

Analysis of The Influence of Digitalization of The Book Industry on The Performance of Traditional Traders

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Abstract

The advancement of digital technology has caused a significant shift in the book industry, altering the way consumers access and purchase literature. This study explores the impact of book digitalization on the performance of traditional book vendors in Indonesia. Digitalization, encompassing e-books and digital distribution platforms, offers convenience and lower costs, leading to a decline in the demand for physical books and challenging traditional business models. This research employs a qualitative approach with a literature review methodology. Data were collected from relevant literature, industry reports, and previous studies to analyze the changing trends in the book industry and their effects on traditional vendors. Descriptive analysis is used to interpret how digitalization impacts the demand for physical books and the adaptation strategies employed by book vendors. The findings reveal that book digitalization has led to a significant decline in the sales of physical books at traditional bookstores. Consumers now prefer the convenience and lower cost of digital books, resulting in reduced revenue and operational challenges for physical book vendors. While digitalization offers efficient solutions for book distribution and procurement, it also requires traditional vendors to adapt. The implications of this study highlight the need for traditional book vendors to adopt digital strategies, such as developing e-commerce platforms and integrating technology, to maintain their relevance in the evolving market. The study suggests that book vendors explore product and service diversification to meet the needs of increasingly digital consumers and invest in innovation to remain competitive in the digital age.

Article Info

Keywords:
digitalization,
physical books,
digital books,
performance,
traditional vendors

JEL Classification:
L81, M21, D12, O33

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Received: 05-10-2025
Revised: 30-11-2025
Accepted: 22-12-2025
Published: 31-12-2025



1. Introduction

Based on the mandate contained in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, the state has the aim of building national civilization through the development and use of science. One of the ways used to achieve this goal is to promote the use of books as the main means of educating the nation's life and improving general welfare. Developing literacy and access to knowledge through books is considered an important foundation in creating a society that is knowledgeable and highly competitive (Susanti, E., Mauluddin, A. A., & Amelia, 2023). The government continues to encourage various programs and policies aimed at increasing interest in reading among the public, providing adequate library facilities, and ensuring equal distribution of books throughout the country. Efforts to make the nation's life smarter through books also include developing an educational curriculum that focuses on improving the quality of human resources. This is expected to produce a generation that is not only academically intelligent, but also has the ability to think critically and creatively (Hermanto, 2020).

In this context, general welfare is also an important aspect promoted by the 1945 Constitution. Quality education through books is expected to open up new opportunities for society, increase productivity and reduce poverty rates (Lellola, I., Keipau, D., Ngilamele, N., Louk, R., Peraso, A., Koupun, R., ... & Alam, 2023). In carrying out this task, the state must be able to provide adequate educational facilities and infrastructure, including ensuring open access to knowledge ownership. This means that the state must be able to guarantee the availability of books in society. Providing books that are evenly distributed and easily accessible is the key to supporting the development of literacy and understanding of science. The government needs to take strategic steps, such as building and improving libraries in various regions, including remote areas, as well as facilitating book donation and distribution programs. The state must also support the publishing and writing of quality books and encourage the use of technology to expand access to digital books.

The availability of good books will provide opportunities for all levels of society, especially the younger generation, to broaden their horizons and improve critical thinking skills. With strong literacy, society will be better prepared to face global challenges and contribute to national development. This effort is also in line with the aim of making the nation's life smarter and improving general welfare, because with an educated society, the quality of life will increase. People will have greater opportunities to find decent work, increase productivity and reduce poverty. The state plays an important role in ensuring that books and knowledge are accessible to everyone, thereby creating an advanced, prosperous and highly competitive society. Books, as the most important educational tool, occupy a complicated problem position in Indonesia. Even though it is recognized as a major source of knowledge and learning, the availability and accessibility of books in Indonesia still faces many challenges. One of the main issues is the uneven distribution of books, where remote areas often have difficulty getting quality books (Sakhi, R. G., & Najicha, 2023).

The relatively expensive price of books is also an obstacle for many families to meet their children's educational needs. The lack of adequate libraries and supporting facilities in various regions further exacerbates this situation. In some cases, the books available in school libraries are often outdated and irrelevant to the existing curriculum, so they are unable to provide maximum benefits for students. The country needs to take further steps to address this problem. One way is to increase the budget for education, especially in the procurement and distribution of books. Partnerships with the private sector and non-governmental organizations can be a solution to expand access to books through donation programs and mobile libraries. The development of digital books and e-learning platforms can also be an effective alternative, especially in this digital era. By ensuring the availability of good and easily accessible books, the country not only supports the development of literacy and knowledge, but also contributes to creating an intelligent, creative and innovative generation. This will have a positive impact on improving the quality of Indonesia's human resources, which in turn will support more inclusive and sustainable economic growth and social development. Therefore, the role of the state is crucial in ensuring that every individual in Indonesia has fair access to books and knowledge, so that they can reach their full potential and contribute to the nation's progress (Hana, S., & Wibawa, 2022). Penurunan kinerja penjualan buku fisik di Indonesia mulai tampak jelas sejak tahun 2015, seiring dengan perubahan pola konsumsi masyarakat dalam membeli dan membaca buku. Masyarakat kini semakin mengandalkan teknologi digital untuk memenuhi kebutuhan literasi mereka, beralih dari buku fisik ke e-book dan buku audio. Faktor kenyamanan dan kemudahan akses yang ditawarkan oleh platform online menjadi daya tarik utama, memungkinkan pembaca untuk mendapatkan dan menikmati berbagai judul buku hanya dengan beberapa klik. Additionally, self-publishing via digital platforms is also growing in popularity, giving authors the opportunity to publish their work without going through the often time-consuming and expensive traditional publishing process. The impact of this shift can be felt most in physical bookstores, which are now struggling to stay afloat. Many bookstores are trying to adapt by opening online sales services, while others are trying to create a more engaging and interactive shopping experience in their physical stores. However, competition with digital platforms remains a big challenge, especially in terms of maintaining operational continuity and attracting customer interest (Al-Rosyid, H., Purnama, B. E., & Uly, 2021).

Shifts in society's buying and reading patterns have had a significant impact on the physical book sales industry. In this digital era, more and more people are turning to online platforms to fulfill their reading needs, both through e-books and audiobooks. Ease of access, convenience, and availability of various book titles at one click have changed the way consumers obtain reading. Technological developments also allow writers to self-publish their work via digital platforms, reducing dependence on traditional publishing. This phenomenon caused a drastic decline in sales of physical books, which were previously the backbone of the book industry (Francisca, F., Zahra, J. O. V., Anggraeni, S. H., & Aeni, 2022). Physical bookstores, which were once a favorite place for book lovers to hunt for new titles and experience hands-on experience in selecting books, now have to adapt to these changes. Some bookstores are choosing to expand their services by selling books online, while others are innovating by offering unique and interactive shopping experiences to attract customers. However, challenges remain, especially in maintaining the continuity of physical store operations amidst intense competition from digital platforms. This shift not only impacts book sales, but also changes the way society values and consumes literature, reflecting new dynamics in the ever-evolving book industry.

2. Methods

This research is qualitative research that uses the literature study method to explore the influence of digitalization of the book industry on the performance of traditional traders. The literature study method was chosen because it allows researchers to collect and analyze various relevant literature sources, such as books, journal articles, industry reports, and other secondary sources, in order to gain an in-depth understanding of this phenomenon. With a qualitative approach, this research aims to explore perspectives and experiences regarding the impact of digitalization from the perspective of traditional booksellers and how they adapt to the changes that occur. Data analysis was carried out systematically to identify patterns, themes and trends that emerged from existing literature, providing in-depth insight into the challenges and opportunities faced by traditional traders in this digital era. This approach allows researchers to construct a comprehensive and contextual picture of the dynamics affecting the book industry, as well as suggest adaptation strategies that may be useful for the sustainability of traditional booksellers.

3. Results and Discussion

Every company, regardless of whether its goal is to make a profit or operate as a non-profit entity, has clear directions and goals that guide its operational activities. For profit-oriented companies, the main goal is to manage and utilize the economic resources they have to generate maximum profits. This involves effectively managing a system of income sources, which includes various elements such as income from product or service sales, investments, and other sources of income. Companies must be able to process these inputs into optimal output, which means producing high quality products or services that meet market needs and create added value for customers. This process involves smart marketing strategies, innovation in products, and efficiency in operations and cost management. Meanwhile, non-profit companies, even though they do not pursue financial profits, still have to manage their resources efficiently to achieve their social or humanitarian goals. They focus on maximizing the impact of the programs or services they offer, by managing donations, grants, and other resources received in the most effective way. Both profit and non-profit companies require careful planning and effective management of resources to achieve their goals, whether in the form of financial profits or significant social impact (Fauziyyah, Nurul, 2021).

Books, as an essential educational tool, face a number of serious challenges in Indonesia. One of the main issues recognized by the Indonesian Publishers Association (IKAPI) is the insufficient number of book production to meet readers' needs. Even though books are the main source of knowledge and education, in reality, the volume of book production is still far from sufficient to reach all levels of society. This situation is caused by various factors, including budget limitations, unequal distribution, and a lack of infrastructure to support book publishing and distribution.

Many areas, especially remote ones, have difficulty accessing quality books, while large cities often struggle with high book prices. This causes gaps in access to education and information, which in turn affects the quality of literacy and education throughout the country (Maula, I., Irwandi, I., Sari, A. L., Sarimin, D. S., & Rondonuwu, 2023).

IKAPI notes that despite efforts to increase book production and distribution, these challenges still need to be addressed comprehensively. To bridge this shortage, there needs to be cooperation between the government, publishers and the community to increase book production, expand distribution networks and ensure book prices are more affordable. Support for local book publications and authors is also important to ensure that the content available is relevant and in line with the educational needs of the community. Books as a teaching tool play an important role in creating a conducive and quality education system. Effective book management is crucial to ensure that these learning resources are widely available and accessible to all groups, to support an optimal learning process. However, even though there have been various regulations created to regulate and improve the bookkeeping system, these regulations are often unable to cover all aspects necessary for comprehensive book management (Rodin, R., Anjelika, V., Wilawati, W., & Ninsik, 2024).

This problem arises due to various factors, including inadequate implementation of regulations and deficiencies in existing regulations. Some regulations may not accommodate all needs related to book production, distribution, and access. Challenges in implementing regulations are often caused by limited resources, lack of coordination between various relevant parties, and lack of effective monitoring. As a result, the book system which is expected to support education well still faces various obstacles. To overcome this problem, it is necessary to evaluate and revise existing regulations, as well as develop new policies that can address these deficiencies. Support from the government, publishers and educational institutions is also very important to ensure that book management can be carried out effectively and in accordance with educational needs.

Textbooks, as a key component in the education system, are the main responsibility of the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Religion. Even though these two ministries have an important role in providing educational books, in reality, they are not yet fully optimal in ensuring the availability of quality, affordable and accessible books for all students. One of the main challenges is ensuring that the books supplied meet high quality standards, thereby supporting the learning process effectively. In addition, books must be available at affordable prices so that all students, including those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, can access them without difficulty. Moreover, the equal distribution of books to all regions, including remote areas, is still an issue that needs to be improved. In practice, various obstacles, such as budget limitations, bureaucratic procurement processes, and lack of coordination between related institutions, often hamper efforts to meet all these needs. To overcome this problem, there needs to be improvement efforts which include increasing efficiency in the procurement and distribution of books, as well as developing policies that support the accessibility and affordability of books for all students (Inkiwang, 2020).

While the textbook trade is regulated by the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Religion, the non-textbook sector often escapes government regulation. The governance of non-text books, such as fiction, non-fiction and reference books, is completely left to market mechanisms. As a result, this sector faces various problems such as unhealthy competition, variations in book quality, and unaffordable prices. Without clear regulations, the non-text book market is prone to extreme price fluctuations and varying book quality, which can confuse consumers. Competition between publishers and booksellers often focuses on pricing and promotional strategies that can harm consumers, such as heavy discounts that ultimately do not reflect the true quality of the books being sold. Additionally, without strict standards, lower quality books can enter the market, reducing the reading experience for consumers.

The development of digital books in Indonesia has received an extraordinary response from readers, mainly due to several main factors. First, the difficulty in obtaining conventional printed books, especially imported books needed in the world of education, has encouraged many people to switch to digital books. First, the difficulty in obtaining conventional printed books, especially imported books which are very much needed in the world of education, has been one of the main

reasons why digital books have received extraordinary acceptance in Indonesia. Print books, especially those published abroad, often face challenges in terms of distribution and accessibility. The import process requires additional time and costs, as well as logistical constraints, often making these books difficult to find in the local market (Agustian, Vlor, & Kunci, 2023).

The high costs of procuring imported books often pose a significant obstacle for schools and educational institutions, especially in less developed areas. Budget and resource limitations can also hinder the ability to provide quality books needed to support educational curricula. As a result, educators and students often experience a lack of adequate learning resources, which can affect the quality of education received. In this situation, digital books emerge as an efficient and practical solution. With digital books, access to various educational materials becomes easier and faster, without having to go through a complicated and expensive import process. Digital books can be downloaded and accessed directly via electronic devices, eliminating the distribution problems and physical limitations often faced by printed books. In addition, digital books are often more affordable and can be updated quickly, ensuring that the material used remains relevant and in line with the latest developments in the field of education (Makdis, 2020).

Second, the increasingly rapid development of communication technology has opened wider access to digital book downloading businesses. Advances in information and communications technology, such as high-speed internet, mobile devices, and e-reader applications, have made it easier to download and access digital books from various platforms. With a stable internet connection, users can now easily search for, buy and download digital books to their devices, such as smartphones, tablets or computers, without having to depend on the availability of printed books in physical stores. This technology has also enabled the development of efficient digital book distribution platforms, such as online bookstores and digital libraries, which provide a variety of titles with just a few clicks. This accessibility not only expands the reach of books to readers in various locations, including remote areas that were previously difficult to reach by printed book distribution, but also allows readers to quickly obtain the latest educational materials and literature. Communication technologies also support the integration of additional features in digital books, such as text search, page marking, and personal note-keeping, which enhance the reading and learning experience. The ability to access digital books anytime and anywhere provides much-needed flexibility for students, educators and general readers, and supports more interactive and adaptive learning (Makdis, 2020).

Third, the public's tendency to choose cheap and fast books has contributed to the popularity of digital books. In an era where consumers are increasingly looking for cost and time efficient solutions, digital books offer significant advantages compared to traditional printed books. Digital books are often available at more affordable prices, as they do not involve the costs of physical production, distribution, and storage. This makes it an attractive option for many people who want to gain access to learning materials or entertainment without having to spend a lot of money. With various offers and promotions available on digital book platforms, readers can get books at lower prices compared to the often expensive prices of printed books. The ease of getting digital books also influences people's preferences. Digital books can be downloaded quickly and directly to devices, without the need to wait for delivery or search in physical stores. This is especially important for consumers who want instant access to the material they need, whether for education, work or entertainment. This trend reflects changes in people's consumption patterns, which increasingly prioritize comfort and efficiency. Therefore, digital books are a very relevant solution in meeting these demands, offering a combination of affordable prices and fast access, which in turn encourages wider adoption among readers (Makdis, 2020).

Based on research (Nurbaiti, 2019) it is stated that the number of publishers actively switching towards digital books has increased significantly, reaching around 20%. This change reflects the awareness and adaptations made by large publishers to respond to shifts in the culture of reading and buying books in Indonesia. As people's interest in buying books online increases, many large publishers have responded by opening their own online bookstores. This phenomenon shows that major publishers are not only following developments in digital trends but are also trying to meet the demands of consumers who are increasingly accustomed to shopping for books online. By leveraging digital platforms, publishers can reach a wider audience, provide easier and faster access to their book collections, and offer features that make the

shopping experience easier, such as book recommendations and user reviews. People's desire to buy books online, driven by ease of access and convenience, is one of the main factors influencing publishers' decisions to invest in digital solutions. This also indicates that the book market in Indonesia is undergoing a major transformation, where digital presence is becoming an important element in book distribution and marketing strategies. With these changes, publishers not only face the challenge of adapting to digital trends, but also have the opportunity to expand market reach and increase engagement with readers.

Book-loving consumers are now starting to abandon traditional methods of purchasing books, which usually require a visit to a physical bookstore. A lifestyle shift that prioritizes convenience and speed has led to the rapid growth of digital versions of bookstores. As the need for more practical and efficient access increases, many readers now choose to buy books online rather than leaving their homes. The ease of access offered by digital bookstores allows consumers to browse titles, read reviews, and purchase books with just a few clicks, without having to face the hassle of searching for and visiting a physical bookstore. In addition, digital bookstores offer benefits such as wider book availability, prices that are often more competitive, and the ease of obtaining the latest books without waiting for the delivery process. This shift reflects a significant change in consumer behavior, who increasingly want solutions that save time and effort. As a result, digital bookstores are increasingly mushrooming, reflecting the adaptation of the book industry to modern demands and the need for easier and faster access for readers (Nurbaiti & Mariah, 2020).

According to research (Rachdian, Azis, Studi, Communications, & Strata, 2021), digital books now have a significant market, offering various advantages that can be utilized by authors and publishers. For writers, digital books provide a practical and efficient platform for publishing their work. By simply using a device such as a computer or tablet, writers can easily convert their manuscripts into digital format and distribute them to various online platforms. This process does not require complex physical processes, such as printing and packaging, which are often a challenge for authors just starting out. For publishers, the shift to digital books also offers cost advantages. The funds required to publish digital books are much lower than printing physical books. These savings come from reducing the costs of conventional materials such as paper, ink, and other physical production processes. Publishers do not have to incur additional costs for distribution and storage of physical books, which often require a significant investment. Thus, digital books not only provide an opportunity for authors to reach a wider audience in a more practical way, but also allow publishers to manage their budgets more efficiently. These advantages make digital books an attractive and sustainable alternative in the publishing industry, as technology develops and consumer preferences change.

Based on research (Alfi & Nawawi, 2022), apart from rapid progress in the digital era, the main factor causing the decline in demand for books at CV Merdeka Kreasi is the increasing number of teaching material sources that can be accessed via digital media. With the existence of various digital platforms that provide educational materials online, such as e-books, learning videos and educational applications, educators and students now have easier and more flexible access to the teaching materials they need. The ease of obtaining learning materials through the digitization of books has reduced dependence on physical books as the main source of learning. Digital media allows instant access to a wide variety of materials, often at a lower cost than purchasing printed books. This has resulted in reduced demand for physical book products from CV Merdeka Kreasi, which previously relied on book sales as its main source of income. These changes show that the publishing industry must adapt to rapidly evolving digital trends, where consumers increasingly prioritize convenience and accessibility. CV Merdeka Kreasi, like many other publishers, needs to explore new strategies to maintain relevance and competitiveness in a market increasingly focused on digitalization. This may include developing digital products, expanding offerings to online platforms, or looking for innovative ways to integrate digital technology in their products and services to meet evolving market needs.

The shift in people's preferences from physical books to e-books has caused a significant decline in the performance of traditional booksellers. These changes reflect a major shift in the way consumers access and consume literature, which has a direct impact on the print book market. Traditional booksellers, who have long relied on physical book sales, are now facing

severe challenges due to reduced demand for their products. The availability of cheap and easily accessible digital books, combined with the practicality and convenience they offer, has shifted readers' attention from physical bookstores to online platforms. As a result, many brick-and-mortar bookstores experienced a sharp decline in sales, resulting in reduced revenues and even the closure of some outlets. The high operational costs of storing and managing physical book inventory is an additional burden that is difficult for traditional traders to bear in declining market conditions. As more consumers turn to e-books, which offer speed and efficiency without the need for physical space, traditional booksellers are having to face the reality that their established business models will have to be adapted or drastically changed to remain relevant. This transformation creates an urgent need for traditional booksellers to explore new strategies, such as product diversification, providing additional services, or even entering digital markets, in order to adapt to changing consumer behavior and overcome the challenges faced in this digital era.

4. Conclusion

In analyzing the impact of the digitalization of the book industry on the performance of traditional traders, it is clear that the shift towards digital formats has had a significant impact on the sector. The digitalization of books, driven by technological advances and changing consumer preferences, has created a vast and dynamic new market. Digital books offer ease of access, lower costs, and flexibility that print books lack, causing many readers to turn to digital platforms to meet their literature needs. As a result, traditional booksellers who depend on physical book sales are facing a sharp decline in demand. This decline not only impacts their income but also threatens the sustainability of their business. The high operational costs associated with storing and managing an inventory of physical books, coupled with a decline in the number of customers, further worsened their situation.

Traditional book dealers must adapt to new market demands by considering diversification strategies, innovation in services, or even entering digital markets to remain relevant. Some steps that can be taken include developing digital-based services, integrating e-commerce platforms, or providing unique customer experiences in physical stores. Additionally, increasing collaboration with publishers and authors to deliver exclusive content or special offers can be an effective strategy. Digitalization has fundamentally changed the landscape of the book industry, requiring traditional merchants to adapt to new trends in order to maintain the competitiveness and sustainability of their businesses in this digital era. By understanding and implementing the necessary changes, traditional booksellers can find new opportunities and stay relevant in an ever-evolving industry.

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