Is Digital Literacy Improving Science Education

not correlated at all to term frequency or to log-frequency in the Spanish digital newspapers considered.

Thus, this result suggests that probably our students do not read digital newspapers as often as we expected, or if they read them these newspapers are not considered as a source of science education.

In summary, the participants, pre-service primary teachers, university students, have a lower level of basic scientific knowledge than they should have, and it seems that they do not use digital newspapers to improve their science education.

Only a few decades have passed since Tichenor, Donohue and Olien (1970) found a significant relationship between the flow of news in mass media and educated citizens’ literacy. At that time, most of the newspapers readers were a minor part of society and they were also highly educated people. Nowadays, in the digital era, things seem to be different: information sources are at hand and are very easy to access by most people. However, their educational use is not straightforward and needs teachers’ particular and conscious effort.

Even though digital mass media are frequently used by the new generations of students, and science teachers are using them as an instruction resource, special attention in instruction is needed to change students’ use of those digital media from ludic to educational purposes. This implies including mass literacy in teacher education curricula as Torres and Mercado (2006) have pointed out. Kinds of literacy other than scientific literacy could benefit from this consideration, as well.

References


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