

# Bank Indonesia Corner (BIC): An Advocacy Endeavour Promoting the Role of the School Library

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According to the National Library Report in 2015, there were 254,432 schools in Indonesia, and in those schools, there were only 118,599 school libraries (Utomo, 2016). The condition of these school libraries varies with diverse standards in collections, human resources, programs etc. There are many challenging situations explaining why school libraries in Indonesia are having difficulty developing as they should. The reasons why school libraries are having difficulty playing a meaningful role are varied and include:

- Less support from school stakeholders or school principals who do not have a good understanding about the role of the school library in learning and teaching in a school. In the Indonesia education system, the school principal's main task and responsibility areas are students, parents and teachers. They do not directly interact with the school library.
- The existence of a school library in a school is usually only to meet the accreditation requirements of the Ministry of Culture and Education. So, a school library is only a room with books and other physical criteria without any living 'soul'.
- As a school library is not seen as an important element, the school management frequently places a person in the library indiscriminately. A good school library program is rarely produced in such circumstances.

## Advocacy for School Library

Advocacy is needed to highlight and remedy this situation. The Canadian Association of Public Libraries (2001) stated that 'advocacy seeks to change attitudes, policies, positions and/or practices by particular groups or persons'. Furthermore it said that 'advocacy is planned, deliberate, sustained effort to raise awareness of an issue or issues'. Advocacy is thus an ongoing process where support and understanding are built incrementally. The professional association plays an important role in this advocacy task. IFLA in APISI-IFLA Program in Jakarta (2015) stated that reasons to advocate are:

- Improve understanding of the role of libraries.
- To effect change
- To establish credibility or raise profile
- It can assist in planning for the future
- To reach a more diverse audience for your services.

## An Example of Advocacy – The BI Corner

### *What is a BI Corner?*

*Bank Indonesia Corner (BI Corner)* is a library corner provided by Bank Indonesia to provide education especially about the economy and central banking. A BI Corner consists of current books both in printed and electronic book formats including the supporting technology (such as a personal computer and led television screen) (*Bank Indonesia, 2015*).

Bank Indonesia has targeted to set up 1000 units of the BI Corner around the archipelago of Indonesia for all levels of education including university and provincial libraries. In 2016, BI has installed 20 units of the BI Corner in high schools in Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang and Bekasi.

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There have been many positive responses to this grant program both from the receivers and also those who have heard about this program. Moreover, the program has received recognition at a regional level winning a CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) award. The BI Corner program has won a Gold Award in the category Excellence in Provision of Literacy and Education Award at the 8th Annual Asia Global CSR Summit and Awards for 2016 (Bank Indonesia, 2016).



*A BI Corner in a High School in Jakarta.*



*BI Corner in a vocational school.*

## **The Advocacy Role of the BI Corner: Testimonies**

From a professional point of view, the BI Corner has improved the level of understanding of the roles of a school library by the school stakeholders. During the activation of the BI Corner, some school principals and

school management mentioned how a school library has become an important unit that supports the teaching and learning in schools.

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School Director of Madrasah Pembangunan-UIN, Ciputat (an Islamic high school) Dr. H. Bahrissalim, MA mentioned that the BI Corner will strengthen their school research program for students through its strong collection focusing on the economy, finance and central-

banking. The various books in the BI Corner, both Indonesian and English language titles, also enrich the students reading options.

Putu Mudita, MA, a Principal of Global Sevilla, Pulo Mas, stated that the school library has an important role in developing reading interests as a foundation of education. He also admitted that here in Indonesia an interest in reading is not yet developed evenly throughout the country. He noticed that in most cases, in most classrooms, the textbook has been the only resource for teaching and learning. As a result, students are not given an opportunity to further their information skills - to find extra information, or knowledge, about the subject that they are learning. Therefore, a school library is needed to provide information in varied media forms to stimulate learning and allow for practice in finding relevant information. When properly resourced, the school library, can also play an important role in instilling a love of reading for students from the early years of school.

## Moving Onward

The promotion of what a school library can do to improve the quality of teaching and learning through programs that support and enhance literacy, and information literacy, should be supported. The whole school community, especially the school stakeholders, need to support this ongoing development.

The school library should have a 'soul' that integrates classroom learning with varied information sources to strengthen students' knowledge and understanding. To support this, school librarians, should take an active role and demonstrate how a school library can help a school to achieve its education goals.

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