LITERACY DIGITAL: a need of the present times.

Given the wide variety of technological devices that we interact with on a daily basis, we are connected all the time, so much so that the way we work, study, communicate or spend free time almost always involves the use of technology through resources such as cell phones, tablets, computers, virtual reality simulators, among others; which has led to affirm that we are hyperconnected.

This era is known as the era of Information and Communication Technologies, which means that literacy is conceived not only as the need to know how to read and write texts in traditional formats, but also demands that people have the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to properly use technology, taking advantage of existing guarantees and opportunities in access to information and strengthening the path of continuous learning.

Concepts of digital literacy

Digital literacy is the ability to perform different tasks in a digital environment. Among the skills to be developed are: locating, researching and analyzing information using digital media, as well as being able to create digital content.

International University of La Rioja-UNIR 2019 (for its acronym in Spanish)

Digital literacy is seen as the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create and communicate information, which requires both cognitive and technical skills.

American Library Association, 2023

Semrush Blog (2022), describes that digital literacy has three levels of learning: **1) learning to use, 2) understanding to use and 3) content creation.** Let's detail each of these levels a bit:

1 Digital Competence

Talks about the basic and necessary skills to use technological devices or resources, examples of this are making a post on Instagram or sending a message on WhatsApp.

2 Digital Usage

At this level, the person is able to understand that technology is a means that facilitates various tasks that can improve their lives or make daily tasks more productive and efficient. For example, knowing that an email can be scheduled to be sent for a time when you are not connected or posting on Facebook at a convenient time.

3 Digital Content Creation

Here it is allowed not only to consume but also to communicate, translating the learning that is available into a piece of content that can be transmitted to other people.

This last level makes it possible to refer to what some authors call **prosumers** (Toffler, A., 2021; Andreu-Sánchez & Martín-Pascual, 2014), where the people who lead the use of technology have skills that not only allow them to consume it, but also to produce around it, which in turn helps foster knowledge and more participatory and qualified roles in technological interactions.

Benefits of digital literacy

- **Critical thinking:** as it is mentioned in the report from the Davos Laboratory of the World Economic Forum (2021) , mass communication has made it possible to raise the voice of many, but at the same time it has facilitated the spread of misinformation and content that polarizes and creates spaces of hate and division. So it is important that people develop the ability to select the sources and forms of verification of information and an analytical, reflective and critical look at what is "read", thus creating more critical citizens.

- **Applicability to daily life:** new technologies can be integrated into our daily lives, both on a personal level in leisure activities and professionally, being a tool to improve performance.

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- **Access to different possibilities:** with the access to available information people are able to get new opportunities such as obtaining a job, volunteering or a scholarship.

Access to technology plays an important role in social inclusion, however, in the face of difficulties of connectivity and access, and the skill diference in its use. There are contrasts in the educational, social, economic and cultural fields and in the different population groups, creating digital gaps between people who have access and make favorable use of technology and those who do not.
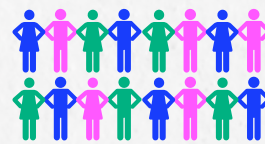
In the 2020 **Digital Intelligence** *Index, which measures the current state of digitization and its pace over time, Colombia scored 43.80 points out of 100, which highlights the urgent need to improve access and digital literacy in different sectors, populations and territories.*

In the classroom, digital literacy proposes a new way of teaching and learning, where creativity, innovation and student participation are key. The use of technology arouses curiosity, favors autonomous work and allows transversal learning of the subjects (UNIR, 2019).

The Post-Secondary Education Agency of Medellín - Sapiencia, being aware of the need to improve the digital literacy of the citizens of the District of Science, Technology and Innovation of Medellín, promotes the democratization of knowledge by expanding access to information and improving conditions promotion and use of technology.

For this purpose, the agency has developed the Ciudadela Arroba Medellín as one of its programs, in which access to opportunities is made possible for the inhabitants of the District through a series of virtual courses of free access for people residing in the city and who have finished the ninth grade.

In 2022,
30.046 people
benefited from the program

Women
50,5 %
15.187 people

Men
39 %
11.704 people

Intersexual
0,3 %
93 people

Arroba Medellín allows learning in various areas, including an introduction to the latest technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT), blockchain, as well as social and/or emotional skills to undertake or be a good leader. Therefore, these are courses available for different population groups, this is evidenced in the participation by age ranges:

Age ranges:

16-28 y/o	29-54 y/o	+55 y/o
45.7 %	**41.8 %**	**1.8 %**
13.755 people	12.572 people	567 people

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