



DIGITAL LITERACY AMONG HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS OF KERALA**Liz Kuriakose¹ and Dr. Pushpa Marian²****¹Assistant Professor, Mount Carmel College of Teacher Education for Women, Kottayam and
Research Scholar, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore.****²Principal, Mount Carmel College of Teacher Education for Women, Kottayam and
Research Supervisor, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore.****ABSTRACT**

The present study is an attempt to determine Digital Literacy of Higher Secondary Students of Kerala across the sub-disciplines namely Device Literacy, Digital Media Literacy and Information Literacy. The present study is also an attempt to know whether the Digital Literacy of students differ according to Gender, Locality of school and Stream of Study. The findings of the study revealed that there exists a significant difference between the mean scores of Digital Literacy with respect to Gender and Locale.

KEYWORDS: *Digital Literacy***INTRODUCTION**

Advancement in the field of Information Communication Technology (ICT) has created an ever-expanding digital arena for the development of human innovation, education, expression, communication and interaction. Digital media defines the lives of children growing up in the digital age in remarkable ways. Digital technologies are the present and the future of the 21st century children. Digital Literacy has gradually become a part of basic literacy. The skills, knowledge and understanding of Digital Literacy are therefore becoming crucial as students living in a society in which digital technology and media play an important role. Digital Literacy equips students to play an active part in social, cultural, economic, civic and intellectual life now and in the future.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE

The Digital age brings opportunities never envisaged before. Digital Literacy is the skills, knowledge and understanding required to use digital technology and media appropriately and to navigate in the digital world safely. Digital Literacy will facilitate empowerment of students with necessary technological skills for living, preparation and transition to higher education. Without critical Digital Literacy students will not flourish in this knowledge society where Digital Literacy and competence are given supreme importance. UNESCO (2011) has identified Digital Literacy as one of the most important "life skills". The incapability to access or use ICT has become a barrier to social integration and personal development. Developing Digital Literacy is important because it helps young people to be confident and competent in their use of technology and in turn enables them to develop their subject knowledge and to make intelligent use of the multitude of digital resources available. An understanding of Digital Literacy of Higher Secondary Students will help administrators, Government and teachers to focus on Digital Literacy across the curriculum and in equipping students with the skills needed to make informed choices and think critically about the opportunities offered by digital technologies. The study attempts to make the world more



accessible and comprehensible to the young learners. Hence an assessment of Digital Literacy of Higher Secondary Students is the need of the time.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the level of Digital Literacy among Higher Secondary Students of Kerala.
2. To compare the mean scores of Digital Literacy of Higher Secondary students of Kerala with respect to (a) Gender (b) Locale and (c) Stream of Study.

HYPOTHESIS

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Digital Literacy of Higher Secondary Students of Kerala with respect to (a) Gender (b) Locale and (c) Stream of Study.

METHODOLOGY

Survey method is adopted for the study. The sample consists of 931 students of XI standard selected from Higher Secondary Schools belonging to four educational districts of Kottayam namely Pala, Kaduthuruthy, Kanjirapally and Kottayam using stratified random sampling technique.

TOOL

To assess Digital Literacy of Higher Secondary Students the investigator prepared and standardized three separate tools namely Device literacy Test, Digital Media Literacy Inventory and Information Literacy Test.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Table 1: Classification of Higher Secondary Students with respect to their Level of Digital Literacy

Level	Scores	Count	Percentage
High	≥160	152	16.3%
Average	Between 123 to 160	609	65.4%
Low	≤123	170	18.3%

Table 1 shows that majority of Higher Secondary Students (65.4%) possess an average level of Digital Literacy.

Table 2: Digital Literacy of Higher Secondary Students with respect to Gender, Locale and Stream of Study

Subsample		N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of significance
Gender	Boys	490	152.36	12.01	22.27	p<0.01
	Girls	441	130.39	17.79		
Locale	Urban	454	144.04	17.36	3.6	p<0.01
	Rural	477	139.97	19.52		
Stream of Study	Science	466	141.54	18.71	0.66	p>0.05
	Humanities	465	142.35	18.49		

The calculated value of 't' for significance of difference between the mean scores of Digital Literacy with respect to Gender is $t = 22.27$ and with respect to Locale is $t = 3.6$. The calculated t-values are greater than the table value at 0.01 level of significance and therefore significant at 0.01 level. This indicates that there exists a significant difference between the mean scores of Digital Literacy with respect to Gender and Locale. The calculated value of 't' for significance of difference between the mean scores of Digital Literacy with respect to Stream of Study indicates that there exists no significant difference between the mean scores of Digital Literacy with respect to Stream of Study.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

1. Majority of Higher Secondary Students possess an average level of Digital Literacy.
2. There exists a significant difference between the mean scores of Digital Literacy with respect to Gender and Locale. From the mean scores it is evident that Boys are more Digital Literate than Girls and Higher Secondary Students belonging to Urban Schools are more Digital Literate than that of Rural Schools.
3. There exists no significant difference between the mean scores of Digital Literacy with respect to Stream of Study.

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