

# ANALYSIS OF READING LITERACY IN PHYSICAL BOOKS AND E-BOOKS AMONG 6TH SEMESTER PGSD STUDENTS

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyse the reading literacy level of 6<sup>TH</sup> semester PGSD students toward two types of reading media, namely physical books and e-books. The background of this study is based on changes in students' reading patterns due to technological advances that have made it easier to access information through digital media. The research method used is descriptive qualitative with a case study approach. The research subjects consisted of 30 active sixth-semester students selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected via an online questionnaire and analysed thematically. The results showed that 80% of students preferred e-books due to their practicality, efficiency, and flexibility in access. Among them, 45% were in the high literacy category, 37.5% in the moderate category, and 17.5% in the low category. Most students read to complete academic assignments, not out of personal interest. Reading barriers include technical, physical, and psychological factors. These findings highlight the importance of learning strategies that not only leverage technology but also promote the enhancement of interest and literacy skills comprehensively.

**Keywords:** reading literacy, physical books, e-books, PGSD students, digital media

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## INTRODUCTION

Literacy is a broad understanding of various ways of conveying ideas through various means, so that literacy from generation to generation can develop rapidly in line with developments in the digital age. According to (Abidin, et al. 2018) At the initial stage, literacy is defined as the ability to utilize language and images in rich and varied formats for reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, presenting, and critically reflecting on ideas. According to (Sari, 2017), language is an individual's language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) for communicating in various ways depending on the purpose. According to (Sujana 2019), the term literacy is not actually new, as since 1958 UNESCO has described that a person is considered literate if they can understand the content of simple texts related to daily life. According to (Nudiati, 2020), reading and writing literacy is the knowledge and ability to read,

write, search for, explore, process, and understand information to analyze, respond to, and use written texts to achieve goals, develop understanding and potential, and participate in the social environment. In this skill, students are assessed on their ability to read, write, and search for information, both through the use of physical and digital facilities.

Reading is the activity of understanding knowledge through media, whether from physical books or e-books. According to (Akbar 2020), one of the means of acquiring knowledge is through reading. Reading is the soul of acquiring knowledge. Through reading, one will gain extensive knowledge. According to Sutrisna, reading is related to writing. Without reading, it would be difficult to write. This concept needs to be instilled in students so they realize the importance of reading as a foundation for writing. According to Amalia (2017), reading is one of the fundamental language skills. Among the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—reading and listening are receptive language skills, while speaking and writing are productive language skills. According to Maeja (2023), reading has significant benefits, particularly for education and society. Reading is not only beneficial for the learning process at school but also throughout one's life.

books are learning resources in the form of paper or print that can be physically seen. According to (Prajawinanti 2020), books are collections of text or images available in printed form, known as textbooks, and unprinted books, known as e-books, both of which contain knowledge. According to (New Columbia Encyclopedia 1975, p. 331) Defining a book is a written work available in either manuscript or printed form, which is sufficiently thick and lengthy. According to (Fathanudien 2023), one of the advantages of printed books available in large bookstores is that they have and include an International Standard Book Number (hereinafter referred to as ISBN). With an ISBN, printed books remain reliable as academic references for scholars in compiling their scientific works.

An e-book is an electronic reading medium made possible by technological advancements, allowing readers to access learning materials in the form of e-books available on Android devices rather than carrying physical books. According to (Ambarwati 2022), an e-book is a book publication available in digital form. It consists of images, text, or both. It can be opened and read on a smartphone screen, computer, or other devices. While traditional books are made of paper containing text or images, e-books contain digital information that can also take the form of text or images. According to (Makdis 2020), an e-book or digital book is “a publication consisting of text, images, or sound and published in digital form that can be read on computers or other electronic devices such as Android, smartphones, or tablets.”

Technological advancements have changed the way students read. Through field observations conducted by the researcher, there are factors influencing students' choice of reading sources, whether printed books or e-books. From the researcher's observations, it is very rare to find PGSD semester 6 students carrying physical or printed books; they tend to use

e-books as references due to the ease of access and the fact that they do not need to purchase books to read. Therefore, the researcher concludes that in the current era, students are more interested in using e-books compared to physical books themselves.

The research findings show that students from the Nursing Academy prefer to read books, whether in physical or electronic format, without considering the medium. Based on the responses obtained from the questionnaire, it was determined that 35 people, equivalent to 50% of the sample size (70), expressed a greater tendency to read physical books than electronic books (Krisniady, 2022). According to (Kisno, 2019). This study used a quantitative descriptive design with 216 student respondents. The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire containing closed-ended questions. Questionnaire responses were totaled and categorized to determine whether respondents tended to choose printed books over digital books. 69.9% (151) of respondents preferred digital books as a reading medium to improve learning performance, while 35.18% (76) of respondents chose printed books due to difficulties in reading and browsing when using digital books. Wahyuni, 2023 The main finding of this study is that the ease of access to digital books does not necessarily make digital books more preferred. Other findings include a lack of interest among students in reading textbooks, intensive reading being more common than extensive reading, and reasons for choosing digital books, such as a) being more economical because there is no need to purchase printed books, which are relatively expensive, b) being more practical and easy to carry, c) being environmentally friendly because require paper sheets, and d) a more attractive appearance, while the reasons for choosing printed books include a) reading digital books on gadgets causes eye strain, b) it is not easy to get distracted, and c) it is more personal because one feels a sense of ownership.

Based on the explanations and theories outlined above, this study aims to determine the extent to which sixth-semester PGSD students choose learning resources. This choice of learning resources is crucial, as upper-level semesters will face thesis writing, which requires numerous books or references as theoretical foundations and to strengthen arguments. This study will provide results on whether physical books or e-books are more frequently chosen by students, as well as the frequency of reading and their purposes—whether solely for academic tasks or as a hobby among sixth-semester PGSD students.

## **METODOLOGI**

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to describe and analyze the reading literacy level of PGSD semester 6 students towards two reading media, namely physical books and e-books. This study was conducted to reveal the preferences, habits, and understanding of students in using these two types of media in the learning process. The case study selected by the researcher only examines the extent of students' reading literacy, especially those in the seventh semester who will be writing their theses to complete their bachelor's degree, so the selection of media sources is very diverse, including both physical books and e-books as preferences.

The research design used is a case study. This study focuses on a specific group, namely PGSD students in their sixth semester, to examine in depth how they interact with physical books and e-books in reading literacy activities. The study also aims to determine how frequently students read, whether for academic assignments or because they enjoy reading as a hobby. Therefore, the researcher is confident that the choice of reading media for sixth-semester PGSD students is more oriented toward the digital era due to its ease of access.

The subjects of this study are sixth-semester students in the Elementary School Teacher Education Program (PGSD) at a university in Lubuklinggau. The sample size consists of 30 active sixth-semester students, selected based on their active participation in reading both physical books and e-books.

*The data collection techniques used in this study include: questionnaires, to determine the frequency, motivation, and preferences of the participants toward each medium. The data collection questionnaires were distributed using Google Forms and shared online via the WhatsApp application. Data from the questionnaire was analyzed using thematic analysis techniques, namely by identifying the main themes from the questionnaire and tabulating them descriptively to see the comparison or percentage of reading media preferences.*

*Mapping was conducted by the researcher to group the results of student reading literacy based on several aspects, including:*

- 1. Type of reading medium (physical books vs. e-books)*
- 2. Purpose of reading (for assignments, references, or personal interest)*
- 3. Reading frequency*

*Based on the mapping results, several main categories were determined as follows:*

- 1. Categories based on the reading medium preferences chosen by PGSD students:*
  - Students who predominantly use physical books*
  - Students who predominantly use e-books*
- 2. Categories based on PGSD students' reading literacy levels toward reading sources:*
  - High (active, critical, and independent)*
  - Moderate (reading due to academic requirements)*
  - Low (rarely read and have difficulty understanding the content)*
- 3. Categories of reading barriers among PGSD students in their 6th semester:*
  - Technical (internet access, device limitations)*
  - Physical (eye strain, comfort, reading)*
  - Psychological (lack of interest in reading)*

## **RESEARCH RESULT**

This study aims to analyze the preferences and reading literacy levels of sixth-semester PGSD students toward two types of reading media, namely physical books and e-books. Data was obtained through an online questionnaire distributed to 40 active sixth-semester students.

## 1. Reading Media Preferences:

- a. Based on the questionnaire data analysis, it was found that:
  - 80% of students prefer e-books as their primary reading medium.
  - 20% of students choose physical books as their learning resource.
- b. Main reasons students choose e-books:
  - Easier and faster access
  - No need to purchase books
  - Various digital book applications available
  - Practical and flexible
- c. Meanwhile, reasons for choosing physical books:
  - More comfortable for prolonged reading
  - Does not strain the eyes
  - Better focus while reading

## 2. Reading Literacy Level:

Based on the categorization of reading frequency and comprehension:

- a. 45% of students are in the high literacy category (active readers, critical thinkers, and independent learners)
- b. 37.5% are in the moderate category (read due to academic requirements)
- c. 17.5% are in the low literacy category (rarely read or do not understand the content)

## 3. Purpose of Reading:

- a. 70% read to complete academic assignments
- b. 20% read to add references or insights
- c. 10% read because of hobbies or personal interests

## 4. Barriers to Reading:

- a. Technical: limited internet and devices
- b. Physical: eyes get tired quickly when reading e-books
- c. Psychological: lack of interest in reading

Research findings indicate that technological advancements have a significant impact on students' reading literacy patterns. E-books have become the primary choice due to their perceived practicality, efficiency, and flexibility in access. This aligns with Wahyuni's (2023) perspective, who states that while access to reading materials has become easier through digital

media, reading interest remains the primary challenge that requires cultivation through active and innovative learning strategies.

However, the dominance of e-books in students' reading preferences does not automatically guarantee a deep understanding of the content. The use of digital reading technology must be accompanied by improvements in digital literacy skills, including critical reading, filtering valid information, and developing reflective understanding. Some students revealed that although e-books are easier to access, they still experience difficulties in comprehending the content thoroughly, especially without adequate guidance or training in reading skills.

On the other hand, there are still groups of students who appreciate physical books because they provide a more focused and immersive reading experience. Printed books are considered more comfortable to read for long periods of time and do not cause visual disturbances like digital screens. This shows that even though technological developments bring many conveniences, the traditional values of physical books remain relevant and appreciated. Therefore, reading literacy development strategies need to consider a combination of digital and conventional approaches to suit the needs and preferences of students as a whole.

Improving students' reading literacy in the digital age requires a balanced approach between the use of technology and the preservation of physical books. Digital platforms such as e-books, online journals, and reading apps can facilitate access to information and foster a love of reading in a more interactive way. However, physical books still play an important role in developing depth of understanding and concentration while reading. Therefore, it is important to cultivate digital reading without abandoning the habit of reading printed books. Campus support in providing both physical and digital reading materials, building literacy communities, and instilling reading habits from the start of university studies will be key to fostering literate, critical, and adaptable students in the information age.

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