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MEDIA LITERACY AND DIGITAL IDENTITY MANAGEMENT: IMPACT ON DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

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Abstract: In an increasingly digitized world, digital citizenship, encompassing technical, ethical, and critical skills, has become an essential requirement. This study analyzes how media literacy and digital identity management impact the digital citizenship of graduate students. Through a systematic review of the PRISMA-based literature, 30 relevant studies were selected to identify relationships between these variables in educational contexts. The results highlight that media literacy fosters active and responsible citizenship, while digital identity management protects online security and privacy. However, significant challenges remain, such as digital divides in Latin America, a lack of teacher training in Europe, and a limited focus on Asia. The findings underscore the need for inclusive education strategies, teacher training programmes and multisectoral policies to reduce inequalities and strengthen key digital skills.

Keywords: Media literacy, digital identity management, digital citizenship, higher education, systematic review, PRISMA, digital competencies, digital divides.

Introduction: In an increasingly digitized world, the interaction and participation of citizens in virtual environments has become a fundamental need. Digital citizenship, defined as ethical, safe and responsible behavior in the use of digital technologies, is crucial for contemporary life (Ribble, 2012). This concept encompasses not only technical skills, but also ethical and critical competencies that enable people to successfully navigate a complex digital environment.

At the international level, technological advances have transformed the way societies interact and participate in social, economic, and political processes. Studies in Europe have identified media literacy as an essential pillar for the development of active citizenship in the digital age (Livingstone & Helsper, 2007). In regions such as Asia, the importance of digital identity management as a tool to protect online privacy and security, fundamental aspects in a highly connected society, has been highlighted (Kim & Kim, 2021).

In Latin America, the digital landscape presents both opportunities and challenges. According to Claro (2020), the region faces a significant gap in access to digital technologies,

which limits the full development of digital citizenship. However, initiatives in countries such as Chile have shown that citizenship education can be an effective way to integrate digital skills into academic training (Contreras & Vera, 2022). In Mexico, it has been shown that virtual communities have allowed the active participation of citizens in political and social issues, highlighting the need for education focused on ethics and respect in digital environments (Ayala et al., 2022).

In the Peruvian context, progress towards digital citizenship has been uneven. A recent report by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers (PCM, 2023) indicates that, on average, citizens exercise less than two of the eight digital skills assessed. This low level of digital skills limits people's ability to use technological resources effectively. In addition, problems such as unequal access to the internet and the lack of digital literacy programs persist, underscoring the need for urgent interventions in this area (Linares et al., 2023).

The Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, as the oldest educational institution in the Americas, faces the challenge of training students capable of functioning in digital environments in an ethical and effective way. In the Faculty of Education, it has been observed that postgraduate students lack key skills, such as the use of bibliographic managers and the performance of procedures through technological platforms. These limitations reflect a gap in the integration of digital citizenship into higher education.

This study focuses on analyzing how media literacy and digital identity management impact the digital citizenship of graduate students. By addressing these areas, it seeks to contribute to the development of educational strategies that promote comprehensive education, preparing students for the challenges of a digitalized society.

Methodology:

This study was carried out through a systematic review of the literature, following the guidelines established by the PRISMA statement (Moher et al., 2009). The main objective was to identify and analyze research that explores the relationship between media literacy, digital identity management, and digital citizenship in education.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria:

Specific criteria were defined for the selection of studies:

- **Inclusion criteria:**
  - Articles published between 2010 and 2023.
  - Studies focused on media literacy, digital identity management and digital citizenship in educational contexts.
  - Research available in English or Spanish.
  - Peer-reviewed articles.

- **Exclusion criteria:**
  - Studies that did not directly address the variables of interest.
  - Articles without access to the full text.
  - Publications in languages other than English or Spanish.

Search strategy:

The literature search was carried out in the following electronic databases:

- **Scopus**
- **Web of Science**
- **ERIC (Education Resources Information Center)**
- **Google Scholar**

Combinations of keywords and Boolean operators were used to optimize the search, such as:

- "media literacy" AND "digital citizenship"
- "digital identity management" AND "education"
- "media literacy" AND "digital citizenship"
- "digital identity management" AND "education"

Selection of studies:

The selection of studies was carried out in three phases:

1. **Identification:** A total of 1,250 articles were retrieved after the initial search of the aforementioned databases.
2. **Screening:** 450 duplicate articles were eliminated, leaving 800 for the review of titles and abstracts.
3. **Eligibility:** After review of titles and abstracts, 150 articles were selected for full-text evaluation. Of these, 30 met all the inclusion criteria and were incorporated into the final analysis.

Quality assessment:

The critical appraisal skills programme (CASP) was used to assess the methodological quality of the included studies. This evaluation made it possible to identify possible biases and ensure the relevance and rigor of the selected research.

Data synthesis:

Data extracted from the selected studies were organised in a table that included:

- Authors and year of publication.
- Objectives of the study.
- Methodology used.
- Main findings related to media literacy, digital identity management and digital citizenship.

A thematic analysis was conducted to identify patterns and relationships between the variables of interest, allowing for a deep understanding of how media literacy and digital identity management influence digital citizenship in educational contexts.

Results

The systematic review carried out following the PRISMA guidelines made it possible to identify and analyse 30 relevant studies that addressed the relationships between media literacy, digital identity management and digital citizenship in educational contexts. The main findings are presented below, organized thematically and categorized by regions and countries.

1. Relationship between Media Literacy and Digital Citizenship

Europe

- **United Kingdom:** Livingstone & Helsper (2007) noted that media literacy is an essential pillar for the development of active and ethical citizenship, highlighting initiatives to strengthen these competencies from primary education.
- **Spain:** Recent studies (UNESCO, 2024) highlight programs that combine media literacy and civic training, promoting more ethical participation in digital environments.

Latin America

- **Chile:** Contreras & Vera (2022) showed that comprehensive educational programs have improved media literacy, which has increased the active participation of students on digital platforms.
- **Peru:** In the Peruvian context, Linares et al. (2023) highlighted that, although there is recognition of the importance of these competencies, their integration into the educational curriculum remains limited.

Asia
- **South Korea:** Kim & Kim (2021) identified that media literacy is critical to mitigating the risks associated with disinformation and promoting responsible interactions in virtual environments.

2. Digital Identity Management
Europe
- **Spain:** Núñez-Alberca and Mateus (2022) evidenced an increase in academic production related to digital identity management, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Sweden:** Studies highlight national programs to protect online privacy and educate on the ethical management of digital identity.

Latin America
- **Mexico:** Benavides Reyes (2021) identified gaps in the teaching of computational thinking, which affects students' ability to manage their digital identity effectively.
- **Colombia:** Pilot programs have shown that students with training in digital identity management are less likely to be victims of data theft.

Asia
- **India:** The findings suggest that although the technological infrastructure is robust, digital identity management education is still nascent, limiting the development of secure digital citizenship.

3. Challenges identified in educational contexts

REGION	MAIN CHALLENGES
EUROPE	Lack of integration of digital skills at higher educational levels.
LATIN AMERICA	Significant technological gaps, especially in rural areas.
ASIA	Limited focus on ethical and critical literacy within digital educational programs.

4. Educational Policies and Proposals

COUNTRY	MAIN PROPOSALS
UNITED KINGDOM	Strengthen teacher training in advanced digital skills.
MEXICO	Design digital inclusion strategies for marginalized communities.
SOUTH KOREA	Implement national media literacy training programmes for youth and adults.
PERU	Integrate digital citizenship competencies into the national curriculum, with a focus on social equity.

The results show that both media literacy and digital identity management have a direct and positive impact on the development of digital citizenship. However, significant challenges remain in terms of educational implementation and equitable access. The country ranking reveals differences in the degree of progress and approaches taken, underscoring the need for tailored regional strategies to address these challenges.

Conclusions

The systematic review carried out under the PRISMA methodology has made it possible to consolidate relevant findings on media literacy, digital identity management and its impact on the development of key digital citizenship competences in educational contexts. Media literacy is positioned as an essential component to foster active and responsible digital citizenship. The studies reviewed show a positive correlation between these competencies, which indicates that the integration of specific educational programs can enhance critical, ethical and participatory skills in students. However, significant discrepancies are observed in the implementation of these initiatives, particularly in regions with educational inequality. Digital identity management, on the other hand, emerges as an indispensable competence to guarantee security and privacy in digital environments. Despite some progress in countries with more developed education systems, this area remains an emerging challenge in many regions. The lack of specific training in this competency limits students' ability to build a safe and ethical online presence. This highlights the need to design educational strategies that prioritize both data protection and the construction of a responsible digital identity.

Disparities in access to digital resources and limited technological infrastructure disproportionately affect rural and marginalized communities, particularly in regions such as Latin America. These technology gaps not only restrict access, but also students' ability to develop critical digital competencies. The review underscores the importance of multisectoral interventions that combine investments in infrastructure, teacher training, and inclusive strategies to address these inequalities.

It is crucial to implement training programs for educators in media literacy skills and digital identity management, ensuring their effective integration into educational environments. In addition, education systems should prioritise the inclusion of these competencies in the curriculum, addressing both equitable access to digital resources and their practical application. Collaboration between governments, educational institutions and the private sector is essential to overcome existing barriers and promote inclusive and sustainable digital citizenship. Finally, these conclusions highlight the need for further research on how to address the identified challenges, focusing on strategies to reduce digital divides and strengthen key competencies in the various educational contexts.

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