Internet and Literacy in society

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Abstract

Recent technological advancements have led to widespread beliefs that the Internet is contributing to the decline of literacy levels in adolescents. Internet innovations through the years have seen advancements allowing us to send instant messages, images and videos through social networking platforms like Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp and Keek. While some young adults are able to maintain their writing standards, many adolescents on these sites tend to express themselves using Internet jargon, slang and shorthand. Many people have raised their concerns about this, as they believe that the daily use of such language in teens is contributing to the deteriorating literacy levels. The use of slang and shorthand first started with the use of the Short Message System (SMS) in mobile phones. In order to be succinct, people developed short versions of words and this has developed over the years and it is commonly used in young people who now forgo the use of Standard English.

While one group of people views the Internet as detrimental, others believe that the internet is a great invention that will improve the literacy levels of teenagers worldwide. Despite its flaws, the Internet provides young students with access to millions of articles, eBooks and even audio books. The Internet has the potential to be a platform of academic learning because there are so many resources ranging from improving your writing skills to learning a new language freely available to everyone. The notion that it is the Internet is behind the increased use of slang and shorthand is flawed because this mainly originated many years before the Internet was available to most people. This paper contends that while the Internet has its deficiencies in improving literacy among teenagers, it has many positive aspects that facilitate learning and the benefits clearly outweigh the disadvantages.

The best method to reduce the negative effect the Internet has on literacy in young adults is encouraging the proper use of English at all times and also advocating for teens to read more literature. Literature does not necessarily come in the form of classic novels but this can also take the form of short stories and novellas.