

The Level of Media Literacy in a Post-Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Media literacy has become an increasingly critical skill in the post-pandemic era, particularly in addressing the spread of misinformation and disinformation that can negatively impact society. This study aims to assess the level of media literacy among the public after the COVID-19 pandemic and examine their tendencies toward teleworking in the post-pandemic era. A quantitative approach was employed, with data collected through an online survey distributed to 150 respondents. The data were analyzed using descriptive analysis to identify trends and patterns related to media literacy and teleworking. Findings indicate that while most respondents acknowledge the importance of media literacy in daily life, there is still confusion regarding its actual concept, especially in distinguishing between fake and credible news. Additionally, the study reveals that although teleworking is supported, a significant portion of respondents still prefer working in an office rather than from home. These findings highlight the need for increased awareness and education on media literacy, as well as the necessity of flexible teleworking policies. This study suggests that media literacy training and education should be further integrated into higher education curricula to combat the challenges of infodemic and ensure sustainable teleworking practices in the evolving work environment.

Keywords: Media literacy, infodemic, COVID-19 pandemic, teleworking, misinformation

INTRODUCTION

The absence of media literacy skills is where the people are these days. When people assume the first result, they see in a search engine is accurate, are perplexed when content they saw on one app appears on another, or are misled by a manipulated video into risky actions during a pandemic or lead to doubt the results of an election, it is clear that people lack media literacy skills (Owens, 2021). Recent studies have revealed that, particularly online, teenagers struggle to evaluate the authenticity of media and critically think about it. According to Stanford Graduate School of Education research that examined the media literacy of middle school, high school, and college students, the younger age group do not have a solid knowledge of the difference between "fake news" and legitimate news (Spilsbury, 2018).

The COVID-19 pandemic has been followed by a so-called "infodemic"—a worldwide outbreak of disinformation that presents a significant concern for public health. Infodemics are worrisome because the dissemination of inaccurate or deceptive facts has the potential to affect circulation patterns and therefore the scale and lethality of a pandemic. Any media can disseminate the information, but there is cause to be worried about the position that social media holds including Facebook and Twitter play in unintentionally boosting misperceptions. One in three people believe the media has underestimated the pandemic, according to a recent poll conducted across several nations. Some people were conscious that disinformation was an issue in the same study (EAVI, 2020).

The lack of current media and information literacy among the general public, as seen by their inability to separate reliable information from the vast amount of information they were receiving on their devices, supports the necessity for quick action to stop any additional infodemic. The documentation, analysis, and compilation of literature that was accessible over the Internet. Misinformation outbreaks during the COVID-19 pandemic, unusual infodemic incidents, efforts by social media platforms to contain them, the need to improve people's media and information literacy, and the involvement of libraries and educational institutions in achieving this—all call for action (Banga & Singh, 2022).

There has also been misinformation about potential treatments for the disease, making the consequences of accepting incorrect facts potentially fatal. As certain policymakers and businesses all over the world seek to exploit the virus' epidemic to advance their personal agendas, it is important for readers to learn media literacy: validate sources, read beyond news, crosscheck knowledge, listen to experts, and use common sense. This is not only a kind of media literacy; it is also the start of a happier, less stressed mindset (EAVI, 2020).

Lack of a systematic approach to media literacy is one of the issues the education sector faces. The majority of countries lack any activities that can be easily tested to see how effectively students have mastered specific skills and abilities, despite the fact that many countries throughout the world insist that media literacy be taught in schools. As the coronavirus crisis has intensified, conspiracy theories and health disinformation, which frequently circulates on social media, have highlighted the significance of media literacy - the capacity to recognise, comprehend, and critically assess various sources of media. It is nearly impossible to create a single instrument that could evaluate all elements of media literacy and

all target audiences since media literacy is so broad and complicated (McDougall & Watt, 2021).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

RO1: To study the level of media literacy in post-pandemic.

RO2: To identify the preferences towards the use of teleworking in the post-pandemic era.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Media and Information Literacy

Information is made and scattered in all structures and organizations. Media and information increment consistently and it turns out to be plentiful to such an extent that it very well may be found anyplace, whenever particularly in the flourishing time of information and data blast. Media and data literacy helps the general population to utilize data and media content in a moral, productive and successful way. As our reliance on innovation increases, deliberate reflection about media and data is a deep rooted mastering expertise that upholds dynamic and informed individuals who assume a key part in guaranteeing democracy does not die online (Varda and Kyza, 2019). As digital media advancements develop, traditional media is at this point not sufficient for an individual to maintain and be ready to interface in the new media world. By taking a gander at how much time people in general spend participating in various exercises on the Internet, it gives huge advantages to have adequate information as far as new media education and literacy which are expected in the years to come (Veeriah, 2021).

Media Literacy in an Era of Fake News and False Information

“People want to believe that something is the biggest and the greatest and the most spectacular. I call it truthful hyperbole. It’s an innocent form of exaggeration and a very effective form of promotion.” (Donald Trump, 1987). What the future politician deemed "truthful hyperbole" as a businessman meant little to anybody disinterested in Trump's idea of personal nance. It probably did not signify much to the television audiences who watched his reality show "The Apprentice", which he hosted from 2004 to 2015. When Trump declared his desire to run for president as the Republican nominee in 2016, many people were intrigued, while others were sceptical. It rapidly became clear that this man was not afraid to speak anything during his rallies. The mainstream media gave his candidacy more publicity than the other Republican candidates combined.

Understanding the socio-cultural conditions in which false news, disinformation, and misinformation propagate might help influence the sort of solutions to use to combat them. With this dedication, Wasserman et al. (2019) researched six African nations to discover motives for distributing fake news and determined that the most prevalent reasons for sharing deception were: raising awareness out of a (misplaced) sense of civic duty and making people aware of disinformation. In the case of satirical content, users shared it "for fun." Humorous material became a haven for media consumers who sought to avoid depressing news and instead foster conviviality and camaraderie.

Media Literacy on Debunking Fake News

The Internet is a staggering asset for information and latest news, yet sadly not everything on the web is reliable. Fake or counterfeit news is any article or video containing false data masked as a valid news source. While counterfeit news is not exceptional to the Internet, it has as of late turned into a major issue in the present media world (GCFGlobal, 2019). Fake news and disinformation can have a huge impact on media users and penetrate each fibre of society. Counterfeit news and falsehood do not normally have all the earmarks of being phony as they frequently appear to be credible and authentic. These are reports intended to be a trick, to intentionally misguide and misdirect peruses. Counterfeit reports can be facilitated on sites that bear names like trustworthy news associations. It might very well be challenging to control the creation and spread of phony news, disinformation, and deception, yet media proficiency can guarantee their clients are media and data proficient. This will give them the abilities and skills to use sound judgment about information use and expenditure (Adjin-Tettey, 2022). Media literacy can likewise assist with teaching individuals to explore the misleading waters of the Internet, so they do not suffocate in that frame of mind of fake news and disinformation, consequently diminishing the gamble of being controlled by promulgation (Leong, 2019).

Initiating Media Literacy Education

Drawn in learning ought to be a trade of thoughts and not restricted to one idea or one type of reasoning. Media literacy instruction gives numerous viewpoints and voices to illuminate understudies' perspectives on various subjects. Counting media literacy education standards for a school's educational program offers understudies the chance to participate in discussions that are fundamental for everybody to hear and gain from various people. Teaching understudies on the most proficient method to track down replies to their inquiries and how to find assets that give legitimate information is essential to media education guidance. It includes connecting with students at the stage level and showing them how the media attempts to impact our reasoning (Abreu, 2021). A general public that is media literate will actually want to make unbiased, informed choices in light of honest realities, as opposed to untruths and promulgation. There is a need to push for more noteworthy media literacy in Malaysia, beginning with its conventional educational system (Leong, 2019).

Digital Literacy on Productivity

While the COVID-19 pandemic has been with us for many months, it has introduced work-life balance, it likewise now expects organizations to look at the supportability of remote working sooner rather than later. While the jury is still out on the possibilities of embracing remote working practices as another ordinary, a few driving stages for business exploration and driving IT organizations have started to share their bits of knowledge. For example, a new article distributed by Forbes shared that a California based organization had seen a 47% expansion in efficiency because of its representatives telecommuting during the continuous pandemic. It has likewise permitted representatives to investigate ways of working with adaptability and find better work-life combinations, which was impractical in the old model. As a matter of fact, it is a good idea to guess that numerous representatives might want to keep telecommuting.

Coronavirus made a staggering presentation on the world scene and sent off another period of how we live and function in our worldwide society. The pandemic introduced sensational changes and developed disparities. In any case, it likewise sped up development and especially the reception of new technologies. The rise of another type of work, for example, teleworking was to be expected, but instead should be visible as an impact of digitalization and variation to a continually changing financial climate. Under these circumstances, more prominent consideration should be paid to how nations come up with the techniques and switches required for ideal adaptation and variation.

Recent global surveys put the perspectives in excess of 16,000 representatives across 16 nations, including Malaysia. It investigated representative experiences and viewpoints to work all through the pandemic and into the new normal. As per the EY (2021), just 22% of Malaysia representatives overviewed would like to work from the workplace all day. The greater part would like to work anywhere (23%), work remotely all day (29%), or in a hybrid work plan such as a blend of in-office and remote working (25%), predictable with inclinations uncovered by representatives studied from around the world. Seven out of 10 of Malaysia respondents say half and half work plans will expand efficiency, productivity and inventiveness.

The Utilization of Teleworking

Teleworking or known as work from home and home office has been an essential practice for some organizations and workers during the lockdown time of the COVID-19 emergency. During this episode, firms and employees have kept on working while at the same time being truly isolated and had the vital innovative, technological, and computerized security conditions. The speed of telecommuting extension was sped up, yet separated by the points of interest of exercises, the word related and proficient status of the labour force, the work strategies, and the degree of advancement of nations. To stay away from the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 infection, the states have urged the organizations to utilize telecommuting, subsequently the businesses have become more receptive about this type of work and the representatives have adjusted to the new prerequisites. In such a manner, the agreeable advanced improvement, recognizing deficiency where greater venture is required in digital advances should be considered.

Teleworking can work on firm execution by raising employees' fulfilment and improve worker proficiency through better balance of work and life, or less interruptions prompting more engaged work or less non-attendance. It is, in any case, likewise conceivable that employees' fulfilment diminishes with telecommuting, for example because of isolation, stowed away extra time and a combining of private and work life, or an improper workspace at home. In any case, the employee's productivity may likewise diminish with telecommuting as telecommuting decreases the quantity of in-person corporations, which debilitates correspondence, information flows and administrative oversight. An extensive variety of proof backs the idea that working at an office takes into consideration more compelling correspondence than additional remote structures like messages, talk, or calls. The absence of individual associations can likewise diminish information streams among representatives.

METHODOLOGY

A research design is a step-by-step strategy outlining how a study will be conducted. It acts as a guide to help researchers gather, analyse, and evaluate the study's findings. This research technique will give impacts to the design of the study and allows the researchers to assess the benefits and numerous strategies accessible to them (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this particular investigation, the Quantitative Research Method serves as our methodology of choice for gathering the information required to finish the investigation.

The researcher will be employing the Quantitative Research Method with Close-Ended Question, and in order to carry out an in-depth interview or survey, we will be sending our respondents an online version of the Google form. Because we are committed to conducting reliable and accurate research, we will be sending the online Google form to each of the 150 respondents. The link to the survey was shared across various social media platforms including Whatsapp, Telegram, Facebook, and Instagram. As the response of the public is the primary focus of these 15 investigations, utilizing a platform of this type makes it simple to collect a diverse range of responses from the general population.

In order to conduct an analysis of the information that we gleaned from the Google form, we will be using descriptive analysis. The procedures for analyzing the data consist of creating a survey stage, conducting a pilot test, and transferring the data. The questionnaires and surveys that are used in the research are designed with the research objectives in mind. In order to determine the accuracy of the research, the questionnaire was given to the first fifty people who participated in the study.

The survey method was used to collect quantitative data for this research. The survey method was chosen due to its economical price, relevant to our study, and has a wider scope of resources available. A pilot test was conducted to get feedback from respondents on the quality of the statement and their grasp of the statement in order to guarantee that the survey is properly understood.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

For the finding and discussion of this research, we have categorized one sub-topic that is related to our research topic, The Level of Media Literacy in a Post Pandemic. All of the findings and results from the research will be analysed and discussed below referring from the Google Form Questionnaires that were distributed to the total of 150 respondents.

Most of our respondents were female with 68.7% compared to male that are only 31.3%. According to the data gathered, 74% of the respondents are single and 26% of them are married. Respondents in the age between 18-25 years old hold the majority with 56.7%. Meanwhile 90% out of the 150 respondents are Malays. 34.7% of them lived in the central Region (Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya) and 54% of them were students. 65.3% of them come from urban areas. 96% of the respondents stated that they know the excessive media literacy consumption will cause anxiety while 92.7% of the respondents understand the meaning of media literacy.

In section B, the reliance on media literacy in a post pandemic world, we found out that the highest mean was from the statement "I believe that media literacy is important for

everyone to learn” and “I am aware that media literacy was still be use in educational system” that came out with the same mean 3.64. Hence, the lowest mean is 3.50 where they were unsure whether that media literacy allows anyone to create or manipulate media or otherwise.

Move on to the last section, which is The Preference of The Teleworking During the Endemic Phase of Covid-19. Based on our finding, the lowest mean was at 3.18 where most of them would prefer to work from office rather than working from home. The highest mean was at 3.52 at which the respondents agree that understanding the long-term impact of teleworking on company productivity and overall productivity is vital. They also think policymakers should assure that teleworking remains a choice in this post-pandemic era, and they chose to understand the acceptance and sustainability of home-based teleworking among employees.

CONCLUSION

Through this study, it shows that nearly all of the respondents strongly agree that the reliance on media literacy in the post-pandemic world is still required. The results mainly show that the majority of them believe that a lack of media literacy may lead to misinformation, and it is needed and essential to include media training in post-secondary higher education. Moreover, most of the respondents prefer to work-from home rather than working in the office as they believe that productivity performance would increase through telecommuting. This illustrates that they prefer to telework during the endemic phase of COVID-19.

Further research might theoretically be undertaken employing additional theories such as the media agenda theory, framing theory, media dependency theory, and plenty of others depending on the topic under study at the time. This could aid in the discovery of more hidden facts and correlations that the uses and gratifications theory may not have revealed clearly in the current research. In terms of data collecting, rather than relying just on one method, future research might dive deep by incorporating another method, such as an interview, to speak with underage students and gain a more in-depth situation regarding the issue.

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