



SOCIAL STUDIES STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE USE OF THE NATIONAL DIGITAL LIBRARY'S DIGITAL LEARNING RESOURCES AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION

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Abstract. *This study explores the experiences of social studies students in using digital libraries, focusing on accessibility, user satisfaction, content relevance, and technical challenges. Through a mixed-method approach involving questionnaires, interviews, and observations with 50 participants, the research reveals that digital libraries significantly enhance students' academic engagement, information literacy, and research productivity. Most students reported positive experiences in terms of access and interface usability, especially in using Perpustakaan Nasional (Indonesia's National Digital Library). However, persistent challenges such as limited full-text availability, slow internet speeds, and the need for improved user guidance continue to hinder optimal usage. The study concludes that addressing technical issues and curating discipline-specific content are vital for improving the efficiency and inclusivity of digital libraries. These findings contribute to the ongoing discourse on digital transformation in education, emphasizing the need for strategic development in digital library services tailored to specific academic fields.*

Keywords: *Digital Library, Social Studies Students, Accessibility, User Satisfaction, Digital Literacy, Content Relevance, Technical Barriers, Perpustakaan, Educational Technology, E-Learning*

Abstrak. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi pengalaman mahasiswa studi sosial dalam menggunakan perpustakaan digital, dengan fokus pada aksesibilitas, kepuasan pengguna, relevansi konten, dan tantangan teknis. Melalui pendekatan metode campuran yang melibatkan kuesioner, wawancara, dan observasi dengan 50 partisipan, penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa perpustakaan digital secara signifikan meningkatkan keterlibatan akademis, literasi informasi, dan produktivitas penelitian mahasiswa. Sebagian besar mahasiswa melaporkan pengalaman positif dalam hal akses dan kegunaan antarmuka, terutama dalam menggunakan Perpustakaan Nasional (Perpustakaan Digital Nasional Indonesia). Namun, tantangan yang terus-menerus seperti keterbatasan ketersediaan teks lengkap, kecepatan internet yang lambat, dan kebutuhan untuk meningkatkan panduan pengguna terus menghambat penggunaan yang optimal. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa mengatasi masalah teknis dan menyusun konten khusus disiplin ilmu sangat penting untuk meningkatkan efisiensi dan inklusivitas perpustakaan digital. Temuan ini berkontribusi pada wacana yang sedang berlangsung tentang transformasi digital dalam pendidikan, yang menekankan perlunya pengembangan strategis dalam layanan perpustakaan digital yang disesuaikan dengan bidang akademik tertentu.

Kata Kunci: Perpustakaan Digital, Mahasiswa Studi Sosial, Aksesibilitas, Kepuasan Pengguna, Literasi Digital, Relevansi Konten, Hambatan Teknis, Perpustakaan Nasional, Teknologi Pendidikan, Pembelajaran Elektronik

INTRODUCTION

The digital era has transformed U.S. education through innovation and technology, but challenges like the digital divide and equity remain. The digital era has profoundly impacted

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education in the United States, bringing both challenges, such as the digital divide, and innovations, such as online learning and AI technologies that improve educational quality (Silaban et al., 2024). This change has changed the way people learn by encouraging self-directed and personalized learning experiences. It has also brought attention to issues that need to be fixed in order to make sure that everyone can use these new technologies, such as the digital divide and educational equity (Zhang et al., 2024). According to Warschauer (2011), the integration of digital technologies into education not only enhances learning opportunities but also highlights longstanding social and economic disparities that must be addressed for inclusive progress. Similarly, Selwyn (2016) argues that while digital technologies promise educational reform, they also risk deepening educational inequality if not thoughtfully implemented.

A digital library is an organized collection of digital content that provides methods for searching, accessing, and sharing materials like text, images, video, and audio. Digital libraries are organized collections of digital content that enable users to search, access, and share various materials, a concept anticipated by Vannevar Bush in 1945, which has since evolved significantly, presenting numerous opportunities for development in the field of Library and Information Science (Bush, 2023). A digital library enhances the services offered by traditional libraries to a diverse range of users (Cusimano, 2021). According to Arms (2000), digital libraries are essential in supporting distance education, fostering global collaboration, and ensuring the long-term preservation of digital knowledge. Furthermore, Borgman (2007) emphasizes that digital libraries are not just repositories of information, but also dynamic platforms that facilitate new forms of scholarly communication and knowledge discovery.

The perspective of social studies students is essential in assessing how effectively digital learning resources enhance their educational experience. Students in social studies are very important for judging how well digital learning tools work. Their comments on the quality of the content, their level of satisfaction, and the course structure can help make e-learning better (Al-Shurman et al., 2023). Their perspective is vital in understanding how digital learning tools enhance their educational journey, as their involvement and active participation in technology-driven environments significantly boost motivation and foster critical thinking skills, equipping them for a digitalized world (Reyes et al., 2024). As Prensky (2010) points out, today's learners, often referred to as "digital natives," bring unique expectations and preferences to the learning environment, which educators must understand to design effective digital pedagogy. Moreover, Bonk and Khoo (2014) stress the importance of learner feedback in refining digital instructional strategies to ensure engagement and deeper learning outcomes.

Learning digital literacy is becoming more and more important for students as digital innovation becomes a major component of contemporary education. They can confidently and competently navigate digital environments thanks to this ability, which makes it possible for them to find, analyze, and critically assess online information quickly. In today's educational context, digital literacy also fosters critical thinking, effective online communication, and informed judgment in evaluating information within a rapidly evolving digital environment (Normuratova, 2024). In addition, digital literacy functions as a core competency that allows students to retrieve, examine, and utilize information through digital platforms, enriching their educational experience, improving their teamwork skills, and better preparing them to meet the demands of the digital era (Furqon, 2023). Gilster (1997), who coined the term "digital literacy," emphasized that it encompasses more than just technical proficiency—it includes the ability to critically evaluate and use digital information wisely. Furthermore, Eshet-Alkalai (2004) expands the definition to include cognitive, motoric, sociological, and emotional skills necessary for functioning in digital environments.

Although digital resources can improve educational accessibility for every student, issues, including internet access, device availability, and digital inequality, have to be resolved if fair

opportunities are to result. For every student, digital resources could greatly enhance their access to education. However, issues like internet connectivity, availability of devices, and digital inequality need to be tackled to provide equal learning opportunities (da Costa et al., 2024). Ensuring digital accessibility in education is crucial to guarantee that every student, including those with special needs, can engage with quality learning materials and fully participate in the educational process (Dembitska & Кобилянський, 2024). As Van Dijk (2006) points out, addressing the “second-level digital divide,” which includes differences in digital skills and usage, is as crucial as resolving access issues. In addition, Beetham and Sharpe (2013) advocate for digital inclusion strategies that not only provide access but also foster the skills and confidence necessary for meaningful participation in digital education.

METHOD

This study investigates the usage patterns, satisfaction, and challenges faced by social learning students in utilizing digital libraries through a combination of questionnaires, interviews, and observations. This research explores the digital technology usage habits and learning strategies of Chilean university students, identifying three distinct groups based on their interaction with digital libraries and learning management systems, which are linked to their academic performance (Gonzalez et al., 2022). Similarly, another study examines the usage patterns, satisfaction levels, and challenges experienced by social learning students when using digital libraries, employing a mix of questionnaires, interviews, and observations (Steinerová, 2003).

The study engaged 50 students, utilizing questionnaires, observations, and interviews, with data analyzed through reduction, coding, and triangulation to uncover key themes. The study looks at the planning, execution, and results of library policies at UIN Malang and finds that their electronic services significantly raise student literacy and support research efficiently and effectively (Amirullah, 2022). A mixed-methods approach was used in another study, involving 50 students through questionnaires, observations, and interviews to analyze their information behaviors in library and information science, identifying key themes through thorough data reduction, coding, and triangulation (Siddiqui et al., 2024).

The study involved 50 social studies students, using purposive sampling, questionnaires, and interviews to explore their experiences and challenges with digital library use. The research evaluated user viewpoints on library digitization and its effect on research capabilities among social studies students, uncovering both positive perceptions and notable challenges associated with the use of digital resources (Kanyika et al., 2024).

Monitoring students' behavior using the digital library allowed observational data to be gathered on their search strategies, resource choice, and platform time spent. The study reveals that while also pointing out difficulties, particularly during the COVID-19 epidemic, digital platforms significantly enhance university students' learning experiences. It underscores the importance of digital literacy programs to enhance student engagement with these technologies (Gottlieb et al., 2024). Emphasizing the need for data collecting and analysis techniques in optimizing educational processes and linking these patterns to academic performance outcomes, the research also looks at student behavior patterns derived from Learning Management Systems data (Levin, 2024).

Data analysis through reduction, coding, and triangulation identified key themes like access, usability, content satisfaction, and technical issues in students' use of digital libraries. Emphasizing the need for better informational literacy training and improved library services, the research shows that students use digital libraries with limited access, usability problems, content

discontent, and technical challenges (Alvarez-Flores et al., 2024). By providing quick access to a range of reading materials, guaranteeing high usability, and efficiently addressing technical issues, the building of a digital library at Darul Mustofa Vocational School has greatly raised students' reading literacy (Dellia et al., 2024).

Data reliability was ensured through inter-coder checks, and validity was strengthened by piloting the questions with a small group of students. The study showed that the test questions designed to measure information literacy skills in prospective teacher students were both valid and reliable, with 20 out of 22 questions deemed valid by expert evaluation and a KR-20 reliability value of 0.740, along with a high item reliability of 0.97 (Akbarini & Anggrawal, 2024). Furthermore, underlining the need for thorough training in research methods for students, the study emphasizes how much research methodology determines data quality, dependability, validity, and generalizability of results (Ojoboh & Igben, 2024).

Ethical Getting informed permission, guaranteeing anonymity, and letting participants stop at any moment without penalty were among the ethical procedures followed. Particularly with regard to the right to withdraw, which relates to both tangible and intangible data, researchers have to handle both procedural ethics and the complicated reality of participant experiences (Dahal, 2024). A fundamental ethical tenet of clinical research is informed consent, which guarantees that participants are completely informed about the study, can withdraw at any point without penalty, and have their confidentiality preserved throughout the research process (Arellano et al., 2023).

Ethical procedures in research were upheld through informed consent, the assurance of confidentiality, and the right of participants to withdraw at any time without repercussions. Rooted in the core values of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice (Subject Recruitment, Consent, and Assent, 2023), these methods are underlined in debates on ethical participant recruitment. In participant-centered linguistic research, maintaining these ethical standards is particularly vital as they navigate complex researcher-participant dynamics while safeguarding participant autonomy (Atkins et al., 2024).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the key findings from the study, based on the data collected through questionnaires, interviews, and observations.

Accessibility and Ease of Use

Table 1. User Evaluation Summary of Perpunas Digital Library

Aspects Evaluated	Column A (%)	Column B Key Point
Accessibility	42 (Strongly Agree) / 34 (Agree)	High access via smartphones/laptops (Perpunas)
Service Availability	56 (Agree/Strongly Agree)	Few technical issues; potential for system upgrades
Navigation & Layout	38 (Strongly Agree) / 28 (Agree)	Generally easy to use; UI improvements needed

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Most respondents reported that they can access the National Digital Library anytime via personal devices such as smartphones and laptops. Specifically, 42% strongly agreed, and 34% agreed that accessing Perpustakaan was not an obstacle, indicating high accessibility. The study highlights that convenient access plays a crucial role in using digital libraries, underscoring the importance of incorporating accessibility features for individuals with disabilities to improve user involvement and interaction with digital content (Meena, 2024).

Regarding login and service availability, most users experienced no significant technical difficulties, with 56% agreeing or strongly agreeing. The study indicates that although the digital archiving system at the Dinas Perpustakaan dan Kearsipan Kota Bandung encounters several obstacles, it holds significant potential to improve the reliability of platforms such as Perpustakaan—especially in areas like authentication and server stability—by promoting greater efficiency and offering recommendations for long-term sustainability (Saefulrahman et al., 2025).

Regarding navigation within the website or application, 38% strongly agreed, and 28% agreed that the layout and menu structure were easy to understand. However, approximately 30% remained neutral or disagreed. Improving digital library systems' user interface design is essential to making them easier for novices to use and enabling more seamless navigation and digital resource access (Abinowi et al., 2024).

Efficiency in Searching and Utilizing Materials

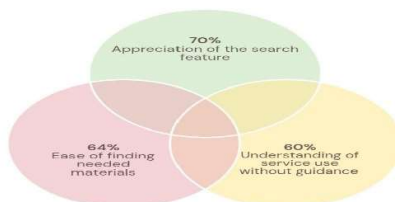


Figure 1. First Picture

Seventy percent of respondents (38% agreed and 32% strongly agreed) said they liked the search feature of Perpustakaan. Digital libraries make it much easier for people to find the books, journals, and articles they need. They do this with many resources and easy-to-use interfaces (Chavan & Naikar, 2023). Users also felt they could quickly find the needed materials, with 64% agreeing or strongly agreeing that digital libraries enhance academic productivity and research efficiency by providing 24/7 access to a wide range of resources, allowing users to easily locate and utilize necessary materials without the constraints of physical libraries (Abinowi et al., 2024).

Moreover, 60% of respondents reported understanding how to use the Perpustakaan services without exceptional guidance, indicating a relatively good level of digital literacy among the students. The adoption of e-clipping technology in the BPK RI Bali digital library supports autonomous learning by enabling quick access to information, boosting operational efficiency, and enhancing user satisfaction, ultimately reducing the need for supplementary guidance (Salsinha & Lukman, 2024).

Comfort and User Interface

The library's interface received positive feedback, with 70% of respondents (34% agreed, 36% strongly agreed) finding it attractive and not confusing. Comfort in accessing Perpustakaan via digital devices was also rated positively, with 60% agreeing or strongly agreeing. Most people who used the library interface found it interesting and easy to use. Additionally, many users

reported being satisfied with the ease of accessing Perpunas on digital devices (Muthurasu & Suganthi, 2023).

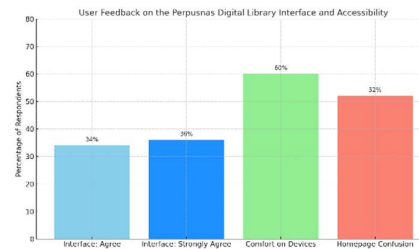


Figure 2. Second Picture

Still, there are particular usability problems even with the positive responses. Especially, 52% of the respondents said that the homepage design perplexed them and made using the platform difficult. Respondents indicated that the structural clarity of the homepage still needs significant improvement, even though general impressions of the interface are decent. Positive comments about the interface and the ease of accessing content on digital devices show how user experience design significantly increases user satisfaction and engagement, which is why it is so important in digital libraries (Abinowi et al., 2024).

Content Quality and Relevance

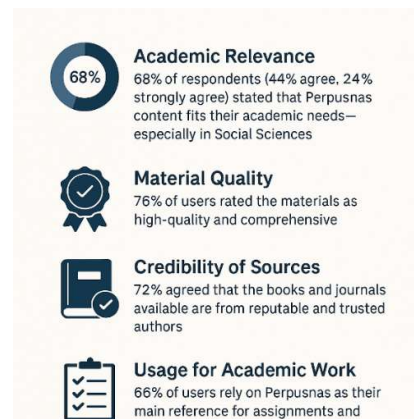


Figure 3. Third Picture

Respondents rated the content available in Perpunas as quite relevant to their academic needs, particularly in the field of Social Sciences. Around 44% agreed, and 24% strongly agreed that the reading materials aligned well with their coursework. The response to the content at the National Library shows that content curation has effectively considered academic relevance.

Regarding quality, 76% of respondents perceived the materials as high-quality and comprehensive. The credibility of the sources was also acknowledged, with 72% agreeing that the books and journals are from reputable authors, thereby reinforcing Perpunas as a trustworthy academic reference.

A significant number of users (66%) relied on Perpunas as their primary reference source for academic assignments and research projects, underscoring its integral role in their educational endeavors.

Support for Academic Activities and Research

Perpusnas makes significant contributions to a range of academic endeavors. According to about 76% of respondents, Perpusnas was very helpful to them when they were preparing their final projects, theses, and research proposals. Digital libraries are crucial for academic development as they provide accessible information and resources that enhance learning and research opportunities for users (Mahmudah & Azrina, 2024).

A significant number of students (74%) utilized Perpusnas materials for class discussions and presentations. Digital libraries are crucial for learning today because they provide access to a vast array of academic materials. Digital technology allows people to conduct research and study at any time and from anywhere. Digital technology also enhances the overall educational experience and the effectiveness of library services (Abinowi et al., 2024).

Over 70% also said that Perpusnas made their arguments better in discussions and their assignments more interesting. Using reliable sources, such as those from digital libraries, significantly boosts students' confidence and motivation to learn by providing them with access to accurate information and enhancing their research skills (Muthurasu & Suganthi, 2023).

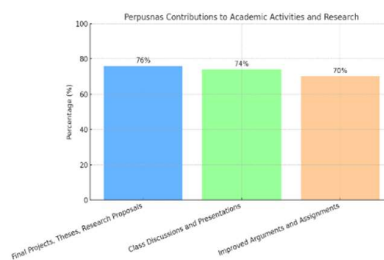


Figure 4. Fourth Picture

Technical Challenges and Limitations

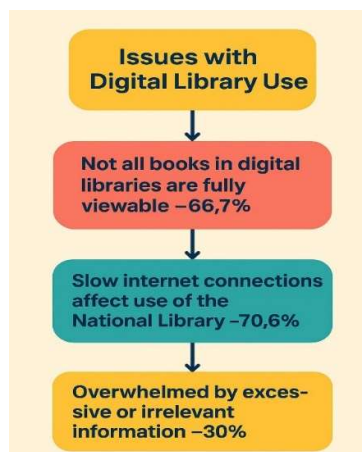


Figure 5. Fifth Picture

Although people have said nice things about it, technical issues still impact how people use it. Approximately 66.7% of respondents stated that not all books in digital libraries are fully

viewable. Unresolved technical problems hinder users' access to all necessary materials, potentially compromising the effectiveness of their research (Singh et al., 2022).

Internet speed also has a significant impact on how people use the National Library, with 70.6% of respondents stating that slow connections make it difficult for them to use the service effectively. Because this limits people's ability to interact with the available content fully, limited access to digital library resources becomes a more serious problem in areas with poor internet connections (Abinowi et al., 2024).

Some users expressed feeling overwhelmed by excessive or irrelevant information, which complicates the search process and reduces efficiency. Approximately 30% of the need for additional training to optimize the use of Perpustakaan features underscores the significance of sustainable digital literacy education in enhancing user engagement with digital library resources (Chavan & Naikar, 2023).

Discussion

According to the findings, social studies students now consider digital libraries to be a standard academic resource. Technical problems further reduce the usefulness of digital libraries as all-inclusive learning resources, and they are frequently restricted to retrieving textbooks and assigned materials (Sledování objednávky "Unlocking the Power of Digital Libraries: A Comprehensive Review," 2023). A limited user experience in digital libraries can discourage students from engaging in deeper academic exploration and independent learning due to technical barriers and usability issues (Byrne, 2003).

Comparison with Previous Research

These findings are consistent with previous research that emphasizes the importance of accessibility and system performance in the adoption of digital libraries. Content availability and ease of use are critical factors that significantly affect user satisfaction in digital libraries, as they determine how effectively users can access and utilize the resources they need for their academic pursuits ("Problems and Solutions of Information Resource Management in University Digital Library," 2023). The study identifies critical issues in digital library implementations in developing countries, such as limited full-text access and interface difficulties, which hinder effective research and learning opportunities (Quansah, 2024).

Contributions to Existing Research

Digital libraries must tailor their services to each field of study, especially in the social sciences, which require contextually relevant historical resources to enhance learning experiences and research capabilities (Quansah, 2024). Providing this access will help them improve their research skills and learning experiences (Quansah, 2024). Digital libraries must curate content and design interfaces that are explicitly tailored to the diverse disciplines of their users, thereby improving accessibility and usability (Digital Libraries: Meeting the Needs, Academic Community, 2022).

Theoretical Framework

Students' perception of the value of social networking sites decreases when they encounter technical difficulties or struggle to find relevant content, which in turn reduces their engagement and the frequency with which they use the platform to obtain information about reproductive health (Macharia, 2023). The study reveals that enhancing user experience, improving system responsiveness, and curating discipline-specific content is vital for increasing the acceptance and use of the TikTok Shop among Indonesian university students (Syafika & Antonio, 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the significance of digital libraries, particularly the National Library of Indonesia (Perpusnas), in supporting social science students with their academic endeavors. The platform has become a primary reference tool because it is easy to use, accessible, and offers a wealth of handy educational resources. Students use it for a variety of schoolwork, including writing their theses, doing research projects, and getting references for class discussions.

The study found that libraries are great in many ways, but numerous problems prevent people from utilizing them to their full potential. Some of these issues include the fact that not everyone can access full-text documents, internet connections aren't always reliable, and some people lack proficiency in using technology. These difficulties may prevent students from fully utilizing the resources provided by the digital library, particularly those with limited financial resources.

According to the findings, even though digital libraries offer many benefits, several problems limit their full potential. Among these challenges are sporadic internet connections, limited access to full-text materials, and low degrees of digital literacy among some users. For low-income students, these obstacles make it more challenging for them to utilize the materials offered by the digital library fully.

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