

DIGITAL LIBRARY INFORMATION RESOURCES AS TOOLS OF INFLUENCE ON SOCIAL UNITY

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Summary

A comprehensive analysis of the strategic vectors of influence of library electronic information resources on social cohesion processes during the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war was conducted. The essence of library digitalization as a tool for social cohesion, which involves uniting society through shared access to technology, knowledge, and opportunities for self-realization, is revealed. Using the example of the specialized full-text database "Ukraine in Foreign Press Reviews", produced by the V. I. Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, the mechanisms of the influence of digital content on the consolidation of Ukrainian society are detailed. The key functional areas of this influence are identified and characterized, in particular verification (provision of reliable information), communication (ensuring remote access), scientific and educational (expanding the scientific and educational worldview and developing media literacy). It has been demonstrated that during intense hybrid threats, libraries are transformed into critically important players on the information front.

Key words: library electronic information resources, database, access provision, verification, users, media literacy, social consolidation.

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1. Introduction

In the face of hybrid threats and information fragmentation, digital library resources represent a strategic foundation for national resilience, where societal consolidation occurs around verified information as an antidote to manipulative influences. The research's novelty lies in rethinking the digital transformation of libraries and the development of electronic information resources not as a technical process, but as a social and communicative component of societal unity. As libraries undergo a fundamental shift in their role from traditional book repositories to dynamic digital hubs, they face a key contradiction: the rapid adoption of technologies (SI, digitalization of collections, virtual services) is often viewed as merely a technical upgrade, while their impact on social cohesion remains understudied. In the context of full-scale Russian aggression, which is causing social turbulence, migration processes, and a digital divide, there is an urgent need to understand how the digital transformation of libraries, using a resource base, can become a tool for overcoming social isolation and uniting society, and not just a way to automate processes.

The aim of the study is a comprehensive analysis of the strategic vectors of influence of electronic information resources of libraries on the processes of ensuring social unity in the context of a full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war using the example of the specialized database

“Ukraine in Foreign Press Reviews” of the V. I. Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine (hereinafter – NLUV).

The objectives of the study are as follows: to uncover the essence of library digitalization as a tool for social cohesion; to clarify the criteria for selecting verified database information as a factor in social consolidation; to characterize the communicative potential of databases in promoting social unity; and to highlight the influence of scientific and educational components on unity in the digital environment.

The research topic lies at the intersection of social communications and library science. To obtain objective results, a comprehensive approach to defining methods was used. Specifically, systems analysis was employed to examine library digital resources as a holistic system interacting with society, the state, and individual users. A dialectical method helps explore the problem of developing access to knowledge and, consequently, community consolidation. Analysis and synthesis were used to determine how databases influence social cohesion.

The theoretical basis of the study was formed by the works of domestic and foreign scientists, including: Adetayo A. D., Omolara O. V., Olovookeri A., Sharma V., Rana K., Prakash Sati P., Koloskova G., Mikhailova A., Sokur O. L., Klimenko O. Z. and others. The absence of a thorough monographic work on the vectors of influence of electronic information resources of libraries on society during the Russian-Ukrainian war was noted.

2. Digitalization of libraries as a tool for social cohesion

The current stage of development of the global information society is characterized by total digitalization and changing paradigms of content consumption. It would seem that in a world where access to any information is provided “in one click”, traditional institutions such as libraries should lose their relevance. However, the reverse process is observed: in times of social atomization, the spread of disinformation and the “digital divide”, libraries are transformed from passive book repositories into dynamic centers of social consolidation (*Sharma et al., 2025: 168*).

These transformations are particularly significant for Ukrainian society due to the urgent need for a neutral space that fosters cohesion. Libraries are currently rethinking their role not only as a cognitive resource, but also as a “third place”, which, according to R. Oldenburg's concept, is a space located outside of home and work where informal interaction, the exchange of ideas, and the formation of local communities occur (*Oldenburg, 2023: 104*). In the context of digital transformation, the library is becoming almost the only open platform that provides equal access to knowledge, technology, and cultural dialogue for all segments of the population, regardless of their socio-economic status. In particular, using the example of the structural unit of the VNLU, the Fund of Presidents of Ukraine (hereinafter – FPU), which forms electronic information resources on the issues of the presidency and all-ukrainian issues, we can trace how the formation of a common cultural space and the strengthening of national identity in the digital environment is taking place. One of the most popular among users of the FPU is the specialized full-text bibliographic database the “Ukraine in Foreign Press Reviews” (hereinafter – DB), which covers socio-political events in the Ukrainian state, published in 26 popular foreign online media in 13 countries (*V. I. Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, 2011*). The information presented in the DB, which has been in operation since 2011, facilitates the rapid acquisition by users of logically structured information on the reactions of famous figures, experts, analytical institutes, etc., published on the pages of influential foreign media, in particular, to the Russian-Ukrainian war and its consequences for international politics.

The DB primary goal of providing government agencies with the necessary information to fulfill their mandates, as well as users of the global internet, is achieved through a complex set of influence vectors, through which digital resources in the hands of scholars and bibliographers become tools for social consolidation. Among the interconnected influence vectors, the following should be highlighted: verification, communication, and scientific and educational.

3. Verified information as a factor in social consolidation

Libraries provide access to reliable DB – this is not just a technical service, but a powerful tool that accumulates and produces significant information resources, guaranteeing their reliability. Therefore, one of the key vectors of the influence of DB that contribute to social consolidation is the provision of verified information. Unlike social media algorithms, the DB is compiled by professional bibliographers and scholars using criteria of scholarly quality, authority, and impartiality. Through systematic monitoring of foreign media, the DB selects information from reputable and influential publications such as the New York Post (USA), The Guardian (UK), Rzeczpospolita (Poland), Focus (Germany), and El Mundo (Spain). The following criteria are taken into account when selecting publications for the DB:

- the author must be a journalist, reporter, politician, expert, or military analyst, as well as an editorial team, such as Nick Hopkins, executive news editor of The Guardian, and Władysław Kosiniak-Kamish, deputy prime minister and minister of defense of Poland;
- the presence of references to influential institutions, such as the Institute for the Study of War (USA), the UN, the IAEA, the European Council, and others, as sources of information (articles attributed solely to an anonymous source are not considered);
- the presence of precise data in the material (names, dates, numbers, titles, for example: The Geneva Academy of International Law and Human Rights provided information that from 2024 to the end of 2025, the number of civilian deaths in Ukraine increased by 70 %;
- the accuracy of the content of the article in the abstract without adding one's own perspective, for example: Viktor Orban considers Ukraine an enemy of Hungary due to attempts to deprive the country of cheap Russian energy resources.

The DB materials are classified into objective categories to simplify searching. Specifically, the DB contains the following sections: activities of the Ukrainian government, Ukraine's European integration, peace proposals and the negotiation process, foreign expert opinion on the war in Ukraine, etc.

In order to popularize the DB and provide users with systematized information in a more accessible format, an information and analytical bulletin with a similar title, “Ukraine in Foreign Press Reviews” is being created. It is published online monthly and, in addition to a bibliography and links to official sources, contains a thorough analytical context of direction and tone (*VLNU, 2011*). A professional analysis of the DB materials demonstrates an impartial and objective approach to providing information to users.

Therefore, the DB contains only verified and structured materials from recognized authors and various institutions and organizations, which contrasts with the often unverified or biased information found on the open internet.

4. The communicative potential of the DB in the unity of society

The impact of public knowledge on social cohesion isn't simply a matter of access to numbers or texts. It's a process of transforming disparate information into shared knowledge, which becomes the foundation of mutual understanding within society. When people use shared resources, they begin to operate on shared facts, which is critical for consensus. This mitigates the influence of “information bubbles” and fake news that tend to divide society.

The DB exerts a communicative influence, serving, first and foremost, as a powerful tool for informational dialogue between Ukraine and the world, which is realized not through direct communication, but through the collection, processing, and dissemination of significant meanings. For example, the DB accumulates articles from The New York Times on Ukraine's integration into the EU, adding annotations and translations to them. This makes foreign discourse understandable to ukrainian consumers (civil servants, academics, journalists). Through the DB, Ukrainian society hears how it is perceived from outside, and analysts, relying on the DB data, prepare reports for government agencies. This allows for the adjustment of government information policy – that is, responding to criticism or reinforcing positive narratives in the international space.

Furthermore, the DB provides equal access to information resources to everyone – professors, students, and retirees alike – helping to narrow the digital and intellectual divide between different segments of the population. The advantage of library resources hosted online is that they provide easy and quick access to information, allowing users to search and consult sources remotely at their convenience (*Koloskova et al., 2024: 18*). By providing remote access to users, particularly those who are internally displaced persons or temporarily residing abroad during a full-scale russian invasion, the DB allows scholars, students, and all citizens, regardless of their location, to continue to use the materials. It should be noted that by consistently organizing access to document collections using electronic technologies, the VLNU strives to expand access to remote users. (*Sokur et al., 2022: 167*). Remote access to BD information 24/7 maintains communication between users and maintains involvement in the ukrainian information space.

5. Scientific and educational foundation for unity in the digital environment

Analysis of the impact of the scientific component of the DB on the unity of ukrainian society has shown its contribution to the expansion of the scientific worldview through familiarization with the views, approaches and results of analysis, expert forecasts and assessments regarding the war in Ukraine, which the DB contains both in annotated form and in full text. The DB provides researchers with systematized information from 13 countries of the world (USA, Great Britain, Germany, Poland, Japan, etc.), which allows for:

- comparative analysis: comparing how different countries and cultures perceive events in Ukraine;
- content analysis and imagology: studying the image of Ukraine that is being formed in the global media space;
- research into information wars: tracking foreign narratives and identifying attempts at disinformation or manipulation by the aggressor.

The DB data allows us to analyze not only current news, but also the dynamics of changing attitudes towards Ukraine since 2011, which is invaluable for historians and political

scientists. Although the DB is of a scientific and bibliographic nature, its impact on social unity is significant through several mechanisms: countering disinformation (scientific works written on the basis of the DB materials become the foundation for debunking myths, which works to consolidate society around true facts; a sense of global support; faith in victory, which is a critical factor in unity in times of crisis). Conducting high-quality scientific research and writing papers based on media publications by utilizing a wide range of thematic materials in the DB and ensuring access to information is important for the sustainable development of society. Digital libraries promote the systematic development of users' media literacy by developing comprehensive cognitive skills and practical competencies related to effective search, critical analysis, and ethical use of content in the electronic resource environment (Adetayo et al., 2023: 19). Working with DB, in particular, helps distinguish authoritative sources from dubious ones. DB contain materials from leading global media outlets with strict ethical codes, and users experience the application of such standards as balance of opinion, separation of facts from commentary, etc. Libraries are moving from a resource storage model to a model of providing intellectual services (Olowookere, 2025: 103). A systematized picture of global media discourse transforms information consumers from passive recipients to active analysts. The DB creates an intellectual standard, and when users become accustomed to high-quality, structured, and verified information, they automatically become more demanding of any online content. This is what media literacy is all about – the ability to base one's own opinion on proven facts, not manipulation.

By providing a high-quality level of satisfaction of the information needs of users through scientific and educational influence, the DB contributes to the increase of the general intellectual and spiritual potential of society, necessary for successful modernization and development.

6. Conclusions

The study found that library DB act as a strategic tool during wartime, ensuring the stability of national unity through effective verification (providing reliable information), communication (ensuring remote access), scientific and educational activities (expanding scientific worldview) and developing a competent approach to the media. The example of the “Ukraine in Foreign Press Reviews” database demonstrates that digital library content resources act as a mediator between the global media space and individual information consumers, transforming into an effective tool for ensuring social unity. It is revealed that the BD contributes to the formation of a homogeneous information environment, which is a necessary determinant of the sustainable development of the state and the preservation of national identity in the context of systemic challenges caused by russian aggression. We plan to direct further research toward determining the role of digital resources in different social groups through joint educational projects.

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