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The Influence of Technology Access, Socialization, and Social Preferences on the Use of the PLN Mobile Application at PT. PLN (Persero) Serui Customer Service Unit

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Abstract

This study aims to determine: 1) the influence of technology access on the use of the PLN Mobile application at PT. PLN (Persero) Serui Customer Service Unit, 2) the influence of socialization on the use of the PLN Mobile application at PT. PLN (Persero) Serui Customer Service Unit, 3) the influence of social preferences on the use of the PLN Mobile application at PT. PLN (Persero) Serui Customer Service Unit, and 4) the influence of technology access, socialization, and social preferences on the use of the PLN Mobile application at PT. PLN (Persero) Serui Customer Service Unit. This study used a quantitative survey method to analyze the factors influencing the use of the PLN Mobile application at the Serui ULP. A sample of 100 respondents was selected using purposive sampling techniques and the Slovin formula. Data were collected through a Likert questionnaire, observation, and documentation, then analyzed using descriptive statistics, validity, reliability, normality, linearity, t-test, F-test, multiple linear regression, and coefficient of determination using SPSS. The results indicate that technology access, socialization, and social preference have a positive and significant influence, both individually and simultaneously, on the use of the PLN Mobile application at PT PLN (Persero) ULP Serui. Technology adaptation is the most dominant factor driving application utilization, followed by socialization and social preference. Based on these findings, it is recommended that PLN improve technology training, expand outreach campaigns, and develop community-based promotions and recommendation programs to strengthen sustainable application use.

1. Introduction

In the era of globalization, mastery of information technology has become an essential requirement for Indonesian society to enhance efficiency, productivity, and global competitiveness. Information technology not only creates opportunities in digital trade, the creative industry, and digital-based services, but also promotes transparency and effectiveness in governance (Vionika, 2022; Situmeang et al., 2023). Delays in adopting technology risk hampering economic growth as well as limiting public access to information and public services.

In the context of public service delivery, the integration of information and communication technology requires transformation from both the government and state-owned enterprises. Effective communication is key to realizing transparency, accountability, and public participation (Nasrullah, 2021; Nurudin, 2019). Therefore, communication planning based on technology needs to be carried out systematically through the selection of appropriate media, the formulation of clear messages, and evaluation to ensure the effectiveness of information dissemination.

PT PLN (Persero), as a state-owned enterprise responsible for electricity services in Indonesia, plays a strategic role in improving public welfare through the provision of energy. To support more efficient services, PT PLN introduced an innovation in the form of PLN Mobile, a digital application based on Android launched on October 31, 2016. This application allows customers to pay bills, monitor electricity consumption, report disturbances, and submit suggestions or complaints in real-time (Shyntia, 2022; Sari et al., 2021).

The presence of PLN Mobile provides dual benefits: ease of access for customers and

improved responsiveness for PLN. However, utilization of the application has not been evenly distributed across regions, including in Serui City. Many local residents have not yet downloaded or understood how to use the application, so electricity services are still accessed conventionally through queues for bill payments or manual reporting. This condition reflects the low adoption of digital services in the region.

In this context, socialization plays a vital role in improving digital literacy among the community. Socialization not only introduces the features of PLN Mobile but also encourages behavioral changes so that people become more accustomed to using digital services. In addition, factors such as technology access and social preferences also influence the adoption rate of the application among customers.

Based on these phenomena, this study aims to analyze the influence of technology access, socialization, and social preferences on the use of the PLN Mobile application at PT PLN (Persero) Customer Service Unit Serui. This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the study of digital communication as well as practical benefits for PT PLN in formulating strategies to increase the utilization of PLN Mobile in the Papua region

2 Research Methods

2.1 Research Approach and Design

This study adopts a quantitative survey approach to collect data from PLN customers at the Customer Service Unit (ULP) in Serui. The survey method is chosen to objectively and systematically identify the factors influencing the use of the PLN Mobile application. The research is both descriptive and analytical, aiming to examine the relationship between technological access limitations, ease of use, socialization, social preferences, and device constraints with the level of application usage. To analyze these relationships, a multiple linear regression model will be employed to assess the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable. Data will be gathered through questionnaires distributed to customers who have or have not used the PLN Mobile application. The questionnaire consists of closed-ended questions measured using a five-point Likert scale to evaluate each research indicator.

2.2 Researcher's Role

The role of this research is to provide an empirical understanding of the factors influencing the adoption and usage of the PLN Mobile application among customers in Serui. By applying a quantitative survey method and multiple regression analysis, the study seeks to identify how technological access, ease of use, socialization, social preferences, and device limitations affect user behavior. The findings are expected to assist PLN in improving its digital service strategies, enhancing customer satisfaction, and strengthening public trust in digital-based services.

At the academic level, this research contributes to the broader discussion on digital transformation in the public sector, particularly in utility services. It also offers practical recommendations for policymakers and public service providers in designing more inclusive and citizen-centered digital applications

2.3 Research Site and Period

The research will be conducted at PT PLN (Persero), Customer Service Unit (ULP) Serui, located in Yapen Islands Regency, Papua Province. This site was chosen due to its strong relevance to the research topic, particularly in relation to customer service activities carried out at ULP Serui. The study is scheduled to take place over a three-month period, from May to July 2025, covering the stages of preparation, data collection, data analysis, and the writing of the final research report.

2.4 Data Sources

The data used in this study consist of both primary and secondary sources.

2.4.1 Primary Data

Primary data are collected directly by the researcher through various techniques such as interviews, questionnaires, observations, and experiments. These data are typically specific and unique to the study but often require considerable time and resources to obtain. Meanwhile.

2.4.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data are gathered by other parties and subsequently used by the researcher. Such data may come from scientific publications, government reports, databases, or other information sources. Compared to primary data, secondary data are generally easier to access and less costly, though they may present limitations in terms of relevance and quality.

2.5 Data Collection Techniques

a. Questionnaires serve as the main method of quantitative data collection in this study. The instrument is designed using a five-point Likert scale to measure respondents' perceptions of various variables, such as technological access, socialization, social preferences, and the use of the PLN Mobile application. The scale ranges from:
   a) Strongly Agree (SA) = 5
   b) Agree (A) = 4
   c) Neutral (N) = 3
   d) Disagree (D) = 2
   e) Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1
b. Observation is employed as a supporting method to directly examine how customers interact with the PLN Mobile application. Through this approach, the researcher can observe user behavior while navigating the application's features. Observation also helps identify potential technical barriers or user difficulties that may not be revealed through questionnaires, thereby providing a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the user experience with the digital service.
c. Documentation is used as a complementary method by utilizing secondary data sources such as official reports from PT PLN (Persero), research journals, and relevant scientific articles. This method aims to strengthen the analysis results and provide broader context to the data obtained from respondents. By reviewing these documents, the researcher can gather additional information that supports the understanding of the studied phenomenon, while also ensuring the validity and accuracy of the findings obtained through other methods such as questionnaires and observations

2.6 Data Analysis Techniques

The data will be analyzed quantitatively. First, the validity test (Pearson correlation) and reliability test (Cronbach's Alpha, $\alpha \geq 0.70$) will be conducted to ensure the quality of the questionnaire. Then, a descriptive analysis will summarize respondents' characteristics and responses.

Before regression, classical assumption tests will be applied, including normality (Kolmogorov–Smirnov), multicollinearity (VIF < 10, Tolerance > 0.10), heteroscedasticity (Glejser test), and autocorrelation (Durbin–Watson).

The main analysis uses multiple linear regression with the model:

Y=a+b1X1+b2X2+b3X3+eY = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + eY=a+b1X1+b2X2+b3X3+e

where Y = PLN Mobile usage, X_1 = Technology Access, X_2 = Socialization, X_3 = Social Preference. To test significance, t-tests (partial effects) and F-test (simultaneous effects) will be used with a 5% significance level. The coefficient of determination (R^2) will measure how much variation in Y can be explained by X_1, X_2, and X_3.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Research Results

4.1.1 Respondent Characteristics

Table 1 Respondents by Age

No	Age Group	Number	Percentage
1	Under 20 Years	0	0%
2	21–30 Years	43	43%
3	31–40 Years	26	26%
4	Above 40 Years	31	31%
Total		100	100%

Table 2 Respondents by Gender

No	Gender	Number	Percentage
1	Male	50	50%
2	Female	50	50%
Total		100	100%

Table 3 Respondents by Educational Background

No	Education Level	Number	Percentage
1	Elementary School	2	2%
2	Junior High School	4	4%
3	Senior High School	57	57%
4	Diploma	8	8%
5	Bachelor's Degree	25	25%
6	Master's Degree	4	4%
Total		100	100%

3.1.2 Validity Test

Table 4 Validity

Variable	Number of Items	R-calculated (Range)	R-table	Result
Technology Access (X1)	8	0.300 – 0.707	0.197	All Valid
Socialization (X2)	8	0.301 – 0.715	0.197	All Valid
Social Preference (X3)	7	0.304 – 0.582	0.197	All Valid
PLN Mobile Usage (Y)	7	0.389 – 0.469	0.197	All Valid

3.1.4 Reliability Test

Table 4 Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Result
Technology Access (X1)	0.616	Reliable
Socialization (X2)	0.623	Reliable
Social Preference (X3)	0.669	Reliable
PLN Mobile Usage (Y)	0.699	Reliable

3.1.5 Normality Test (Kolmogorov-Smirnov)

Table 5 Normality

N	Sig. (2-tailed)	Threshold	Result
100	0.200	0.05	Normal Data

3.1.5 Linearity Test

Table 6 Normality

Variable Relationship	Sig.	Threshold	Result
Y → X1	0.239	0.05	Linear
Y → X2	0.256	0.05	Linear
Y → X3	0.668	0.05	Linear

Multiple Linear Regression

Multiple linear regression is a method used to examine the effect of independent variables (X), namely technology access, socialization, and social preference, on the dependent variable (Y), which is the usage of the PLN Mobile application. Based on the results of multiple linear regression analysis, the following model equation was obtained:

Y=22.471+0.370X1+0.296X2+0.283X3Y = 22.471 + 0.370X1 + 0.296X2 + 0.283X3Y=22.471+0.370X1+0.296X2+0.283X3

Interpretation of Coefficients:

a. Constant (22.471)

The constant value of 22.471 indicates that if technology access, socialization, and social preference are assumed to be constant (zero), the usage score of the PLN Mobile application would be 22.471 units.

b. Coefficient X1 (0.370)

The regression coefficient for technology access (X1) is 0.370, with a significance value of 0.000 (< 0.05). This means that each 1-unit increase in technology access will increase PLN Mobile usage by 0.370 units, assuming other variables remain constant. Thus, technology access has a positive and significant effect on application usage.

c. Coefficient X2 (0.296)

The regression coefficient for socialization (X2) is 0.296, with a significance value of 0.000 (< 0.05). This indicates that each 1-unit increase in socialization will increase PLN Mobile usage by 0.296 units. Hence, socialization has a positive and significant effect on application usage.

d. Coefficient X3 (0.283)

The regression coefficient for social preference (X3) is 0.283, with a significance value of 0.002 (< 0.05). This means that each 1-unit increase in social preference will increase PLN Mobile usage by 0.283 units, showing that social preference also has a positive and significant effect.

3.1.6 Hypothesis Testing

a. T-Test

This test is used to determine whether the independent variables (X1, X2, X3) have a significant partial effect on the dependent variable (Y). A one-tailed test with a 5% significance level (0.05) is used. If the significance value < 0.05, the independent variable is considered to have a positive influence.

Table 7 T-Test Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.
(Constant)	22.471	2.933	–	7.662	.000
Technology Access	.370	.072	.574	5.151	.000
Socialization	.296	.076	.441	3.903	.000
Social Preference	.283	.088	.288	3.225	.002

Dependent Variable: PLN Mobile Application Usage

(Source: SPSS Data Processing, 2025)

a. Effect of Technology Access (X1) on PLN Mobile Usage (Y):
   Coefficient = 0.370, t = 5.151, sig. = 0.000 < 0.05 → Technology access significantly influences PLN Mobile usage. Hypothesis H1 is accepted.
b. Effect of Socialization (X2) on PLN Mobile Usage (Y):
   Coefficient = 0.296, t = 3.903, sig. = 0.000 < 0.05 → Socialization significantly influences PLN Mobile usage. Hypothesis H2 is accepted.
c. Effect of Social Preference (X3) on PLN Mobile Usage (Y):
   Coefficient = 0.283, t = 3.225, sig. = 0.002 < 0.05 → Social preference significantly influences PLN Mobile usage. Hypothesis H3 is accepted.

b. F-Test

The F-test is used to determine whether the independent variables simultaneously affect the dependent variable. The significance level used is 0.05. If the significance value < 0.05, it means that the independent variables together significantly influence the dependent variable.

Table 8 F-Test Results (ANOVA)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	128.563	3	42.854	12.849	.000
Residual	320.187	96	3.335	–	–
Total	448.750	99	–	–	–

Dependent Variable: PLN Mobile Application Usage

Predictors: (Constant), Social Preference, Technology Access, Socialization

(Source: SPSS Data Processing, 2025)

Result: F = 12.849, sig. = 0.000 < 0.05 → Technology access, socialization, and social

preference simultaneously have a significant influence on PLN Mobile usage. Hypothesis H4 is accepted.

c. Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The coefficient of determination (R^2) shows how well the regression model explains the variability of the dependent variable.

Table 9 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.535a	.286	.264	1.826

Predictors: (Constant), Social Preference, Technology Access, Socialization

(Source: SPSS Data Processing, 2025)

Interpretation:

1. R^2 = 0.286 → The independent variables explain 28.6% of the variation in PLN Mobile usage.
2. The remaining 71.4% is influenced by other factors not included in the model.
3. Adjusted R^2 = 0.264 → Adjusted for the number of predictors, confirming that although the contribution of the three variables is meaningful, other external factors play a greater role in influencing user behavior.

3.1 Discussion

3.1.1 The Influence of Technology Access on the Use of the PLN Mobile Application at PT. PLN (Persero) Customer Service Unit (ULP) Serui

Technology access is one of the key factors that determine the level of utilization of digital services, including the PLN Mobile application. In the context of PT. PLN (Persero) ULP Serui, easy access to technological devices such as smartphones, internet networks, and supporting infrastructure plays a crucial role in encouraging customers to shift toward application-based services. Adequate access allows users to quickly obtain information, make payments, report disruptions, and use other available features in PLN Mobile. Conversely, limited technology access can be a significant obstacle, reducing both interest and ability to optimally utilize digital services.

The results of descriptive statistical analysis indicate that most respondents have good access to technology to support the use of the PLN Mobile application. The majority of respondents own adequate technological devices, stable internet connections, and hardware compatible with the application. Moreover, technology has become a part of their daily routine, with sufficient skills to adapt to technological developments, overcome minor technical issues, and learn new technologies without hesitation. Respondents also showed a willingness to try new features in digital applications. Overall, these findings suggest that technology access is not a major barrier for respondents in using the PLN Mobile application.

Hypothesis testing results show that the technology access variable (X1) has a positive and significant effect on the use of the PLN Mobile application at PT. PLN (Persero) ULP Serui. This is supported by a regression coefficient of 0.370, a t-value of 5.151, and a significance level of 0.000 (< 0.05). These findings indicate that every one-unit increase in technology access will increase the use of PLN Mobile by 0.370 units, assuming other variables remain constant. Thus, the first hypothesis (H1), which states that technology access significantly affects the use of PLN Mobile, is accepted, with a positive relationship—meaning the higher the level of technology access, the higher the application usage.

3.1.2 The Influence of Socialization on the Use of the PLN Mobile Application at PT. PLN (Persero) ULP Serui

Socialization is an important factor influencing the level of utilization of the PLN Mobile application by customers. Through effective socialization, customers can gain a better understanding of the functions, benefits, and usage of the application. Socialization

activities may take place through various media, such as brochures, social media campaigns, advertisements, or direct interaction between PLN officers and customers. At PT. PLN (Persero) ULP Serui, planned socialization efforts are expected to increase public awareness and interest in shifting toward digital services. This is especially important since not all customers initially have sufficient knowledge about the existence and features of the PLN Mobile application.

Descriptive statistical analysis results indicate that the socialization efforts of PT. PLN (Persero) ULP Serui have been fairly effective and positively received by most respondents. The intensity of promotional campaigns is considered high, carried out through regular information sharing and multiple media channels such as social media, mass media, and direct delivery by PLN officers. Socialization activities are also supported by community participation in training sessions, easy-to-understand materials, and sufficient information about the application. Overall, the majority of respondents agree that socialization activities have increased awareness and understanding of the PLN Mobile application.

Hypothesis testing results show that the regression coefficient of the socialization variable (X2) is 0.296, with a t-value of 3.903 and a significance level of 0.000 (< 0.05). This indicates that every one-unit increase in socialization increases the use of the PLN Mobile application by 0.296 units. Thus, socialization has a positive and significant effect on application usage. Therefore, the second hypothesis (H2), which states that socialization significantly influences the use of the PLN Mobile application at PT. PLN (Persero) ULP Serui, is accepted.

3.1.3 The Influence of Social Preferences on the Use of the PLN Mobile Application at PT. PLN (Persero) ULP Serui

Social preference refers to the tendency of individuals to make decisions or act based on values, habits, and social influences from their environment. In the context of PLN Mobile, social preferences can be seen from the extent to which customers follow trends, rely on recommendations from close acquaintances, or are influenced by their social groups. At PT. PLN (Persero) ULP Serui, this factor has the potential to be a significant driver, as consumer behavior is often shaped by the experiences and opinions of others. For instance, customers who observe relatives or neighbors benefiting from PLN Mobile are more likely to adopt the application themselves.

Descriptive statistical analysis results show that the social environment plays an important role in encouraging the use of PLN Mobile at PT. PLN (Persero) ULP Serui. The majority of respondents exhibit high levels of trust in the security, reliability, and practicality of digital services, and they already have routines involving digital applications. In addition, support from family, recommendations from friends or colleagues, and positive social influences strengthen public interest in using the application. These findings highlight that social preferences significantly shape consumer behavior toward PLN Mobile usage.

Hypothesis testing results show that the regression coefficient of the social preference variable (X3) is 0.283, with a t-value of 3.225 and a significance level of 0.002 (< 0.05). This proves that every one-unit increase in social preferences increases the use of PLN Mobile by 0.283 units. Thus, social preference has a positive and significant effect on application usage. Therefore, the third hypothesis (H3), which states that social preference significantly influences the use of PLN Mobile at PT. PLN (Persero) ULP Serui, is accepted.

3.1.4 The Influence of Technology Access, Socialization, and Social Preferences on the Use of the PLN Mobile Application at PT. PLN (Persero) ULP Serui

The development of digital technology has encouraged public service companies, including PT. PLN (Persero), to optimize services through application-based innovations. PLN Mobile was introduced as a solution to facilitate customer access to services in a faster, more practical, and efficient way. However, the level of application utilization in practice is influenced by several factors, including access to technology (device and internet availability), socialization efforts by the company, and social preferences linked to community habits and influences. At PT. PLN (Persero) ULP Serui, these three factors play important roles in determining customers' willingness and ability to use PLN Mobile.

Descriptive statistical analysis results indicate that the utilization level of the application is high, both in terms of frequency, types of services used, and user satisfaction. Most respondents use the application regularly—often more than once a month—mainly for bill payment and outage reporting. Moreover, the majority of users expressed satisfaction with service speed, ease of access to features, and overall user experience. These findings suggest that PLN Mobile has effectively functioned as a digital service tool, simplifying and enhancing customer interactions with PLN.

Hypothesis testing results show that the F-value is 12.849 with a significance level of 0.000 (< 0.05), indicating that technology access, socialization, and social preferences simultaneously have a significant effect on PLN Mobile usage at PT. PLN (Persero) ULP Serui, thus supporting the fourth hypothesis (H4). The R Square value of 0.286 means that these three variables explain 28.6% of the variation in application usage, while the remaining 71.4% is influenced by other factors outside the study. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.264 suggests that although these variables contribute meaningfully, other factors still play a larger role in shaping user behavior.

4. Conclusion

4.1 Summary of Findings

This study investigated the influence of technology access, socialization, and social preferences on the use of the PLN Mobile application at PT. PLN (Persero) Customer Service Unit (ULP) Serui. The empirical results reveal that all three independent variables technology access, socialization, and social preference have a positive and significant effect on PLN Mobile usage, both individually and simultaneously. Technology access emerged as the most dominant factor, indicating that adequate infrastructure, smartphone ownership, and internet connectivity substantially support the transition from conventional to digital services.

Socialization activities by PLN also play a vital role in increasing public awareness, digital literacy, and trust in the use of PLN Mobile. Meanwhile, social preferences—reflected through family influence, peer recommendations, and social group behavior—strengthen the acceptance and habitual use of digital applications among customers. Collectively, these factors explain 28.6% of the variance in PLN Mobile utilization, suggesting that other contextual or behavioral aspects may further contribute to the adoption process.

4.2 Theoretical Implications

The findings of this research provide meaningful contributions to the literature on digital transformation and technology adoption in public service organizations. First, the results reinforce the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Diffusion of Innovation Theory, which highlight the roles of accessibility, perceived usefulness, and social influence in driving digital adoption.

Second, this study contributes to the body of knowledge on digital service communication, showing that socialization and social preferences are not merely supporting factors but act as significant determinants of user engagement and technology diffusion,

particularly in peripheral regions like Serui. Third, the study bridges the gap between technological infrastructure readiness and behavioral adaptation, emphasizing that digital transformation in public utilities requires both structural (technological) and cultural (social) reinforcement. Thus, the findings extend theoretical discussions on how digital public services can effectively penetrate regions with diverse socio-technological characteristics.

4.3 Practical Implications

From a managerial and policy perspective, the findings suggest several actionable strategies for PT. PLN (Persero) and other public service institutions aiming to enhance digital service adoption:

1. Enhancing Technology Access: PLN should strengthen infrastructure quality, expand internet coverage, and provide technical support or tutorial features in local languages to accommodate users with limited digital literacy.
2. Intensifying Socialization Programs: Regular campaigns through social media, community engagement, and offline events can increase public awareness and build confidence in using PLN Mobile. Integrating customer education into payment centers or rural service units would help reach less digitally active users.
3. Leveraging Social Influence: PLN can design community-based promotion models such as "refer-a-friend" programs or neighborhood digital ambassador initiatives to utilize peer networks as channels of behavioral diffusion.
4. Continuous Evaluation and Innovation: Monitoring user feedback, simplifying the app interface, and maintaining service reliability are crucial for sustaining long-term adoption and user satisfaction. By applying these approaches, PLN can accelerate the digital transformation of its services, minimize conventional service dependency, and increase operational efficiency and customer satisfaction.

4.4 Recommendations and Future Research Directions

While this study has provided valuable insights, several limitations open opportunities for future research. First, the explanatory power (R^2 = 28.6%) indicates that other factors such as perceived usefulness, trust, security concerns, or demographic characteristics may also influence PLN Mobile adoption. Future studies should incorporate these variables to enhance model robustness. Second, this research focused solely on the Serui region; therefore, comparative studies across multiple PLN units or provinces could offer a broader understanding of regional disparities in digital service adoption.

Third, a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative analyses could capture deeper insights into behavioral motives and cultural nuances affecting user engagement. Lastly, exploring longitudinal data could reveal how sustained socialization and technological adaptation shape long-term behavioral change.

In conclusion, strengthening technology access, socialization, and social preference frameworks can collectively accelerate the digital transformation of PT. PLN (Persero) and enhance inclusive public service delivery in Indonesia's digital era.

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