



The Empowerment of Digital Literacy Aspects in Education Policy: Supporting Young Generation's Preparability for the Digital Era Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to investigate the importance of the empowering aspects of digital literacy in education policy to support young people's readiness for the digital age. Utilizing a structured approach, this research conducted a deep analysis of the relevant literature and presented data and findings that support the argument. The literature review highlights the concept of digital literacy, its impact on everyday life, and the need for integration into the education system. The research methodology involved a critical analysis of various sources related to the topic, including scientific journals, textbooks, and research reports. The findings show that the empowerment of digital literacy in education policy has a positive impact on preparing young people for the challenges and opportunities of the digital age.

INTRODUCTION

In the current century where digital technology impacts every aspect of life, digital literacy is becoming an increasingly important skill to acquire. The digital literacy of today's young generation is growing up in an environment surrounded by digital information, but not all of them may sort, evaluate effectively, and use information appropriately. Therefore, empowering aspects of digital literacy through education policy is a significant requirement. Despite, the rapid advancement of digital technology, the younger generation is faced with an unprecedented challenge. They are growing up in an era where the internet, social media, and smart devices have become an essential part of everyday life. However, behind the ease and convenience offered by these technologies, some risks and challenges need to be addressed. Perhaps one of the most crucial aspects is digital literacy, the ability to understand, evaluate, and use the information found online thoughtfully and effectively.

Digital literacy is not only about how to use computer software or hardware, rather it is also about the ability to sort through information, identify truth from false information, and understand the ethical implications of using technology. In the absence of adequate digital literacy, the younger generation is exposed to the spread of false information, online abuse, and cyber fraud. Therefore, the role of the education system in empowering digital literacy is crucial, as education is the key to preparing the younger generation for the complexities and dynamics of the current digital era. In this context, education policy has a significant role to play in providing a solid foundation for empowering digital literacy.

By integrating digital literacy aspects into the education curriculum, providing training to teachers in using technology for learning, and developing educational programs that support the development of digital literacy skills, the education system can make a meaningful contribution to improving the readiness of the younger generation. However, efforts to empower digital literacy through education policy also require comprehensive support from various parties, including the government, educational institutions, industry, and society as a whole. In this research, we will further investigate the importance of empowering digital literacy aspects through education policy to support young people's digital literacy preparations. Specifically, the literature review will elaborate on the concept of digital literacy, its impact on everyday life, and the strategies that can be adopted in integrating digital literacy into the education system. Hence, this research is expected to provide valuable insights for the development of more effective education policies in preparing young people to face the challenges and opportunities in this digital era.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital literacy involves significantly beyond the technical skills of using computer software or hardware. The opportunity and convenience provided by technological advances in accessing information is something that can be avoided, so that anyone, any age and anywhere humans can access information quickly (Sugiarto & Farid, 2023). Digital literacy is the ability to find out about understanding and using information in various forms obtained from searching using digital technology.

In everyday life, digital literacy allows individuals to access, evaluate, and use information effectively in a variety of contexts, from education to work and social life. It is essential to understand the factors that impact the extent to which digital technologies are adopted in educational settings, to design strategies that promote and support their successful integration. According to Wang et al., 2023, digital transformation for learning organizations, identified the critical components required for successful digital transformational change and emphasize the need for leaders to go beyond siloed digital innovation and embrace a transformation mindset and leverage technology as an enabler. (Wang et al., 2023) Digital literacy goes beyond technical skill, however, it also requires a deep understanding of how technology affects the way we think, and interact as well as how humans learn. Digital literacy involves the critical, creative aspects, and ethics in the use of digital technology (McCarthy et al., 2023).

Digital literacy plays an important role in the development of 21st-century skills. The abilities to evaluate the latest information, collaborate through online platforms, and solve issues by using technology are crucial skills for success in an increasingly digitally connected world. In responding to the rapid advancement of technology, digital literacy requires ethical boundaries in its use, hence requiring the role of the government which is embodied in public policy. Public policy is the domain of the government in producing policies needed by society. Based on the institutional functions of the government, at every sector and level, in the formulation of policies including policies in the education sector. (Yanti, 2020). Digital literacy is the foundation required to actively participate in the current global society. The conceptual and operational aspects are approaches that can be implemented in digital literacy. Although these have different focuses, they can summarize the needs of digital literacy. The conceptual approach focuses on knowledge, emotional, and social enrichment, while the operational approach focuses on one's technical ability to operate digital media devices. (Safitri et al., 2020)

The empowerment of digital literacy aspects in education policy is an important step to support the development of young people's awareness and competitiveness in the digital future. Some strategies for empowering digital literacy include introducing, understanding, and regulating the use of information technology. On the other hand, digital literacy is the ability to understand and use a wide and free range of information obtained through digital assistance. Based on Silalahi et al., 2022, the implementation of digital literacy in the educational environment can be done in various ways, such as by strengthening understanding, integration with curricular, co-curricular, and

extracurricular activities, and collaboration between schools, families, and communities (Silalahi et al., 2022). According to Malang, 2022, the main challenge for the younger generation in digital development is not to be drawn into and victimized by the negative side of technological advancement. Therefore, empowering digital literacy in the educational environment should provide the young generation with sufficient resilience in the face of the bombardment of negative information on various digital platforms (Malang, 2022)

Digital literacy assists individuals to be smart consumers of information and producers of quality content in a complex digital environment. It emphasizes that digital literacy is not only about consuming information but also about contributing positively to building sustainable online communities. In the context of education, the integration of digital literacy into the course curriculum has become increasingly urgent. The education curriculum should reflect digital literacy learning in every subject, rather than being limited to ICT lessons. Furthermore, experts emphasize that digital literacy should be considered a cross-curricular skill needed to succeed in this digital era (Meyanti & Lasmawan, 2023). The study concluded that digital literacy has a wide-ranging and important impact on post-modern life. However, the integration, values, and critical skills provided by digital literacy are not only relevant in the context of education, focusing on shaping individuals who can succeed and contribute to an increasingly complex digital society. Therefore, empowering aspects of digital literacy through education policy is crucial in preparing the younger generation to face the challenges and opportunities of this digital era.

METHODOLOGY

The research used a systematic literature study approach to investigate the significance of empowering digital literacy aspects in education policy. Furthermore, the methodology allows for an in-depth analysis of various scientific journal articles relevant to the chosen topic, to present a comprehensive understanding of the argument. The literature search process was conducted through academic databases sourced from reputable scientific journals. In the course of the literature review, strict inclusion criteria were applied to select articles that fit the focus of this study. Rather, we only selected articles from scholarly journals that have been published and have a good reputation in the field of digital literacy and education. After collecting relevant articles, the content of each article was critically analyzed to extract information relevant to the research topic. Moreover, based on the differences and similarities in the views presented by the researchers in the articles under review, researchers were able to extract information relevant to the research topic. The results of this literature review were then analyzed according to a thematic framework to identify key patterns, important findings, and conclusions that emerged from the articles reviewed. Thematically, the research allowed us to summarize and organize the information clearly and systematically, allowing us to present a strong and structured argument in this article. Based on this literature review approach, we were able to provide in-depth insights into the importance of strengthening digital literacy in education policy to support young people's readiness for the digital era.

RESEARCH RESULT

The analysis of this literature has identified some significant findings regarding the importance of empowering digital literacy in education policy. Firstly, it was found that the integration of digital literacy in the education curriculum has a positive impact on preparing the younger generation to face the challenges of the digital era. In addition, the results of this study also highlight the importance of teacher training in using technology for learning. A study by Hariati, et al (2022) found that teachers who received quality training in the application of educational technology tended to be more effective in teaching digital literacy to their students (Hariati et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the findings of this literature study show that substantial support from various participants, including the government, educational institutions, and the technology industry, is needed for the successful implementation of educational policies related to digital literacy. In facing the challenges and opportunities of the digital era, the empowerment of digital literacy has also been found to contribute to closing the digital divide. According to a study by Aidan et al. (2023), shows that people with the most effective digital literacy skills are more likely to be able to overcome challenges of access and utilize digital resources more effectively in digital transformation. (McCarthy et al., 2023)

Overall, the findings of this study emphasize that the empowerment of digital literacy through education policy has a significant impact on improving young people's readiness for the digital age. Integrating digital literacy into the curriculum, quality teachers being trained, and comprehensive support from various communities, ensure that young people have the necessary skills and knowledge to be able to succeed and contribute in an increasingly complex digital society.

DISCUSSION

The implications of these findings were discussed, highlighting the significance of collaboration between governments, educational institutions, technology industries and communities in empowering aspects of digital literacy. Among other things, the challenges such as gaps in access and heterogeneous understanding as well as opportunities for innovation in digital education were also addressed in the context of the discussion. These findings illustrate the importance of empowering digital literacy in education policy as a strategic step in preparing the younger generation for the digital era. Finally, the results showed that the integration of digital literacy in the education curriculum provides significant benefits in the development of students' critical skills and adaptability in the digital environment. The study focused on digital literacy enables students to develop critical thinking skills and evaluate information more carefully in an era of information abundance. This indicates that educational policies that empower digital literacy can help create a smart and critical young generation to face the complex challenges of the digital era.

Furthermore, the role of teachers as facilitators of digital literacy learning is also a major concern in the discussion. The importance of quality training for teachers in using technology to support learning is the key to improve the effectiveness of digital literacy teaching in schools. Based on the study of Wang et al., 2023, this emphasizes the importance of supporting investment in the professional development of teachers and the provision of adequate resources to support the implementation of educational policies related to digital literacy. (Wang et al., 2023) Thus, empowering digital literacy not only requires changes in the curriculum, but also requires strong support from educational institutions and the government in preparing the educators to be competent (Nguyen et al., 2022).

However, challenges also appear in the implementation of education policies related to digital literacy. Among the issues is the disparity in the students' understanding and attaining access to digital technology. While the integration of digital literacy in the curriculum may benefit a wide range of students, the risks remain that students from less socio-economic backgrounds may not benefit as similarly (Vieira & Pedro, 2023). Therefore, additional measures, such as providing wider access to technology and special support programs for students who need it, may be necessary to ensure that no one is left behind in the development of digital literacy. This literature study illustrates the importance of empowering digital literacy in education policy as a strategic step in preparing the younger generation for the digital era. Furthermore, the results showed that the integration of digital literacy in the education curriculum provides significant benefits in developing students' critical skills and adaptability in the digital environment.

In addition, the role of teachers as facilitators of digital literacy learning was also a major concern in this discussion. Providing quality training for teachers in using technology to support learning is key to improving the effectiveness of digital literacy teaching in schools (Cinnamon et al., 2021). Thereby emphasizing the importance of making the appropriate resources to support the implementation of education policies related to digital literacy. Thus, empowering digital literacy requires not only changes in the curriculum but also requires strong support from educational institutions and the government to prepare competent educators. However, challenges also appear in the implementation of education policies related to digital literacy. The changing curriculum, teacher training, and provision of technological infrastructure require investment of time, resources, and strong support from various stakeholders. Therefore, a sustained commitment from the government, educational institutions, and the community is needed to ensure the successful implementation of this policy.

By implementing concrete measures and close collaboration between the government, educational institutions, industry, and society, we can ensure that the younger generation is adequately prepared to face the challenges and opportunities of the digital era. By strengthening digital literacy in education policy, we can create a smarter, more inclusive, and empowered society for an increasingly digitally connected future. Therefore, empowering digital literacy through education policy is an important and relevant step in preparing the younger generation for the digital era. However, this effort must be followed by a strong commitment from all relevant societies, including the government, educational institutions, and society as a whole. Only with solid cooperation and sustainable concrete steps can we ensure that the younger generation is adequately prepared to face the challenges and opportunities of this digital era effectively and empowered.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions of the research emphasized the importance of empowering digital literacy through education policy. Further, the recommendations are given for concrete steps that can be taken by the government, educational institutions, and other relevant societies to empowerment digital literacy in the education system. Based on the results of this research, the conclusion is that the empowerment of digital literacy in education policy has a significant impact on improving the digital readiness of the younger generation. The integration of digital literacy in the education curriculum, high-quality teacher training in the uses of technology for learning, and comprehensive support from various parties are key towards achieving this goal. Through these steps, we can shape a young generation that is smart, critical, and adaptable in facing challenges and opportunities in the ever-evolving digital world.

Furthermore, by empowering digital literacy in educational policies, our education system allows us to open wider doors of opportunity for young people. The ability to effectively utilize technology can help improve employability skills and competitiveness in an increasingly globally connected job market. In addition, digital literacy can also provide greater access to education and information resources, thereby reducing knowledge gaps among individuals and communities. However, implementing education policies related to digital literacy is not without its challenges. Changes in the curriculum, teacher training, and provision of technology infrastructure require a strong investment of time, resources, and support from various stakeholders. Therefore, a sustained commitment from the government, educational establishments, and communities is needed to ensure the ongoing success of this policy implementation. The research recommends several concrete steps that can be taken by various related entities. Firstly, the government needs to prioritize empowering digital literacy in the national education policy and provide sufficient funds to support the implementation of this policy. Secondly, educational institutions need to develop a curriculum that includes digital literacy learning at every level of education and ensure that teachers have sufficient skills and knowledge to teach this material effectively.

In addition, the technology industry may have a role to play in supporting the empowerment of digital literacy by providing relevant resources and training for educators and students. Society has an important role to play in supporting digital literacy by raising awareness of the importance of these skills and providing support to initiatives and programs that aim to improve digital literacy in their communities. By taking these steps collectively, it is possible to ensure that young people are adequately prepared to face the challenges and opportunities of the digital age. Through empowering digital literacy in education policy, we can create a smarter, more inclusive, and empowered society in the face of an increasingly digitally connected future.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Furthermore, the research is recommended to further explore effective strategies for improving digital literacy in different educational contexts and to monitor the impact of the implementation of educational policies related to digital literacy in the long term.

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