Digital Media and Media literacy. An Analysis of the Contribution and Effect of social media in Media Literacy

Abhishek Srivastava, Umesh Kumar Saxena

Abstract: In today's digital world every one is significantly involved in consuming media content with their interest and intent. Now it is proven that most of the time we are accessing the media content through mobile phone or other handy devices through several applications and websites. According to one survey an average kindergartener can access 70 media messages everyday and teens are using one-third of the day in media messages.[1] India is world's second-largest population and second-largest digital market which is growing drastically in both urban and rural areas. Now India has more than 500 million Internet users and over 450 million smartphone users and one in every three people is consuming video content online. Affordable and easy access to technology and the growth of regional language usage in media content is wonderfully mix the early and new Internet users, which make this market ripe for opportunity in digital media content.[2] India is a 2nd largest number of internet users in the world.[3] As a result a large number of population is shifting towards online and digital platform and it may possible that population is not that much media literate to analyze the critically think on the dissemination and consumption of media message. So this has become necessary to critically insight the term, types and effect of media literacy.

Keywords: Media Literacy, Digital Media, Digital journalism, Social media, Critical Thinking.

I. INTRODUCTION

India is a country of around 1.4 billion populations. According to the 2011 census, which reveal that there has been a significant growth in literacy in the country. The overall literacy rate in the country is 74.04 per cent, where 82.14% are males and 65.46% covers the female population.[4] According to the FICCI-EY report April 2023 it is expected to grow in media and entertainment industry is from INR734 billion to reach INR2.83 trillion in 2025. Specially the Digital media will grew by INR132 billion to reach INR571 billion, and now Digital media is comprises 27% of the Indian M&E sector and 48% of all advertising revenues in this industry.

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Where as in television sector advertising grew 2% to end of 2022 and Subscription revenue continued to fall for the third year around 4% of de-growth. In Print media the advertising revenues grew to 13% in 2022 and subscription revenues grew to 5%. [5] These presented data is an assessment indicator for the future of media and entertainment industry in India. Although there may be some difference and divide in segmental performance and at the same time an eye-opener indicator for the future of M&E Sector. In 2022 it reported a 30% of growth in Digital media with 4% increase of Internet connection. Now India is a second largest broadband connection base in the word after china. Reach of smart phone is reported in 2022 is around 538 million, and 8 to 10 million Smart TV connection is reported every day in 2022. These figures are also pointing the fact that, like this significant growth in technology infrastructure there is also a high growth in production of media content and it's consumptions. Today 4.9 hour spent by an Indian per day which is the 8th highest position in online media consumption in the world. Today we are experiencing 3000 hour of fresh media content with 6% increase of online video viewership. According to a report (FICCI-EY report April 2023) an average mobile data usage per smartphone was 25GB per month in 2022, and this is expected to increase to reach 54GB at a CAGR of 14% by 2028. Here it is also important to mention that India provides 3rd lowest data package (4G) charge in world estimated 00.17 $ per 1 GB data.[6] It is also become important to mention that India has already started the 5G services since last month of year 2022. These figure and facts are indicating the growth in the technical and infrastructural growth in the M&E sector. So it becomes necessary to understand the medium and messages dissemination to consume it in a proper way. Where not only operational understanding is necessary like not only know how to operate the digital device but It is equally important to understand the content and there context with critical understanding of media messages, while consuming and before sharing. After the Digital revolution in India by launching the "Digital India" program by Government of India in July 1st 2015 with three core component- digital infrastructure, delivering government services digitally, and universal digital literacy. Where Digital literacy is technical and cognitive ability by using the Media and communication technology while creating, evaluating and sharing.[7]

According to the study done by FICCI on Media & Entertainment industry it is reported that 82% of time spent on mobile by Indian on media & entertainment which news, books, music, video and gaming, which is the 62% of data consumption in India.

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There is a significant growth in News audience and media consumption. Around 473 million unique users who are using the online media like News portal, Sites and news aggregator to access the media messages through mobile and desktop devices. This audiences are the 55% of Internet users who are mostly scrolling the fingertip to mouse on website and apps offering News content. And mostly the news audiences are directed through social media. Nearly 62% of news content visitors are redirected from the social media platforms. In 2022 there is a 33% penetration of social media in population and they belong from the age of 16 years. There are 470 million are actively engaged on social media, mostly through mobile phone which is around 85% and nearly spend 44% of there time on online in social media which is highest in the world. That's why it becomes necessary to make the population media literate, which will not only make them skillful but also capacitate them in critical thinking while creating, consuming and sharing the media messages and content. [8]

This is the reason why todays world emphasis on media literacy so that every individual becomes sensitive on media messages and media messages are susceptive for the people without any misleading and misinformed. This will also act as a barrier and filtering tools before sharing any media messages to over come the fake news and any type of manipulation of media messages.

Today especially country like India, which is the biggest democracy in the world, is grappled with this media misinformation and fake news. Now knowing by the popularity and penetration of Digital media in masses and potential challenges in population, profession and media industry, now we cannot pass over the importance and necessity of the media literacy. In New Education Policy 2020 (NEP) there is a wide scope for E-learning and Digital education, Which will not only emphasize on the building the digital infrastructure but focused on content creation and capacity building in digital ecosystem to encourage in the creation of solution which will solve the Indian challenges in administration, education, educational technology, digital pedagogy, assessment and e-governance. [9]

Change in technology is evolving rapidly and simultaneously the mood of media is changing. Now media is not only used for disseminating messages to society but now it consist and contains more elements from its core objective. In this information age media plays an important role in our life. It inform us, aware us and enhance our knowledge. From propaganda to persuasion media pays a vital role. This is the common understanding about the media in general. After the digital revolution, internet penetration in society and emergence of social media, where one side we are accessing the information and message in finger fraction of second, at the same time there is a emergence of numerous media content provider which results the plenty of media messages through different digital platform like website, media/news portals, Social media and several messaging services. Here it become necessary to know that an average Indian spend 2.50 hour per day and mostly on social media nearly 44% in 2022, which is highest in the world. The highest popular application is WhatsApp and Instagram, Facebook and telegram stands second, third and fourth respectively. The 55% are online news consumer and they get's the 90% of traffic through website.[10]

Just as a huge amount of hours spent by the masses in news and media message on different types of digital and social media platform. Similarly great amount of information and messages is shared and disseminating around us. Some are authentic and some are misleading. Some are fabricated and some are fake. To develop a sense of understanding on these challenges on media messages It become necessary to develop a sense of responsibility towards media messages before sharing and establishing any point of view. We have to be more careful, analytical and think critically in creating, consuming and disseminating the media content. Here then Media Literacy plays a substantive role to understand the challenges and how this can be overcome to establish the legitimacy of media message in digital sphere.

Today media literacy is much need to make the active news consumer then passive end user. Teaching civics to citizen has no sense without teaching them how to navigate the media.[11]

There are thirteen types of literacy and "Media Literacy" is among one of them.[12]

II. METHOD

The study is based on the systematic literature review and content analysis on the basis of the published reports articles and online content. The study is a details and critical analysis on the digital media and media literacy related archives, which analyse the increase and ubiquity of digital media and how it affects our life. So it deals with importance and necessity of media literacy to keep the media reliable and messages effective.

Types of Literacy
1. Digital Literacy
2. Media Literacy
3. Recreational Literacy
4. Critical Literacy
5. Balanced Literacy
6. Developmental Literacy
7. Functional Literacy
8. Content Literacy
9. Early literacy
10. Multicultural Literacy
11. Civic Literacy
12. Disciplinary Literacy
13. Information Literacy

III. WHAT IS MEDIA LITERACY?

Back from history it is a outcome of 1930 war propaganda and the rise of advertisement in 1960 in USA and UK. Where media is used to manipulate the prospective of peoples. Then there comes a need of such education and knowledge through population can understand the biases, falsehoods, miss information and half-truths disseminated by print, radio and television.[13]

There are number of scholar who extensively worked and defines the field of media literacy and its important components.

According to Renne Hobbes " Literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and communicate messages in a variety of forms. (2001,17). Thus this statement tries to attract attention on the some of important components of media literacy and they are as follows[14] Access - It's a ability to find and access the different kinds of media content. Weather it is in printed form, electronically disseminated trough Radio and Television or in digital form. Media consumer must know that where and how to access the media.

Analyze - Through this ability one can analyze the media message and there source from where it comes from. It is about to identify the origin of the disseminated message from where this information is come from it can be of any type of message either news or advertisement. By analyzing the source of media message one can understand whether this message is coming from valid source and rhetoric for a person to share. Evaluate - On the basis of the accuracy, credibility and reliability the media messages can be evaluate. Through this ability one can evaluate the accuracy of the share media message "How accurate is the message is", the message credibility, "The shared information fulfills the purpose of the message" and the truthfulness of the media message. Create - This ability will enable us to create the effective media content by using various tools and technic. It deals with the persuasiveness of the media message either through the use of social media, messaging service, High-end graphic and animation or simple static post or any such tools or technic will successfully deliver the message with its full impact. Act - This ability will enable us to communicate properly with active participation. This will also helps us in decision making before sharing any message and drawing any precipitation on the disseminated media message.

Similarly many other scholars come up with vital components of media literacy as per their study and findings. And overall the purpose of the media literacy is to enable us to think critically on media messages while creating and before sharing. It also enables us to become an informed citizen as a producer and consumer of content. It also helps us in developing the prospective and point of view towards media messages by understanding the content and context of the messages. Media literacy is an ability that enables us in responsible media creation and effective communication. It also helps us to identify the role of media in our society and culture. Because messages conveyed by media will shape the thought and build the understanding on which individual can act upon, it is not something like knowing to handle the mobile phone, chatting on internet, doing digital payments, surfing the web and text talking, sharing the message and mimes. Today we are living in the age of information and a powerful media surrounds us. And engagement time with consumption of media is increased significantly. Mostly on Social media around 44% of there total online engagement[15], where all type of media content is being consumed. Which will not only entertain and educate but mislead the audience as well. Then it becomes necessary to understand the media language for the responsible use of media messages to avoid negative effect of media. According to the National Association for Media Literacy Education, media literacy is the ability to use all kinds of communication to access, analyze, evaluate, create, and act. Web advertisements, making viral video content, and detecting native advertising are just a few names are examples of media literacy. According to *Kathryn Reusch* The media literacy will give the ability to strategically evaluate the media credibility, the content that is browsed. The strategy is called WAIL. Where W represents the words which is used in the media content or news, Adjective and adverbs used in the content is represented by letter A, I is for the included in information and letter L for the left out information in the media content. By following this strategy will not only educate the audience but also make them to analyze and think the media content critically.[16] This first initiative to promote the Media Literacy is goes to UNESCO in year 1960 with 19 other countries that are willing to incorporate and enhance the knowledge of Media Literacy in society. Earlier it is a training program for the teachers to understand the media creation and effective teaching in the field of media literacy. Since Media literacy consists of several types of literacy stream in the field of media study. Digital Literacy, Information Literacy, Computer Literacy, Technology Literacy, Visual Literacy, Environmental Literacy, Internet Literacy and Advertisement Literacy all this comes under one umbrella called Media Literacy. So this is how media literacy will enable us to understand the different aspects of study area. In this Digital sphere it also become necessary to be a media literate because of the easy access and wide spread of digital media and technology. Every second we comes across to some information and messages in the form of news, advertisement and social share. Now we are not only consumer but producer as well. We are receiving the messages forwarding it or putting some inputs by editing or giving reply or reviews. But in fact that shared media message are not always true or some time misleading which results conflict and chaos in society. Especially while it comes to the Digital media, which is commonly associated to "social media", a very easy, strong and powerful medium to disseminate the media message quickly. There is one commonly known stigma about Digital media is "Fake News". Which are becoming widely accepted like a fact day by day; that media messages spread in and by digital medium is Fake. But at the same time this Digital Media also enable us to Fact Check, with numbers of tools and technique easily available on Internet. "Fact Check Explorer" is one of the tools developed by Google.

Fact Check Explorer	To expose the falseness.	https://toolbox.google.com/factcheck/explorer

can be consumed. So it becomes necessary to think again on the need and relevance of media literacy in digital era.

IV. INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA

In early age of media literacy the effort are made on to stop the people from media consumption to prevent the effect of media dominance on masses. After the Invent of Internet, mobile devices and technology makes the access and use of media easy. Due to this anywhere and anytime now media

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Today there is a big amount of media messages where produced, disseminate and consumed through digital media, around 470 million user are actively engaged on social media and 62% of them are consuming news content through Social media [*FICCI, Ey Me Report (2023)*], and the key source of information are Social Media. It will consider as a main tool, which is used to get connection between family and friends. We also cannot deny the fact that over use of social media and increased screen time will also have long term negative effect, which results anxious, depressed and lonely. It also affects the mental health of individual. By considering these consequences of the over use of social media we also don't deny the fact that now we cannot stop it completely. But we can make the user much aware and informed so they can use and consume the social media responsibly by using this medium in a positive way where this will act as a tool of media literacy in a broader way in society.

According to a research which emphasize the positive impact of social media by most of the democratic nations where they not only consider the social media as a tool for manipulation, divide and falsehood but also plays an important role to inform us, educate us and raise awareness among society. 58% believe that social media is good for democracy. By categorizing in effect of social media in society the opinion insinuate towards positive and negative effect. Where 73% agree that they have been informed with the domestic and international events through social media. 45% accept that this platform has wide range of acceptance from religion, race and ethnicity by the society. 23% of people who says that social media and internet has made people, but 65% accept that it is also a one of the key factor for there divide in there political opinion. 84% says that Internet and social media have made people easy to manipulate through fake news and misinformation. In general there are mixed opinion of constructive and distractive aspect about social media but majority of people considering the positive impact of social media in society.[17]

A.   How Social Media helps in Media literacy

The previous section of literature gives an idea about the media literacy, technological popularity, media uses and engagement based on the literature reviewed. It gives a statistical analysis of media production and consumption. How population is connected and influenced. Above literature is with overall understanding about media literacy, concept and its dimensions. Since the key area of exploration is based on the digital media so it's becomes necessary to insight into the Social media. Which is now a days not only a communication medium but also becomes the key tool for knowledge and learning and here we will try to identify the importance of social media in media literacy.

In this digital dominance and technology driven media world social media makes its ubiquitous and unavoidable presence in society. So its becomes necessary to make the people media literate and aware, so they can produce and use this social media responsibly and sensitive towards prejudices.

According to the communication model defined by Harold D. Lasswell, communication inquiries about Who is the messenger, What is the message and through what means it conveyed and to whom (receiver), and what will be the end result of this message i.e. the effect of the message conveyed.

This is the widely accepted model of communication as well, which is also known as Lasswell model of communication. This will also helps us to message deconstruction to understand the shared message. This communication model of Media literacy is commonly seen and accepted by all means and modes.

When we get the message notification in our mobile phone where message icon is sufficient to understand from where this message comes from few words of text pop ups which will direct that message. If it is about some news, which occurred few second back and shared some social connect or through social handle of news portal then by clicking that notification we can observe the following key points which also align with communication model.

. Message from Facebook handle of my social connect name "ABC"
. The message is about International ODI cricket match, which is going to be
  Organized in next week in the newly build stadium in the city.
. Message shared in public and since I am also in his contact list so notify
  accordingly.
. This will results the excitement among people to get attention on that news, create
  Excitement for the ticket or passes, serve the exclusive news content in public so
  people always visit that page for such information or those who are not following
  that page will start following will increase the audience it results high
  engagement and traffic on the page, scope of advertisement will increases, and
  many more.

It also makes the audience to re-examine the fact of this shared message on the basic of the person who shared this message is credible or just for attention. Weather the source of message is genuine. Is the shared news is truly about upcoming match or manipulated magic of words and picture to just get the fabricated traffic on the page.

By doing all these, message deconstruction will help to find the falsehood of message and come up with the conclusion either it is false news or credible enough to be share. It also helps to examine the credible source of information about person place or things. As a popularly used and revolutionary tool of communication, the learning resource, content and tips on media literacy can be easily disseminate by using social media in various form, like Text, Image, Audio-Video, Graphics, Infographic etc. in engaging and interactive form to understand the media message, technique and bias in effective way in society. It enables us to approach information critically and aware us to the potential risks associated with the social media by engaging thoughtfully and responsibly with media content shared on social media.

Digital media provides wider range to access the information which helps the people informed and aware about the happenings around our surrounding which enhance the knowledge and prospective. It encourages the active participation or users by commenting on the shared message and sharing their own information. It also encourages the collaborative learning where people can work together where they can create and share the content by discussing and debating collaboratively with there own viewpoint and start learning from each other and this participation will help to develop the critical thinking skill among people and this is the key factor to accomplish the effective learning on media literacy.

V. ANALYSIS

Nothing is untouched with drawback in the world. As a coin has two sides like wise every message and information contains both positive and negative aspect within. Like Digital media there are several positive aspects, which will help to achieve the relevance and effectiveness of media literacy. However there is also some negative aspect and implications of digital media in achieving the core objective of media literacy. After the rise of digital technology there is a decline of traditional media is noticed even this is burning issue of discussion among the media fraternity from Print and digital media around the word to claim their dominance in the field of communication. Today 47% of news are shared through digital media in the form of message. The fake news and misinformation in digital media are the key concern area where traditional media stands undoubtedly on its legacy and trust among peoples. But in spite of this there is fall observed in news consumption through traditional media like TV and print media. Now news consumption through online media is increased from 25% from Searches, through mobile alerts, aggregators and email is 9%, 8% and 5% respectively which is the increased value from 2022.[18]

Such ubiquitous presence and increasing use of digital media also have big concern on the declination of critical think among the peoples, peoples are consuming the media messages easily without evaluating just to keep oneself engaged and entertained due to the lack of media literacy in institutions specially in schools and other educational institutions. As a result the media messages and information, which is consumed by the people, are less critically evaluated before disseminating by the peoples.

To over the issue and improve the media literacy skill people can conscious with their own biases before selecting and consuming the media messages. It becomes necessary to identify and evaluate the source of information where we asked to ourselves "who created the content, what their purpose and is the source of information is credible" while reading, hearing and watching the piece of media content. Which will not only help to identification on source but also make you understand the cause and impact of that information where people can distinctly realize the influence of information and their impact on our thought and a belief, which helps to create a media sphere more accountable and responsible.

VI. CONCLUSION

Some time media messages are over statement and some time vague explanation of subject and cultural values. Here media literacy helps us over come the falsehood, distrust and misleading media messages in order to effective, reliable and persuasiveness of media content in society. It is an tool to differentiate between truth to propaganda and compliment to censorship and fairness to bias.

We all are not born as a literate person; rather we acquire the knowledge gradually. Likewise no one is born perfect media literate but can become media literate through gradual learning. It is also important to understand that this is a continues and gradual process. Because nature of media, formats of messages and strategy of influence is evolving gradually and changing simultaneously.

These days Media Literacy is essential for every individual. It's a continues process of learning with the personal efforts of an individual expert advice. Because media changes the thought emotions and behavior of individual, which results the mass opinion. Media literacy is multifaceted in nature where anything or we can say everything is affected in every level due to the inter dependency and co relation with the various social, personal, emotional and cultural factors in society. It is not prevent to using media but it is all about to help them to become more informed and aware media consumer but also helps to achieve the SDG 4, 11 and 16 which are Quality Education, Sustainable cities and community and peace, justice and strong institution respectively (www.aseanmil.org)

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