Chapter 9
Informed Citizens, Resilient Society:
Indian Librarians' Perspectives on Median and Information Literacy in Tackling Fake News

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ABSTRACT

Academic librarians are vital in helping students and faculty with their research projects and instilling information literacy skills. Due to the large amount of information available online, media and information literacy (MIL) is particularly crucial in the digital age. There are obstacles, nevertheless, that must be overcome. One such difficulty is the requirement that educators—including librarians—possess a good fluency in MIL themselves to instruct and mentor students effectively. The development of MIL skills among students and their capacity to critically analyze and evaluate information can both be hampered by limited access to resources. To guarantee that students can traverse the information landscape and make educated decisions, it is imperative to remove these barriers. Media and information literacy (MIL) is essential for achieving Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 16, and the five laws of MIL aim to foster critical thinking and digital citizenship.

INTRODUCTION

Against the background, knowledge emerges and spreads in manifold ways and diverse channels. Day by day, unlimited streams of media and information are freshly born; their ubiquity makes it possible to touch upon them at any time. Such an age, in a continuously louder pattern of data proliferation, that

is driving us into an age of information explosion. Dealing with this spate, of course, means building media and information literacy; and that means confronting our capacity for tolerance in the face of things that are indeed facts even when this requires an informed judgment. This burgeoning discipline of media and information literacy demands a measure of deference to those who seek and value it. The cult of respecting information would have us giving people liberty, in all walks of life to articulate their thoughts without fear of being watched, scrutinized or suspected regarding their content. Media and information literacy is, at its heart, a systematic process designed to endow citizens with the capacities needed for meaningful and responsible interaction in today's media environment. Central to media and information literacy is making clear the ethical boundaries underlaid by the acquisition and use of information and media content. It distributes how to use these resources properly, whether efficiently or not, and responsibly; toward integrating knowledge into the framework of society.

MEDIA LITERACY AND INFORMATION LITERACY

As we explore the mystery of media literacy, it is evident that although it may appear to have a lot in common with information literacy, the truth is that these are basically different things. In 1992, the seminal definition of media literacy was presented by the Aspen Media Literacy Institute, which proclaimed it to be the ability to use various modes of media (Mackey & Jacobson, 2011). This complex set of skills not only allows individuals to view and judge the media; it also prepares them for working in its myriad forms. Media literacy, one might say, is a tool for the mind which fosters the critical response to information spread through various media: digital universe, cinema, music, AM/FM radio, TV sets, computer and video games, and magazines.

Being able to decode media messages is at the heart of how one becomes media literate. Your average media literate individual can do everything: on the one hand, use their brains to analyze the effect these messages have on their feelings and thoughts; while on the other demonstrate the kind of caution necessary for producing media responsibly. Encouraged should also be the establishment of media information literacy in students, for it is of substantial benefit to them. Officially named as information literacy by the American Library Association, it is quintessentially a form of cognitive ability (Mertoğlu & Genç, 2020). This involves not only recognizing the necessity of information but having the aptitude to find, assess, and use it effectively. However, in today's environment of information literacy, people have more requirements besides seeking out facts; take for instance skills such as handling the digital landscape, deducing meaning from information, expressing specific information needs, using information ethically, and understanding professional networks of communication and persons. This is important in terms of credibility, legitimacy and evaluated in light of the source-from whom did this information come. The changing character of today's information literacy underscores the need for us to navigate and comprehend the digital era's complexities.

In their research endeavors, one of the major roles of academic librarians is to support students and faculty, and also to actively teach them information literacy skills. These skills include both the critical evaluation of print and online information for reliability, validity, currency, and bias, and students also learn how to recognize the need for information and where to find it, as well as how to use and properly cite information in their work. Beyond academics, information literacy is a skill for life with practical applications in daily living. Good management is based on accessing accurate data at the right time. And it applies to business as well as to personal affairs. Even though social media is a valuable platform

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