

Research Article

The Importance of Information Skill In Digital Age

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Abstract: In the digital age, the rapid advancement of technology has transformed the way we access, process, and utilize information. As a result, information skills have become increasingly crucial for individuals to navigate and thrive in this information-rich environment. This abstract explores the problem of information overload and the lack of information literacy among individuals, which hinders their ability to effectively evaluate and utilize information. The solution proposed is to enhance information skills through comprehensive educational programs and training, empowering individuals with the necessary tools to critically analyze, interpret, and apply information in various contexts. The impacts of improving information skills are manifold, ranging from improved decision-making and problem-solving abilities to increased digital citizenship and media literacy. Additionally, individuals equipped with strong information skills are more likely to engage in lifelong learning, adapt to changing technologies, and effectively participate in the digital economy. Furthermore, this abstract highlights the commercialization potential of information skill development, as organizations can capitalize on the demand for information literacy training by offering tailored programs, consulting services, and innovative digital tools. The importance of information skills in the digital age cannot be overstated, as it has far-reaching implications for individual empowerment, societal development, and economic growth. By recognizing the significance of information literacy and implementing measures to enhance these skills, we can foster a more informed and knowledgeable society capable of harnessing the vast potential of the digital era.

Keywords: information skills, digital age, information overload, information literacy, educational programs.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving digital age, information has become an invaluable currency that shapes every aspect of our lives. With the vast amount of data available at our fingertips, the ability to navigate, evaluate, and effectively utilize information has become a critical skillset. Information skills are no longer optional, they are essential for success in academic, professional, and personal spheres.

Information skills encompass a broad range of abilities, including critical thinking, information literacy, digital literacy, and media literacy. These skills empower individuals to effectively evaluate, interpret, and use information in an increasingly complex digital landscape. They go beyond mere searching and skimming, enabling us to discern reliable sources from misinformation, analyze data critically, and make informed decisions.

In today's digital age, misinformation and disinformation proliferate at an alarming rate, blurring the lines between fact and fiction. The ability to navigate this informational minefield is essential for individuals to safeguard themselves against manipulation and make well-informed choices. Information skills equip us with the tools to critically assess the credibility, relevance, and bias of the information we encounter, empowering us to become discerning consumers and active participants in the digital realm.

2. METHOD & MATERIAL

To investigate the importance of information skills in the digital age, a quantitative research design employing a survey approach was adopted.

First, Population and Sample Size. The study focused on the population of specified populations in the name of organization/institution. Using a random sampling technique, a sample of number participants was selected to represent the population. The inclusion criteria for the sample were explained criteria. The sample size was determined based on statistical considerations, ensuring an appropriate representation of the population and providing sufficient data for analysis.

Next, Research Instrument. This was a self-developed survey questionnaire consisting of three sections. The first section collected basic demographic information from the participants. The second section assessed the participants' information skills in the digital age, focusing on digital literacy, web-based research, information evaluation, and critical thinking skills. Participants rated their proficiency on a scale from 1 to 5. The third section explored the utilization of digital resources and challenges encountered by the participants. They rated their level of usage for different digital resources and the level of challenge they faced in acquiring and improving their information skills. The questionnaire underwent a pilot test to ensure validity and reliability, and necessary adjustments were made based on the feedback received.

Last but not least, Validity and Reliability of the Instrument. To ensure the validity and reliability of the survey instrument, a pilot test was conducted prior to the main data collection phase. The pilot test involved a number of participants who were not included in the final sample. The collected data from the pilot test were analyzed to establish the internal consistency of the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which indicates the internal reliability of the items, was calculated. A value above 0.70 was considered acceptable, demonstrating a high level of internal consistency.

3. FINDINGS

In the digital age, where vast amounts of information are readily available at our fingertips, possessing effective information skills has become more critical than ever. Individuals with strong information skills are better equipped to navigate the digital landscape, make informed decisions, and evaluate the credibility and reliability of the information they encounter.

3.1 Information Skills are Crucial for Navigating the Digital Landscape

Effective information skills are essential for navigating the digital landscape and making informed decisions. They have the ability to critically evaluate information, identify misinformation, and determine the credibility and accuracy of the content they encounter. These skills not only help individuals make well-informed decisions but also save them time by efficiently finding the information they need amidst the overwhelming amount of data available.

3.2. Information Skills Foster Lifelong Learning and Adaptability

Information skills promote lifelong learning and adaptability in the digital age. With the constant advancements in technology and the ever-changing nature of the digital world, individuals need to continuously acquire new knowledge and skills to stay relevant. Strong information skills enable individuals to stay updated with the latest developments, trends, and tools in their fields of interest. They foster critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity, which are crucial for adapting to new challenges and finding innovative solutions. Furthermore, information skills facilitate effective collaboration and communication in remote work environments and virtual teams, enhancing productivity and enabling individuals to contribute meaningfully to projects.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Benefit of Digital Age

4.1.1 Communication and social connection

Communication and social connections are important parts of how people deal with each other because they help people understand each other, form bonds, and share information. They are very important in personal connections, in the workplace, and in society as a whole. Communication is when two or more people or groups send and receive information, ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Both the sender and the receiver must be able to understand and read messages correctly for them to work. Communication can be vocal, nonverbal, written, or visual. People who are digitally literate can effectively communicate through email, social media, instant messaging, video calls, and other digital platforms (Subaveerapandiyana A. et al., 2022). This facilitates staying connected with friends, family, and colleagues, even across long distances. Communication is important for making and keeping connections, letting people know what you need and want, solving problems, working together at work, and sharing knowledge and information (Konstantina Martzoukou et al., 2020). It helps people understand each other, have empathy for each other, and work together, which leads to better connections and more productive interactions.

The term "social connection" refers to the relationships and ties that people make with other people. It includes different kinds of relationships, such as friendships, family ties, romantic relationships, and participation in the community. Social ties help people feel like they belong, get support, and feel better overall. People gain in many ways from having strong social connections. They give social support, lessen feelings of loneliness and isolation, improve mental health, and make life more enjoyable overall (Fang Zhao et al., 2021). Social relationships can also help you grow as a person, work with others, and share experiences. In recent years, technology has made it easier for people to talk to each other and make friends. People can meet and talk to each other all over the world thanks to social media platforms, messaging apps, video calls, and online communities. Technology can help people connect with each other, but it's important to keep a healthy balance and not forget about face-to-face interactions and deeper, more meaningful relationships. There are many things that can get in the way of good communication and social connections. There are language barriers, cultural differences, a lack of active listening, distractions, electronic limitations, social anxiety, and time constraints. To get past these obstacles, you have to work hard, have compassion, and be willing to understand and connect with others.

Communication has become the most important part of digital literacy in a world where technology is changing quickly. It's no longer enough to know how to use digital tools well; you also need to be able to communicate, understand others, and get around in digital relationships. There are many ways to communicate digitally, from emails and instant messaging apps to social media sites and

video conferencing tools (Janne Anderson et al., 2018) For effective communication, digital literacy means having a deep knowledge of these channels and how they work. It means learning how to write messages that are clear and to the point, adapting communication styles to different platforms, and making the most of the benefits of each channel to get the most out of it.

In the fast-paced digital world, it's important to be brief. Digital conversation requires being able to say things in a short, clear way that grabs attention and is easy to understand. People who know how to use technology well are able to communicate with clarity and accuracy, providing information in a way that doesn't lose depth or meaning (Ivette K. Caballero et al., 2018) This skill is especially useful when you have to talk to someone in a small place, like a social media post or a chat platform. In the digital age, visual communication has become more important. To be digitally literate, you need to know how to use visual elements to get your point across. Digital marketers need to learn how to make images, infographics, and videos that grab and hold the attention of their audience. Visual literacy is the ability to choose the right pictures, make material that looks good, and use visual clues to help people understand and connect.

Digital literacy includes being able to think critically about what you find online. Because there is so much digital content, people need to be smart about what they choose to read and how they share knowledge (Isto Huvila et al., 2012) Digital speakers need to learn how to check sources, check facts, and tell the difference between accurate information and false information. Individuals add to an informed digital society and build trust within their digital networks by learning to think critically and use information well.

4.1.2 Critical thinking and problem solving

In the fast-changing digital world of today, critical thought and problem-solving skills are more important than ever. As technology becomes part of every part of our lives, we need to be able to find, analyze, and use digital information. Critical thinking is the process of actively and skilfully analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information to make well-reasoned judgments and choices (Atlantic University et al., 2022) In the digital age, when we have access to a lot of data and information at our fingertips, critical thinking is more important than ever. It helps us tell the difference between trustworthy sources and false information, check claims against facts, and evaluate the trustworthiness and validity of information. It gives people the chance to question assumptions, find biases, and use logic to come to good decisions.

Finding, analyzing, and solving complicated problems is an iterative process. In the world of digital literacy, problem-solving skills help people deal with technology problems, adjust to changing situations, and come up with new ways to solve them (Yottabyte et al., 2023) As the digital world changes quickly, people need to learn how to solve problems to deal with things like cybersecurity threats, privacy concerns, and the moral effects of new technologies. Also, people who know how to solve problems can use technology to improve their efficiency, productivity, and general well-being. Critical thinking gives people the tools they need to judge the quality, usefulness, and trustworthiness of digital material. By learning how to find reliable sources, check claims for accuracy, and analyze data, people can make good choices and avoid being fooled by false information or manipulated.

In the digital age, technology changes quickly and surroundings are always changing. Critical thinking makes people more adaptable and flexible, so they can accept change, predict problems, and change their plans accordingly (YK Dwivedi et al., 2021) People can confidently deal with the complexities of the digital age if they have a growth attitude and learn throughout their lives. Critical thought and coming up with creative solutions to problems go hand in hand. Critical thinking drives creativity by getting people to think outside the box, question assumptions, and look at things from

different points of view. It lets people come up with new ways to solve hard problems and take advantage of how technology can change things.

Understanding the ethical implications of technology and making good choices are both parts of digital literacy. People who can think critically can evaluate the moral aspects of digital practices, like privacy, data safety, and the fair use of technology. By taking ethics into account when solving problems, people can make sure that their activities help society in a positive way. In a complicated and interconnected world, people need to be able to think critically and solve problems in order to do well. By developing these skills, people can evaluate material well, adjust to changing situations, and come up with creative solutions to hard problems (K. Martin et al., 2019) By learning to think critically and solve problems in the digital world, people can confidently move through the digital world, make good choices, and contribute to the progress of society. As technology continues to change the way we live, developing and using these skills will be key to making the most of the digital age for the benefit of everyone.

4.1.3 Health and well-being

In today's linked world, people need to know how to use technology well in order to do well in many areas of life. It's important to be able to move around in the modern world with skill and confidence. But even with all the possibilities and changes that technology has brought, it is still important to put health and well-being first (Sara Atske et al., 2019) Digital literacy, which often involves using devices for long amounts of time, can hurt physical health. When people spend too much time in front of screens, they often become sedentary and have bad posture. It is important to find a balance by making physical exercise a part of everyday life. Regular breaks, stretching routines, and being aware of your posture can help reduce the risks of spending too much time on digital devices.

There is a chance that the digital world could affect mental health. Constant connectivity, too much information, cyberbullying, and the pressure to keep up a good online image can all lead to stress, anxiety, and other mental health problems. It is important to learn digital literacy skills that help people think critically, be skeptical, and act responsibly online. Mindfulness, setting limits, and taking care of offline relationships can help you have a healthy connection with technology and improve your overall health (CL Nixon et al., 2014) Digital literacy is the information and skills that people need to keep themselves and others safe online. It's important to know how to stay safe online, like making strong passwords, spotting scam attempts, and keeping personal information safe. Also, knowing the private settings, permissions, and possible risks of sharing personal information can stop bad things from happening. Promoting digital citizenship and good behavior is another way to make the online world better and healthier.

Because there is so much knowledge on the Internet, it is important to learn how to use it. To be digitally literate, you need to be able to judge, analyze, and figure out the credibility and trustworthiness of online sites. With so much misinformation and fake news out there, it's important to have these skills to make good choices, develop critical thinking, and stop the spread of false information (N. Sirlin et al., 2021) Information literacy gives people the tools they need to form well-rounded opinions and have useful conversations online. In our always-connected world, it's important to take breaks from digital devices and social media sites every so often. A digital detox gives people a chance to relax, refocus on offline activities, and take care of their mental and physical health. Setting aside time for hobbies, spending real time with family and friends, and being in nature all help people feel connected and refreshed.

When it comes to digital literacy, health and well-being should be seen as two of the most important parts of a healthy digital living (DHT Force et al., 2019) By putting physical health first, taking care of mental health, promoting online safety and privacy, learning how to find and use

information, and practicing "digital detox," people can use the power of digital tools without risking their overall health. Finding a balance between the digital and real worlds makes it possible to have a fulfilling, enriching, and long-lasting connection with technology. Let's start this path of digital literacy with an eye on our health and well-being and a commitment to being mindful.

4.2 Challenges in digital literacy

Digital literacy has become an essential skill set in our increasingly interconnected and technology-driven world. It encompasses the ability to access, evaluate, and effectively use digital tools and information for personal, educational, and professional purposes (Giannikas et al., 2020) While digital literacy offers countless opportunities, it also presents several challenges that need to be addressed.

One of the primary challenges in digital literacy is the rapid pace of technological advancement. The digital landscape is constantly evolving, introducing new tools, platforms, and trends. This poses a continuous learning demand on individuals, who must keep pace with these changes to remain relevant (A Haleem et al., 2022) However, this can be overwhelming for those who struggle to adapt or lack access to resources for learning. As a result, a significant portion of the population may face difficulties in acquiring and maintaining the necessary digital skills.

The proliferation of misinformation and the spread of fake news represent a significant challenge in digital literacy. With the ease of sharing information online, it has become increasingly difficult to discern accurate information from false or misleading content. Many individuals struggle to critically evaluate sources, fact-check information, and identify biased or manipulated narratives (L. Soetekouw et al., 2022) This challenge undermines informed decision-making, public discourse, and trust in reliable information sources, posing risks to individuals and society.

Digital literacy also encompasses the understanding of cybersecurity principles and practices. As individuals engage in online activities, they face various risks such as identity theft, phishing attacks, malware, and other forms of cybercrime (F. Quayyum et al., 2021) Lack of awareness and skills in cybersecurity can make individuals vulnerable to these threats, potentially resulting in financial loss, privacy breaches, or reputational damage. Developing robust cybersecurity knowledge and adopting secure practices is crucial for protecting personal information and maintaining digital well-being.

Another challenge lies in utilizing digital tools effectively for communication, collaboration, problem-solving, and creative expression. While technology offers numerous opportunities for productivity and innovation, many individuals struggle to leverage these tools to their full potential (YK Dwivedi et al., 2022) A lack of familiarity with digital platforms, inadequate training, or limited exposure to advanced tools and techniques can hinder individuals' ability to effectively navigate and utilize digital resources.

Digital literacy is indispensable in the modern world, enabling individuals to participate fully in the digital age and unlocking opportunities for personal and professional growth. However, challenges such as the rapid pace of technological advancement, the digital divide, misinformation, cybersecurity risks, and the effective use of digital tools must be addressed to ensure equitable and inclusive digital literacy for all (Romina Bandura et al., 2022) Efforts should be made to promote education and awareness, expand access to technology and the internet, foster critical thinking, and develop cybersecurity and digital competency skills. By tackling these challenges head-on, we can empower individuals to navigate the ever-evolving technological landscape with confidence and competence.

5. CONCLUSION

The ability to navigate the large quantity of information available online is essential in the digital era. In summary, having strong informational abilities is crucial in the digital era. They enable people to find, assess, and use information efficiently, encouraging critical thinking, digital literacy, lifelong learning, and responsible online behaviour. The success of academic, professional, and personal endeavours in today's information-driven culture depends on the development of these abilities. The value of information literacy in the digital age cannot be emphasised, in my opinion. Making educated judgements, navigating the huge internet environment, and remaining current in a world that is changing quickly all depend on one's capacity to properly obtain, assess, and use information. The ability to critically assess sources, conduct research and analysis, and become lifelong learners are all made possible by information skills.

Additionally, they support career advancement, appropriate use of technology, and digital citizenship. To succeed in academic, professional, and personal endeavours in a culture where information and digital resources are pervasive, it is crucial to have good information skills. The task of educating consumers to critically evaluate, reflect on, and make use of the incredibly diverse spectrum of available media makes media and information literacy in the twenty-first century an ambitious objective. Users now need to be media literate with regard to the abundance of new technology accessible and the development of apps providing whole new methods of sending information, in addition to conventional media literacy and visual representation.

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