



Digital Literacy: Fundamental Competence for Modern Society

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Digital literacy;
Information technology;
Modern society

Article history:

Received 2023-12-08
Revised 2024-01-07
Accepted 2024-02-13

ABSTRACT

This research highlights the significance of digital literacy in our increasingly interconnected modern society through information technology. It addresses the primary challenges faced by modern society in managing information in the digital era, including the spread of fake news and data privacy breaches. The research aims to elucidate the contribution of digital literacy in addressing these challenges faced by modern society and identify its positive impacts in safeguarding data security, combating misinformation, and enabling active participation in the digital community. The research methodology employed a systematic literature review (SLR) to gather, evaluate, and synthesize literature related to modern society and digital literacy. The findings of the research reveal that digital literacy plays a pivotal role in assisting individuals in comprehending, filtering, and assessing information encountered online while safeguarding their privacy in the digital environment. In conclusion, digital literacy is not just a technical skill but also the key to responsibly and wisely harnessing digital opportunities. For further research, it is recommended to explore the implementation and effectiveness of digital literacy programmes at various levels of education and society, dig the impact of digital Literacy on mental well-being, investigate ethical aspects and digital responsibility, and formulate digital literature policies to create a safer and more trustworthy online environment.

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INTRODUCTION

The globalization and information technology revolution have made it simpler and quicker to access a variety of information types. The old communication paradigm has changed due to the rapid

rise of online platforms, social networks, and internet-based apps. This has brought about new opportunities and problems for individuals, communities, and institutions (Umayyah, 2022). Wider and quicker access to information is one of the major effects of the use of digital technology (Zis et al., 2021). People may quickly and easily look for information from a variety of sources online without being constrained by time or location thanks to the internet (Aglaiia & Aesthetika, 2022). However, because there is so much content available online, people must develop their critical thinking abilities in order to distinguish between reliable and inaccurate sources of information. As a result, controlling and confirming the authenticity of information has become more difficult.

Recent years have seen a rapid growth of technology, with major societal effects that require careful consideration (D. E. G. Lestari, 2020). Meutia (2017) estimates that by 2025, the Internet of Things (IoT) will cover about 26 billion objects, connecting 4 billion people. The We Are Social report, as of January 2023, shows that the number of Internet users in Indonesia reached 213 million people, representing 77% of the total population of 276.4 million at the beginning of the year. This figure shows an increase of 5.44% compared to the previous year, whereas by January 2022, the total Internet user in Indonesia only reached 202 million people. The report also notes that the average Indonesian spends 7 hours and 42 minutes a day using the Internet. (Annur, 2023). This fact indicates that social life is significantly linked to the Internet, describing that we are already in a deep digital age as a result of the growth of technology.

According to Oktaviana et al. (2021), social media and content sharing platforms have grown in importance as tools for conveying ideas and information. They have made it possible for people to actively engage in message dissemination and public opinion shaping in ways that were previously challenging. But this phenomena also calls into question the veracity and accuracy of information, since misinformation and false information can have detrimental effects on society, politics, and the economy. The problem of data security and privacy is one crucial element (Khan & Ansari, 2019). Concerns around the use of personal data by third parties are becoming more pertinent due to the volume of data that technology businesses and internet platforms are creating and collecting. Concerns over the necessity of more stringent regulatory measures to safeguard individual privacy rights and control the responsible use of data have been highlighted by the disclosure of privacy breaches and instances of data misuse (Martin et al., 2019).

Apart from the noteworthy surge in the utilization of digital technology and the internet, the copious amount of information accessible presents formidable obstacles for the community in terms of discerning and comprehending reliable, precise, and legitimate information (Fatmawati, 2012). A world full of many sources and viewpoints has resulted from the issue of information overload, making it challenging for people to discern between news that is based on facts and fake news (hoaxes). Furthermore, a major social impact of the growth of digital technology is the intentional dissemination of misleading information or fake news, or hoaxes. The ease and speed with which information can now be shared via social media and other online channels has made it possible for false information to proliferate and sway public opinion. This may cause division in opinions, foster mistrust of reliable information sources, and maybe have an effect on political processes and elections (Nur et al., 2022).

The difficulty of confirming the accuracy and dependability of information is one of the primary obstacles in managing information overload (Majerczak & Strzelecki, 2022). With the rise of alternative news sources and social media, a large amount of information is produced and shared by people or organizations without strict editorial or monitoring procedures. This implies that without a solid factual foundation, unsubstantiated information can spread quickly and take hold as the mainstream opinion. The dissemination of false information has the potential to sway public opinion,

creating societal divisions, mistrust of authorities, and even jeopardizing the democratic process (Aisyah et al., 2022). Furthermore, how information is presented to users is impacted by the advancement of sophisticated search technologies and algorithms. Filter bubbles can be produced by search engines and social media platforms since they frequently display results based on user behavior and past preferences. People in these information bubbles are only exposed to viewpoints that support their own, marginalizing or even ignoring opposing viewpoints or contradicting information. Consequently, there is a restriction on access to a wide range of viewpoints and thorough information, which can exacerbate societal division and obstruct the development of shared understanding (Shu et al., 2020).

Digital technology has affected not just how information is distributed and disseminated, but also how society interprets information (Adhianto et al., 2019). People's behaviors in terms of finding, processing, and comprehending information have changed due to the rise in the usage of smart gadgets and ongoing connectivity. The need to quickly digest information and multitask is a result of the constant flow of information, which might impair one's ability to pay attention and think deeply about a subject. In this fast-paced and complicated era of information, honing important abilities in information verification, source evaluation, and fake news detection has become imperative (Shahzad et al., 2022). Public awareness of the value of evaluating and comprehending information carefully must be actively promoted by educational institutions, media outlets, and neighborhood associations.

This research aims to explore and understand the importance of digital literacy in the context of modern society. The research will focus on understanding the contribution of digital literacy to the effectiveness and intelligence of society in dealing with various aspects related to the development of digital technology and the internet. Additionally, the research will identify the positive impacts generated by digital literacy in addressing data security and privacy challenges and how digital literacy can help people maintain balance and psychological well-being in a fast-paced digital environment. The research will examine how a strong understanding of digital technology and the ability to use devices and applications wisely influence people's decisions in protecting their personal data and addressing security threats in the digital environment. The results of this research are expected to provide a valuable contribution to the understanding and development of digital literacy in addressing the various challenges faced by society in an increasingly advanced digital era.

METHODS

This research employs the systematic literature review (SLR) method to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the importance of digital literacy in the context of modern society. SLR is a systematic approach to gather, evaluate, and synthesize relevant literature from various sources of scholarly articles that have been published in academic journals (Mengist et al., 2020). This method helps identify trends, similarities, and differences in previous research conducted on modern society and digital literacy.

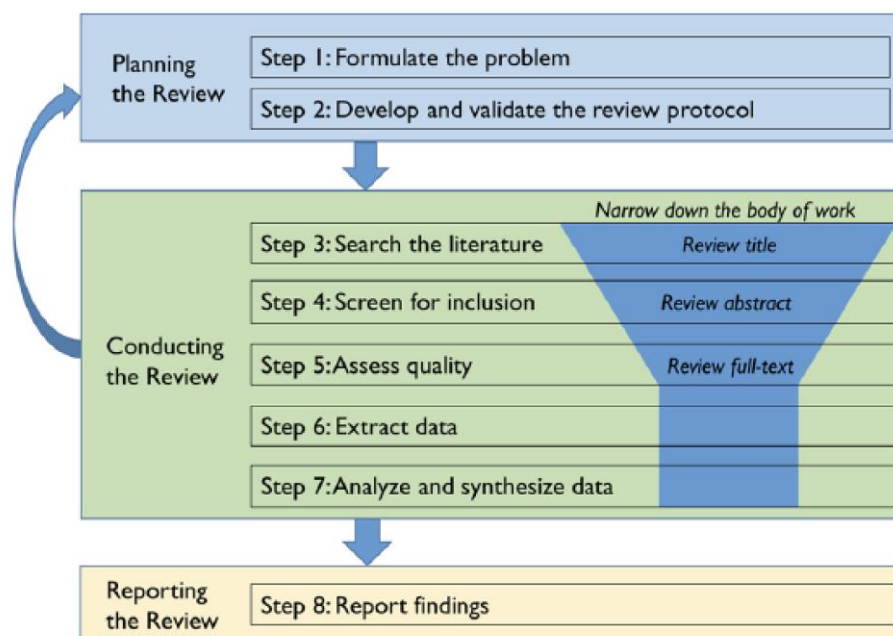


Figure 1. Process of Systematic Literature Review (Xiao & Watson, 2019)

The initial stage of this research involves formulating research questions about the challenges faced by modern society and the importance of digital literacy. These research questions guide the search for literature that aligns with the research objectives, while the research protocol will govern the process of selecting and evaluating literature to be included in the analysis (Madiistriyatno & Alwiyah, 2023). The next step is to systematically search for literature through Google Scholar. Relevant databases and reference sources are searched using keywords that are pertinent to the research topic, which is related to modern society and digital literacy. Once relevant literature has been identified, literature selection is carried out based on inclusion and exclusion criteria specified in the research protocol. After suitable literature has been chosen, an evaluation of the quality and relevance of each study to be included in the analysis takes place. This involves assessing the research methodology, data validity, and the relevance of findings to the research questions. The final step in this research is to synthesize the findings from the evaluated literature and create a detailed report. This is done by identifying patterns and similarities in findings from different studies and systematically summarizing the results (Davila & Nunes, 2021).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From the search results of 200 literatures in the last five years (2019-2023) through Google Scholar using the Publish or Perish search tool, the most relevant title related to the topic of Digital Literacy for Modern Society was chosen for in-depth analysis.

Publish or Perish (macOS GUI Edition)								
Search terms	Source	Papers	Cites	Cites/ye...	h	g	hi,norm	hi,annual
✓ modern society, digital literac...	G Google Scho...	200	7.496	1.499,20	49	79	32	6,40

Figure 2. Publish or Perish Data Search Results (Google Scholar 2019-2023)

Based on the analysis of several relevant articles, this research reveals the challenges faced by modern society and highlights the importance of digital literacy in adapting to changing times. These articles delve into the various issues confronting modern society in an ever-evolving digital technology era, including challenges related to information overload and the spread of fake news, as well as privacy and data security concerns. In line with these challenges, digital literacy emerges as a highly crucial skill in helping individuals and communities navigate this complexity, encompassing the ability to verify information, identify trustworthy sources, and safeguard privacy in the rapidly evolving digital environment.

Modern Society in the Digital Era

With the rapid progress of information technology, modern society has experienced considerable changes (Hafni, 2018; Muzaini, 2014). This phenomena has affected social connection, globalization of knowledge, and communication patterns, among other facets of modern life. According to Steyn et al. (2018), information technology is now a key component of modern society's growth. The internet in particular has had a significant impact on how people communicate in today's society. Before the advent of the internet, communication was frequently hampered by restrictions related to time and place. However, communication has gotten easier, faster, and more accessible since the invention of the internet (Lestari et al., 2023). Nowadays, people can instantly contact with people anywhere in the world using a variety of platforms, including social media, video calls, email, and instant messaging. As a result, geographical limitations that formerly hindered long-distance communication have been removed via the internet (Santoso et al., 2018).

In contemporary civilization, the process of globalization refers to the phenomena whereby the world becomes more interconnected through international trade, information sharing, and cultural interchange (Rizik et al., 2021; Sajal et al., 2019). Information may now easily travel across national and cultural borders thanks to the internet, which has connected people all over the world (Yarlagadda, 2018). Online resources include news, statistics, science, art, culture, and much more. As a result, people have easier access to a wider variety of viewpoints, ideas, and experiences from around the globe (Kornienko, 2015). In light of this, contemporary society is opening up to ideas and viewpoints from throughout the world (Rasdiany et al., 2021). People can learn more about international relations and global challenges by having greater access to news and information from around the world. They are able to stay up to date on global events pertaining to political, economic, environmental, and social issues (Dari et al., 2023). Because modern civilization can enjoy music, movies, food, and art from different cultures without having to go far, this also helps to broaden cultural horizons.

The way we create and sustain social interactions has changed significantly as a result of the increased connectivity brought about by information technology, particularly social media (Abdullah, n.d.). Social media's capacity to transcend regional boundaries is one important development it has brought about (Gaile, 2013). We can now regularly stay in touch with our friends and family, no matter how far away they live. One of the main ways that social media affects social interactions is through instantaneous communication (Mirzagitova et al., 2017). Even if we live thousands of kilometers apart, we can communicate with friends and family virtually thanks to group chats, video calls, and instant messaging. As a result, even though we live in different countries, we can enjoy significant occasions together and the feeling of separation is eliminated (Isachenko, 2018).

Challenges of Modern Society

In the digital age, modern society must contend with complicated issues that are changing quickly (Istati & Hafidzi, 2020). The dissemination of fake news, or hoaxes, is a significant problem that is worrying modern society more and more. According to Jehamat et al. (2020), hoaxes are deliberate propagations of false information intended to mislead or fool the public. With social media platforms, websites, and messaging applications, information can travel fast and readily in today's digitally connected society (Bulganina et al., 2021; Mammadova & Ahmadov, 2017). This makes it possible for false information or fake news to spread quickly and widely, frequently without any explanation or verification. The propagation of hoaxes and fake news has a big influence on contemporary society (Anugrah et al., 2023). First of all, people's reactions to hoaxes are frequently exaggerated, leading to feelings of fear and panic. Alarming fake news can readily elicit emotional reactions that are out of proportion to reality in a time when information can travel quickly through social media and other online platforms (Zheltukhina et al., 2016). Social stability may be affected by this since individuals often respond to startling false information instead of factual knowledge. False information spreads quickly, making it difficult for people to tell fact from fiction. Making crucial decisions, such those regarding one's health or finances, may become ambiguous as a result of this. This uncertainty can have long-term effects and hinder society's ability to make wise plans (Aziz, 2022).

Regarding the propagation of hoaxes, political influence is another significant factor (Guess & Munger, 2023). In the world of politics, spreading false information on purpose can have grave and concerning repercussions. The fundamental tenets of the democratic process that underpins the political system of governance could be compromised by hoaxes intended to sway public opinion about a specific political candidate or party (Judge & Korhani, 2020). Election integrity can be undermined, election results can be influenced, and public confidence in political institutions can be damaged when the public is exposed to misleading information that disparages a candidate (Ordenov et al., 2020). Furthermore, the propagation of political hoaxes can intensify social tensions, polarize society, and make it more difficult for the government to cooperate. According to Getman et al. (2020), all of these elements pose significant threats to the democratic order in contemporary society. This highlights the necessity of preserving the integrity of the political system and teaching the public how to identify and react to misleading information in a political setting.

In light of the proliferation of hoaxes, data security is another crucial factor that needs to be taken into account (Susilo et al., 2019). Fake news can become much more harmful in the highly connected digital age if it is linked to data theft or misuse. Hoax spreaders may use misconceptions about data security or flaws in security systems to propagate misleading material that seems to be backed by data that has been obtained unlawfully (Glenski et al., 2020; Wahyudi & Kurniasih, 2021). The repercussions can be even worse when someone's or an entity's private and sensitive data is in danger, as can happen through hacking or data breaches. Hoax propagators can utilize the stolen data to support their fraudulent claims with verifiable proof (Juliswara & Muryanto, 2022; Muslem, 2023). This may strengthen the hoax's appearance of veracity and make it more challenging to spot as bogus information. Moreover, inadequate data security can potentially compromise people's and businesses' privacy (Sajal et al., 2019). When hoax spreaders get access to personal information, they might hurt additional people by violating their privacy and abusing the information for illicit or personal gain.

In today's world, privacy violations are turning into a major problem (Gennadievich Danilyan et al., 2018). Concerns around personal privacy have persisted due to technological corporations' and governments' unauthorized data acquisition. The privacy rights of society may be threatened when personal data is gathered without authorization or utilized for reasons that are not made apparent to

individuals (Okditazeini & Irwansyah, 2018). The knowledge that their personal information could be utilized improperly or exploited without their consent makes them distrustful of the organizations and businesses that violate their privacy. In addition, people are at risk from identity theft, targeted intrusive advertising, and discrimination based on personal information due to privacy breaches (Putra & Hidayatullah, 2020). In order to protect individual privacy and ensure that data usage in modern society is appropriate, it is imperative that efforts be made to increase individual control over their data and to persuade organizations and governments to adopt stronger policies when managing personal data (Sajal et al., 2019).

The Importance of Digital Literacy

Digital literacy has become essential and necessary for modern civilization in an increasingly interconnected digital age (Garcia & de Roock, 2021). Understanding how to use computers, the internet, and other digital devices securely and effectively is known as digital literacy. This knowledge is essential for taking advantage of possibilities and overcoming obstacles in the digital world (Falloon, 2020; Meyers et al., 2013). Digital literacy encompasses more than just using software, using the internet sensibly, and understanding technological details (Chetty et al., 2018). It also entails knowing how to evaluate and critically analyze material that may be accessed online and tell the difference between reliable and fraudulent news. Moreover, digital literacy includes teaching students how to conduct morally and politely in internet contacts as well as knowing online ethics. Digital literacy offers ideas on how to safeguard personal data and prevent cyber dangers, making data security another essential component (Maqsood & Chiasson, 2021; Park, 2013). In the end, digital literacy is about how people conduct responsibly in digital spaces, respond appropriately to others online, and give back to the digital community (Sugiarto & Farid, 2023). Strong digital literacy enables members of today's society to navigate the rapidly changing digital world with greater assurance and wisdom (Ciampa et al., 2023; Tham et al., 2021).

In addition to being a technical ability, digital literacy is essential for modern society to access a multitude of information sources and opportunities in the digital world (Iordache et al., 2017; Tinmaz et al., 2022). People may access a wealth of information, pick up new skills, and investigate a variety of educational possibilities online with a solid understanding of technology and digital literacy. Without needing to visit a physical campus, they can pursue academic degrees, obtain certifications in a variety of disciplines, and enroll in online courses offered by top universities worldwide. Additionally, in the quickly expanding digital economy, where many businesses are looking for people with excellent digital abilities, digital literacy creates avenues for career development and job hunting (Alexander et al., 2017; Lyons et al., 2020). Furthermore, digital literacy can be utilized by contemporary culture to investigate avenues for personal development, embark on novel pastimes, and establish connections with international groups that possess similar interests. People can fully utilize the opportunities presented by an increasingly linked and accessible digital environment by developing their digital literacy (Buckingham, 2015; Spante et al., 2018).

The key capacity to sort through and assess information found on the internet is a component of digital literacy, and it is becoming more and more crucial in light of the problems with disinformation and fake news (hoaxes) (Guess et al., 2020; Noh, 2017). People with strong digital literacy are better able to recognize false and potentially dangerous information in an age where information can travel quickly across digital channels (Lestari et al., 2021). They are able to identify the telltale characteristics of false news, which include dramatic headlines, shaky sources, or a dearth of convincing proof. Seeking out trustworthy information sources and doing a fact check before accepting or disseminating information are further components of digital literacy (Ikhsan et al., 2021; Sitepu et al.,

2021). By doing this, society is better shielded from internet fraud and information manipulation. Strong digital literacy enables people to act as knowledgeable information consumers and help build a more genuine and reliable online community (Bećirović, 2023; Porat et al., 2018).

To enable people to actively engage in an increasingly interconnected digital society, digital literacy is essential (Anthonysamy et al., 2020; Pangrazio & Sefton-Green, 2021). It involves people's capacity to exchange ideas, participate in online debates, and communicate with larger communities via digital platforms. Additionally, it provides access to social campaigning, online activism, and other digital collaboration opportunities that can impact positive social change (Raharjo & Winarko, 2021). Digital literacy is essential in today's increasingly interconnected society to increase citizen involvement in public life, close the digital divide, and create a more inclusive and informed future society (Brown, 2014; McDougall et al., 2018; Polizzi, 2020; Talib, 2018).

CONCLUSION

With the rapid advancement of information technology, digital literacy has become a crucial aspect that cannot be ignored. Digital literacy is no longer optional but is a fundamental skill that must be possessed by modern society. The importance of digital literacy lies in its ability to help individuals navigate the digital world wisely, safely, and productively. Modern society is required to use digital technology intelligently and responsibly to participate in this increasingly connected environment actively and successfully. Digital literacy goes beyond basic skills in using hardware and software. It includes an understanding of how digital technology works, the ability to analyze and evaluate information obtained through digital media, and the skills to actively participate in an increasingly complex digital environment. With strong digital literacy, modern society can overcome challenges and better harness the opportunities offered by this digital era.

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