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Personal Digital Archiving Practices of Library and Information Science Student at Padang State University

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the personal digital archiving capabilities of Library and Information Science students at Universitas Negeri Padang, specifically those from the 2023 and 2024 cohorts. A descriptive quantitative approach was employed, involving 61 participants selected through proportionate stratified random sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires and supported by documentation, while the research instruments and data were examined using expert judgment, validity and reliability testing, and descriptive statistical analysis. The findings indicate that students' personal digital archiving practices are in the high category, with a grand mean score of 3.18. This result suggests that students demonstrate competent abilities in managing personal digital archives across different stages, although their implementation is not yet fully optimal or consistent. The study contributes to the growing literature on digital information management by providing empirical insight into students' personal digital archiving capabilities. Practically, the findings highlight the need for educational institutions to develop more structured and sustainable digital archiving practices. Future research is recommended to examine additional variables and broader contexts to generate more comprehensive findings.

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Keywords: Personal Digital Archiving; Library And Information Science Students; Digital Information Management; Digital Preservation; Higher Education

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of information technology has profoundly influenced nearly every aspect of human life. This evolution has resulted in a significant increase in both the diversity and volume of information produced (Wulandari & Hwihanus, 2023). Within this context, archives represent a strategic form of information, serving as authentic evidence of events, activities, and decisions (Azzahra et al., 2025). However, contemporary archives have shifted from traditional physical forms to increasingly prevalent digital formats.

This transition from conventional to digital archiving marks a paradigm shift in information management. While digital archives offer convenience in creation, storage, and distribution, they also present new challenges regarding management, security, and long-term accessibility. An increasing volume of digital records, without an adequate management system, can lead to unstructured data accumulation, retrieval difficulties, and the risk of losing critical information (Mulyadi, 2023).

Consequently, the concept of Personal Digital Archiving (PDA) has emerged, referring to the individual activities required to ensure that digital archives are stored, organized, and maintained sustainably (Sari et al., 2020). PDA is vital as it positions the individual as the primary actor in ensuring continued access to their digital assets. Therefore, the ability to implement PDA has become an indispensable component of digital literacy.

The urgency of PDA is particularly evident in academic environments, where students actively produce diverse digital records, including assignments, reports, presentations, and scholarly works. Given that these archives serve as valuable references for future use, systematic management is no longer optional but a necessity. Despite this, personal digital archiving practices among students often remain unsystematic and inconsistent.

To validate this phenomenon, a preliminary survey was conducted via Instagram's polling feature with approximately 64 to 70 respondents. The results indicated that most students store their academic digital archives in a disorganized manner without clear categorization. Furthermore, the majority have not implemented adequate data backup practices, often storing critical archives on a single device. This lack of management results in retrieval difficulties, as evidenced by respondents reporting a sense of panic when required to locate old academic files or documents within a short timeframe.

These findings were further corroborated by interviews with several students, including those from the Library and Information Science program. The interviews revealed unstructured management practices characterized by inconsistent file naming, fragmented storage across multiple devices, and a lack of routine backup habits. Notably, even students with a background in archival science admitted that their theoretical knowledge has not been fully translated into their personal PDA practices.

This situation highlights a gap between the necessity for effective digital management and the actual practices performed by students. Despite being specifically equipped with archival knowledge through their coursework, students in the Library and Information Science program at Universitas Negeri Padang still struggle to internalize PDA into their daily academic activities. This foundational knowledge should, theoretically, make them more skilled and aware of personal digital management compared to students from other programs.

Based on the aforementioned context, this study is titled "Personal Digital Archiving of Library and Information Science Students at Universitas Negeri Padang." This research aims to provide a comprehensive overview of students PDA practices, serving as a basis for enhancing awareness and skills in organized and sustainable digital archive management.

METHODS

This study employs a quantitative approach with a descriptive research design. This approach was selected to objectively illustrate the Personal Digital Archiving (PDA) capabilities of students based on numerical data. According to Afif et al. (2023), quantitative research facilitates the systematic measurement of variables, resulting in a structured overview of the phenomenon. In this study, the descriptive approach is utilized

to reveal the level of students' PDA proficiency without manipulating the variables under investigation.

A survey research design was adopted for this study. This design is highly effective for collecting data from a specific group of respondents to describe the actual conditions of PDA practices. Furthermore, the use of surveys aligns with previous PDA scholarship, which commonly utilizes questionnaires to measure individual behaviors in managing digital archives. The population of this study consists of Library and Information Science students at Universitas Negeri Padang from the 2023 and 2024 cohorts. The sampling process employed a proportionate stratified random sampling technique to ensure that each group was proportionally represented. According to Sugiyono (2022), this technique is appropriate for heterogeneous populations. The final sample for this research comprises 61 respondents.

The research instrument is a questionnaire developed based on the core indicators of Personal Digital Archiving: find, select, describe, store, and manage. The questionnaire consists of 19 items (P01–P19) representing each indicator: find (P01–P04), select (P05–P08), describe (P09–P11), store (P12–P15), and manage (P16–P19). Each item is measured using a Likert scale to determine the students proficiency level at each stage of the PDA process. Prior to data collection, the instrument underwent expert judgment to ensure content validity. Subsequently, validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure that the instrument measures the variables accurately and consistently.

Data were collected by distributing questionnaires to respondents both in-person and online, supplemented by documentation as supporting data. Data analysis was performed using descriptive statistics by calculating the mean for each item (P01–P19), each indicator, and the overall grand mean. The results were then interpreted into specific categories to describe the students' PDA capability levels. The analysis process was facilitated by Microsoft Excel 2021 software to ensure systematic and accurate results.

RESULTS

This study employs a quantitative approach with a descriptive method to illustrate the Personal Digital Archiving (PDA) practices among students. Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, shared both directly and through social media platforms, specifically WhatsApp. All gathered data were processed

and presented using frequency distribution tables and percentages. The descriptive analysis results are presented as follows:

1. Characteristics of Respondents

The participants in this study consisted of 61 active students from the Library and Information Science Program at Universitas Negeri Padang. The breakdown of respondent characteristics is as follows:

a. Gender

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	17	28%
Female	44	72%
Total	61	100%

Data analysis reveals that of the 61 respondents, 44 individuals (72%) are female, while 17 individuals (28%) are male. This distribution indicates a significant female dominance among the study participants.

b. Cohort Year

Table 2.Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Generation Years

Year	Frequency	Percentage
2023	29	48%
2024	32	52%
Total	61	100%

The respondents are categorized into two groups based on their academic year: the 2023 and 2024 cohorts. There were 32 respondents (52%) from the 2024 cohort and 29 respondents (48%) from the 2023 cohort. Thus, the sample is slightly dominated by students from the 2024 academic year.

2. Descriptive Analysis of Personal Digital Archiving Variables

This section presents the respondents' feedback as a basis for the research discussion. Each indicator was measured using a 4-point Likert scale 1=Strongly Disagree (STS), 2=Disagree (TS), 3 =Agree (S), and 4 =Strongly Agree (SS). The following are the results of the descriptive analysis:

a. Ability to Identify and Retrieve Archives (Find)

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Find Indicator

No	SS		S		TS		STS		Mean
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
P01	32	52,5%	27	44,3%	2	3,3%	0	0%	3,49 (Very High)
P02	23	37,7%	28	45,9%	9	14,8%	1	1,6%	3,19 (High)
P03	38	62,3%	21	34,4%	2	3,3%	0	0%	3,59 (Very High)
P04	8	13,1%	11	18%	34	55,7%	8	13,1%	2,68 (High)

Analysis of P01 yielded a mean score of 3.49, falling within the 3.26–4.00 interval. This finding indicates that students' ability to recognize the storage location of their digital archives is in the "Very High" category. Meanwhile, P02 shows a mean of 3.19 (interval 2.51–3.25), suggesting that students' ability to quickly retrieve academic files from the previous semester is in the "High" category.

Furthermore, P03 reached a mean of 3.59, which is classified as "Very High" (interval 3.26–4.00). This indicates a high level of awareness among students regarding organizing important files into specific folders. Conversely, P04 showed a mean of 2.68, placing it in the "High" category (interval 2.51–3.25), which reflects the students' consistency in saving completed academic assignments.

b. Ability to Distinguish Between Useful and Obsolete Archives (Select)

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of Select Indicator

No.	SS		S		TS		STS		Mean
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
P05	28	45,9%	33	54,1%	0	0%	0	0%	3,45 (Very High)
P06	20	32,8%	32	52,5%	9	14.8%	1	0%	3,18 (High)
P07	26	42,6%	25	41%	10	16,4%	0	0%	3,26 (Very High)
P08	13	21,3%	8	13,1%	32	52,5%	8	13,1%	2,57 (High)

Analysis of P05 yielded a mean score of 3.45, falling within the 3.26–4.00 interval. This finding indicates that students' ability to review file content before deciding to save it into a folder is in the "Very High" category. Meanwhile, P06 shows a mean of 3.18 (interval

2.51–3.25), suggesting that students' proficiency in separating necessary digital archives from those that are no longer needed is in the "High" category.

Furthermore, P07 reached a mean of 3.26, classified as "Very High" (interval 3.26–4.00), which indicates strong student awareness regarding the deletion of accidentally stored duplicate files. In contrast, P08 showed a mean of 2.57, placing it in the "High" category (interval 2.51–3.25), reflecting students' awareness of verifying file content before committing it to the primary storage folder.

Overall, the Select sub-indicator, comprising four statement items, obtained an average mean score of 3.11 (interval 2.50–3.24). Consequently, it can be concluded that the students' ability to differentiate between valuable and non-valuable archives is in the "High" category.

c. Ability to Provide File Naming and Metadata (Describe)

Table 5. Frequency Distribution of Describe Indicator

No.	SS		S		TS		STS		Mean
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
P09	29	47,5%	32	52,5%	0	0%	0	0%	3,47 (Very High)
P10	43	70,5%	18	29,5%	0	0%	0	0%	3,70 (Very High)
P11	14	23%	32	52,5%	14	23%	1	1,6%	2,96 (High)
P12	4	6,6%	4	6,6%	39	63,9%	14	23%	3,03 (High)

The results for P09 show a mean score of 3.47, falling within the 3.26–4.00 interval. This indicates that students' ability to name academic files according to their content is in the "Very High" category. Similarly, P10 yielded a mean of 3.70 (interval 3.26–4.00), demonstrating a "Very High" awareness that systematic file naming significantly facilitates archive retrieval.

Moreover, P11 obtained a mean score of 2.96 (interval 2.51–3.25), indicating that students possess a "High" level of awareness regarding the addition of metadata, such as dates or document types, to file names. P12 followed with a mean of 3.03 (interval 2.51–3.25), showing that the students' ability to identify and understand the content of their assignments through structured naming is also in the "High" category.

d. Ability to Maintain Security and Availability of Digital Archives (Store)

Table 6. Frequency Distribution of Store Indicator

No.	SS		S		TS		STS		Mean
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
P13	28	45,9%	29	47,5%	4	6,6%	0	0%	3,39 (Very High)
P14	22	36,1%	30	49,2%	9	14,8%	0	0%	3,21 (High)
P15	24	39,3%	36	59%	1	1,6%	0	0%	3,37 (Very High)

The analysis of P13 yielded a mean score of 3.39, falling within the 3.26–4.00 interval. This indicates that students' ability to store academic files within an organized folder structure based on specific courses is in the "Very High" category. Meanwhile, P14 shows a mean of 3.21 (interval 2.51–3.25), suggesting that students possess a "High" level of awareness regarding storing academic digital archives across multiple storage media. Furthermore, P15 reached a mean of 3.37, classified as "Very High" (interval 3.26–4.00), which indicates students' proficiency in utilizing appropriate storage media to preserve their archives.

e. Ability to Maintain Archives for Long-Term Use (Manage)

Table 7. Frequency Distribution of Manage Indicator

No.	SS		S		TS		STS		Mean
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
P16	7	11,5%	30	49,2%	22	36,1%	2	3,3%	2,68 (High)
P17	18	29,5%	34	55,7%	7	11,5	2	3,3%	3,11 (High)
P18	24	39,3%	29	47,5%	8	13,1%	0	0%	3,26 (Very High)
P19	3	4,9%	15	24,6%	35	57,4%	8	13,1%	2,78 (Very High)

Results for P16 show a mean score of 2.68, falling within the 2.51–3.25 interval. This indicates that students' awareness of checking old archive folders to ensure files remain accessible is in the "High" category. Similarly, P17 yielded a mean of 3.11 (interval 2.51–3.25), demonstrating that students possess a "High" level of awareness regarding converting file formats (e.g., from Word to PDF) for long-term archiving purposes.

Moreover, P18 reached a mean of 3.26, placing it in the "Very High" category (interval 3.26–4.00), which reflects students' proactive awareness in monitoring storage capacity. P19 followed with a mean of 2.78 (interval 2.51–3.25), indicating that students' consistency in tidying or migrating assignment files is in the "High" category.

To identify the overall trends in respondents' Personal Digital Archiving practices, a summary of the descriptive analysis results across all indicators was compiled. This summary allows for the identification of the highest and lowest scores, providing a clear mapping of the research variables.

Table 8. Recapitulation of Indicator Scores

Indicator	Statement	n	Mean	Score	Average	Remarks
Find	P01	61	3,49	213	3,23	High
	P02	61	3,19	195		
	P03	61	3,59	219		
	P04	61	2,68	164		
Select	P05	61	3,45	211	3,11	High
	P06	61	3,18	194		
	P07	61	3,26	199		
	P08	61	2,57	157		
Describe	P09	61	3,47	212	3,29	Very High
	P10	61	3,70	226		
	P11	61	2,96	181		
	P12	61	3,03	185		
Store	P13	61	3,39	207	3,32	Very High
	P14	61	3,21	196		
	P15	61	3,37	206		
Manage	P16	61	2,68	164	2,95	High
	P17	61	3,11	190		
	P18	61	3,26	199		
	P19	61	2,78	170		
Total						15,9
Overall Average Total						3,18 (High)

The average scores for each Personal Digital Archiving indicator are as follows: Find (3.23), Select (3.11), Describe (3.29), Store (3.32), and Manage (2.95). Based on the accumulation of these five indicators, the overall grand mean is 3.18, which falls within the

"High" category. These results demonstrate that the Personal Digital Archiving proficiency among students is at a "High" level.

DISCUSSION

1. Find

The Find indicator refers to the students' ability to identify and retrieve their personal digital archives. Data analysis reveals that this capability is in a professional category, as reflected by the mean score of P01 (3.49). This condition indicates that students generally do not encounter significant difficulties in locating required files. This ability is typically developed through routine interaction with digital devices, where users memorize storage locations based on habit rather than systematic planning. This aligns with (Kim, 2013), who states that PDA practices often evolve intuitively through daily usage experiences, even when not fully structured. Students recall storage locations due to the high frequency of accessing specific assignment folders, which indirectly forms a consistent navigation pattern within their devices.

The findings for P02 (3.19) imply a relatively rapid file retrieval capability. This suggests that a portion of the respondents can perform the retrieval process efficiently, although this proficiency is not yet uniform across all students. This condition is consistent with the perspective of Rahmaeisa & Kurniawan (2025), who assert that a primary challenge in information management lies in an individual's ability to retrieve information effectively when needed. Despite knowing the storage locations (P01), the retrieval process remains sub-optimal without consistent organization. As explained by Saeed & Arshad (2020), the effectiveness of information retrieval is highly dependent on the orderliness of management from the initial stages.

Furthermore, P03 (3.59) indicates that students are quite consistent in collecting important files into specific folders. This reflects an awareness that archives have functional value, which enhances the ease of identification and retrieval, as supported by Riyanto et al., (2021). In contrast, P04 (2.68) revealed that the habit of saving assignment files is not as established as the habit of grouping important files. This indicates an inconsistency that indirectly impacts the Find process. Redwine & Beagrie (2015) argue that inconsistency in storage is one of the major obstacles in PDA. Consequently, it can be concluded that while students' capabilities in the Find aspect are categorized as good, improvements are still

necessary particularly in archive organization to ensure that the retrieval process becomes more effective and efficient.

2. Select

The Select stage is a crucial phase as it directly relates to retention decisions determining whether an archive is worth preserving for long-term use or should be deleted to maintain information management efficiency. This is reflected in the mean score of P05 (3.45), which indicates that students perform a preliminary evaluation of file content before saving it. This practice demonstrates an awareness of storage efficiency and archive control, as noted by Sinn et al. (2017), who argue that accumulating archives without proper selection can complicate management and retrieval processes in the future.

The findings for P06 (3.18) complement P05, showing that students ability to separate necessary digital archives from obsolete ones is not yet performed consistently. This inconsistency is understandable given that determining the functional value of an archive is often complex. AlRukaibani & Chaudhry (2019) point out that individuals often struggle to predict whether information will be needed in the future, leading to a tendency to over-save archives as a form of anticipation.

Furthermore, P07 (3.26) falls into the "Very High" category, indicating that students possess excellent awareness regarding the deletion of duplicate files. This practice is essential for reducing data redundancy. Zhang & Liu (2015) identify "cleaning" as a core component of PDA practices aimed at reducing storage burdens and facilitating retrieval. Students' high awareness in this aspect can be interpreted as a response to limited storage capacity.

In contrast, P08 (2.57) represents the lowest score within the Select indicator. This suggests a behavioral tendency to save files indiscriminately without mature consideration under certain conditions, particularly when faced with high file volumes or time constraints. Consistent with AlRukaibani & Chaudhry (2019), the Select stage is not merely technical but involves cognitive judgment in determining value. Therefore, compared to purely technical tasks like deleting duplicates, this selective process is more complex and remains a significant challenge for students.

3. Describe

Fauziah & Lawanda (2024) argue that the describe stage is conducted through metadata creation including file naming, dating, and usage context to facilitate future identification and retrieval. This is reflected in the mean of P09 (3.47), showing that students possess a good awareness of the importance of providing digital identities to their files as part of their PDA. In this context, relevant file naming serves as a mnemonic marker that helps individuals recall document content without opening the file. Consequently, higher quality in file naming leads to greater efficiency in the information retrieval process (Saeed & Arshad, 2020).

The findings for P10 (3.70) indicate a very strong awareness among students that file naming facilitates archive retrieval. In the context of PDA, this awareness reflects an understanding of the strategic function of the Describe stage. Smith & Venlet (2015) emphasize that effective description enhances efficiency during the identification and tracking of digital archives. Meanwhile, P11 (2.96) is in the "High" category but remains relatively lower than other indicators. This suggests that the practice of adding metadata, such as dates or document types, is not yet consistently applied. Marshall (2018) argues that effective digital archive management requires deeper decision making regarding how information is described so that it remains meaningful over the long term.

P12 (3.03) indicates that students are reasonably capable of identifying and understanding assignment content through structured naming, though it has not yet reached an optimal level. The link between structured naming and retrieval efficiency is reinforced by Saeed & Arshad (2020), who found that 40% of students tend to access data only when specifically needed. This pattern demands clear file naming to ensure retrieval remains efficient even after long periods. Because individuals often access stored data periodically or only when necessary, their memory of the location or content relies heavily on the descriptions provided in the file names. Therefore, the ability to provide descriptive names serves as a vital preventive strategy to ensure the effectiveness of future re-finding efforts.

4. Store

The Store stage is not merely a technical storage activity but a crucial component in ensuring the long-term sustainability, accessibility, and security of digital archives (Smith & Venlet, 2015; Fauziah & Lawanda, 2024). This is reflected in the mean score of P13 (3.39),

indicating that students are proficient in storing academic files within an organized folder structure based on specific courses. This practice aligns with Detharie et al. (2024), who argue that in the context of PDA, digital archive management should focus not only on storage but also on how archives are organized to remain easily accessible in the future. Furthermore, folder-based organization serves as a PDA implementation that supports efficient information retrieval. This is reinforced by Rifauddin (2016), who asserts that digital systems provide optimal benefits only when supported by clear and structured organization.

The findings for P14 (3.21) show that students are competent in implementing multi-media storage strategies. This aligns with Suwondo & Sari (2025) who emphasize the importance of a "backup strategy" in PDA through multi-media storage to ensure security and continued access. This is further supported by Redwine & Beagrie (2015), who state that utilizing various storage media is a vital step in protecting digital archives. Additionally, P15 (3.37) indicates that students are proficient in selecting storage media that meet their specific needs. Theoretically, this practice is consistent with Smith & Venlet (2015), who emphasize that media selection is a critical part of the Store stage, as each medium carries different advantages and risks that must be aligned with the storage objectives.

5. Manage

The Manage stage is a reflective process aimed at maintaining the long-term accessibility of digital archives, encompassing the verification of file accessibility, content relevance, and the reliability of storage media. This is reflected in the mean of P16 (2.68), which shows that students are reasonably capable of auditing old archive folders. When linked to the PDA process model proposed by Ali & Warraich (2022), checking old files is part of the evaluation phase, where individuals periodically review their digital collections to ensure future usability.

The findings for P17 (3.11) indicate that students are proficient in file format conversion for long-term archiving. Theoretically, changing file formats is a form of "migration strategy" in digital preservation an effort to adapt file formats to remain compatible with evolving technology Smith & Venlet (2015). Furthermore, P18 (3.26) reveals that students are highly aware of monitoring storage capacity. According to the PDA model by Ali & Warraich (2022), management activities are often triggered by specific

conditions, such as storage limitations. Thus, the high score on this indicator suggests that students are relatively more sensitive to aspects that directly impact device performance.

Finally, P19 (2.78) demonstrates that students are sufficiently capable of tidying or migrating assignment files. This activity reflects the maintenance process through the reorganization of storage structures to remain systematic and support ease of retrieval (Smith & Venlet, 2015; Fauziah & Lawanda, 2024). In this regard, Riyanto et al. (2021)state that for students, archives are more than just data; by periodically tidying assignment files, students are essentially performing a simple digital curation process that enhances effective retrieval. A deeper comparison of these findings suggests that while student awareness is categorized as high, it has not yet reached an optimal level (2.78). This indicates that tidying or moving files is likely performed situationally rather than as a fully consistent habit.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that the Personal Digital Archiving (PDA) practices of students in the Library and Information Science Study Program at Universitas Negeri Padang, cohorts 2023 and 2024, are categorized as high, with a grand mean score of 3.18. This finding indicates that students have a relatively good ability in managing their personal digital archives across various stages, although the implementation is not yet fully optimal and consistent. Overall, students are no longer merely storing files, but have begun to demonstrate awareness in organizing, managing, and utilizing digital archives according to their academic needs.

Specifically, the store stage emerged as the most prominent aspect, with the highest grand mean score of 3.32. This suggests that students have developed a strong awareness of the importance of storing digital archives to ensure long-term accessibility. The tendency to store files across multiple storage media reflects an initial implementation of backup practices, although not yet systematically planned. Nevertheless, this practice contributes positively to minimizing the risk of data loss due to device failure or technical issues.

On the other hand, the manage stage recorded the lowest score, with a mean of 2.95. This indicates that students' ability to maintain and ensure the sustainability of digital archives is still not optimal. Management activities tend to be situational and have not yet become structured habits. Despite these limitations, the overall PDA practices of students

remain in a good category, suggesting that they already possess a solid foundation to further develop more systematic and sustainable digital archiving practices in the future.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that students look beyond mere storage and adopt a holistic and sustainable implementation of all PDA stages namely find, select, describe, store, and manage to ensure optimal digital archive management. For the academic department, these results can serve as a basis for strengthening the curriculum by integrating PDA concepts into relevant coursework, thereby equipping students with systematic archival management skills. Furthermore, for future researchers, this study is expected to serve as a reference for further development by incorporating additional variables, ultimately yielding more comprehensive findings and broader contributions to the field of personal digital archive management.

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