Module 5

Digital literacy and the effect media had on mental health created by health emergency crisis

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	Learning Objectives
Unit 1	**Digital Literacy Introduction**
Topic 1	Digital Literacy Introduction
Topic 2	Eight Elements of Digital Literacy
Topic 3	Media Literacy
Topic 4	Media Traditional Vs New

Unit 1: Digital Literacy Introduction

Topic 1: Digital Literacy Introduction

Digital Literacy is defined by Cornell University (2009) as a combination of the skills or competencies in finding, comprehending, evaluating, utilizing, sharing, and creating digital content using technology and the internet.

To be Digitally Literate is not merely the mastery of computer technology and internet usage skills, which connotes making humans mere robotic figures.

Rather, it is interpreted as reading for knowledge, reading coherently, and thinking critically.

This ability is not merely the mastery of computer technology and internet usage skills, which connotes making humans mere robotic figures.

The importance of digital literacy was further reinforced during the COVID-19 pandemic, as educators of all levels across the world had to adapt their teaching and learn new teaching

methods in a short amount of time. This had an effect on teachers' and students' mental health.

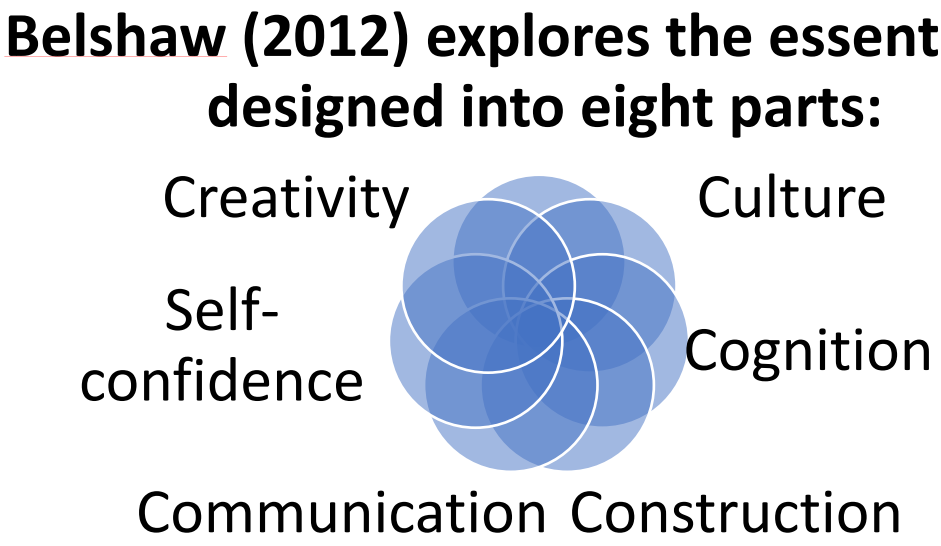
For **teachers**, the impact of digital technologies (additional workload, adapting to new technologies etc) during the pandemic caused stress and reduced motivation (Toto and Limone, 2021).

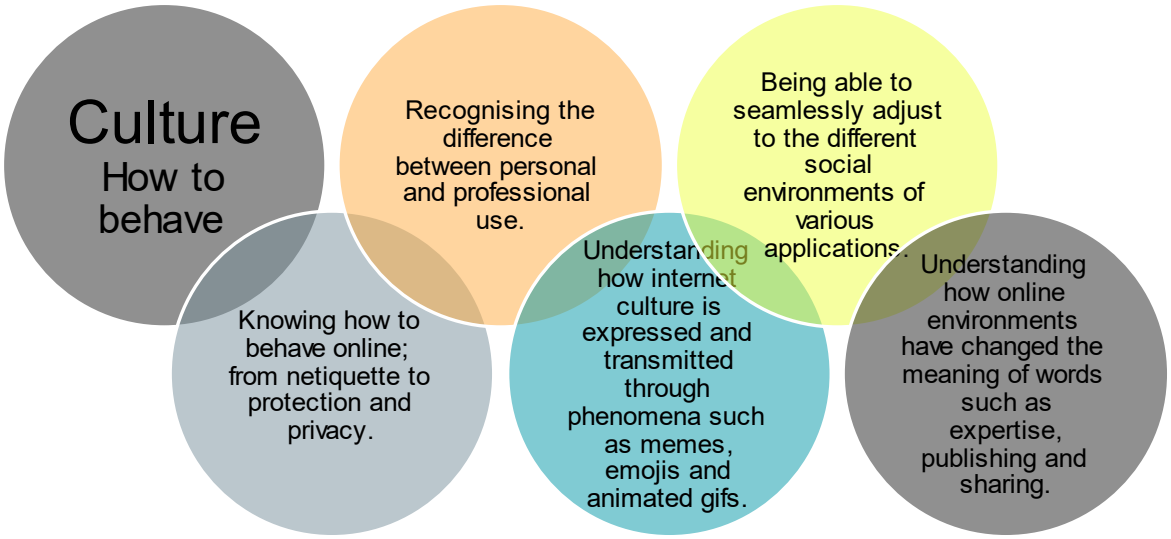
For **students**, adapting to online teaching also caused difficulties as discrepancies in the level of digital literacy and online access among students, teachers, and parents created huge obstacles for some children, even the ability so signing on their class.

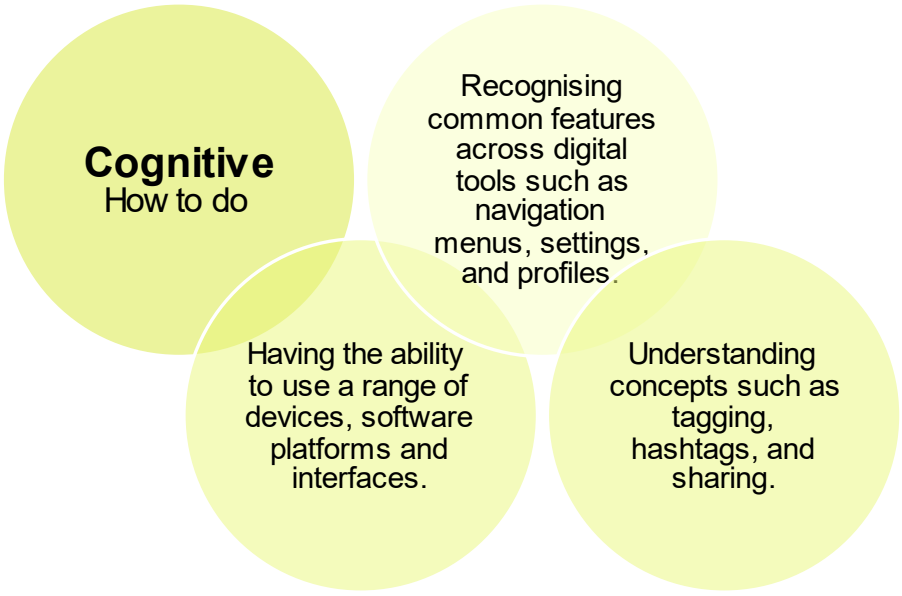
Topic 2: Eight elements of DL

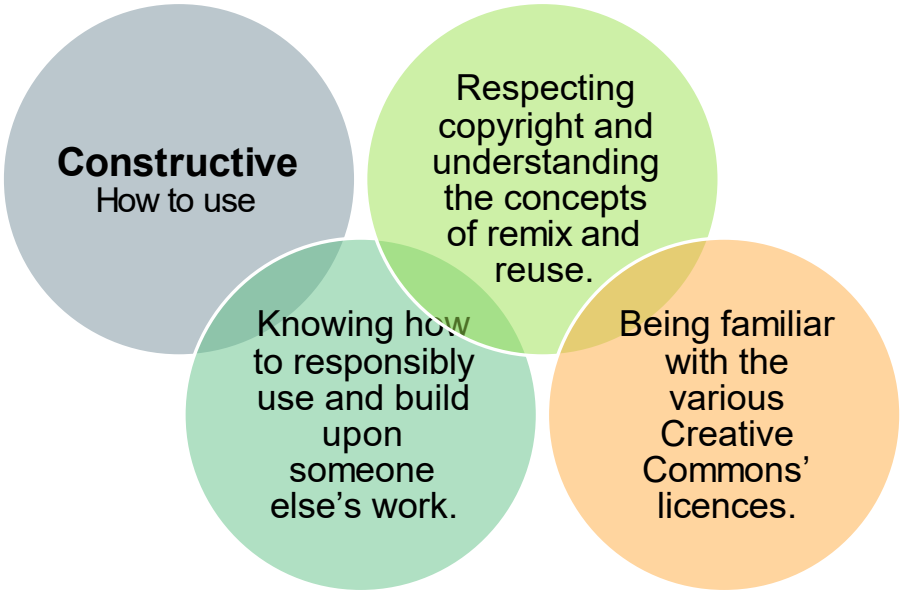
Belshaw's model provides a holistic approach to digital literacy were knowing how to use technology is just one of the 8 core elements (cognitive).

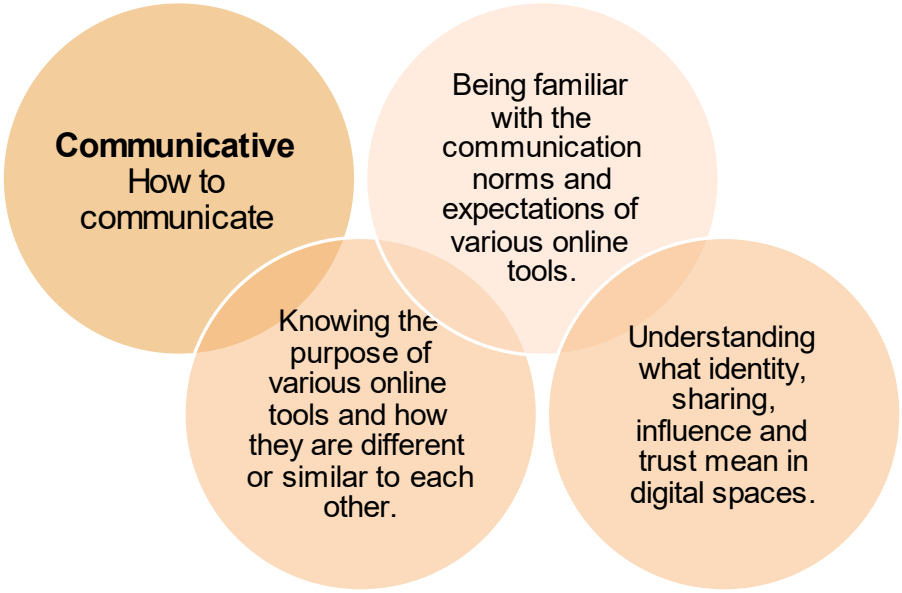
The model is broad enough that the elements can be applied to any related situation and role. It is also descriptive rather than prescriptive making it a suitable learning framework for improving the digital literacy fluency of both digital novices and confident digital learners.

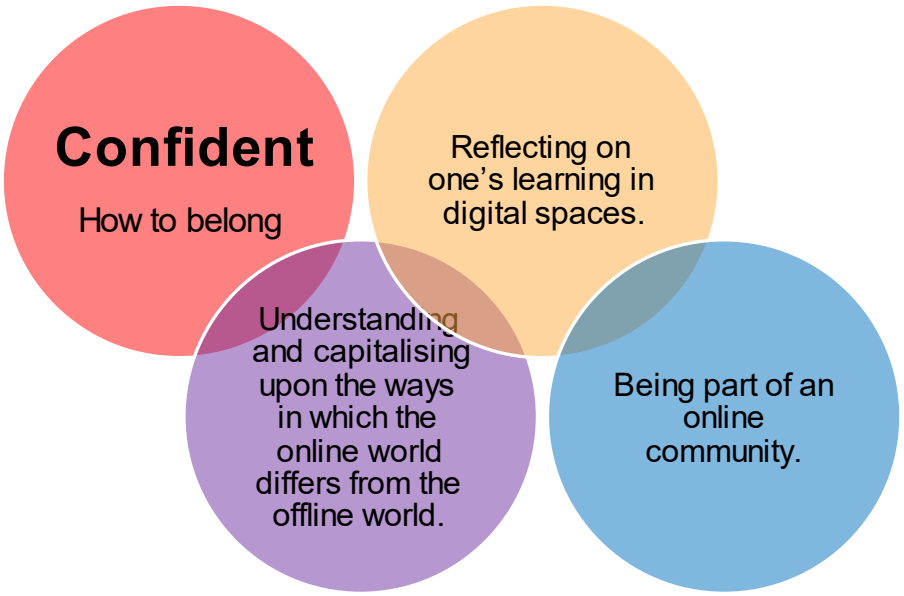


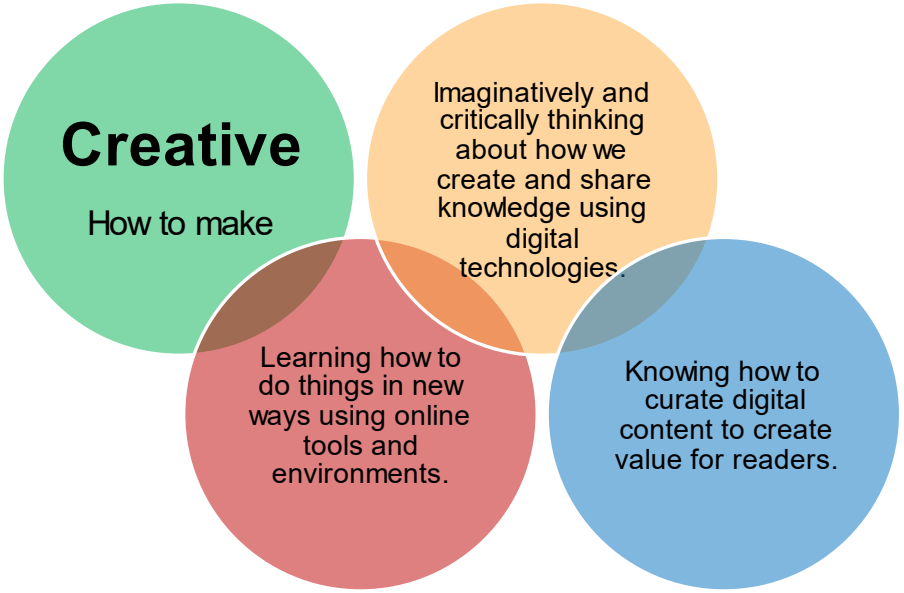

Culture
How to behave
Recognising the difference between personal and professional use.
Being able to seamlessly adjust to the different social environments of various applications.
Knowing how to behave online; from netiquette to protection and privacy.
Understanding how internet culture is expressed and transmitted through phenomena such as memes, emojis and animated gifs.
Understanding how online environments have changed the meaning of words such as expertise, publishing and sharing.

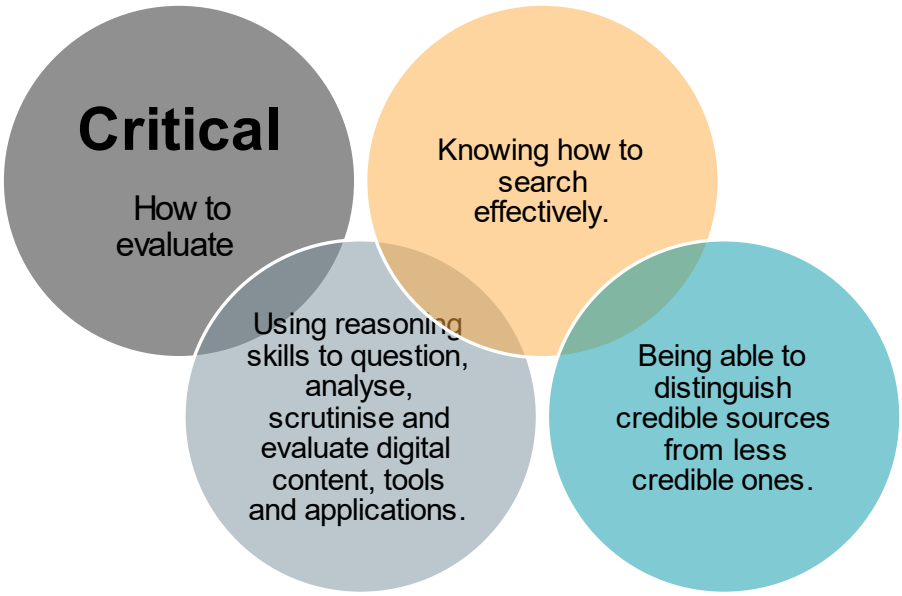

Cognitive
How to do
Recognising common features across digital tools such as navigation menus, settings, and profiles.
Having the ability to use a range of devices, software platforms and interfaces.
Understanding concepts such as tagging, hashtags, and sharing.

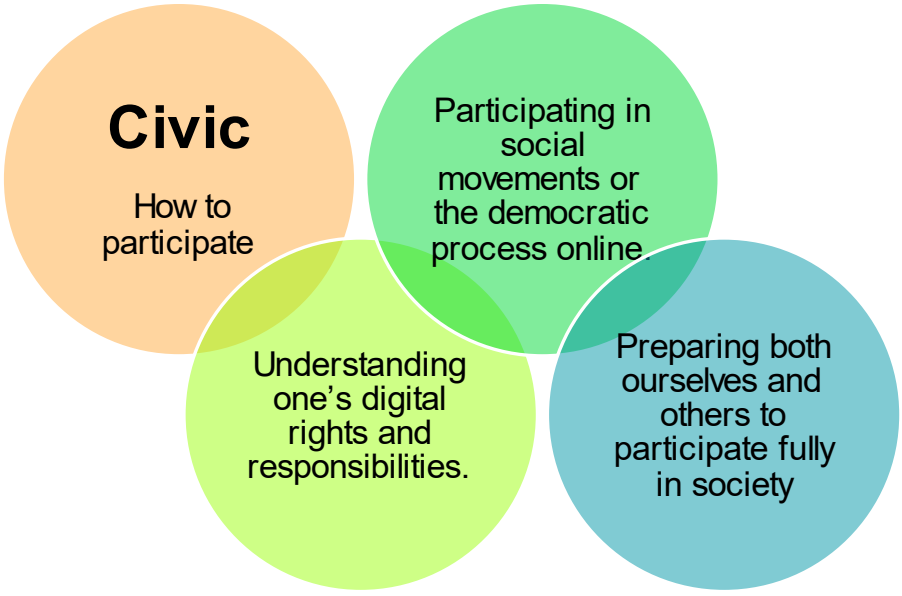

Constructive
How to use
Respecting copyright and understanding the concepts of remix and reuse.
Knowing how to responsibly use and build upon someone else's work.
Being familiar with the various Creative Commons' licences.


Communicative
How to communicate
Being familiar with the communication norms and expectations of various online tools.
Knowing the purpose of various online tools and how they are different or similar to each other.
Understanding what identity, sharing, influence and trust mean in digital spaces.


Confident
How to belong
Reflecting on one's learning in digital spaces.
Understanding and capitalising upon the ways in which the online world differs from the offline world.
Being part of an online community.


Creative
How to make
Imaginatively and critically thinking about how we create and share knowledge using digital technologies.
Learning how to do things in new ways using online tools and environments.
Knowing how to curate digital content to create value for readers.

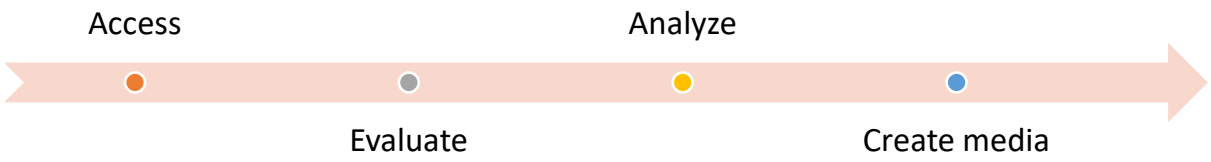

Critical
How to evaluate
Knowing how to search effectively.
Using reasoning skills to question, analyse, scrutinise and evaluate digital content, tools and applications.
Being able to distinguish credible sources from less credible ones.


Civic
How to participate
Participating in social movements or the democratic process online.
Understanding one's digital rights and responsibilities.
Preparing both ourselves and others to participate fully in society

Topic 3: Media Literacy

Media literacy is the ability to access the media, to understand and to critically evaluate different aspects of contents and to create communications in a variety of contexts.' (EC Media Literacy Portal, no date)

Media Literacy is also considered a 21st century learning approach which enables learners to:



Media Literacy is particularly relevant for the Net Generation, who have grown up surrounded by the Internet, and more recently, digital and social media.

Research emphasizes the need for having innovative classrooms which are embedded in and surrounded by increasingly mobile and digital information and communication technology (ICT), to foster modernized, inclusive learning practices which are centred on innovative teaching, and creative learning: where students are able to develop their thinking abilities and practice new skills (Bocconi, Kampylis, & Punie, 2012). These approaches to learning will allow this Net Generation of students to be critical and to interpret what is right and what is not, when they, for instance,engage in/with social networking platforms (Livingstone, 2014)

Len Masterman points to media saturation as one of the main reasons. "We are exposed to more mass media messages in one day than our grandparents were in a month".

Topic 4: Media; Traditional vs New

Traditional media

Includes mostly non-digital means of publishing information.

Traditional media are considered:

- Television
- Radio
- Newspapers
- Direct mail
- Poster
- Books

- Fliers

Activity 1:

Which types of Media do your students use to get informed on a daily basis?

Ask students to state the types of either traditional or new media that they use and have the results of a week
frequency of the media used by your class.

Select from the ones below:

New Media

- Websites
- Blogs
- Email
- Social Media Platforms
- Video Sharing Platforms
- Online Newspapers
- Online Forums
- Wikipedia

Activity 2:

Do this exercise one afternoon, collect one breaking news piece from all media channels, all TV news announcements, online newspapers and radio. Compare the level of detail, severity and angle of each news announcement. Is it the same? Is it subjective?

Activity 3:

How many of the eight elements of the Belshaw's model element can you name?

Which ones do you consider relevant to?

Which ones would you like to enhance?

Module 5 : Digital literacy and the effect media had on mental health cre by health emergency crisis	
Unit 2	**Use of Media and Associated risks**
Topic 1	Introduction
Topic 2	Fake news/ Misinformation/Malinformation/Disinformation
Topic 3	Risk factors social and individual
Topic 4	Impact of social media on children and adolescents' mental health

Unit 2: Use of Media and Associated risks

Topic 1: Introduction

Users of Media have an obligation to be Digitally Literate, however equally, Media content creators and distributers can, and have been influencing the public scene which often leads to drastic consumer behaviour, elections and referendums have been shifted and so on. Some examples are laid out below

Topic 2: Fake news/Misinformation/Disinformation Malinformation

Fake news can be in the form of:

1. Written text

2. Text supported by a picture – this kind is usually the most powerful one

3. "Clickbating": along with the text of the fake news a link to another webpage is shared with the intention to benefit from the increased clicks and interaction

For a piece of fake news to be effective, it does not need to convince everyone. It is enough that it creates a certain level of confusion, so as to undermine trust in official sources of information.

Why is fake news effective in being misleading

Fake news point to the subtle difference between what is true and what is probable.

In our societies we witness a continuous flow of information: this is a factor which lowers the level of our attention.

The nature of modern social media is designed to offer people what they want to read, based on their demonstrated preferences (the "echo-chamber").

Topic 2: Fake news/Misinformation/Disinformation Malinformation (continuation)

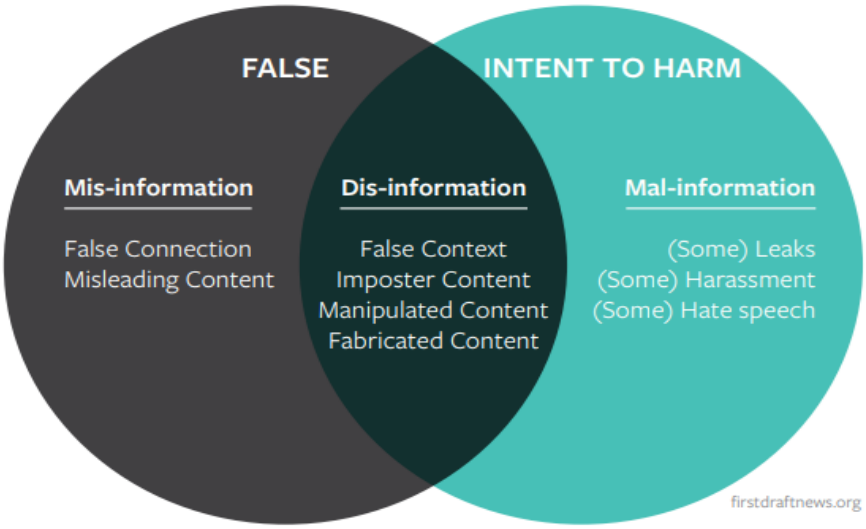


Figure 1: 'Information disorder'

Disinformation

"**Intended Misinformation**" (i.e. when the writer/the sender has the intention of creating and sharing false or misleading information).

Malinformation

The most dangerous of all: it is information that is based on reality but **is used to inflict harm on a person**, **an organisation or a country**.

- School children's phones are often targets for fake news (Schultz, 2019), therefore it's important for teachers to encourage their students to be sceptic and critical of any news the come across online.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, fake news and misinformation was widely spread which caused more chaos, fear and panic than the pandemic had already caused.
- Organisations such as WHO advised people not to read the news, as a result of that.

Topic 3: Risk factors social and individual

Infodemic is too much information including false or misleading information in digital and physical environments during a disease outbreak.

Results:

- Confusion
- Risk Taking Behaviours

Political polarization

Divergence of political attitudes away from the centre, towards ideological extremes. Most discussions of polarization in political science consider polarization in the context of political parties and democratic systems of government.

Social Inequalities

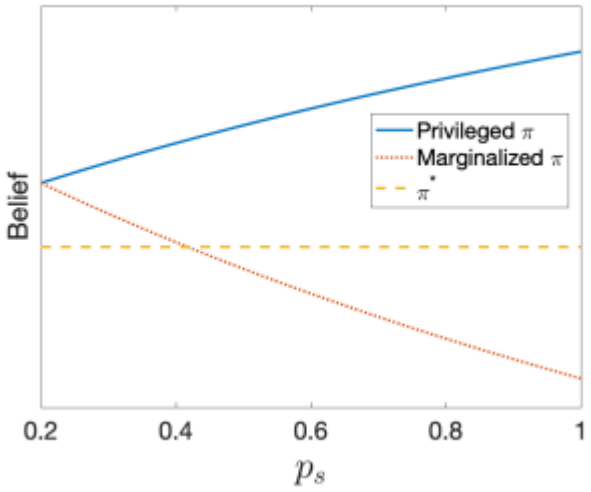
Privileged communities with easy access to knowledgeable agents are more likely to be protected against misinformation, but if homophily is too high and communities become more insular, then vulnerable communities with few or no knowledgeable agents will have little access to the more affluent communities and their resources.

Social Inequalities

Outbreaks of measles in Eastern Europe and parts of the US have been linked to Russian interference and propaganda whose goal is to convince people that vaccines are harmful in order to make them opt against vaccinations during Covid – 19.

Social Inequalities

As demonstrated here, beliefs of privileges and marginalized communities have different behaviors. As homophily increases (i.e. as ps increases), the beliefs of the privileged community move towards the truth while the marginalized community's beliefs fall below the belief threshold given by the dashed line, leading to the agents in that community taking the incorrect action.



Hypodermic needle theory

This Theory implies that the media has the power to inject highly influential messages directly into passive and susceptible audiences.

Such audiences have no other sources of information by which to compare the media's messages, they have no choice but to act on those messages.

Agenda-Setting Theory refers to how the media's news coverage determines which issues become the focus of public attention.

Introduced in 1972 by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw.

There is a correlation between issues citizens of Chapel Hill, N.C., thought were important and stories presented by the local and national media.

Research has shown that infodemic knowledge can cause psychological disorders and panic, fear, depression, and fatigue (Rocha et al, 2021).

Topic 4: Impact of social media on children and adolescents' mental health

The use of social media and being online has become an essential part of children and young people's lives.

According to OECD (2017), ιn 2015, a typical 15-year-old from a country that is a member of the OECD had been using the internet since age 10 and spent more than two hours every weekday online after school, and more than three hours on a weekend day.

Not surprisingly, depending on digital technology and social media has raised concerns in parents, teachers, governments and young people as digital technology and social media can cause anxiety, depression, disturb sleeping patterns and may lead to cyber-bullying and distorting body image.

Children and teenagers are heavily affected by influencers and what they upload on their social media, which can be positive e.g. inspiring them to be more healthy but quite often portray bad examples, unrealistic aspirations, leading to following dangerous trends (e.g. TikTok), and negative effects on their mental wellbeing.

Teenagers and young adults (16-24) are the most frequent users of social media. They may enjoy some benefits of using social media (e.g. decreasing loneliness or enhancing their existing friendships), but overusing of social media can also have the opposite effect (increased mental health problems e.g. anxiety, depression and suicidality).

Therefore, it's important to teach children and adolescents on how to use social media.

Module 5 : Digital literacy and the effect media had on me health created by health emergency crisis	
Unit 3	Digital Literacy good practices
Topic 1	New media usage – good practices
Topic 2	Media; Digital Literacy and Critical Thinking
Topic 3	Current state Covid-19, Countering vaccine misinformation resources
Topic 4	Online support Platforms

Unit 3: Digital Literacy Good Practices

Topic 1: New media usage – good practices

- Using the possibilities of ICT to promote well-being

In France, during the lockdown period, the efficiency of online initiatives has been evaluated with very positive results for persons experiencing mental distress, and this includes online tools, self-help apps and contents, teleconsultation, escape games, short initiations to wellness techniques, immersive or virtual reality programs.

A review by Seabrook and colleagues (2016) showed that access to more online support reduced the levels of depression and anxiety in children and adolescents. Although as mentioned above, social media use was linked to depression, social media can also be used to benefit the mental health of adolescents; strengthen relationships with new and existing friends online, reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness, express their feelings more easily and receive support from others.

Teachers can use this information to design information sessions on how to use social media to connect with others in times of isolation (e.g., public health crises, wars etc.) as a mental promotion strategy.

During the pandemic, many countries have implemented messaging programs for teachers, students and parents. In Chile, Sumate foundation, a second chance schools network, implemented a program to continue to give emotional support and education continuity to students through WhatsApp and social media. A recent intervention in Ghana introduced SMS to improve parents' engagement in educational activities, and promote gender parity in education through messages promoting girls' education and addressing some common stereotypes around gender roles during the school closures.

A review on the use of Educational Technology (EdTech) found that technology-enabled behavioural interventions, especially the ones led by teachers, help promote students' psychosocial wellbeing, make students feel more connected to their community and are highly cost-effective.

EdTech-related pedagogies implemented by teachers, may also promote students' psychosocial wellbeing as they enable communication with local communities as well as with global population and often involve some element of play and recreation activity.

Breaking the silence around mental health, ending stigmatization

Another positive trend that emerged out of necessity in this tumultuous period is the renewed emphasis on the mental health and well-being of children. To get parents on board and empower them to protect their children as best as possible, guidance and awareness-raising tools were created, which helped destigmatize children's mental health. Public health campaigns have been

carried outusing new media, such as WHO's #HealthyAtHome, that includes a whole series of understandable advice for parents, as well as for people with mental health problems.

Topic 2: Media; Digital Literacy and Critical Thinking

Center for Media Literacy has identified five core concepts based on synthesis of scholarly work in several countries.

These five concepts reflect the five key questions that audiences are encouraged to ask when they engage with media:

Who created this message? What techniques are used to attract attention? How might different people understand this message differently? What lifestyles, values, and points of view are represented in or omitted from this message? Why was this message sent (Center for Media Literacy n.d.)

1. **Who created this message:**

- Media texts are not "natural" although they look "real". The media message we experience was written by someone, images were captured and edited, and a creative team with many talents put it all together.
- The second insight is that in this creative process, choices are made. If some words are spoken; others are edited out; if one picture is selected, dozens may have been rejected. Media get taken for granted and their messages can go unquestioned.
- Media are not "real" but they affect people in real ways because we take and make meaning for ourselves out of whatever we've been given by those who do the creating.
- The aim is to create the critical distance we need to be able to ask other important questions.

2. What techniques are used to attract attention?

Explore the 'format' of a media message and examine the way a message is constructed, the creative components that are used in putting it together – words, music, color, movement, camera angle and many more.

Build an internal checklist that students can apply to any media message anytime, by first noticing how a message is constructed. Keyword: Format What do you notice… (about the way the message is constructed)?, Colors? Shapes? Size? Sounds, Words? Silence? Props, sets, clothing? Movement? Composition? Lighting? Where is the camera? What is the viewpoint? How is the story told visually? What are people doing? Are there any symbols? Visual metaphors? What's the emotional appeal? Persuasive devices used? What makes it seem "real?" • • • • • • Five Key Q

3. How might different people understand this message differently from me?

Each audience member brings to each media encounter a unique set of life experiences (age, gender, education, cultural upbringing, etc.) which, when applied to the text – or combined with the text – create unique interpretations. A World War II veteran, for example, brings a different set of experiences to a movie like Saving Private Ryan than a younger person – resulting in a different reaction to the film as well as, perhaps, greater insight.

We may not be conscious of it but each of us, even toddlers, are constantly trying to "make sense" of what we see, hear or read. The more questions we can ask about what we and others are experiencing around us, the more prepared we are to evaluate the message and to accept or reject it. And hearing multiple interpretations can build respect for different cultures and appreciation for minority opinions, a critical skill in an increasingly multicultural world.

Finally, students and teachers don't experience the same media the same way. The goal of media literacy is not to ferret out one "right" interpretation that resides in the head of the teacher but rather to help students think through the "constructedness" of a media message and then substantiate their interpretation with evidence.

4. What lifestyles, values and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message?

All media carry subtle messages about who and what is important.

Public need to be able to locate alternative sources of both news and entertainment and to be able to evaluate the alternatives as well for their own embedded values.

Less popular or new ideas can have a hard time getting aired, especially if they challenge long-standing assumptions or commonly-accepted beliefs.

5. Why is the message being sent?

Exploring how media content, whether TV shows, magazines or Internet sites, makes viewers and readers of all ages receptive target audiences for advertisers creates some of the most enlightening moments in the media literacy classroom.

Examining the purpose of a message also uncovers issues of ownership and the structure and influence of media institutions in society.

Topic 3: Current state Covid-19, Countering vaccine misinformation resources

As a professional, there might be times when you need to raise concerns with parents about a child's behaviour, wellbeing or development.

A problem-solving approach will help you and parents work together to address concerns. This approach involves:

- identifying the problem
- brainstorming as many solutions as possible
- jointly evaluating the pros and cons
- deciding on a solution to try
- putting the solution into action
- reviewing the solution after a period of time.

One of the keys to this approach is talking about concerns when they come up. Problems usually don't go away by themselves. And if you let problems build up, they might be more and more difficult to address.

Topic 4: Online Support platforms

Health related platforms of reliable information

https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019?adgroupsurvey={adgroupsurvey}&gclid=CjwKCAjw_ISWBhBkEiwAdqxb9lwYm94QHWfQ8IPf8LeFJAYCnq7T83C_sUcrwCqu1nxOlxkNBVy5gBoCfP0QAvD_BwE

https://medlineplus.gov/covid19coronavirusdisease2019.html

https://healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx

https://www.cdc.gov/

Health related platforms of reliable information

https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019?adgroupsurvey={adgroupsurvey}&gclid=CjwKCAjw_ISWBhBkEiwAdqxb9lwYm94QHWfQ8IPf8LeFJAYCnq7T83C_sUcrwCqu1nxOlxkNBVy5gBoCfP0QAvD_BwE

https://medlineplus.gov/covid19coronavirusdisease2019.html

https://healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx

https://www.cdc.gov/

Mental Health related platforms of reliable information

https://www.betterhelp.com/helpme/?utm_source=AdWords&utm_medium=Search_PPC_c&utm_term=covid+mental+health+support_e&utm_content=112181460605&network=g&placement=&target=&matchtype=e&utm_campaign=11717489914&ad_type=text&adposition=&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI9I3yhvjj-AIVUNnVCh0HfQBTEAAYASAAEgJW-_D_BwE&not_found=1&gor=helpme

https://www.mind.org.uk/

https://mhanational.org/donate-now

https://Samaritans.co.uk

https://www.sprc.org/colleges-universities/consequences

Activity 1

Take a look at this news example. Discuss with your peers or team whether you can identify notions of the below.

Think about the justification of your argument.

https://www.foxnews.com/politics/aoc-tests-positive-for-covid-19-after-partying-in-miami-maskless

- Fake news
- Misinformation
- Malinformation
- Disinformaiton

Check your knowledge:

What is the difference between traditional and new media? (multiple choice, more than one answer possible)

- New media involves a culture, in which new phenomena emerged such as memes and emojis but also different social environments
- Information depicted by traditional media doesn‘t change and therefore can be always be accepted
- News and information on new media is always highly subjective
- New media is also called digital media, consists of methods that are mostly online or involve the Internet in some sense

Check your knowledge (continuation)

- Which one of these is fake news? Take some time and decide which criterias mark it as Mal-information / Di Mis-information

Social media is ruining our children! Burn down the internet and stop the dumbening of our youth by the elite!

People are turning violet – What kind of new disease is spreading?

Sahara is drowning – elefants learn to swim due to climate change

What are the dangers of infodemic (too much information in times of a disease outbreak)? (multiple choice, more t
possible)

- Confusion
- Risk-Taking Behaviours
- psychological disorders, e.g. panic, fear, depression, and fatigue

Who is susceptible to fake news in terms of social inequalities? Do you remember about the impact of social polarization and homophily?

A) Privileged communities

B) Marginalized communities

Which of the following impacts of social media are positive, which are negative?

Influencers can inspire a healthier style of living	**Positive**	**Negative**
Overusing of social media may increase anxiety, depression and suicidality		
Decrease of loneliness and enhancement of existing friendships		
Unrealistic aspirations portrayed by influencers effect mental wellbeing		
Distorted body image or cyber-bullying		

What does media literacy enable learners to do?

- Access, evaluate and analyse media
- Access, analyse and create media
- Access, evaluate, analyse and create media

Children and teenagers are heavily affected by influencers. Is that effect positive or negative?

- Positive
- Negative
- Both

During the pandemic, many countries have implemented messaging programs for teachers, students and parents.

- True
- False

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