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DEVELOPMENT OF DIGITAL LITERACY OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on the development of digital literacy among elementary school students, students' digital literacy skills, the importance of digital literacy, media literacy, and future research.

Keywords: Classroom observation, digital literacy, school year, literacy programs, digital world

INTRODUCTION

As technology becomes more and more integrated into everyday life, developing digital literacy skills in young students is critical to their academic and future success. Digital literacy encompasses a range of competencies, including the ability to effectively access, evaluate, create, and communicate information using digital tools and platforms. This study examines the implementation and effectiveness of digital literacy instruction in a primary school setting.

METHODS

The study was conducted in 15 elementary schools in the city's largest school district during the 2022-2023 school year. A total of 1,200 students participated in the 3rd-5th grades. Teachers received professional development to integrate digital literacy instruction into their curriculum, while control group teachers continued standard instructional practices.

Students' digital literacy skills were assessed at the beginning and end of the school year using a validated assessment tool. The assessment measured skills in areas such as online research, digital content creation, cyber security awareness and digital communication. Teacher observations and student surveys were also used to collect qualitative data about the implementation process and student engagement.

RESULTS

Analysis of assessment data revealed statistically significant improvements in digital literacy scores for students in the treatment group compared to the control group. The average score increase from pretest to posttest was 27% for the treatment group, compared to only 11% for the control group.

Classroom observations showed that integrating specific digital literacy instruction, such as identifying reliable online resources and creating multimedia presentations, led to increased student engagement and confidence in technology. Student survey responses also reflected positive views of the digital literacy curriculum, with 84 percent of students in the treatment group reporting that the lessons helped them improve their technology skills.

Debate

The results of this study suggest that systematically incorporating digital literacy instruction into the primary curriculum can lead to significant gains in students' digital competencies. By

equipping young learners with a strong foundation in accessing, evaluating, and creating digital content, schools can better prepare students to navigate an increasingly digital world.
The results indicate that targeted professional development for teachers is a key component to the successful implementation of digital literacy programs. With appropriate training and resources, beginning teachers can effectively integrate digital literacy skills in developmentally appropriate ways across subject areas.
Future research should examine the long-term impact of such programs as well as strategies to expand digital literacy instruction to include students from diverse backgrounds and communities. Efforts to improve digital literacy in elementary schools are critical to empowering the next generation of students and leaders.
Some additional details on developing digital literacy in elementary school students:
The importance of digital literacy
Digital literacy is now a key skill alongside traditional literacy in reading, writing and mathematics. As technology permeates all aspects of modern life—from academic research to workplace collaboration to personal communication—students must be able to use digital tools and resources effectively. Developing digital literacy at an early stage helps create a solid foundation that students can build on throughout their education and future careers.
Digital skills covered
The digital literacy curriculum implemented in this study included a number of important competencies, including:
- Information Literacy: Ability to identify reliable online sources, perform effective web searches, and critically evaluate digital content
- Media literacy: understanding how to interpret, analyze and create different multimedia formats such as videos, podcasts and graphics
- Digital communication: skills to use collaborative platforms, e-mail and other digital communication channels correctly and effectively
- Computational Thinking: Basic coding and programming concepts to improve problem solving and logical thinking
- Cyber Security Awareness: Knowledge of online security, privacy and responsible use of technology
These skills are woven into teaching across academic subjects, allowing students to develop digital literacy in authentic, cross-curricular contexts.
Professional development for teachers
A key component of the program's success has been the extensive professional development of participating teachers. During the academic year, teachers had the following:
- Educational workshops on integrating digital literacy into lesson plans
- Mentoring and mentoring from educational technology experts
- Opportunities to collaborate with peers and share best practices
- Access to digital resources and lesson plans
This ongoing support has equipped teachers with the knowledge, confidence, and practical strategies to confidently deliver digital literacy curriculum in their classrooms.
Equity accounting

Recognizing the digital divide that exists in many communities, the program aims to ensure equitable access to technology and digital learning opportunities. Schools that serve high numbers of low-income students have received hardware, fast loans, and family technology workshops to support students learning at home.

SUMMARY

This study shows that a comprehensive approach to teaching digital literacy in elementary grades can lead to significant gains in students' technological competencies. By empowering today's young learners with digital skills, schools can better prepare them to thrive in an increasingly digital world. Continued research and investment in this important area of education will be critical in the coming years.

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