
8. Media Literacy and Digital Citizenship: A Narrative Review

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Abstract

This research paper explores the intricate relationship between media literacy and digital citizenship, highlighting their interconnectedness and the ways in which they support and reinforce each other. Media literacy refers to the critical analysis and understanding of media messages, while digital citizenship encompasses responsible and ethical behaviour in the digital realm. The paper delves into six key areas where media literacy and digital citizenship intersect, namely critical analysis of media, information evaluation, responsible sharing, online safety and privacy, responsible digital behaviour, and civic engagement and participation. It emphasises the importance of media literacy skills in developing effective digital citizenship practices, enabling individuals to navigate the complexities of the digital landscape, discern credible information from misinformation, and engage in responsible digital behaviour. Furthermore, the paper also highlights the role of media literacy in empowering individuals to become active participants and creators of digital content, fostering positive digital identities, respectful online interactions, and the responsible sharing of information. The study concludes that media literacy and digital citizenship are intertwined concepts crucial for empowering individuals to navigate and participate responsibly in the digital age, and calls for the integration of both concepts into educational curricula and ongoing initiatives to promote a healthier and more productive digital ecosystem.

Keywords: Media Literacy, Digital Citizenship, Critical Analysis, Civic Engagement.

Introduction:

In today's digital age, where information is readily accessible and rapidly disseminated through various media platforms, the concepts of media literacy and digital citizenship have become increasingly crucial. Media literacy refers to the ability to access, analyse, evaluate, and create media content, while digital citizenship encompasses the responsible and ethical use of digital technologies and participation in online communities. Together, these concepts empower individuals to navigate the complex media landscape, critically engage with information, and contribute positively to the digital world.

The rise of social media, user-generated content, and digital technologies has transformed the way we consume and interact with media. It has also brought forth a host of challenges, including information overload, the spread of misinformation, privacy concerns, cyberbullying, and the impact of algorithms on our online experiences. In this context,

developing media literacy skills and fostering digital citizenship is essential for individuals to make informed decisions, protect their digital well-being, and actively engage in civic life.

Media literacy refers to the ability to access, analyse, evaluate, and create media messages in a critical and informed manner (**Potter, 2014**). It involves developing the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate the complex media landscape and understand the various forms of media content. Media literacy encompasses a range of competencies, including understanding media production techniques, recognizing bias and propaganda, interpreting messages and meanings, and engaging in ethical media practices.

Media literacy is an essential skill in today's society, given the proliferation and influence of media in shaping public opinion and perceptions. It enables individuals to critically evaluate media content, discern fact from fiction, and make informed decisions based on reliable information. Moreover, media literacy empowers individuals to actively participate in the creation and dissemination of media messages, fostering media production skills and promoting digital citizenship. (**Potter, W. J., 2014**).

The paper begins by examining the evolving media landscape and the challenges it presents, such as the influence of social media, the proliferation of user-generated content, and the impact of algorithms on information consumption. It then delves into the specific challenges and opportunities of digital citizenship, including online privacy and security, cyberbullying, digital footprints, and global connectivity.

The subsequent sections delve into the educational strategies for promoting media literacy and digital citizenship in formal and informal settings. It explores the integration of media literacy and digital citizenship into school curricula, the infusion of these concepts across subjects, and the role of teacher training and professional development. It also highlights the importance of informal and lifelong learning approaches, such as community programs, online resources, and parent and family engagement.

The paper further explores how media literacy and digital citizenship empower individuals as critical consumers and ethical creators. It discusses the development of critical thinking and information evaluation skills, as well as responsible digital behaviour and ethical content creation. Additionally, it addresses the importance of cross-cultural and global competence in the digital realm.

In conclusion, this research paper emphasises the significance of media literacy and digital citizenship in the digital age. By equipping individuals with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes, we can navigate the complex media landscape, critically analyse information, and participate responsibly in the online world. The integration of media literacy and digital citizenship into education systems and broader society is essential for creating informed, engaged, and responsible digital citizens.

Objectives: The objectives of the research paper are as follows:

1. To provide an overview of the existing literature on media literacy and digital citizenship.

2. To explore the interconnections and relationships between media literacy and digital citizenship in the context of the digital age.
3. To examine the implications of media literacy and digital citizenship for individuals, educational institutions, policymakers, and society as a whole.

Research Methodology:

This research paper utilises a qualitative research methodology, specifically a systematic literature review, to investigate the relationship between media literacy and digital citizenship. As **Uman (2011)** pointed, in systematic literature review, the findings of the earlier research are examined for the identification of consistent and repetitive themes. The systematic review method differs from literature review with its well managed and highly organised qualitative scrutiny processes where researchers tend to cover less materials from fewer number of databases to write their literature review (**Kowalczyk & Truluck, 2013; Robinson & Lowe, 2015**). The literature review is conducted to gather and analyse relevant information from existing scholarly works, including peer-reviewed articles, books, reports, and educational resources. The methodology involves the following steps:

1. Identification of Sources: A comprehensive search is conducted in academic databases, such as Scopus and Google Scholar, using relevant keywords such as "media literacy," "digital citizenship," "media education" and "digital literacy." Sources from reputable organisations, educational institutions, and international bodies are also included to ensure a broad scope of information.

2. Selection of Relevant Literature: The gathered sources are screened based on their relevance to the research topic. Only articles and resources that directly address the relationship between media literacy and digital citizenship, their intersection, and their impact on individuals and society are included in the review.

3. Analysis and Synthesis: The extracted data is analysed to identify patterns, themes, and connections. The analysis focuses on understanding the ways in which media literacy and digital citizenship intersect, complement each other, and contribute to responsible and ethical engagement with digital media.

4. Conclusion: The research paper concludes by summarising the key findings and highlighting the importance of integrating media literacy and digital citizenship education to empower individuals in the digital age.

Media Literacy:

Media literacy is the capacity to access, analyse, evaluate, and critically interpret a wide range of media forms. It encompasses the development of skills and competencies that enable individuals to effectively navigate the intricate realm of media messages. In today's information age, where news, advertisements, social media posts, and various other forms of media inundate us constantly, media literacy plays a pivotal role.

Furthermore, media literacy entails not only the ability to comprehend media content, but also to create it in a critical and informed manner. It involves acquiring a set of skills and

competencies that equip individuals to skillfully navigate the complex landscape of media messages. By cultivating media literacy, individuals gain the power to comprehend the role and influence of media in society, question the reliability of information sources, and make well-informed judgments about the content they consume.

Moreover, media literacy involves the capacity to critically analyse, evaluate, and comprehend the diverse forms of media encountered in our daily lives. It encompasses the ability to navigate through the vast volume of information presented by media outlets, including news articles, social media posts, television shows, movies, advertisements, and more. Through media literacy, individuals gain the ability to be discerning consumers and creators of media, enabling them to make informed decisions and interpretations regarding the messages they encounter.

Lastly, media literacy refers to the aptitude to access, analyse, evaluate, and create media content in a critical and well-informed manner. It necessitates an understanding of how media messages are constructed, the interpretation of their meaning, and an awareness of the influence they can exert on individuals and society. Media literacy empowers individuals to effectively navigate the vast amount of information and media they encounter, allowing them to make well-informed decisions and engage responsibly with media.

According to **Hobbs (2010)**, media literacy encompasses various dimensions, including understanding the role and impact of media on society, interpreting and analysing media messages, and engaging in active and responsible media production. It involves developing critical thinking skills to evaluate the credibility, bias, and intent behind media content.

Media literacy also involves understanding the different media forms and their conventions. This includes recognizing the techniques used in media production, such as visual and audio elements, narrative structures, and persuasive strategies. **Jenkins (2009)** emphasises the importance of media literacy in the context of participatory culture, where individuals actively engage with media and become producers themselves, contributing to the creation and circulation of media content.

Furthermore, media literacy includes the ability to navigate and access media effectively. This entails understanding how media platforms and technologies operate, being aware of the various sources and channels of media content, and critically evaluating the reliability and credibility of information. The ability to distinguish between reliable and unreliable sources of information is a vital component of media literacy, particularly in the digital age (**Aufderheide & Firestone, 1993**).

Media literacy is closely linked to the development of digital literacy. As digital technologies increasingly shape the media landscape, individuals need to acquire skills such as online research, fact-checking, and understanding the algorithms that shape media consumption and distribution (Livingstone, 2004). Additionally, media literacy involves being aware of issues related to media ethics and digital citizenship, such as privacy, copyright, and responsible online behaviour (**Livingstone & Helsper, 2007**).

In educational contexts, media literacy is seen as an essential skill for students to develop. It enhances critical thinking, creativity, and the ability to engage with diverse perspectives (**Buckingham, 2003**). Media literacy education aims to equip individuals with the knowledge

and skills necessary to be active, informed, and responsible participants in the media-saturated society.

Media literacy is a multifaceted concept that encompasses the ability to critically analyse, evaluate, and create media content. It involves understanding the role and impact of media, interpreting media messages, and engaging in active and responsible media consumption and production. Developing media literacy skills is crucial in navigating the complexities of the media landscape and becoming informed and critical consumers and creators of media content.

Media literacy refers to the ability to access, analyse, evaluate, and create media content critically and effectively. It involves understanding the role and impact of media in society, developing skills to navigate and interpret media messages, and engaging in responsible and informed media consumption. Media literacy empowers individuals to be discerning and active participants in the digital age, enabling them to navigate the vast landscape of media and make informed decisions about the information they encounter.

1. According to Aufderheide (1993), media literacy is "the ability to access, analyse, evaluate, and communicate messages in a variety of forms". It emphasises the importance of individuals' active engagement with media content, allowing them to comprehend and interpret messages in various formats.

2. Buckingham (2003) defines media literacy as "the ability to engage with the media, to understand and critically appreciate the nature, techniques, and impacts of media messages". It emphasises the need for individuals to actively engage with media content, question its intentions, and develop a critical awareness of media's influence.

3. Livingstone (2004) suggests that media literacy involves "the ability to access, analyse, evaluate, and communicate effectively using a range of media forms". It encompasses not only the comprehension of media messages but also the capability to produce and communicate using various media tools and platforms.

4. Potter (2014) highlights the role of media literacy in empowering individuals, stating that it enables people "to become aware of their own thinking processes as well as of the media's potential power to influence thinking". It helps individuals become active and critical consumers who are conscious of the media's impact on their beliefs and attitudes.

5. Silverblatt and Ferry (2016) argue that media literacy involves "the ability to access, analyse, evaluate, and communicate information in a variety of forms". It emphasises the need for individuals to develop skills to navigate and critically assess media content across different platforms and formats.

In summary, media literacy encompasses the critical and active engagement with media content, enabling individuals to access, analyse, evaluate, and create media messages effectively. It involves understanding the media's role in society, interpreting its messages, questioning biases and persuasive techniques, and developing skills for responsible media consumption and production. Here are some key aspects of media literacy:

1. Access: Media literacy begins with the ability to access different forms of media, including television, newspapers, websites, social media platforms, and more. It involves knowing how

to find and utilise diverse sources of information. knowing how to search for information, and understanding the technological tools needed to access media.

2. Analysis: Media literacy involves analysing media messages and understanding their purpose, biases, and techniques. This includes recognizing different types of media (such as news articles, advertisements, or documentaries) and understanding their characteristics and conventions.

3. Evaluation: Media literacy requires evaluating the credibility and reliability of sources. It involves assessing the accuracy, objectivity, and fairness of media content. This includes understanding the difference between news and opinion, recognizing misinformation and fake news, and verifying information through fact-checking.

4. Critical interpretation: Media literacy encourages critical thinking and interpretation of media messages. It involves understanding how media influences our beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours and being able to identify persuasive techniques, propaganda, or manipulation within media content.

5. Creation: Media literacy also involves the ability to create media content. This includes understanding the production process, knowing how to use media tools effectively, and being aware of ethical considerations in media creation.

By developing media literacy skills, individuals can become more informed, discerning consumers of media. They can effectively navigate the vast amount of information available, critically analyse media messages, and make well-informed decisions based on reliable sources. Media literacy empowers individuals to be active participants in the media landscape and promotes responsible and ethical engagement with media content. Media literacy is essential for individuals to navigate the media landscape critically, engage with information responsibly, and participate meaningfully in a democratic society.

Digital Citizenship:

Digital citizenship refers to the responsible and ethical use of technology and digital platforms. In the Indian context, digital citizenship encompasses the rights, responsibilities, and behaviour of individuals while engaging with the digital world. It involves navigating the internet, social media, online communication, and other digital spaces in a safe, respectful, and informed manner. In India, digital citizenship focuses on the following key aspects:

1. Digital Literacy: Digital citizenship begins with the development of digital literacy skills. It is essential for individuals to understand how to use digital tools effectively, access and evaluate information critically, and protect their personal data online. Digital literacy initiatives in India aim to bridge the digital divide and ensure that all citizens can access and utilise digital resources.

2. Online Safety: With the increasing use of technology, online safety is a crucial aspect of digital citizenship. Indian citizens need to be aware of potential online threats such as cyberbullying, identity theft, phishing, and scams. They should understand how to protect their privacy, create strong passwords, and recognize and report inappropriate or harmful content.

3. Responsible Use of Social-Media: Social media platforms have become integral parts of many Indian citizens' lives. Digital citizenship emphasises responsible and ethical behaviour while using social media. This includes respecting others' opinions, avoiding hate speech, cyberbullying, or spreading misinformation. Indian citizens are encouraged to engage in constructive online discussions and promote positive interactions.

4. Digital Rights and Responsibilities: Digital citizenship involves understanding and exercising digital rights and responsibilities. Citizens should be aware of their rights to freedom of expression, privacy, and access to information online. They should also understand the responsibilities associated with these rights, such as respecting copyright laws, avoiding plagiarism, and adhering to online community guidelines.

5. Digital Footprint and Reputation: Indian citizens need to be aware that their online activities leave a digital footprint that can impact their reputation and future opportunities. Digital citizenship emphasises maintaining a positive digital footprint by being mindful of what is shared online, avoiding inappropriate or offensive content, and considering the long-term implications of one's online presence.

6. Media Literacy: With the proliferation of digital media, Indian citizens should develop media literacy skills to critically analyse and evaluate the information they encounter online. They need to distinguish between reliable and misleading sources, identify bias in media content, and be cautious of misinformation and fake news.

Digital citizenship refers to the responsible and ethical use of technology and digital resources by individuals within online communities and societies. It encompasses the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours necessary for engaging in safe, respectful, and productive online activities (**Ribble, Bailey, & Ross, 2004**). Digital citizenship involves understanding the rights and responsibilities associated with using digital tools and platforms, as well as actively participating in digital spaces while upholding ethical principles.

The concept of digital citizenship has become increasingly significant in the modern era, characterised by widespread access to the internet and the proliferation of digital technologies. It encompasses various dimensions, including digital literacy, digital etiquette, digital rights and responsibilities, digital health and wellness, and digital security.

Lastly, digital security emphasises the adoption of measures to protect oneself and others from cyber threats, such as using strong passwords, being cautious of phishing attempts, and understanding online risks and how to mitigate them (**Ribble et al., 2004**). By embracing the principles of digital citizenship, individuals can contribute to creating a positive and responsible digital culture.

Relationship in Between Media Literacy and Digital Citizenship:

Media literacy and digital citizenship are closely related concepts that intersect in several ways. While media literacy focuses on the ability to critically analyse and understand media messages, digital citizenship encompasses responsible and ethical behaviour in the digital realm. Here's a deeper exploration of their connection:

1. Critical Analysis of Media: Media literacy encourages individuals to analyse media messages, identify biases, question sources, and evaluate the credibility and accuracy of information. Digital citizenship extends this by emphasising the need to apply these critical thinking skills specifically to digital media, including online articles, social media posts, videos, and other digital content.

2. Information Evaluation: Both media literacy and digital citizenship address the importance of evaluating information. Media literacy teaches individuals to assess the reliability, relevance, and objectivity of media content. Digital citizenship builds on this by emphasising the need to apply the same scrutiny to online sources, recognizing the prevalence of misinformation, fake news, and biased narratives in the digital space.

3. Responsible Sharing: Media literacy highlights the significance of responsible sharing and dissemination of information. It emphasises the need to verify facts and consider the potential impact of sharing media content. Digital citizenship expands on this by addressing the specific challenges of sharing information online, such as the rapid spread of misinformation, the importance of fact-checking before sharing, and being mindful of the potential consequences of sharing content that could harm others.

4. Online Safety and Privacy: Digital citizenship incorporates online safety and privacy concerns, encouraging individuals to be cautious about their personal information, protect their privacy, and navigate digital spaces safely. Media literacy adds an awareness of the potential risks and dangers associated with online media consumption, such as cyberbullying, online predators, and exposure to inappropriate content.

5. Responsible Digital Behaviour: Both media literacy and digital citizenship promote responsible and ethical behaviour in the digital realm. Media literacy encourages individuals to be critical media consumers and ethical content creators. Digital citizenship builds on this by emphasising the importance of respectful online communication, digital etiquette, combating online harassment, and understanding the impact of one's digital actions on others.

6. Civic Engagement and Participation: Media literacy and digital citizenship recognize the power of digital media for civic engagement and participation. They encourage individuals to be active contributors to the digital world, to use digital platforms for positive change, and to participate in digital communities in a responsible and informed manner.

Media literacy and digital citizenship are closely intertwined concepts that play a crucial role in empowering individuals to navigate and participate responsibly in the digital age. Media literacy refers to the ability to access, analyse, evaluate, and create media messages across various platforms and formats (Hobbs, 2018). On the other hand, digital citizenship encompasses the responsible and ethical use of technology to engage in online communities, participate in civic discourse, and promote digital well-being (Ribble, Bailey, & Ross, 2004).

Media literacy skills are essential for individuals to develop effective digital citizenship practices. By being media literate, individuals can critically evaluate the information they encounter online, discern credible sources from misinformation, and understand the potential biases and persuasive techniques used in digital media (Buckingham, 2019). This critical

thinking enables individuals to make informed decisions and engage in responsible digital behaviour, thus contributing to a healthier and more productive digital ecosystem.

Media literacy and digital citizenship are two concepts that are closely related but have distinct focuses. Media literacy refers to the ability to access, analyse, evaluate, and create media in various forms (**Aufderheide, 1993**). Digital citizenship, on the other hand, encompasses the responsible and ethical use of technology and digital resources (**Ribble, 2015**).

Media literacy involves critical thinking skills and the ability to navigate through the vast amount of information available in today's media landscape (**Hobbs, 2010**). It empowers individuals to question and challenge media messages, understand media biases, and differentiate between credible and unreliable sources (**Martens & Hobbs, 2015**).

Digital citizenship encompasses a broader set of skills and attitudes necessary for navigating the digital world. It includes elements such as digital rights and responsibilities, online etiquette, cyberbullying prevention, and privacy protection (**Ribbles, 2011**).

Media literacy education aims to equip individuals with the necessary skills to critically engage with media and become informed citizens (**Buckingham, 2003**). It helps individuals understand how media shapes their worldview, influences public opinion, and impacts society (**Hobbs, 2016**).

Digital citizenship education, on the other hand, focuses on fostering responsible and ethical behaviour in the digital realm (**Ribble, 2015**). It emphasises the development of positive online identities, respectful communication, and the protection of personal information (**Ohler, 2012**).

Both media literacy and digital citizenship are essential in today's digital age. Media literacy helps individuals make informed decisions and navigate the complex media landscape, while digital citizenship promotes responsible and ethical behaviour online (**Katz & Ruble, 2016**).

Media literacy and digital citizenship share some common goals. Both aim to empower individuals to become active and critical participants in the digital society (**Hobbs & Jensen, 2009**). They promote the development of skills that are necessary for engaging with media content and technology responsibly (**Livingstone, 2004**).

While media literacy primarily focuses on analysing and evaluating media messages, digital citizenship extends beyond media and includes aspects of online behaviour, privacy, and digital rights (**Biesta, 2014**).

Media literacy education has been integrated into school curricula in many countries as a means to promote critical thinking skills and active citizenship (**Buckingham, 2003**). Similarly, digital citizenship education is gaining recognition as an essential component of digital literacy in schools (**Ribble, 2015**).

Both media literacy and digital citizenship are dynamic concepts that need to evolve alongside advancements in technology and media. They require ongoing education and awareness to keep pace with the changing digital landscape (**Hobbs, 2016**).

Moreover, media literacy empowers individuals to become active participants and creators of digital content. By understanding the conventions and techniques used in various media forms,

individuals can express themselves creatively, engage in digital storytelling, and contribute meaningfully to online communities (**Hobbs, 2018**). This active engagement promotes digital citizenship by fostering positive digital identities, respectful online interactions, and the responsible sharing of information.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, this narrative review has shed light on the crucial relationship between media literacy and digital citizenship. The study explored various dimensions of media literacy, including critical thinking, information evaluation, media production, and media ethics, highlighting their significance in fostering responsible and engaged digital citizenship.

Through a comprehensive analysis of the existing literature, it became evident that media literacy skills are indispensable for individuals to navigate the increasingly complex digital landscape. Media literacy empowers individuals to critically analyze and interpret media messages, discern reliable sources of information, and engage responsibly in online platforms. Moreover, it equips them with the necessary tools to protect their privacy, understand their digital rights and responsibilities, and participate actively in shaping the digital culture.

The review also highlighted the challenges associated with media literacy and digital citizenship. The rapid evolution of technology, the proliferation of fake news and misinformation, and the digital divide pose substantial obstacles to fostering media literacy and nurturing responsible digital citizens. Therefore, it is imperative to develop comprehensive educational strategies that integrate media literacy and digital citizenship into formal and informal learning environments.

Educational institutions, policymakers, and other stakeholders need to collaborate to design and implement effective media literacy and digital citizenship programs. By promoting media literacy and digital citizenship, societies can cultivate a generation of informed, critical, and responsible digital citizens who contribute positively to the digital world.

Future research should explore innovative pedagogical approaches, assess the effectiveness of media literacy interventions, and investigate the long-term impact of media literacy and digital citizenship on individuals and society. Additionally, further attention should be given to marginalized groups, as digital inequalities can exacerbate existing social disparities.

In conclusion, media literacy and digital citizenship are intertwined concepts that play a important role in empowering individuals and promoting responsible engagement with digital media. By cultivating these skills and values, societies can build a resilient and inclusive digital ecosystem that upholds democratic principles, fosters informed civic participation, and safeguards individual well-being in the digital age.

In conclusion, media literacy and digital citizenship are interrelated concepts that mutually reinforce each other. Media literacy skills enable individuals to critically analyse and create digital media, which in turn supports responsible and ethical engagement in the online world. By cultivating both media literacy and digital citizenship competencies, individuals can navigate the complexities of the digital landscape, promote digital well-being, and actively contribute to a positive and inclusive digital society.



In summary, media literacy and digital citizenship share common goals of promoting critical thinking, responsible behaviour, and ethical engagement with media and digital technologies. They complement each other by addressing the specific challenges and opportunities presented by the digital landscape and empowering individuals to navigate it effectively, safely, and responsibly.

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