A Grounded-Theory Study of Digital Literacy among Iranian Senior High School Students

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The relationship between people, new technologies, and how things are done have changed in the past couple of decades, and as new media have been increasingly incorporated in our communication, the entire concept of literacy has expanded, new definitions of digital literacy have been offered, and effort has been made to incorporate media competencies in educational settings. Educators, policy-makers and researchers have also tried to address new educational needs by developing programs of digital literacy education depending on the subject area.

Digital literacy is quickly becoming a vital skill for mediating life in the 21st century as digital technologies, digital media, and digital devices have become universal and essential in modern society. New media are a significant consequence of new and emerging technologies that one shall delve into to have a clear picture of new educational trends. The purpose of the present study is to observe the Iranian educational landscape in an explanatory, analytical and empirical manner, and to explain the status quo of digital literacy among Iranian senior high school students. Through a grounded-theory study, the researcher intends to explore the Iranian so-called digital natives' perceptions and experiences so that a substantive model for digital literacy could emerge.

The researcher hopes that this way, the study would be able to come up with an indigenous model of digital literacy for the Iranian context and contribute to the field, while addressing a significant problem: The lack of an indigenous theory concerning digital literacy and an instrument for its assessment.

The findings of the present empirical study can potentially provoke even more scholars to publish scientific findings in an area which has been mostly left untapped. It will also hopefully generate concrete data that will be relevant to the establishment of media and media literacy as inseparable components of modern educational systems, positively prompting other researchers to perform similar studies and incorporate their agenda.