

Libraries as Digital Literacy Spaces for Muslims: Challenges and Opportunities in Contemporary Islam

Mufti Zevira

Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

Email: muftizevira87@gmail.com

Article Info

Article history:

Received 10/06, 2025

Revised 25/07, 2025

Accepted 15/08, 2025

Keywords:

Digital Libraries;

Digital Literacy;

Muslims;

Contemporary Islam;

Kata Kunci:

Perpustakaan Digital;

Literasi Digital;

Umat Islam;

Islam Kontemporer;

ABSTRACT

The development of digital technology demands that Muslims possess adequate digital literacy skills to understand and utilize religious information critically and responsibly. In this context, libraries play a strategic role as digital literacy spaces that provide trusted sources of Islamic information grounded in scholarly traditions. This study aims to examine the role of libraries as digital literacy spaces for Muslims from a contemporary Islamic perspective. The study employed a literature review method with a descriptive qualitative approach through a review of relevant literature. The results indicate that the digital transformation of libraries further strengthens their role in enhancing digital literacy and fostering a moderate and contextual understanding of Islam. Despite challenges such as the digital literacy gap and limited curated collections, digital libraries offer significant opportunities for equitable access to knowledge and the preservation of Islamic scholarly treasures.

ABSTRAK

Perkembangan teknologi digital menuntut umat Islam memiliki kemampuan literasi digital yang memadai agar dapat memahami dan memanfaatkan informasi keagamaan secara kritis serta bertanggung jawab. Dalam konteks ini, perpustakaan memegang peran strategis sebagai ruang literasi digital yang menyediakan sumber informasi keislaman yang terpercaya dan berpijak pada tradisi keilmuan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji peran perpustakaan sebagai ruang literasi digital umat Islam dalam perspektif Islam kontemporer. Penelitian menggunakan metode studi pustaka dengan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif melalui penelaahan literatur yang relevan. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa transformasi perpustakaan ke arah digital semakin memperkuat perannya dalam meningkatkan literasi digital serta membangun pemahaman keislaman yang moderat dan kontekstual. Meskipun dihadapkan pada tantangan seperti kesenjangan literasi digital dan keterbatasan koleksi yang terkurasi, perpustakaan digital memiliki peluang besar dalam pemerataan akses pengetahuan dan pelestarian khazanah keilmuan Islam.

This is an open access article under the [CC BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.



1. INTRODUCTION

Advances in digital technology have driven a major transformation in how society accesses, manages, and utilizes information. In the digital era, the flow of information is rapid and no longer limited by space and time (Sari and Diana, 2024). This situation demands adequate digital literacy competencies so that individuals can select, understand, and utilize information critically and responsibly. For Muslims, digital literacy is not solely related to technical skills in using technology, but also encompasses an understanding of

values, ethics, and responsibility in accessing and disseminating religious information (Izzati and Batubara, 2025).

Muslims face numerous challenges amidst the development of digitalization, including a preponderance of inaccurate religious information, hoaxes, and instant and partial understandings of Islam. These phenomena can impact people's ways of thinking and practicing religion (Juhara et al., 2024). Therefore, literacy spaces are needed that can serve as trusted references in developing a moderate, critical, and contextual understanding of Islam in line with current developments.

The rapid development of information technology has significantly transformed the ways individuals search for, access, and utilize information. Literacy is no longer understood merely as the ability to read and write, but rather as a set of competencies that include accessing, evaluating, and using information critically and responsibly. In educational and Islamic contexts, digital literacy challenges have become increasingly complex due to the overwhelming flow of information that is not always supported by credibility or strong scholarly foundations. This condition highlights the urgent need for institutions that can mediate between digital information and the development of critical literacy skills in an academic and ethical manner (Wahyuni & Safri, 2023).

Libraries hold a strategic position in responding to digital literacy challenges, particularly through the provision of credible, curated, and relevant information resources. The transformation of libraries from conventional service models to digitally based services is not solely oriented toward technological availability, but also toward improving service quality and users' capacity to utilize information effectively. Therefore, the quality of library services becomes a crucial factor influencing users' perceptions and determining the effectiveness of libraries in supporting literacy development and lifelong learning (Nabila et al., 2024).

As knowledge management institutions, libraries are strategically positioned to respond to these challenges (Jaya, 2024). Libraries are no longer simply repositories; they are now centers of digital literacy, offering access to reliable, inclusive, and sustainable information sources. This is due to the transformation from physical to digital spaces (Aji, 2022). Libraries have the potential to become digital literacy spaces in the Muslim context, supporting the strengthening of Islamic understanding based on knowledge, moral principles, and modern Islamic thought (Rodin, 2025).

However, the role of libraries as digital literacy spaces for Muslims still faces many challenges. Some of these challenges include poor Islamic digital collections, low user literacy skills, and the inability to effectively integrate Islamic values into digital library services (Hasan, 2025). Based on these conditions, this article aims to examine the role of libraries as digital literacy spaces for Muslims using a literature review approach. The goal is to provide a conceptual overview of the opportunities and challenges libraries face in supporting digital literacy in the contemporary Islamic era.

2. METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a library research method. Data collection was conducted through a review of various relevant literature, including scientific journals, books, and articles from credible digital sources that discuss digital libraries, digital literacy, and libraries as digital literacy spaces for Muslims from a contemporary Islamic perspective. The primary data sources come from national publications published in the last ten years, with an emphasis on studies that highlight libraries as digital literacy spaces for Muslims from a contemporary Islamic perspective.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. Library Transformation as a Digital Literacy Space

Library transformation is a process of change in various elements of a library, including collections, processing, storage, and utilization, leading the library towards a better condition. Libraries, which previously focused solely on managing library materials for use by users through traditional methods, known as book management, have now evolved into knowledge management (Ruhukail, 2021). This change places knowledge management as the primary focus, with comprehensive data management integration for easier and more effective information retrieval.

According to Endang Fatmawati, library transformation is the process of transforming library components for the better:

- 1) Shifting from a reading culture to a reading and writing culture;
- 2) Shifting from a physical resource library to a knowledge-based library;
- 3) Shifting the focus from providing physical collections to electronic ones;
- 4) Shifting from an independent library to a collaborative library;
- 5) Shifting from paper-based collections to paperless collections;
- 6) Shifting perspectives of librarians (Tania, 2023).

Librarians are no longer merely bookkeepers, but are instead required to become data brokers, capable of managing and packaging data so that it can be accessed electronically by users without being restricted by time and place. Furthermore, librarians are also expected to possess digital skills, namely the ability to recognize, master, and utilize digital hardware, software, and operating systems in their daily lives and in carrying out their professional activities (Vitriana, 2024).

Furthermore, research has shown that digital libraries can serve as a forum for discussion and integration between the dynamics of modern knowledge and classical Islamic academic traditions. The digitization of manuscripts, classic books, and contemporary Islamic intellectual works enables the preservation of Islamic intellectual heritage while expanding access to these scientific treasures for the younger generation (Nasir, 2025). Therefore, libraries help maintain Islamic intellectual traditions amidst the currents of digitalization and globalization.

b. Libraries and Strengthening Islamic Understanding

Libraries are often referred to as bridges between civilizations and national cultures, enabling them to preserve their cultural heritage. Libraries are also described as centers of P3IR, meaning education, storage, information, and recreation. Libraries were established as places for lifelong learning following the 1945 Constitution. Their goal is to develop individuals who believe in and fear God Almighty, possess noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become responsible democratic citizens who support national education (Anggara and Khoeron, 2023).

Libraries play a strategic role in enhancing public understanding of Islam, particularly amidst the complexity and fragmentation of digital information flows. Much literature suggests that obtaining a wealth of religious information does not necessarily translate into a deep and comprehensive understanding (Fatima et al., 2025). In this context, libraries play a role in providing trusted, verified sources of Islamic information based on a strong scholarly tradition.

Through selective and high-quality curation of collections, libraries can present diverse perspectives on Islamic thought, both classical and contemporary. The availability

of traditional books, Qur'anic interpretations, hadith, fiqh, and works by modern Islamic thinkers enables users to gain a holistic and contextual understanding of Islam. Thus, libraries play a role in preventing the development of narrow, textual religious understanding.

The ability to understand Islam in the digital age is closely linked to the ability to understand information and digital literacy. Muslims can develop a critical attitude towards religious information disseminated on social media and online platforms (Ahmad et al., 2024). By utilizing literacy services and librarian guidance, users are encouraged to apply the principles of *tabayyun* (reference), verify sources, and understand context when reading Islamic information.

Thus, libraries function not only as information centers but also as a means of intellectual and spiritual development for the community. Strengthening Islamic understanding through libraries emphasizes the strategic role of these institutions in maintaining the quality of the Muslim community's religious life in the digital age, while also bridging the gap between Islamic scholarly traditions and the challenges of contemporary thought.

c. Challenges and Opportunities for Digital Libraries for Muslims

Digital libraries have developed with numerous challenges as well as opportunities to improve Islamic literacy and understanding for Muslims. The gap in digital literacy among users is one of the main challenges identified in the literature (Kadir, 2025). Not all Muslims have the skills to access, evaluate, and use digital information critically. This can lead to reliance on unreliable sources of information about their religion and increase the spread of disinformation (Azizi, 2025).

Not all Muslims have the skills to access, evaluate, and use digital information critically. This can lead to reliance on unreliable sources of information about their religion and increase the spread of disinformation (Ismael, 2023). The limited availability of well-organized and curated collections, such as classical texts and contemporary Islamic scholarly works, hinders digital libraries from fulfilling their role as trusted reference sources. In addition, copyright and legality issues in the digitalization process are still issues that require serious attention (Ramadhani, 2024).

On the other hand, digital libraries offer significant opportunities for Muslims to access the riches of Islamic knowledge in a more inclusive and sustainable manner. The digitization of manuscripts, traditional books, and modern Islamic literature allows for the preservation of Islamic intellectual heritage while expanding access to communities across regions and generations. This opportunity is highly relevant in supporting equitable access to Islamic knowledge in the global era.

Using digital technology to create literacy services based on Islamic values represents another significant opportunity (Mudiono and Mudzakkir, 2025). Libraries can serve as learning spaces that encourage Muslims to be critical, moderate, and responsible in utilizing religious information available online, with the support of experienced librarians (Shafi, 2025).

Thus, the challenges facing digital libraries for Muslims align with the opportunities they offer. Strengthening the role of digital libraries requires strategies focused on improving user digital literacy, developing curated Islamic collections, and implementing Islamic values in library management and services. If managed optimally, digital libraries have the potential to become a strategic tool in building a literate, inclusive, and adaptable Islamic society.

4. CONCLUSION

Libraries play an increasingly strategic role as digital literacy spaces for Muslims in the contemporary era. The transformation of libraries from managing physical collections to managing digital-based knowledge has made them not only information centers but also educational resources that support the development of digital literacy, Islamic understanding, and the intellectual and spiritual development of the community.

Libraries contribute significantly to strengthening a moderate, critical, and contextual understanding of Islam by providing trusted, verified sources of Islamic knowledge grounded in a strong scholarly tradition. Through curating digital collections and information literacy services, libraries encourage Muslims to apply the principles of *tabayyun* (religious guidance), critical thinking, and responsibility in accessing and disseminating religious information in the digital space.

REFERENCES

- Ahmad, Ikhsan, Iman Mukhroman, and Rangga Galura Gumelar. "Penguatan Literasi Media Digital di Pesantren Tradisional Alfathaniyah Kota Serang: Membangun Generasi Melek Teknologi dengan Nilai Keislaman." *Jurnal Akademik Pengabdian Masyarakat* 2, no. 6 (2024): 236–46.
- Aji, Tandira, Tsuraya Banatya Sundusy, Vania Maulida Azzahra, and Yasmin Akhdinie. "Inovasi Perpustakaan Digital: Meningkatkan Akses Dan Minat Baca Di Era Digital." *Jmi : Jurnal Multidisiplin Ilmu* 1, no. 1 (2022): 1–8.
- Anggara, Septa, and Slamet Khoeron. "Pengaruh Peran Perpustakaan terhadap Tingkat Kemampuan Literasi Digital Santri di MA Unggulan Al-Imdad Bantul." *Buletin Perpustakaan Universitas Islam Indonesia* 6, no. 2 (2023): 263–95.
- Azizi, Muhammad Rizky, Tisyia Dwi Nuraini, Syafah Audina, and Ali Hasan Siswanto. "Rekonstruksi Epistemologi, Dakwah Dalam Konteks Digitalisasi Dan Era Disrupsi." *Jurnal Penelitian Nusantara* 1, no. 6 (2025): 654–66.
- Ismael, Fauzan. "Strategi Pendidikan Islam Di Era Digital: Peluang Dan Tantangan." *Innovative: Journal Of Social Science Research* 3, no. 3 (2023): 4526–33.
- Izzati, Nabilla Fairuz, and Abdul Karim Batubara. "Literasi Digital Masyarakat Pedesaan: Studi di Desa Tanah Tinggi Kabupaten Batubara." *Jurnal Alwatzikhoebillah : Kajian Islam, Pendidikan, Ekonomi, Humaniora* 11, no. 2 (2025): 455–65. <https://doi.org/10.37567/alwatzikhoebillah.v11i2.3885>.
- Jaya, I Nengah Sutrisna. "Peran Perpustakaan dalam Meningkatkan Literasi Informasi bagi Pemustaka." *Media Sains Informasi dan Perpustakaan* 4, no. 2 (2024): 70–80.
- Juhara, Heri, Asep Nugraha Jaya Pamungkas, Tresna Ridwan Firmansyah, Omang Komarudin, and Agus Nurkoliq. "Dinamika Studi Islam Di Era Digital Dalam Pemahaman Keagamaan." *Refresh: Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 2, no. 2 (2024): 53–58.
- Kadir, Surni. "Pergeseran Pemikiran Islam di Era Digital, Tantangan dan Peluang bagi Muslim Milenial." *Iqra: Jurnal Ilmu Kependidikan dan Keislaman* 20, no. 02 (2025): 153–63.

- Mudiono, and Muhammad Mudzakkir. "Transformasi Manajemen Pendidikan Islam Di Era Digital: Kajian Konseptual Tentang Peluang Dan Tantang." *Journal Of Islamic Education Management* 1, no. 1 (2025): 29–43.
- Muhammad Syahrul Hasan. 2025. Transformasi Literasi Pesantren di Nusantara: Dari Kitab Kuning ke Ebook dalam Perspektif Peradaban Islam (Abad Ke-16 Hingga Abad Ke-21). Accessed December 22, 2025. <https://repository.unusia.ac.id/id/eprint/786/1/Muhammad%20Syahrul%20Hasan%20-%202021220010.pdf>.
- Nabila, R., Rasyid, S. A., Safri, T. M., Manan, A., & Hasan, N. A. (2024). Peran Perpustakaan Madrasah dalam Mendukung Program Moderasi Beragama di MTsS Ulumul Quran Banda Aceh. *Baitul 'Ulum: Jurnal Ilmu Perpustakaan Dan Informasi*, 8(2), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.30631/baitululum.v8i2.235>
- Ramadhani, Ayu. "Optimalisasi Digitalisasi Dan Akses Terbuka Untuk Koleksi Skripsi Di UPT. Perpustakaan Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Datokarama Palu." Diploma, Universitas Islam Negeri Datokarama Palu, 2024. <https://repository.uindatokarama.ac.id/id/eprint/3784/>.
- Rodin, Rhoni, Yuyun Yumiarti, Riska Putri, and Andre Fadhila. "Strategi Mahasiswa Ilmu Perpustakaan dan Informasi Islam IAIN Curup dalam Mengembangkan Literasi Keislaman berbasis Digital di Era 5.0." *Anuva: Jurnal Kajian Budaya, Perpustakaan, dan Informasi* 9, no. 4 (2025): 662–80. <https://doi.org/10.14710/anuva.9.4.662-680>.
- Sari, Jayanti Armida, and Bambang Agus Diana. "Dampak Transformasi Digitalisasi terhadap Perubahan Perilaku Masyarakat Pedesaan." *Jurnal Pemerintahan dan Politik* 9, no. 2 (2024): 88–96. <https://doi.org/10.36982/jpg.v9i2.3896>.
- Shafi, Azfa Nabil. "Peran Perpustakaan Dalam Meningkatkan Minat Baca Buku Diniyyah Santri Kelas 8D Salafiyah Wustha Islamic Centre Bin Baz." Other, Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Tarbiyah Madani Yogyakarta, 2025. <https://repository.stitmadani.ac.id/id/eprint/235/>.
- Siti Fatima, Masriyah, Shofrian Rendiaji, and Abdul Wafi. "Peran Literatur Digital dalam Membentuk Syakhshiyah Islam Mahasiswa di Tengah Era Kemunduran Berpikir." *Jejak digital: Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin* 1, no. 4 (2025): 1183–94. <https://doi.org/10.63822/3qee2811>.
- Tania, Yesika Eva. "Transformasi Perpustakaan Berbasis Inklusi Sosial pada Dinas Perpustakaan dan Kearsipan Provinsi Kalimantan Barat." *JIPIS: Jurnal Ilmu Perpustakaan dan Informasi Islam* 2, no. 1 (2023): 1. <https://doi.org/10.31958/jipis.v2i1.8602>.
- Vitriana, Novita. "Transformasi perpustakaan di era digital native." *Librarium: Library and Information Science Journal* 1, no. 1 (2024): 59–69. <https://doi.org/10.53088/librarium.v1i1.693>
- Wahyuni, S., & Safri, T. M. (2023). Peran Ruang Baca Rimba Bulan dalam Meningkatkan Kemampuan Literasi Masyarakat Kota Padang Panjang. *Jurnal Adabiya*, 25(2), 133–147. <https://doi.org/10.22373/adabiya.v25i2.19295>