

Chapter 2

Are There Inclusive, Accessible Reference Tools for the Post–Pandemic Era?

Exploring Literacy Resources to Teach Social Justice Through Community Engagement

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ABSTRACT

Attempts to integrate the twain (i.e., social justice [SJ] and civic engagement [CE]) are slowly emerging. This chapter critically explores the tools for inclusivity and engagement -- to facilitate developing digital literacies for an integrated program. Among the roles of LAM, such as, literacy, collaboration, outreach, advocacy, etc. this chapter deals with digital literacies -- the aim is to reduce the digital divide between haves and have-nots. The digital divide became most obvious during COVID-19, and therefore this dimension is the focus. The method adopted is a semi-automated strategy to support a rationale for analysis and validation of its findings. Strongly recommends the need to conduct COVID-19's impacted digital exclusion areas -- with due consideration for the work done at New Literacies Research Lab at the University of Connecticut. A combined quantitative and qualitative assessment will be required to remove the digital inequalities.. An innovative approach for data visualization is provided. It is a faceted technique developed by Dr. SR Ranganathan (viz., PMEST–personality, matter, energy, space, and time).

INTRODUCTION

This chapter has two aims, first to find significant reference tools (henceforth tools). And, second to critically evaluate discovery/dissemination aids. In particular, four challenges about functionality and usability of the tools will look for suitable responses, viz.,

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-8363-0.ch002

Are There Inclusive, Accessible Reference Tools for the Post-Pandemic Era?

- Is there a reduction in bias and discrimination, impact or explicit?
- In understanding the other as human, promote compassion, tolerance, and intercultural/interfaith harmony?
- Does metadata enable engagement?
- How responsive, equitable and inclusive in structure and design is the Webflow (ie., full compliance with Accessibility standards, and conform to Level AA standards as per WCAG 2.0)?

“There can be no true democracy without reference service.” (Ranganathan, 1961, p. 73; Gopinath, 1992, p. 53; Courtney, M. (2016, p. 21). Accordingly, democratic and engaging service begins with inclusive and accessible reference work and reference tools. This chapter critically explores the tools for inclusivity and engagement. (Finley, 2011; Remtulla, 2008; Delgado-Algarra & Cuenca-López, 2020).

Resources for Developing Literacies for Teaching Social Justice through Civic Engagement

To think of literacy that is integrated, one needs to first look internally and get started. (Larson, Baydoun, & Pickens, n.d.; Soto, 2018; Martin 2019).

Examples that are illustrated, in this chapter include Race, Racism, Anti-Racism Literacy (Table 10), Peace Literacy (Table 11), Tolerance Literacy (Table 12), Peace Literacy: Hands-on activity with a focus (Table 13), Critical Peace Literacy Session as a Life Skill (template for a lesson plan or workshop) (Table 14), Verifying Fake News (Table 16), A quiz about food -- Religious/cultural accommodation at the workplace: (Table 15). A few templates in the chapter are provided, such as:

Appendix One: OPAC’s Accessibility--is everyone being served?

Appendix Two: Learning Social Justice Through Community Engagement (to Evaluate Resources)

BACKGROUND AND METHOD

“... There has been less conceptual development exploring the relationship between social justice and civic engagement. Indeed, as a term, civic engagement lacks a singular universal definition.” (Richards-Schuster et al., 2019. P. 29). Nevertheless, weaving together SJ & CE, and offering an integrated academic program is common in many higher educational institutions (Calderón & Pollack, 2015). For example, Social Justice and Civic Engagement, at Lebanon Valley, Pennsylvania; Wilfrid Laurier University, Ontario; Eugene Lang College, New York; Dominican University, Illinois, University of Victoria, British Columbia; etc. The relevant resources identified in Tables 4, 8, 18, and 19 are the best starting point for an exploration of the emerging integrated paths (see Closson, & Mullins Nelson, 2009; see also. May & Leighton, 2013).

One of the criteria, for example, six factors (Taher, 2021), viz., accuracy, credibility, frequency, reliability, and validity, are used in the evaluation of the tools. These six factors are based on best practices in the literature (Katz 2002, Katzer, et al., 1998). Among the common reference tools, this chapter will evaluate web-based pathfinders, websites of journals, databases, OPAC, etc. Selecting these is based on the Reader Advisory’s four primary formats described by Wong, & Saunders (2020, p. 662) - i.e., books, databases & catalog-related sources, journals, and free web resources. This selection of tools is needed

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