

THE NEEDS TO HAVE DIGITAL LITERACY AND INTERNET SAFETY AMONG THE LEARNERS

by:

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Today, digital literacy is required to carry out tasks, and keeping up with technological innovations accessible in today's society is recognized as a must. Internet safety, on the other hand, has emerged as a major issue in terms of online learning, involving a wide range of activities such as online privacy, which includes personal information, the use of weak passwords, fraud, and dishonesty, which contains copyright infringement, cheating during examinations, online bullying, and exposure to violent material that provokes exclusion and hatred (Zilka, 2017). As the pandemic COVID-19 continues, the need for living in a digital environment in the Philippines has altered dramatically. We have grown to rely more on technology gadgets and connecting to the internet as a method of interacting with our loved ones as we have experienced lockdowns and school closures. The shift from traditional face-to-face classes to blended and online learning encourages students to stay at home. This situation exposes the learners to be more offenders and inclined on multiple digital networks, which is especially dangerous if they are socially isolated.

As people spend more time on the internet, they are more likely to be misled and misinformed. It has become an important issue since knowing digital privacy and how to conduct oneself may assist in healthy internet usage.. Furthermore, we have observed that internet safety in online learning has become a major concern, involving a variety of activities such as online privacy, which includes personal information, the use of weak passwords, which may jeopardize our schoolwork, fraud, and dishonesty, including plagiarism, students potentially cheating during examinations, online bullying, and exposure to violent content that instigate exclusive behavior. When individuals are not

familiar with particular laws and rules in place for utilizing technology responsibly and ethically, issues of inappropriate technology usage will occur. Individuals should acquire safe online practices at a younger age than ever before since there are various concerns linked with Internet usage. Students should be able to protect themselves against online risks that may disclose personal information and have an influence on their mental health and well-being once they have gained an understanding of the notion of being digitally literate and practicing internet safety. Students should ideally be able to alter technology to meet specific needs or have well-known digital literacy abilities. Students should ideally be able to adjust technology to meet the needs of persons or have well-known digital literacy abilities. If the students have a high degree of digital literacy, they will be better able to deal with online threats (Purnama et al., 2021). Students must maintain appropriate behavior and avoid harming themselves or others. Personal information and intellectual property must be safeguarded. Students learning digital literacy should be taught the basics of online safety, such as how to create secure passwords, understand and manage privacy settings, and what to publish and what not to post on social media.

A well-directed direction, constraints, and parental assistance will result in a greater understanding of each learner and how self-control will grow and develop. When students' self-control improves, they will be less likely, if not removed, from engaging in detrimental online behavior. As we face a new normal in which physical contacts are being replaced by virtual ones, we understand that more action on digital inclusion is urgently required. Given that a huge portion of the global population still lacks fundamental digital skills and understanding of online safety, students lack the readiness to move online. Knowledge and Practices of students towards digital literacy and internet safety should be prior to engagement in the online world. Students who have aware and foundation digital literacy skills may be familiar with the fundamentals of internet safety, such as how to create secure passwords, how to understand and use privacy settings, and what to publish and what not to share on social media. Many students struggle with self-discipline, a lack of social connection, a lack of touch with teachers, poor time

management, and technical challenges. As a result, learning digital literacy is essential if we are to live in a better and safer digital environment.

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