

RESEARCH ARTIKEL

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DIGITAL MEDIA LITERACY AS A 21ST CENTURY BASIC SKILL FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract. The rapid development of digital technology in the 21st century requires the education sector to equip students with various essential skills, one of which is digital media literacy. According to Gilster (1997), digital literacy is the ability to understand and use information from various digital sources effectively, while Hobbs (2010) emphasizes the importance of accessing, analyzing, evaluating, and producing messages through digital media in a critical and responsible manner. This study aims to analyze the role of digital media literacy as a fundamental 21st-century skill for elementary school students based on a literature review. The method employed is a literature review by examining various scientific sources, including national and international journals, reference books, and relevant educational policy documents. The results of the review indicate that digital media literacy significantly contributes to enhancing students' critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration skills, while also fostering good character and ethical media use. Therefore, the integration of digital media literacy into elementary school learning is an urgent necessity to prepare a generation that is adaptive, critical, and competitive in the global era.

Keywords; digital media literacy, 21st-century skills, elementary school students, digital learning, literature review.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology has changed many things massively in various aspects of life, including in the field of education. 21st century education requires learners to have a set of skills known as 21st century skills, including critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, and digital literacy (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). Digital media literacy is one of the basic skills that students must have in order to be able to adapt to technological developments and global information flows.

Gilster (1997) defines digital literacy as the ability to understand and use information in various formats from various sources presented through digital media. In line with that, Hobbs (2010) stated that digital media literacy includes the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create, and communicate messages using digital media effectively and responsibly. Elementary school students are a digital native generation who have been exposed to various technological devices since an early age. However, the high intensity of digital media use has not been accompanied by adequate literacy skills. Pratiwi and Pritanova (2017) stated that low digital literacy can have a negative impact on children's psychological development. Therefore, strengthening digital media literacy since basic education is very important.

Nasrullah et al. (2017) stated that digital media literacy in elementary schools aims to equip students with the ability to think critically, creatively, communicatively, and behave wisely in using digital media. The Partnership for 21st Century Learning (2019) emphasizes that digital literacy is an integral part of 21st century skills that must be developed through integrated and sustainable learning.

METHODS

This research uses the literature review method, which is a research method that aims to review, analyze, and synthesize various literature sources that are relevant to the topic of digital media literacy as a basic skill of the twentieth century.

21 for elementary school students. According to Snyder (2019), literature review is a systematic approach in identifying, evaluating, and interpreting findings.

findings of previous research to gain a comprehensive understanding of a problem.

Data sources were obtained from accredited national and international journals, reference books, seminar proceedings, and education policy documents. Literature searches

were conducted through Google Scholar, ERIC, ResearchGate, and Garuda with the keywords digital media literacy, digital literacy, 21st century skills, and elementary school learning. The literature was selected based on the criteria of relevance, the year of publication 2015–2024, and the credibility of the source.

The data analysis technique is carried out in a descriptive-qualitative manner through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing to obtain a comprehensive synthesis of the study results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of Digital Media Literacy

The concept of digital literacy was born from a long process. This concept continues to transform over time (Potter, 2010). Initially, this concept was known as media literacy which advocated the importance of a critical attitude towards television. This concept continued to be echoed until the birth of communication technology and the internet. In the era of the birth of computers, the concept of media literacy began to be adopted as a skill that individuals have to be able to operate computer devices (Buckingham, 2015). Slowly but surely, this concept is transformed into information literacy when the internet is still in use. This is because the internet provides wide access to information.

Currently, the concept that is often used is digital literacy. This concept was born because the concept of information literacy could not solve the phenomenon of fake news or hoaxes that have recently been circulating. Some world academics agree that there needs to be new concepts and skills used to solve problems related to news. Digital literacy is the answer. Digital literacy is the skill of using media effectively so that individuals know relevant places and information (Buckingham, 2015). In Indonesia, the concept of digital literacy has begun to be widely adopted. However, this concept is often misinterpreted. Some practitioners and academics still see that digital literacy and media literacy are the same concept. In fact, the two concepts are different. For example, media literacy only refers to the skills to use media and audio-visual, while digital literacy covers a broader range of things (Buckingham, 2015). The difference in the meaning of the concept of media literacy and digital literacy makes researchers interested in studying how researchers in Indonesia use the concept of digital literacy. The researcher measured this use by mapping the definitions and methods of digital literacy and media literacy that are often used in the study. In addition, the researcher also wants to find out the extent of the level of digital literacy of the Indonesian people based on previously published research.

21ST CENTURY SKILLS (4C)

The principle of 21st century learning is blended learning by combining science, as well as critical thinking, innovation, problem-solving, technology, and research skills (Graham, 2006). Knowledge is integrated with various tools that support the acceleration of the dissemination of knowledge such as computers and mobile phones. The thinking skills that can control are humans, while machines and technology only process, classify, and process data. Technology is used to speed up information to reach every human being. Research plays a role in improving scientific treasures while solving various problems and improving the quality of learning.

Communication is a basic skill that everyone must have. Communication is a tool for conveying messages to the recipient of the message. In order for information to be received effectively, it must meet the principles of clear, non-confusing, understandable, and structured. In addition, communication also has rules and ethics that must be followed so that communication does not harm the recipient (Sandy, 2008).

Collaboration is an activity that is carried out jointly by two or more people with the same goal. Collaboration is carried out by prioritizing the benefits of both parties. All parties involved have clear responsibilities, and each role is clearly described (Conklin, 2013).

Critical thinking requires a focused trained brain, because critical thinking arises from the results of this process. Critical to information is having an opinion or view accompanied by clear reasons and data. So critical thinking is not only active but also the reason that. It is said to be acceptable to reason. In order to get used to critical thinking, the brain must be trained to focus, because critical thinking arises from the result of correct understanding while understanding cannot be obtained without focus and concentration (Judge, 2009).

Problem-solving skills are the ability to understand problems, find solutions, and be able to predict outcomes. In solving problems, it must involve decision-making skills, because to find the most appropriate solution, it must be followed by other alternative solutions. The procedure for solving the problem is;

- a) Defining the problem;
- b) Finding alternative solutions;
- c) Determine the most appropriate solution choice among many alternative options;
- d) implementing solutions to problems; and
- e) Predict the outcome of problem solving (Butterworth & Thwaites, 2013).

Creative is the ability to do new things that did not exist before (Piirto, 2011). Creative requires courage because new things usually cause their own problems due to

unpreparedness for the new thing. Creative also does outside the habit of people in plural. Innovation is adding value both from creativity and other aspects to everything that has existed before. Innovation skills arise from circumstances that require or want to improve the capabilities of existing goods. The skill of innovating is also synonymous with the ability to analyze, modify, and update (Nakano & Wechsler, 2018).

The Urgency of Digital Media Literacy for Elementary School Students

Digital literacy is an important skill for learners of all ages, including elementary school students. The digital world allows everyone to connect, collaborate, innovate, and discover new information that is constantly evolving. We can teach digital literacy programs as separate subjects or embed content in broader learning. Students can develop content creation skills while presenting their work in math or science learning, and educators can embed messages about how students should protect themselves in the modern world. Digital literacy is a necessity important for all young people in the era of digital advancement. Digital literacy can equip children and young people with skills, knowledge and understanding that will help them to take a large and active part in social, cultural, economic, civic and intellectual life both now and in the future. Digital literacy gives young people the ability to take advantage of the wealth of opportunities that arise. However, we must also remain vigilant against the various challenges that come due to the influence of technology. Digital activity has increased, a survey conducted by Hootsuite in 2021 revealed that Indonesian respondents spend an average of 7 hours and 52 minutes on the internet every day. Higher than the global average of 6 hours 54 minutes per day. Indonesia is ranked 8th out of 42 countries. According to research conducted in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand conducted by UNICEF in 2020, it was found that many children manage various social media accounts for entertainment, communication, and educational purposes. Some of them are not only consumers but also content creators. During the Covid-19 pandemic, digital activities have grown and increased as many people have had to switch to online solutions. Due to long-term school closures, educational activities have also shifted online, especially in urban areas. As a result, children are exposed to a set of digital content and products.

The Urgency of Digital Literacy in Welcoming School Students Teachers adapt to the online learning model. The government maximizes the "Rumah Belajar" platform, as well as an online learning platform that makes it easier for teachers and students to interact. The pandemic has made children able to use digital technology, have smartphones since elementary school age, the time to use smartphones, the consumption of content that is not appropriate for children's age, and the lack of guidance from parents and teachers in the use

of technology need to be a concern, this makes digital literacy need to be presented in the theme of learning in elementary schools. Overall, improving digital literacy in primary schools requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach. All stakeholders, including governments, schools, teachers, parents, and communities, must work together to create a supportive and inclusive learning environment. With the development of relevant curriculum, teacher training and competency improvement, the provision of infrastructure and technological resources, the application of innovative and interactive learning methods, and the involvement of Active parents and communities, students' digital literacy in elementary schools can be significantly improved. This will not only prepare them for future challenges, but also equip them with the necessary skills to become smart and responsible digital citizens.

Multimedia Digital Media Literacy in Elementary Schools

Multimedia is a combination of several types of media used simultaneously so that the information conveyed becomes more interesting and easy to understand. Multimedia consists of text in the form of writing or words, images such as photos, illustrations, and posters, sound in the form of music, narrative, or sound, videos in the form of moving images, and animation in the form of moving cartoon images. Examples of multimedia that are often used by elementary school students include learning videos, educational cartoon films, illustrated PowerPoint presentations, and educational games. With multimedia, learning activities become more exciting, interesting, and not boring for students.

Digital media provides many benefits for elementary school students if used correctly and according to the rules. Digital media can help students understand lessons more easily, add new knowledge, and make the learning process more enjoyable. In addition, digital media can also train students' creativity and facilitate communication between students and teachers and friends. For example, students can learn math through funny animated videos so that the material is easier to understand.

However, excessive or unsupervised use of digital media can have a negative impact. These impacts include addiction to playing mobile phones, being lazy to study, not interacting with friends, imitating bad behavior from video shows, and viewing content that is not appropriate for the child's age. Therefore, the use of digital media needs to be regulated and supervised by teachers and parents so that it does not have a negative impact on student development.

Digital media literacy is the ability to understand the content of digital media, choose good and correct information, use digital media safely, and not easily believe in fake news or hoaxes. Digital media literacy is very important for elementary school students so that they

can use digital media wisely. Example, The application of digital media literacy is not to immediately believe in all videos or information on the internet, ask teachers or parents if in doubt, and choose age-appropriate spectacles.

Elementary school students need to be accustomed to using digital media wisely in their daily lives. How to use digital media properly includes using gadgets according to the predetermined time, choosing educational spectacles, not playing with cellphones during class hours, not spreading information carelessly, and prioritizing learning and worship activities. The main principle in using digital media is to use it for positive things.

In the school environment, students must also show a wise attitude in using digital media. This attitude can be realized by using digital media for learning purposes, listening to the teacher's explanations well, not opening games during lessons, using the internet according to the teacher's direction, and maintaining good manners when communicating digitally with friends and teachers.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that digital media literacy is a fundamental skill that is very important for elementary school students in the 21st century because it helps them think critically, be creative, be able to communicate and collaborate well, and behave wisely in the digital world. Digital media literacy is not only related to the ability to use technology, but also the ability to choose, understand, evaluate, and create digital content safely and responsibly so that students can avoid negative impacts such as hoaxes, gadget addiction, and exposure to age-inappropriate content. Through a literature review, this scientific paper emphasizes that the integration of digital media literacy in elementary school learning needs to be carried out in a planned, sustainable manner, and connected to strengthening 21st century skills (4Cs: critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration). Increasing digital literacy requires the involvement of various parties, ranging from the government, schools, teachers, parents, to the community, for example through the development of relevant curriculum, teacher training, the provision of technological facilities, the use of multimedia learning, as well as supervision and assistance for children's digital activities. Overall, digital media literacy is seen as a provision. It is important for elementary school students to become smart, critical, creative, and responsible digital citizens, while being ready to face challenges and take advantage of opportunities in the ever-evolving era of technology.

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