Digital literacy in Malaysia: a systematic literature review on methodological approaches

ABSTRACT

Digital literacy can be simply defined as the skills required to achieve digital competence. Depending on the nature of studies, digital literacy has been proliferated into many facets of skills, such as information literacy and computer literacy. We see that the studies of digital literacy are evolving in line with the predominated use of information technologies in learning, work, employability, and participation in society. Malaysia is also striving to ensure that digital literacy skills are bound to their citizens as a way of life, and thus, it is worthwhile to understand and investigate how well the research in digital literacy is progressing. This study has adapted the European Digital Competence Framework for Citizens 2.1 (DigComp) as our framework. The purpose of this study is to review digital literacy studies in Malaysia over the last decade using a systematic review in finding out the methodological approaches that are frequently used. A total of 37 studies were finally selected based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria, and they were categorized according to the year published, topics, research designs and data collection methods. The following findings were noted: (1) topics on information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, and digital content creation were frequently studied in Malaysia, (2) a quantitative research design predominated the studies by the Malaysian researchers, followed by qualitative and mixed methods (3) survey/question is the preferred data collection method for the quantitative research, and while interview is for the qualitative research. We concluded that quantitative research studies were limited by the set answers on a survey and can be too dependent to the measurement scales. Therefore, we suggest the use of qualitative or mixed-methods designs to enrich the studies by exploring the attitudes, behaviours, and digital literacy experiences of respondents in-depth such as by using narrative inquiry or ethnography.