DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

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ABSTRACT

Digital citizenship is a means of preparing students for a world filled with technology. The digital citizenship stands on three pillars which are digital literacy, digital civility and information literacy. Digital citizenship education makes students powerful by making them learn and ensuring their active participation in the digital world. Digital citizens revolve around three rules which are be safe, be savvy and be social. As children are getting engaged into more and more online activities, the significance of digital citizenship is also rising. Morals lie at the heart of digital citizenship. It is customary that students learn digital citizenship right from elementary stage. Digital education, security and community and morals are the main aspects of digital citizenship. A lot of attractive assets are present for digital citizenship education.

Keywords: *Digital Citizenship Education, Digital Literacy, Digital Civility, Information Literacy.*

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Introduction

"Digital citizenship is more than just a teaching tool; it is a way to prepare students for a society full of technology" - words of Mike Ribble who authored digital citizenship in Schools. In this century, technology and computers have made great progress across different phases of life. This is the reason that educators develop themselves into nice digital citizens these days and they also need to make their students follow the path of nice digital citizenship and controlled online behavior. Digital citizenship is an idea that helps educators, developers and parents in getting to know what children need in technology. Digital citizenship is not only an education tool, it is a means of preparing students for the digital world. Many a times, we witness students and grownups making wrong use of the technology. Digital citizenship is pronounced differently as we move across the globe. In some parts, it is called as digital robustness while in some others is called as digital morals but the concept at the core remains as protocols of digital world and making the future generation more disciplined.

Three Pillars of Digital Citizenship

- **Digital Literacy:** The students who are trained in online activities can take care of tough situations, can generate better results and more suited to conserve their privacy in the online world.

- **Digital Civility:** The operative environment of the internet should be cohesive i.e. students should act responsibly and fight for other persons rights as well. The students should act morally and obey to the online standards prescribed by the society.

- **Information Literacy:** It is the trait of introducing, spotting, assessing and putting into use data to achieve the desired goals online.

Digital Citizenship Education

Digital citizenship teaching comprises of making students capable of understanding and practicing in the digital world. This comprises of command, traits and empathy needed by the children in making use of their entitlements and delivering on their duties online and also to advocate and recommend civil liberties, equality and law obedience on internet. It also makes sure to conserve the entitlements of those students who don't succeed in becoming digital citizens. Digital citizenship

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highlights a new world of citizenship teaching which primarily focuses on educating children in working, living and sharing in digital spaces in a affirmative way. An optimal foundation is required for attaining the learning aims of the students. It is also required for the preparation of the educators. Although things are at a very primitive stage, citizenship teaching has to be amalgamated with teacher training programs by following a comprehensive process. With technology penetrating our schools, society and houses, the question staring at parents and teachers is what role we need to play to ensure right use of digital tools by the students? As mentor, we should work for making our children master of online field. Digital citizenship is the answer. When digital citizenship is taught in the schools, students are taught to be right and make use of technology as a responsible citizen.

Digital Citizenship is based on Three Rules

- **Be Safe: Save Yourself and All –** Everyone has their loved sites online which they like to visit very often. They might be gaming websites or social media sites. It is very important for the children to balance their online and offline hours. Children should make use of digital devices as their tools and they should never become themselves a tool in the hands of digital devices. The digital tools should never be overused or misused as the consequences could be very severe. If children face any tough situation online, they should immediately put the matter to an responsible adult. Safety of the data is very significant. Each website has its own tools to keep the data safe. All software's related to digital citizenship should run on safe platforms. The access to the sites for the children should be need based. Firewalls should be properly employed. All the computers on which children spend time online should have secure internet, filters for unwanted data and should have authorized and updated antivirus software running on them.

- **Be Savvy: Teach yourself and All –** Literacy is defined as the capability of reading and writing. Literacy has totally different meaning in the online world. It is significant that students are aware of the main changes in the each upgraded release of the software. Online literacy enables students to search, employ, generate and transmit the online data. Different digital devices provide students plenty of options to interact online. From basic online media tools to high end education portals, students should have clear understating of what they need and how use the needed thing? Teachers too employ online tools to access their students. Online awareness helps teachers in accessing their students' work. Online literacy enables one to differentiate between good and malicious portals.

- **Be Social: Maintain esteem for self and All –** Digital world provides a more equal opportunity for everybody to learn. Educational institutions should applaud and make full use of these chances for the cause of special students. As beneficiaries are ever increasing, it is important to give an ear to concerns of all. In the initial era of technology, this was not feasible but with technology getting enhanced with each passing day, educators are well equipped now to provide ultimate remedies to their students. Digital learning has brought the whole world to a single stage so it is possible now to gel with others. Digital citizenship is all about mutual trust and togetherness. Some nations have included digital citizenship in their curriculum. The way forward for the courses to cater to all can be facilitated by regulations, schemes and legislations. Data on internet is never lost. So it is important to teach students on what to post online? It is our duty to support all beginners to become standout digital citizens.

Need of Digital Citizenship

In this ultra modern age of 21st century, there is a utmost need of digital citizenship. Digital citizenship is needed as it helps children to grasp, share and cooperate securely and accountably.

Here a few reasons for schools to make digital citizenship an essential part of their curriculum:

- A lot of youngsters enter the world of technology without any guidance. If they operate online without supervision, it can have dire consequences. So, it is important to make digital citizenship an important part of the curriculum.

- In today's digital world, employers assess their future employees on the basis of their details on social networking sites. So it is important to train students on updating appropriate details on social networking sites.

- Another significant reason for making digital citizenship education mandatory is cyber – bullying. The only way to stop children from indulging into cyber bullying is digital citizenship education.

- Students are turning to internet for knowledge enhancement these days but not everything updated on internet is correct. Digital citizenship education guides students in differentiating genuine sites from bogus ones.

Importance of Digital Citizenship

Digital Citizenship is concept that all educators should know. As the online activities of children are ever increasing, proper guidelines regarding the do's and don'ts while working online should be made available to the students. Children should be encouraged to make full use of sea of support material available online but they should also be cautioned regarding negative or potentially damaging content available online. As we teach our students to be good citizens in society, they should also be taught to become good citizens online.

Ethics is at the Core of Digital Citizenship

It is very significant for the students as they spend lots of time online without any proper guidance on do's and don'ts. Some potential situations that may arise are:

- If a stranger contacts you online, what should be your response?
- Is it okay to exchange private pictures of yourself or somebody else online? What harm it can cause?
- Is it correct to access somebody's pictures online? Is there no harm in accessing a movie from an unauthorized website?
- Is it okay to copy some text online and use it in your homework?
- How can you check whether data sent by someone to you is authentic?
- What should be your reaction if somebody sends you something negative about someone close to you?

Students must be made Aware about following Five Areas

- **Integrity**

Students must be made aware of how others will portray them if they search about them online. They should never put any vulnerable details / pictures of them online. Furthermore, they should never post any stupid or harsh views online.

- **Confidentiality**

What is the protection available for the information users post online? Are the passwords employed by users are secure enough? Are the users sharing their passwords and if yes with whom? Are the users updating appropriate and safe details about themselves on social networking sites?

- **Control**

How the users are handling the details posted by other users online? Have users an idea of what content online they are authorized to access? If they are using some already stated fact from somebody's article online, how should they go about the same? Is plagiarism okay?

- **Dependable**

How can the users find out whether the information they are assessing online is authentic or not? What is the concept of bogus news and how can the users find out whether news read by them online is bogus or not? How can they find out whether the webpage they are assessing is genuine or not?

- **Society**

How should the users deal with other users of the internet? What should be their mode of action if they receive something suspicious from others online?

Teaching Digital Citizenship to Primary Students is Crucial

Presented below are few guidelines for primary teachers to be effective in teaching digital citizenship:

- **Stay Updated and Secure**
  - Parents should be given periodic briefings of the students 'activities.
  - Make sure that teachers are competent enough to acknowledge what their wards are up to?
  - Parents should also be made aware of students' acts online.
  - Ensure that educators approve what students post online?

- **Be Considerate**

Students should be given a briefing on being sympathetic, regardful and considerate online. Students should be made aware that the way they comment on others, others may also comment on them in similar way. Educate them to avoid bad things and concentrate on good things online. Their online activities should be seen by others as good.

- **Be a nice beginner**

Internet should be presented to the students as a place to acquire knowledge. The focus of the students should be kept only on good internet where they can attain knowledge. These days, students are more inclined to internet and most of them are not competent enough to decide what is good and what is bad for them on internet? So, digital citizenship education is gaining extreme importance.

Resources for Teaching Digital Citizenship

Digital citizenship is those attributes of customs, deeds and utilization designs that affect the conservation of online content and society. It signifies that educators and parents should guide the children to know their entitlements and obligations, find out the probable threats and rewards and also the moral and individual inferences of the deed.

Primarily, the three main domains of digital citizenship are:

- **Digital education**

Digital education comprises of ways to search, arrange, handle, evaluate and manufacture information online.

- **Safety**

Safety domain involves anticipating the probable risks from others as well as by self actions. It also includes awareness related to malwares, external attack and data theft.

- **Society and Morals**

This domain involves exhibiting appropriate and correct behavior in wide spectra of media backdrops. Some of these fields comprise of creating own online stature and behave like a mature resource of the society or any social media platform. Technology has become an integral part of the education in this era so teaching of digital citizenship has attained utmost importance.

Presented below are Some Marvelous Resources for Providing Digital Citizenship Teaching in the School

- General mass communication children visual Library
- Posters on digital citizenship for the school
- Purview and series of digital citizenship
- Resources to prevent cyber – bullying should provide to all the teachers.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Digital Citizenship

- **Advantages**
    - With online equipments and connectivity, it is very convenient to get the information, although some part of the information may not be correct.
    - Social media enables you to get in touch with the people from any part of the world. It also enables you to see the mesmerizing images of the places, you may not visit for whole of your life.
    - Online equipments and connectivity can boost the education and way of imparting education to a great extent.
    - Internet is one of most powerful tool of enjoyment as it provides unlimited availability of visuals, affairs, articles and other such things across the world.
    - It gives you access to e-banking and makes paying utility and other bills easier online.

- **Disadvantages**
    - As number of social media sites are adding up so it is the attraction of youngsters towards these sites and it is taking youngsters away from face to face talk.
    - It is very easy for youngsters to visit even those sites that can have adverse impact on them.

- Rising social media sites have compounded the menace of cyber bullying.
- If not properly monitored, high exposure to online equipments and social media can distract students away from formal education, home studies and real life interactions.
- If your computer/laptop/android phone is not protected with updated antivirus, there is a very high possibility of virus, malware, spyware, ransomeware attacks and similar online threats.

Summary

Digital citizenship pertains to adequate and affirmative arrangement with online technologies, taking part lively and reasonably in society at multiple levels as it is involved in a double process of whole life learning and continuously protecting human nobility. The objective of digital citizenship is to create a generation of mature and responsible youngsters who know what are right things do to online and what the right ways of doing right things online? Digital citizenship has to be included at all levels of the education system to achieve its objectives.

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