

# Saudi Digital Library Services in the Light of the National and International Sustainable Development Goals

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## Abstract

The study aimed to identify the concept of sustainable development, and to explore the role of digital libraries in achieving SDGs, by shedding light on the reality of the SDL in terms of financial, technical and human capabilities to achieve the Kingdom's 2030 vision for sustainable development. The study revealed that digital libraries play an active role in achieving SDGs through secure and diverse technical infrastructure, and a variety of digital information sources. Digital libraries enhance the level of information awareness among users. Among digital libraries worldwide, SDL is distinguished in terms of knowledge resources acquired, its platforms, and through the large number of beneficiaries of its services, representing all segments of the academic community in Saudi Arabia's higher education institutions. Based on a solid network, and Saudi Arabia vision 2030, SDL succeeded to link higher education institutions through a huge amount of information sources, and facilitated their access, and provided equal opportunities for all. The study recommended that in order to be the national digital platform and effective development partner, SDL must expand the scope of services to include trade and industrial private and public sectors, and raise the level of research awareness and ethics among Arab scholars and researchers.

**Keywords:** Digital Libraries, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Saudi Vision 2030.

## 1. Introduction

As gateways to knowledge and culture, libraries play a fundamental role in facing the significant challenge of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by providing public access to information, offering the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), assisting community members in developing effective information usage skills, as well as preserving information to ensure continued access for future generations. In the light of the advanced technological environment and the rapid growth and diversity of electronic information sources, and their scope of dissemination, digital libraries have emerged as a contributing partner in achieving SDGs. The digital library provides opportunities for individuals to develop themselves

by supporting the culture of learning. Additionally, it plays a vital role in increasing access to flexible and equitable sustainable information resources, overcoming challenges related to information illiteracy and awareness in knowledge societies. This trend is vital and necessary at the present time to support and achieve sustainable development and a knowledge-based economy

#### Problem Statement and Study Questions:

The United Nations Sustainable Development Initiative 2015-2030 is considered one of the most important initiatives. This initiative included five basic aspects: people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership, as reflected in the seventeen SDGs (Arabi, 2021) (sometimes referred to as the global goals). Since their launch in 2015, the seventeen SDGs have become an integral part of the strategic goals of all countries. The majority of countries worldwide have joined the initiative, with Arab countries seeking to get the initiative off the ground. Saudi Arabia, in particular, has embraced the initiative through its Vision 2030.

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) has also been actively involved since 2020 in contributing to the planning of the United Nations Sustainable Development Initiative 2030. This involvement aims to ensure universal access to information, preserve cultural heritage, and promote universal literacy (Al-Sarihi, 2017). Consequently, this study aimed to explore and reveal the extent to which the Saudi Digital Library (SDL) contributes to achieving both international and national SDGs.

In light of the aforementioned issues raised, the research problem is formulated by the following question:

- To what extent are SDL services aligned with the international and national goals of sustainable development?

#### Objectives:

The aim of this study is to:

- Identify the concept of sustainable development.
- Review international and national efforts in the field of sustainable development.
- Identify the role of digital libraries in achieving SDGs.
- Shed light on the reality of the SDL in terms of financial, technical and human capabilities to achieve the Kingdom's 2030 vision for sustainable development.
- Explore the services of the SDL in light of the international and national sustainable development goals.

#### Significance of the study:

The importance of this study comes from the following:

- Addresses one of the most crucial variables that affected the form and type of information services provided in digital libraries.

- There are no previous studies that have explored this particular topic.
- All prior studies focused on the SDL from the user's perspective, with the exception of Abu Saree's (2017) study.

## **2. Methods:**

This study is a systematic review and meta-analysis of all articles published on the same topic. The study relied on several research methods, including:

- Case study: to study the current situation of the SDL.
- Descriptive: to explore the theoretical framework.
- Content analysis: to analyze the SDL website comprehensively and cover the entire topic.

Tools:

The study relied on the following tool:

- In depth reading and analysis of the content.

Limitations:

- Topical limits:

The role of SDL in achieving SDGs.

- Geographic limits:

SDL, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

- Time limits:

Between 2022-2023.

Population:

SDL represents the population in this context, and the study focused on identifying the reality of the its services and to what extent is connected to the international and national SDGs.

Terminology:

Digital Library: defined by the New World Encyclopedia: as a library in which collections are stored in digital formats (as opposed to print, microform, or other media) and made accessible to users through computers.

The digital library, for short (d-lib), is defined as ‘‘a collection of electronic or digital information materials, available on the library server, and can be accessed through a local network or via the World Wide Web’’ (Yassin, 2022). It is also known as ‘‘one of the forms of modern information sources that rely on the electronic environment to preserve, index, and retrieve machine-readable information (digital information sources) in order to support and make digital content available

to all beneficiaries concurrently without being restricted to paper copies that are limited in circulation” (Ahmed, 2020).

**Sustainable development:**

Defined by Britannica as an approach to social, economic, and environmental planning that attempts to balance the social and economic needs of present and future human generations with the imperative of preserving, or preventing undue damage to, the natural environment.

Sustainable development has become the primary concern for most countries and governments worldwide. It constitutes an essential tool for confronting the various growing challenges faced by members of society. Sustainable development is defined as the type of development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Al-Sarihi, 2017).

**Saudi Digital Library (SDL):** It is a Saudi academic library that covers all academic disciplines, working to provide advanced information services and make digital information sources available and accessible in various forms for members of Saudi higher education (SDL, 2023).

**International Directions:** This term refers procedurally to the directives of the International Federation of Information Associations and Institutions (IFLA) aimed at achieving the seventeen SDGs launched by the United Nations after 2015. It encompasses the efforts of the Arab Federation for Libraries and Information in this context.

**National Directions:** It is the term used procedurally to refer to “Saudi Vision 2030, which is the post-oil plan for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that was announced on April 25, 2016, and coincides with the date specified for announcing the completion of the delivery of 80 giant government projects” (Kingdom Vision 2016, 2030) Its strategic objectives were consistent with the seventeen goals set by the United Nations to achieve sustainable development.

### **3. Theoretical framework:**

#### **1- Sustainable development (Historical and conceptual background)**

The concept of sustainable development appeared in 1970 as one of the theoretical alternatives to the concept of comprehensive development as a theoretical concept for international strategy. Sustainable development, sustainable growth, and sustainability are all concepts that economists, policy makers, and researchers frequently use to clarify the required balance between economic growth and environmental preservation. (Abdullah, 2017). While others believe that the concept of sustainability can change our future, so after the report submitted by the United Nations Global Commission on Environment and Development, headed by former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, in 1987, the leaders of more than two hundred and seventy countries have ratified the idea of “Sustainable development” at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, which included the definition of sustainable development as (improvement Human well-being, fulfilling the basic needs of the poor, protecting and well-being of future generations, preserving environmental resources, supporting life systems at the global level and within permissible limits, and working to introduce economic and environmental frameworks when

making decisions). (Kamal, Raziq, 2010). By this concept and definition, any development process aims for the well-being of the person in the society in which he lives, meaning that development concerns the person himself within his biological community, and includes developing the individual intellectually and culturally and providing freedom of choice, a sense of dignity, and self-realization. There are those who described sustainable development as “a way of life and a philosophy based on thinking in a participatory manner through the contribution of organizations in assuming their responsibility towards enhancing the requirements of sustainable development and raising the level of aspirations under which they operate and their ability to achieve this while harnessing many activities and programs that are consistent with development goals in a comprehensive manner.” And complementary” (Ghazal, 2019). However, the most quoted definition comes from the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, which defined sustainable development as previously mentioned as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” However, this definition has been criticized for focusing on the human element and for relying on the concept of “needs,” which is difficult to define. Other definitions point to equally problematic concepts such as living within the planet's "carrying capacity," preserving "natural capital," and redefining "growth" (Wheeler, Stephen). Regardless of the definitional difficulties, sustainable development can be viewed as meaning achieving a balance between the activities that humans undertake and the resources they consume of various types and at all economic, social and environmental levels. In the charter of the University of California Sustainability Committee, sustainability was defined. As “the integration of environmental health, social justice, and economic vitality in order to create prosperous, healthy, diverse, and resilient communities for this generation and generations to come” (UCLA Sustainability, 2023).

If we search for the origin of the term sustainability, we find that in the Arabic language it comes from the verb “istadam,” whose root is “dum,” which has many meanings, including being patient with something, asking for its continuity, and persevering with it (Othman, 2019). Accordingly, what is meant by sustainability in development is its continuity, that is, continuous and continuous development in an automatic and unobtrusive manner. If we go back to the origin of the term “sustainable,” we find that it goes back to ecology (Ecology), where this term was used to express the formation and development of a dynamic system that is subject - as a result of its vitality - to structural changes that lead to a change in its characteristics and elements, and the relationships of these elements to each other. In the development concept, the term sustainability was used to express the nature of the relationship between economics and ecology, given that the two sciences are derived from the same Greek origin, as each of them begins with the root (eco), which in Arabic means house or dwelling (Jassim, 2020). This concept initially appeared in international development literature in the mid-eighties under the influence of new concerns about preserving the environment and using resources fairly for the purpose of achieving economic efficiency between generations and promoting a desired reality that ensures decent living for present and future generations (Ghazal, 2019).

Within the framework of intergenerational justice, the World Commission on Development and Environment emphasized this concept and defined sustainable development as: development

that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the capabilities and share of future generations (Jassem, 2020).

From the above, the importance of sustainable development is clear in achieving a balance between the activities that people carry out and the resources they consume of various types and at all economic, social and environmental levels. Therefore, information and knowledge, as one of the types of resources whose flow and investment in different societies should be regulated, must be considered. To them as an influential factor in achieving sustainable development, and here comes the role of libraries and digital libraries in particular to regulate the flow of these two resources (Hamdi, Amal, 2017).

#### National and International SDGs:

Through its post-2015 to 2030 development program, the United Nations works with peoples and all social levels to help nations rise, confront crises, and advance sustainable growth that improves the quality of life. The member states of the United Nations adopted at the 2030 conference a vision for sustainable development crystallized in seventeen goals, including ensuring Poor people's access to economic resources and basic services. Countries have witnessed intense efforts to achieve SDGs through government programs to reduce and eliminate information illiteracy in poor areas, contribute knowledge to support health insurance services, programs to improve education, preserve the marine and terrestrial environment, conserve water, and support clean energy applications (Al-Sarihi, 2017). These included the efforts of Arab countries, such as the Emirates, Qatar, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, and there was cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Arab Ministers regarding providing the requirements for sustainable development in the Arab world (Othman, 2019).

#### How do libraries support the SDGs?

The possibility of achieving the United Nations goals has been increased by the involvement of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) in participatory programs with Many organizations aim to achieve justice, equality and peace in all the initiatives and programs it supports.

Libraries around the world offer a wide range of products and services that promote the achievement of each and every one of the SDGs.

IFLA's interaction with the United Nations goals of the is represented by the issuance of the "IFLA Statement on Libraries and Development," through which it affirmed that the right to access information is a human right to confront poverty and support sustainable development. This was stated in the Lyon Declaration on Access to Information and Development, which It was launched at the World Library and Information Conference in Lyon, France, in August 2014. It also called for recognizing the need of individuals to access information and acquire the skills to use it efficiently to achieve sustainable development that aims for the well-being and prosperity of societies economically and socially in the long term. The Declaration believes that making information available to all supports development by enabling people, especially the marginalized and those living in poverty, to exercise their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights to become more productive, innovative, and able to learn and apply new skills and

participate in decision-making in their communities, as well as more able to face development challenges. in their communities with innovative solutions. They can measure progress on sustainable development. The signatories of the Declaration called on member states of the United Nations to recognize that access to information and the skills necessary to use it effectively is imperative in order to achieve the SDGs, and to ensure that this is recognized in the post-2015 development agenda by recognizing the public's right to obtain information and data. Recognizing the importance of the role of local authorities, information intermediaries, and ICT infrastructure and the Internet as means of achieving goals, and adopting policies, legislation, and standards that ensure governments continue to finance the provision of information to all (IFLA, 2014).

IFLA has worked to identify the most important elements that the library sector in any country can focus on in order to achieve sustainable development, which are as follows:

- Information Availability.
- Establishing cultural values.
- Information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure.

The researchers focused on the following goals:

Fourth goal (SDG 4): Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all:

Libraries are at the heart of schools, universities and colleges in every country around the world. All libraries support literacy programs, provide a safe space for learning, and support researchers to access, apply and reuse research and data to create new knowledge.

Ninth goal (SDG 9) Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation:

Libraries are at the heart of research, technology, innovation and academic life. They provide access to research infrastructure, data and quality information to foster innovation and competitiveness.

Sixteenth goal (SDG 16) Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels: Libraries are a key source of information for the public. They are also equipped to teach and enable citizens to benefit from this open access.

Saudi Arabia's efforts to achieve the SDGs:

On September 25, 2015, world leaders set a set of goals that will eradicate different forms of poverty, inequality, protect the Earth, and achieve global prosperity as part of the 2030 Global Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Saudi Arabia launched its Vision 2030 in April 2016 under the slogan "A vibrant society, thriving economy, an ambitious nation" to face the challenges related to poverty and inequality, climate, environmental degradation, prosperity, peace, justice, education, health, social

protection and employment opportunities. In order to achieve the vision, many programs and initiatives were launched, such as the National Transformation Program and Digital Transformation. The National Transformation Program 2020 is considered the starting point for implementing and implementing Vision 2030, as it includes the public, private and non-profit sectors, and began implementing an integrated management model by the Council of Ministers. (Unified National Platform, 2023)

Saudi Arabia aimed to diversify its national economy and rely on other, non-traditional sources of income. In addition to that applying the financial measurements in order to create a financial surplus to finance the initiatives mentioned in the Vision 2030 and the Sustainable Development Program goals.

Saudi Arabia has also achieved a remarkable progress on the path of economic and social development. Since then, the Kingdom and the United Nations Development Program have built a strategic partnership for sustainable development.

Unified National Platform, 2023).

The researchers conclude that sustainable development has become a popular catchphrase in contemporary development discourse and research.

Saudi Arabia efforts to eradicate poverty

Saudi Arabia has so many efforts to cut poverty at the local and international levels, as it contributes to providing aid and humanitarian aid to the poorest countries and developing countries, through international organizations that combat poverty, in addition to its internal efforts to develop social welfare system to be more efficient and fairer. Saudi Arabia social protection system is based on supporting the social security system and encouraging institutions and individuals to contribute to charitable work. This system contains three components, under which a number of programs and initiatives fall, as follows:

Unified National Platform, 2023)

- Social Insurance Program: It includes cooperative health insurance, retirement, and the unemployment insurance system - SAND
- Social safety networks: This includes government support (food, fuel, electricity, and water support)
  - The citizen account program, the housing support program, educational programs, and residential care programs
- Disabled people program, as the Kingdom's Vision 2030 included a strategic goal concerned with disabled people and with special needs to obtain appropriate job opportunities and education that guarantees their independence and integration as an active segment of the Saudi society.
- Support programs for the labor market include: the Wage Protection Program, the Employment Support Program and job seeker subsidy programs



- Saudi government support programs for the poorest countries, developing countries, and international organizations concerned with combating poverty at the global level, such as the United Nations Development Program, UNICEF, and AGFUND to support United Nations development organizations.

In order to achieve the fourth goal of the United Nations SDGs and to achieve higher education strategic goals, Saudi Arabia launched many programs and projects and adopted new digital transformation strategy. In the meantime, paid attention to digital education sector, as it is closely linked to the goals of developing sustainability (Saudi Electronic University, 2023). Scientific research is one of the most prominent elements that the Kingdom is interested in. It aims to move the national economy from dependence on oil, and shift to a knowledge-based economy. As a result of this connection and the importance of scientific research, the country has paid great attention to research and innovation, and has set some goals that seek to achieved by year 2030, in addition to that being among the top 10 countries in the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI). As a result of this attention given to scientific institutions like King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology, King Abdullah City for Atomic and Renewable Energy, and other important research institutions. Most universities have also established scientific and technical research centers in sectors of interest to Saudi Arabia. Among these national efforts to support scientific research and development, the SDL was established as the largest digital library that includes various specializations that support the educational process and meet the needs of beneficiaries in higher education institutions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. (SDL, 2023).

The role of digital libraries in achieving the SDGs:

Libraries play an essential role in meeting the growing challenge of SDGs by providing access to information, public access to ICT, and helping people develop the ability to effectively use information, as well as by preserving information to ensure continuous access for future generations. Therefore, libraries face... Information centers today are a technical, cognitive and behavioral challenge in light of the growth of virtual knowledge services and the trend of most countries towards developing comprehensive development strategies and realizing what can be expressed today as a knowledge society (Abdullah, 2017). Information technology also plays an important role in sustainable development, as the vast technical capabilities can be harnessed in order to achieve sustainable development economically, socially, and environmentally (Musa, 2021).

The digital library is considered one of the forms of modern information sources that rely on the electronic environment to preserve, catalog, index, and retrieve machine-readable information (digital information sources) in order to support and make digital content available to all beneficiaries at the same time, without being restricted by limited circulation paper copies” (Ahmed, 2020). It has been described as an organized and processed collection of many digital information sources, including technical procedures through automated systems associated with archiving, preserving, and retrieving information (Yassin, 2022).

The digital library plays an effective and influential role in developing scientific research skills and increasing the effectiveness of information circulation and use by providing many forms of digital information sources that can be broadcast to an unlimited number of beneficiaries. Also,

in the ways of making information available to beneficiaries, preserving it, and disseminating it in conjunction with the emergence of the Internet, the growing movement of scientific research and scientific publishing, and the accompanying massive influx of digital sources of all kinds (Ibrahim, 2016). Digital libraries also provide the infrastructure for information and communications technology and enable individuals to make effective use of information. IFLA emphasized that access to information is a comprehensive issue that supports all SDGs (AFLA, 2014) and digital libraries have an effective role in achieving this by promoting digital integration by facilitating access to information and communications technology and enabling its human cadres to help individuals better develop their technical skills ( Ghazal, 2019).

Digital libraries include two basic forms of information sources, which include traditional sources that have been converted into digital sources by scanning them electronically to make them available for circulation, as well as digital sources that are prepared electronically and are issued in the form of scientific articles through magazines, books, electronic university dissertations, conference proceedings, patents, and discoveries. scientific knowledge through the databases it provides, which is a technical design for storing and making digital information sources available through a comprehensive platform that includes many information networks and a huge number of information sources (Klucsevsek, 2020).

Accordingly, all activities and services carried out in digital libraries are linked to the seventeen comprehensive development goals, as development can be achieved in a number of aspects aimed at by the United Nations Vision 2030 for Sustainable Development and the Saudi Vision 2030, which are:

- 1- The economic aspect: which is ensuring that information is easily available, at a lower cost, and with greater efficiency.
- 2- The social aspect: ensuring the availability of information to build a better society.
- 3- The environmental aspect: which is reducing the impact of services on society in all its aspects.

#### **4. Literature Review:**

##### **Arabic Studies:**

Abdel Hadi's study (2017) addressed the role of Egyptian library and information institutions in sustainable development. The study aimed to describe and analyze the services and activities provided by Egyptian library and information institutions in order to implement the SDGs. The study uses the descriptive analytical method.

The study reached to several results, the most important of which are: The Sustainable Development Plan, with its seventeen goals put forward by the United Nations for the year 2030, is worthy of attention and appreciation, and despite the idealism that covers all of it, or at least some of its aspects, it represents a hope that can be worked within its framework even if it is not achieved completely. The International Federation for Libraries and Information is credited with its vision to include libraries as effective and influential institutions in implementing this plan and mobilizing support for its success.

Abu Saree's study (2017) which focused on basic axes of documentation, SDL beneficiaries, organizing and managing methods, and the nature and form of services provided. The results reached related to the content, subject area, beneficiaries, search and retrieval system, ongoing training and briefing services, and otherthings related to intellectual property protection.

Ahmed's study (2018) addressed the role of libraries and information centers in Algerian-Saudi sustainable development in light of information technology. The study aimed to clarify the importance of sustainable development in the field of libraries and information in Algeria and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the importance of these institutions in achieving the goals of sustainable development for the Algerian and Saudi Arab societies, and the repercussions of this on Arab and global sustainable development in the field of libraries and information. The study used the descriptive analytics method. The study reached to several results, the most important of which are: The multiple definitions of sustainable development from different aspects, economic, political, and culture, and the interpenetration of these meanings among themselves. In addition to that the link between sustainable development in the field of libraries and information centers with the various elements and components of sustainable development, as it is an integral part of these components. (Ahmed, 2018)

Ghazal's study (2019) addressed public libraries and promoting the 2030 SDGs in Arab countries. The study aimed to address the issue of Arab public libraries in promoting the 2030 SDGs, through a prospective study. The study included 40 Arab public libraries. The study reached several results, the most important of which are: Arab public libraries represent a prominent role in sustainable development, and Arab public libraries also contribute to sustainable development 2030 through the various activities they provide, including training workshops, lectures, awareness-raising campaigns, and discussion sessions. (Ghazal, 2019)

Al-Balawi and Al-Huwaiti (2020) addressed the role of the SDL in developing educational scientific research in public education. The study aimed to reveal the role of the SDL in developing educational scientific research among teachers researching public education in the city of Tabuk, from the point of view of male and female teachers, and to reveal differences in their responses depending on some variables. The study sample consisted of 255 male and female teachers in the city of Tabuk. The results showed that the role of the SDL in developing scientific educational research and public education in the city of Tabuk was at a high level. The results also showed that there were no statistically significant differences at the significance level due to the variable of gender and academic qualification. (Al-Balawi and Al-Huwaiti, 2020).

#### English studies:

Josiah and others' study (Josiah C. et al., 2022): Explored the role of libraries in using digital platforms to achieve quality education for sustainable development in Nigeria. The study aimed to explore the role of libraries in achieving quality education using digital platforms for sustainable development. The research found that it is the responsibility of information providers and managers to provide quality education using different digital platforms in the library, in order to achieve Nigeria's SDGs by 2030.

Patricia's study (Patricia A. Wand, 2016): This study discussed the extent to which libraries and information centers in the Middle East and North Africa countries contribute to global social and

economic planning for sustainable development as one of the requirements for achieving the United Nations SDGs. The study came out with several results, the most important of which is the existence of a direct relationship between... The number of libraries and information centers in the country and increasing cultural, educational and health awareness among members of society.

Gobind and Chowdhury study (Gobind and Chowdhury, 2012): This study aimed to reveal a set of factors and capabilities that can help provide different forms of sustainable digital information services, in addition to examining the extent to which the sustainability element is covered in information science studies and its relationship to digital information services.

The study concluded that there is a small number of research dealing with the topic of digital information services. Her study also indicated that there is a reciprocal relationship between the various factors that achieve sustainable development in the information services sector.

Through reading and analyzing previous studies, the researchers concluded to the following results:

- Some studies have dealt with the issue of sustainable development from one angle.
- Some studies also touched on the role of libraries from the perspective of scientific research.
- Previous studies mentioned the role of digital platforms in general in promoting sustainable development.
- The researchers conclude that libraries have an important role in promoting SDGs.
- Hence, we conclude that libraries have a role in promoting and consolidating the goals of sustainable development, and here the study was unique in studying the case of the SDL.

Applied framework: The reality of the SDL in terms of material, technical and human capabilities in achieving the Kingdom's 2030 vision for sustainable development:

For over a decade, the Saudi higher education sector in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has witnessed a qualitative shift in the field of e-learning, which led to the emergence of the SDL in 2010 AD, which is considered the most important sector working to make information available to all members of Saudi higher education, and thus it is considered one of the most important sectors in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It is one of the most prominent scientific conglomerates at the national level and one of the national academic knowledge platforms affiliated with the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom (Al-Saadi, 2022), which includes under it all educational institutions in its advanced stages and other parties that wish to benefit from its information services. It seeks to limit and broadcast digital information sources, especially Scientific journal articles, university dissertations, conference proceedings, and peer-reviewed books, in addition to making them available permanently and continuously through a unified platform that allows all members of Saudi universities, including students, researchers, and faculty members, to access them through subscriptions for Saudi universities and research centers, as their role is to support the educational and research process for faculty members. And graduate students in all Saudi universities and raising their level of information awareness to use digital information

sources provided to employees of Saudi universities through coordination with international and local publishers to train employees of Saudi universities on how to use digital information sources provided by the library through the training platform on its website. (The University Saudi Arabia, Learning Resources Guide,...).

SDL: Vision and mission:

Library vision: The library aspires to achieve leadership in services for acquiring and making digital information resources available at the national, Arab and global levels. Its mission is to provide, organize and disseminate local and international digital information sources to serve higher education and scientific research institutions and governmental and private institutions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

SDL: Objectives

In order to achieve its vision and mission, the SDL has set several goals, which are as follows: (SDL, 2023)

- 1-Supporting the university education system and serving employees of Saudi universities by providing information sources and services through the digital library portal.
- 2- Building a digital environment that keeps pace with technical developments in the electronic publishing industry, and this in turn will increase the speed of communication between researchers in the field of scientific production and publishing.
- 3- Acquiring digital books produced by prestigious universities in the world, as well as those produced by international commercial publishers in various disciplines.
- 4- Providing the effort of faculty members, researchers and others with regard to searching for and accessing information in the digital environment.
- 5-Sharing electronic information resources among digital library members.
- 6- Converting paper information sources produced by Saudi universities (faculty members' writings, master's and doctoral dissertations, scientific journals, research and conference papers, Saudi university publications) into digital sources.
- 7- Contributing to enriching digital Arabic content through electronic publishing of serious, value-added books and research.
- 8- Find one party that negotiates with publishers and obtains the best offers.

Operational environment and sections of the SDL:

Software: The library has many systems and programs that can be represented in the following: (Al-Sawy, 2023)

- Electronic publishing programs
- Content management programs
- Database management systems

-Rights management systems

- Open source software

Hardware and gear:

-Personal computers

- High-speed servers and storage

-Building a network and supporting devices.

SDL Collections:

The SDL contains a huge collection of digital knowledge sources, which are as follows: (Al-Sawy, 2023)

- 169 Arab and foreign databases

- 50,000 accredited scientific journals

- 450,000 e-books

- 5,000,000 scientific theses

- Sources of Arabic knowledge include: Dar Al-Mandumah Information Base, Language and Literature Arab Base, Askzad, Nature, Arabic Edition, Al-Jami' Web, Arab Collection Online, Rare Arabic Books from the British Library, Meem Scientific Book Portal. These databases are supervised and managed by a number From international and Arab publishers.

Foreign knowledge sources include (51) foreign databases and international publishers' websites.

- University theses: These include cultural attachés' letters, university theses available on the Askzad databases (Pro quest Dissertation) and the OATD Dissertation database.

- Saudi journals accredited by international publishing houses and issued by Saudi universities, which include (41) peer-reviewed scientific journals. These groups also have a wide linguistic coverage, as groups are available in German and French, in addition to Arabic. (Abu Saree, 2017)

The following is the library interface through which these resources are available:

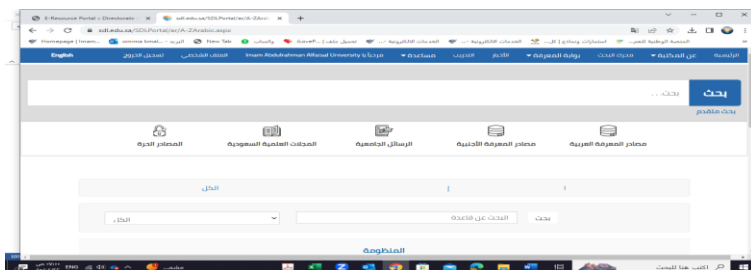


Figure No. (1) shows the sources of knowledge available in the SDL

In addition to the other software the library provides to support and encourage scientific research, the library provides many research tools to support researchers affiliated with higher education inside and outside the Kingdom, as follows: (SDL, 2023)

- Linguistic correction tools: represented by:

(QUILLBOT/LANGUAGE TOOL/ GRAMMAR CHECKER/ GRAMMARLY)

- Scientific elicitation tools are represented in: PUPUBLICHECKER.COM/ CHECKPLAGIARISM/PLAGRAMME.COM)

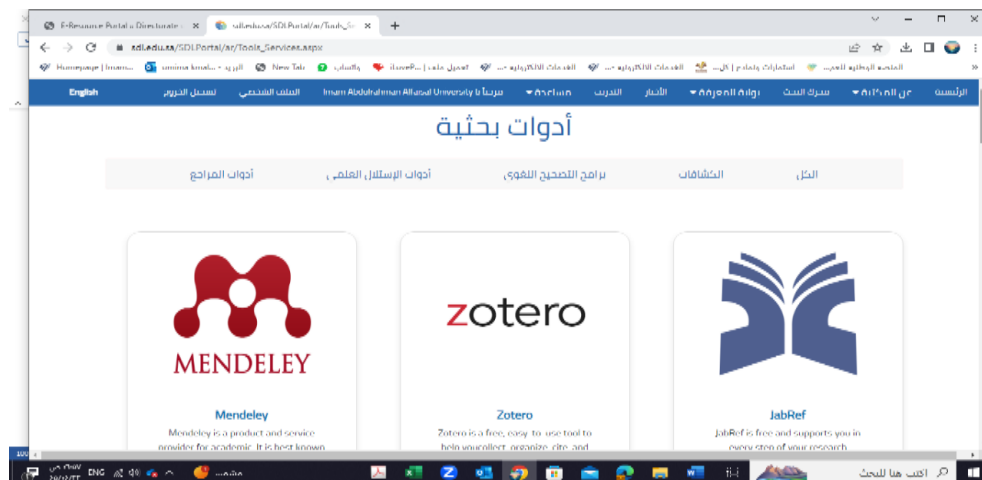
- Directories such as Director of open Access Journal (DOAJ)

SC image Journal and Country Ranke GOOGLE SCHOLAR- PUB MED-CLARIVATE-THE Directory of open access Scholarly Resources

- Reference tools (citation and documentation), which are:

Mendeley-Zotero- Jab Ref-Ref Works

Below is Figure No. (2) showing the research tools provided by the SDL to researchers



Information services at the SDL in light of international and national goals for sustainable development

Fourth goal: Ensure comprehensive quality education for all classes of society and enhance lifelong learning opportunities.

Ninth goal: Establish flexible infrastructure, promote the concept of sustainable manufacturing, and encourage innovation.

Sixteenth goal: which is to build healthy societies and consolidate the concept of justice to include groups and individuals.

SDL provides many services that can be represented in the following:

**Searching and browsing service:** A service available around the clock and there is no specific time to use the library, as any subscriber affiliated with any educational institution affiliated with higher education can browse the content of the site and benefit from it through the official portal of the library.

- **Search and retrieval service:** Search and retrieval operations are carried out through the unified index as well as through available databases. The simple and advanced search feature is also available through the resources portal.

- **Training and guidance services:** Through this service, the library works to spread information awareness among all library users by organizing training courses aimed at raising awareness of using the available electronic library resources and enhancing scientific research skills by introducing research tools and how to use them. The training courses available on the site are varied, as there are two forms of training, either direct or electronic. Beneficiaries can also choose their needs from the courses through the library's website or request specific courses. Beneficiaries usually have to browse the library's website to learn about the courses to be held in order to register.

- **Providing guidance services:** The library provides on its electronic portal a number of guidance guides that help beneficiaries make the most of its services and resources. There is a guide that explains the registration mechanism on the library portal, a guide that explains the registration mechanism and deposit of dissertations, and a library use policy guide.

In addition to its role in unlimited sharing of information sources to all beneficiaries in universities and research centers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and contributing to increasing the movement of scientific publishing for employees of Saudi universities and achieving a distinguished classification degree for publishing through global databases, in addition to sharing content with many regional and global digital library platforms in order to Saving expenses and expanding the availability of information.

The library's contribution to achieving the national and international SDGs:

By extrapolating the reality of the SDL and its services, it becomes clear that it is working to achieve tangible development in the information services provided to higher education in the Kingdom and its members, including researchers and faculty members, by enhancing integration with information and communications technology, as the library has provided a technical structure through which members of higher education have access to information. For the purpose of education, research, creativity, innovation and effective use of them, it has also provided, through the digital resources and software it provides for managing these knowledge sources, secure access to all available sources of knowledge. In doing so, it has provided a safe technical environment for the beneficiaries, as access to information is considered a comprehensive issue that supports all SDGs. Information technology also plays an important pivotal role in achieving sustainable development, as the vast potential it provides can be



harnessed in order to bring about sustainable development economically, socially and environmentally through the role of the library in promoting scientific research in Saudi universities, institutes and relevant research centers to achieve the goals of the national vision (an ambitious nation, A prosperous economy and a vibrant society). The library also achieved the principle of justice and equality in providing services, so that members of all universities and other educational institutions affiliated with higher education can enjoy its services, regardless of aspects related to the modernity, longevity of the institution, its size, or its smallness. Also, the library, as the largest scientific gathering in terms of acquired collections, available through its platform and through its agreements with international publishers, was able to make global knowledge available in all its specializations, and in doing so it may contribute to building the desired knowledge society and strengthening the knowledge-based economy, which represents one of the goals of Vision 2030. Based on this, From the Human Capacity Development Program and its strategic pillars and initiatives as one of the programs to achieve the Kingdom's 2030 vision for sustainable development, which focused on the necessity of intensifying innovative learning methods and using flexible learning options, technology-based learning solutions and providing access to electronic and blended learning tools, as technology and innovation are one of the possibilities for achieving Objectives of the human capacity development program. The Saudi Library has contributed through the safe technical environment it has provided and extensive and sustainable training for all beneficiaries with the aim of enhancing their skills in dealing with electronic information sources in addition to enhancing the research skills of researchers. Thus, it has contributed to achieving the fourth goal of the World Vision for Sustainable Development, which refers to ensuring the quality of comprehensive education for all members of society and enhancing lifelong learning opportunities.

## 5. Results and recommendations:

### Results:

- Digital libraries play an active role in achieving SDGs through secure and diverse technical infrastructure, and a variety of digital information sources.
- Digital libraries enhance the level of information awareness among users.
- Among digital libraries worldwide, SDL is distinguished in terms of knowledge resources acquired, its platforms, and through the large number of beneficiaries of its services, representing all segments of the academic community in Saudi Arabia's higher education institutions.
- Based on a solid network, SDL succeeded to link higher education institutions through a huge amount of information sources, and facilitated their access.
- Based on a Saudi Arabia vision 2030, the Digital Library was able to achieve and provide equal opportunities for all.
- Overall, SDL is strategic partner in fulfilling sustainable development and Saudi vision 2030.

## Recommendations:

- In order to be the national digital platform and effective development partner, SDL must expand the scope of services to include trade and industrial private and public sectors.
- To achieve SDGs, SDL must avail knowledge localization for all.
- Although the digitized Arabic publications represent a lower percentage compared to the English ones, SDL should sign more agreements with Arabic database publishers.
- Raise the level of research awareness and ethics among Arab scholars and researchers.

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