

## OPTIMIZATION OF NATIONAL LIBRARY ONLINE SERVICES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMI

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### Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on society, including libraries. Implementation of restrictions on physical activity outside the home is a challenge as well as an opportunity for libraries to continue providing services to the community. With various limitations, libraries are required to innovate in serving users so that they can still provide excellent service. This study aims to find out innovation and utilization of the National Library of Indonesia's online services during a pandemic. By optimizing digital services, the National Library has provided the widest possible access for all Indonesian people to various and quality reading materials. The Covid-19 pandemic has limited people's movement, but libraries have proven to be able to expand this space virtually.

**Keywords:** *Online Services; RI National Library; Covid pandemic-19*

### PREFACE

At the end of December 2019, the whole world was hit by a virus outbreak which became a serious global problem. Corona Virus Disease 19 (Covid-19), first appeared in a traditional market in Wuhan, China. It is generally known that this virus can be transmitted through direct contact with droplets from the respiratory tract of an infected person (which is released through coughing and sneezing). A person can be infected and contaminated with this virus in unpredictable conditions and situations. With the increasing number of victims due to Covid-19, the government is taking action to prevent the transmission of this virus, as well as trying to take practical steps to control the transmission of this virus by taking policies such as lockdowns, physical distancing, social restrictions which result in people having to stay at home constantly and are prohibited from being close to one another. So that the community, especially workers and students, inevitably have to carry out activities through online or Work from Home (WFH). With that policy, at least it is believed to be able to break the chain that causes the Covid-19 virus.

The covid-19 virus is endemic in most countries including Indonesia which has a huge impact on society. The impact resulting from the spread of this virus is extraordinary, such as loss of life, economic decline, hampered by educational and social activities, disrupted mobility of people and goods, and some workers in tourism and hospitality sector companies have been laid off and some have even been laid off. The land transportation sector, sea and air were also badly hit, then the education sector also gave students the day off to study from home by utilizing digital technology.

One of the places that was also affected was the library. Implementation of restrictions on physical activity outside the home is a challenge as well as an opportunity for libraries to continue providing services to the community. In the current pandemic situation, library services can no longer rely solely on on-site services. With various limitations, libraries are required to innovate in serving users so that they can still provide excellent service by providing online services.

Library services are generally used by users, including circulation and reference services, usually accessed directly by visiting the library building. However, during the current

pandemic, with various limitations, libraries are required to innovate in serving users so that they can continue to provide excellent service under normal conditions.

The existence of the Covid-19 pandemic has not only changed the library service system from onsite to online-based services, but this pandemic has also resulted in a change in the paradigm of employee work. Librarians as community servants can carry out tasks from home or Work From Home (WFH) with established criteria and conditions. The policy implemented for employees related to the Covid-19 outbreak is by changing the work order with more work online. However, librarians are required to remain productive and not neglect services to the community, and must be adaptive to changes in work patterns from manual to digital.

Even during a pandemic like this, National Library of Indonesia employees, especially librarians who do public services, must remain creative and productive in carrying out their function of providing services to the community. In order to optimize services during this pandemic, the National Library provides digital service facilities that can be utilized or accessed online by the public wherever and whenever.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Digital Library

Suharso (2020) in his paper states that the term digital library is a translation of "digital library". The United States of America is the starting point for digital library development which has now spread evenly throughout the world, including Indonesia. There are many mentions of digital libraries that are developing in the community. The public knows it as an online library, online library, electronic library (e-library) or virtual library. Digital libraries are not much different from conventional libraries, the difference is the collection. If conventional libraries have printed collections, then digital libraries have electronic or non-printed collections.

According to Rowland and Bawden cited by Pendit (2008) states that digital libraries are conventional/traditional libraries that are experiencing development. This model describes the development of conventional

libraries to become digital libraries. There are several mentions of digital libraries, namely electronic, hybrid, digital and virtual libraries. The difference between these libraries is their location/shape. Based on the concept of the Digital Library developed by Rowland and Bawden, Pendit concluded that a digital library is a library that still carries out library activities as it should but requires technological assistance to support its development.

Digital libraries have several advantages, namely: 1) Save space. The collections in the digital library are virtual collections so they don't require a large space to store them. Therefore, digital libraries are considered efficient. 2) Multiple access. Digital libraries can be accessed/used together by users because they are accessed online. 3) Not limited by space and time. Digital libraries can be accessed anywhere and anytime if there is a computer network that functions as a link. 4) Collections can be in the form of multi-media. Collections in digital libraries can be a combination of sound, images and text such as films, educational videos and video tutorials. 5) Cost less. The digital library contains e-books so that it can be used by many users.

### RI National Library Service

Libraries are institutions that manage various sources of information in printed and digital forms. As an information management institution, according to the mandate of Law no. 43 of 2007 concerning Libraries, the function of the library is as a vehicle for education, research, information, preservation, and recreation, which ultimately aims to increase the intelligence and empowerment of the nation. The National Library of Indonesia is a Non-Departmental Government Institution (LPND) which carries out governmental duties in the field of libraries and functions as a supervisory library, reference library, deposit library, research library, preservation library and library network center.

Libraries as service organizations, have the main goal of providing excellent service to users of library services or what are often referred to as users. The basic target of the National Library's service activities is explained in Chapter V Library Services, Article 14, namely:

- 1) Library services are carried out in an excellent manner and are oriented to the interests of the users.
- 2) Each library implements library service procedures based on library national standards.
- 3) Each library develops library services in accordance with advances in information and communication technology.
- 4) Library services as referred to in paragraph (1) are developed through the use of library resources to meet the needs of users.
- 5) Library services are organized according to national library standards to optimize service to users.
- 6) Integrated library services are realized through cooperation between libraries.
- 7) Integrated library services as referred to in paragraph (6) are carried out through telematics networks.

In order to meet the needs of the community, the National Library provides services both onsite and online. The onsite service of the National Library provides on-site reading services in the form of monograph collections, in the form of text books, research reports, theses, dissertations, reference books, and so on. The collection is placed in the subject group of the DDC (Dewey Decimal Classification) classification. The RI National Library service building is located on Jl. Medan Merdeka Selatan consists of 27 floors, including a 3-floor basement, which is the tallest library building in the world. The types of collections in the National Library include:

1. Collection service for children, elderly and disabled on the 7th floor, which provides local story books, educational books and collections about the world of children. Meanwhile, across from it there is an area for the disabled and the elderly. For the blind, a collection of books in Braille is provided. Meanwhile, for the elderly, a special machine is provided that can be used to enlarge the letters in the book.
2. The audio visual collection service is located on the 8th floor, providing several types and forms of collections such as microfilms, microfiches, cassettes and videos as well as CDs/DVDs, both old and new collections containing music, films,

lessons, newspapers and magazines. The audio visual collection service is a closed system (closed access) and is only served on the spot.

3. A rare book collection service on the 14th floor, provides a collection of books covering various disciplines and mostly written in Dutch, and published during the Dutch colonial period.
4. The reference service on the 15th floor provides reference collections such as theses, dissertations, research journals, encyclopedias, bibliographies and state sheets.
5. Collection of photos, maps and paintings on the 16th floor.
6. Multimedia services on the 19th floor, where this service has 2 (two) types of services, namely computer-based multimedia services that accommodate users looking for information with the availability of 101 laptops. The second is a Wifi-based multimedia service to accommodate users who bring laptops.
7. The foreign collection service on the 20th floor provides collections about countries in the world, both regarding culture and politics in that country.
8. The collection service is open on the 21st and 22nd floors. This service provides collections of both social sciences and applied sciences where visitors can directly look for collections on the shelves.
9. Archipelagic cultural collection service on the 24th floor, provides collections on Indonesian culture consisting of various tribes in Indonesia.

While online services are a support system for library services using information technology, including:

1. IPusnas, where through this service we can read collections through the gadgets we have.
2. *e-resources*, namely online digital library material services such as journals, e-books, and other online reference works.
3. ISBN, is a service for submitting ISBN numbers for publishers that is done online. Through this ISBN service, the public can register their work to obtain an ISBN number starting from the initial process to

issuing the ISBN number without the need to come to the National Library.

4. Khastara (Khasanah Pustaka Nusantara), is a website that collects and publishes collections such as ancient manuscripts, rare books, maps, photographs, drawings and paintings.
5. Indonesia One search, which is a search portal for all public collections from libraries, museums, archives and electronic sources in Indonesia.
6. OPAC (Online Public Access Catalog), which is a library catalog that provides information on collections of the National Library of Indonesia.

These online services are all included in the National Library web portal ([www.perpusnas.go.id](http://www.perpusnas.go.id)).

## RESEARCH METHODS

Method used in writing this article uses a descriptive qualitative method where as supporting data, the author uses literature studies such as online journals, website pages and online news related to the services of the National Library.

Qualitative research method is research that is used to examine the condition of natural objects, where the researcher is the key instrument (Sugiyono, 2005). The difference with quantitative research is that this research departs from data, utilizes existing theory as explanatory material and ends with a theory.

After analyzing several definitions of qualitative research, Moleong then made his own definition as a synthesis of the basic notions of qualitative research. According to Moleong (2005: 6), qualitative research is research that intends to understand phenomena about what is experienced by research subjects such as behavior, perceptions, motivations, actions, etc. holistically, and by means of descriptions in the form of words and language, in a special natural context and by utilizing various natural methods.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the Principal Secretary Circular Letter Number 2731/2/KPG.10.00/III.2020

concerning Adjustment of the Work System of the State Civil Apparatus in Efforts to Prevent the Spread of the Covid-19 Virus in the National Library Environment, all employees within the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia are allowed to carry out work activities from home (Work from Home).

Work from Home (WFH) does not mean taking a day off, but still working and carrying out routine tasks according to their duties and functions. Librarians must remain active in carrying out librarianship duties as usual from their respective residences. If there is work that requires coordination meetings or discussions, National Library employees use the zoom application as a medium of communication. This effort is a form of solution to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic.

During this pandemic, the National Library continued to open its services by limiting the number of visitors by implementing health protocols to prevent transmission of Covid-19. In addition to limiting the number of visits, National Library also optimizes its digital collection services.

### Online Service Optimization

The National Library of Indonesia (Perpusnas) as a government institution that provides public services in the library sector is at the forefront in providing and providing information services to the public who have also been affected due to the COVID-19 pandemic. National Library of Indonesia has made various efforts in order to realize quality public services. The National Library of the Republic of Indonesia continues to provide services to users by optimizing the use of existing digital collections and online services, such as IPusnas, e-resources, IOS, and Khastara.

The National Library as a provider of information for the public and users during a pandemic is required to adapt to the existing situation and conditions. The situation and conditions during the pandemic were different from before the pandemic. During a pandemic when people were required to carry out activities from home, including studying/lecturing from home, changing the method of library services which was originally carried out in person to become completely online.



Image 1. Display of online services of the National Library of Indonesia

Figure 1 above shows that users can take advantage of the National Library's services which can be accessed through the National Library's web portal. Some of the online services provided include IPusnas.

The IPusnas application is an Android-based application provided by the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia to serve users. The IPusnas application is a mobile-based digital library belonging to the RI library and was developed by PT. Woolu Script Maya

in 2016. IPusnas which carries the tagline "reading is getting easier" is a solution to increase interest in reading in Indonesian society. Digital services such as IPusnas are one of the people's choices to overcome boredom *physical distancing* and large-scale social restrictions (PSBB) imposed by the government. Digital library services This National Library makes it easy for people to read books anywhere and anytime through their gadgets.

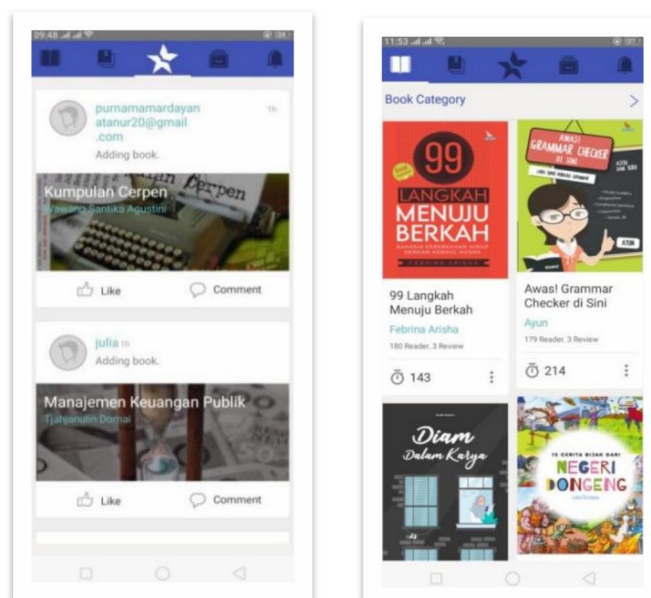


Figure 2. IPusnas application display

Based on data as of September 20 2021, IPusnas has 891,397 copies of e-books out of 73,302 book titles that can be read anywhere

and anytime. At IPusnas, users can also interact with fellow users. All book collections in the official IPusnas and are free. IPusnas can be



downloaded at the Appstore, Google Play and Windows.

Based on data up to December 1 2021, the number of IPusnas downloaders for the last 6 years has increased every year. Where it is known that the biggest jump in the number of downloads occurred in 2020. In addition, from

2016-2021, there were already 11,923864 collections in loans with the largest increase in the number of loans occurring in 2021, which was 96.97% compared to 2020. The following is a graph related to the number of loans from the IPusnas collection in a period of 6 years.



Figure 3. Graph of IPusnas Collection Borrowing Amounts

Feelings of boredom and boredom are commonplace with restrictions on activities outside the home. Reading books can be an alternative as a means of recreation by reading the IPusnas e-book collection. As a means of recreation, Aside from being a means of recreation, digital books can also be a medium of learning about various sciences. In addition, elementary school-age children who usually read picture book books in the National Library's children's services room are now changing to enjoying fairy tales from home by utilizing the IPusnas collection which they can take anywhere.

Apart from IPusnas, there is also an e-resources service which contains international or national scientific journals and international ebooks that have been subscribed to by the National Library of Indonesia. This source of knowledge in electronic format is often used by students and researchers in compiling various research studies. The public can easily access services related to their research references by simply accessing the website <https://e-resources.perpusnas.go.id/> using the member number of the National Library.

The National Library subscribes to online digital library materials from 34 publishers. These thirty-four publishers have their own range of subjects and types of online

digital library materials. The wide range of collections of scientific journals contained in National Library of Indonesia e-resources will be very helpful for students as reference material for scientific work or research conducted.

### Library Service Innovation

With this pandemic, it is both a challenge and an opportunity for the National Library to meet the need for precise and accurate information. The National Library evaluates its services as well as being an opportunity for librarians to provide services, namely:

- 1) Promotion of library services. During this pandemic, National Library of Indonesia librarians are no less active by making various information graphics and library promotional videos. In conditions like this, the existence of a library is definitely needed, especially for students who need sources of information. Therefore, with digital collections, users will find it easier to access information.
- 2) Quality improvement. Existing digital services can be developed to improve the quality of the system so as to facilitate access and operation.

With the above opportunities, the library can create an innovation that can help achieve library goals.

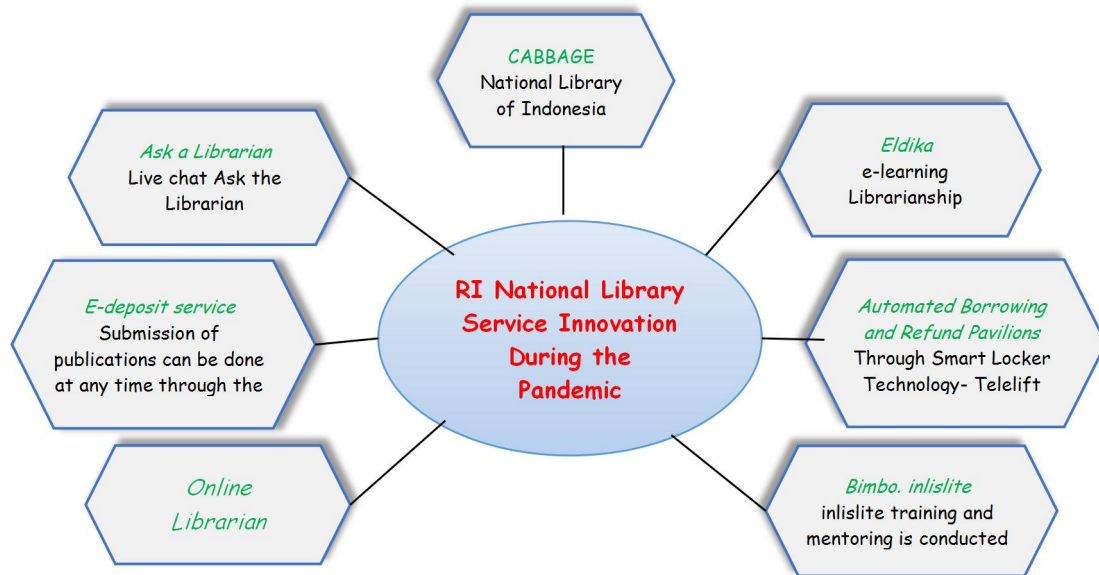


Figure 4. Various Innovations of the National Library of Indonesia

Some of the innovations made by the National Library are as follows:

a. Providing information regarding Covid-19

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the National Library of Indonesia launched Corona Pedia, an e-Pustaka that can be accessed through the National Library of Indonesia which contains various information about the Covid-19 virus to provide understanding to the public about the virus.

The Corona Pedia ePustaka contains various readings such as the “Covid Prevention and Management Book-19”, “The Importance of Social Distancing”, “Stop Touching Faces” and many other readings. This reading can be a reference for dealing with the Covid-19 outbreak so that it can minimize its spread. In the Corona Pedia ePustaka there are 144 collections that users can read free of charge with a maximum of 3 borrowed titles per day.

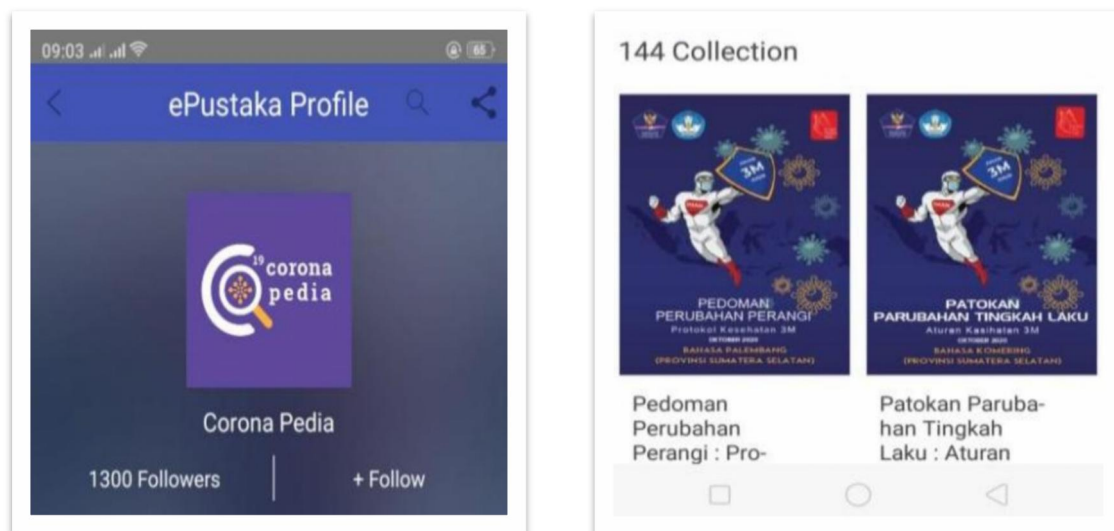


Figure 5. Display of the Corona Pedia ePustaka

b. Providing services according to the needs of the community

In addition to optimizing existing digital services, the National Library has also developed an innovation such as the “Ask a

Librarian” service which is available on the front page of the National Library of Indonesia web portal where people can ask various information related to National Library such as collection searches, visiting

information, internship information or training, membership information and so on. Questions will be immediately responded to by librarians in accordance with their fields. Previously, user questions related to National Library services were done via e-mail and

required a maximum response time of 1x24 hours 1 working day. However, with the new feature live *chat* Every user question can be made via chat with a maximum response time of 5 minutes.



Figure 6. Service feature "Ask the Librarian"

In addition to the "Ask the Librarian" service, there is also a service innovation that is needed by the community, namely "Virtual Membership Cards for Librarians". Prior to the pandemic, National Library of Indonesia had carried out an online member registration process. To print cards, users can go to the library service building of the National Library of Indonesia. However, during the Covid-19 pandemic, a membership application for the National Library of Indonesia was developed. This application can be downloaded via PlayStore (<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=id.go.perpusnas.kememberan>). This application turns National Library of Indonesia library membership cards into virtual cards.

By optimizing digital services, the National Library has provided the widest possible access for all Indonesian people to various and quality reading materials. The Covid-19 pandemic has limited people's movement, but libraries have proven to be able to expand this space virtually.

## CONCLUSION

There are several things that must be considered regarding the principles of library services during a pandemic, namely library services remain open with due regard to the policies and status of the Covid-19 area that have been set by the government so that libraries do not become new transmission clusters, the health of library staff and users is a priority. In addition to physical services, the era of the Covid-19 pandemic can be used as a golden momentum to develop online library services to distribute library services to users without space and time limitations for services.

The pandemic era provides both challenges and opportunities for library services. With limited user mobility, the need for online library services is increasing and this is where the role of librarians is very important in creating innovation and developing creativity to provide excellent service to users.

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