EPISTEMOLIGICAL INTERFACE OF MEDIA EDUCATION AND MEDIA LITERACY EDUCATION

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Abstract: In today's overwhelming media world, everyone has a certain level of media literacy. Media literacy, being the ability to read media, is not necessarily a learning outcome borne out of media education. Media education and media literacy education can be either interrelated and inclusive or mutually exclusive. The paper analyses the deep epistemological interface of media literacy education and media education. The pedagogy of Media literacy education aims to demystify the media glare, its myth, and to inculcate the skills for practical instructional methods in handling media technology. Whereas the pedagogy of media education is aimed at scholarly and apprenticeship learning of media and its cross-disciplinary studies.
Key words : media pedagogy, media skill, epistemological interface

INTRODUCTION

Media education is an academic discipline, a part of many educational programs. Media education, as it is generally connected with the program of Mass communication, includes courses on Journalism (TV/Radio/Print/digital), Advertising, Public Relations, Development Communications, and Films. Media literacy can be a learning outcome of media education or a person's own skill and knowledge. The concept of media has many physical meanings besides its varied technical functions. It has traversed a long way since its conception. In the first media age, the process involved a few senders to many receivers (television, radio, and newspapers). The second media age is seen as recipients of mass communication turning into producers of it themselves (Potter, 1998). The social meaning of media extends beyond its contents and functions to its logic and social implications. Media can be both analogue and digital, which is a concept of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Through ICT, many information-processing disciplines merge and interplay to produce variants of other media. Media concept is a broader, generic term encompassing both IT and ICT. When media literacy emerges, its applications, such as reading ability, media use, media knowledge, media competency, aesthetics, philosophy, and ethical bases, are considered. It is regarded as one of

the expected learning outcomes of media education or one's advanced media knowledge and skills. Media education and media pedagogy are distinguished: the former is non-normative and descriptive, while the latter is normative in the core educational program. Media literacy is one of the outcomes of proficiency in media pedagogy.

Media literacy has been a subject of learning in India since the early 1980s, though mostly outside the school curriculum. Formal school courses in media education were introduced only in 2010, when the National Curriculum Framework (2005) encouraged schools to bring the media into the classroom. Several higher secondary schools now offer 'mass media studies' as an elective subject. Over a hundred Media Clubs in schools across the country meet regularly to discuss the media. Higher education and open universities impart media and information literacy (MIL) through various platforms. Media educational goals have been set in some countries, such as Finland. They have incorporated it into national curricula.

It is accepted that the Media can have a negative effect on the psychological well-being of youths. A highly media-literate person with his literacy can exercise his moral gatekeeping armour and fend off negative media effects. Media Knowledge makes up one of the cross-curricular themes of instruction across all curricula. Understanding the idea of Media is emphasised among the objectives of vocational upper secondary education and training. A traditional way to define a concept is to focus on its techniques, functions, or meanings. Media literacy education was understood as a 'cognitive defence' against the most overt and disturbing forms of sensationalism and propaganda emanating from the rapidly growing culture industries (Hobbs & Jensen, 2009). One objective of media education has been to develop autonomous and critical-thinking individuals with the strength to resist media manipulation and false rhetoric.

PEDAGOGY AND INTERFACE

Media pedagogy varies: learning from media (informal learning), Learning and teaching with media (ICT in education), Learning about media (formal media education). Mass communication and computer science are not the only disciplines that actualise media pedagogical practice. As media is an interdisciplinary stream, the complete pedagogical structure spans other disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, and cultural studies.

Media education pedagogy spans media literacy pedagogy and is applicable to all people in contact with media, fostering sound ethical and normative consumption. The specifics of the pedagogy derive from the curriculum and research output from the field of media education.

Media education introduces teachings on media arts, technologies, processes, culture, and semantic aspects, covering the social, psychological, and political features of this phenomenon. Media education and media literacy aim at preparing the young generation to live in a new information age, to interpret different types of information, understand effects, and be aware of the influence of media, and to master means of communication based on non-verbal forms with the help of technical devices (Media Education 1993). Media literacy, acquired through media education, helps a person actively use the resources of the information field, including TV, radio, video, cinema, press, and the internet (Fedorov, 2001).

There is a plurality of concepts in media pedagogy. The concepts of media reading ability, media use ability, media skill, and media competency have been included in media education pedagogy in the formal education system, which offers academic degrees and supports government research and policy-making activities. Whereas the objective of the media literacy education concept is to build a sound media-literate society for the general public as a policy program or social service. The theory and pedagogy of media education are multifaceted, and media literacy education is part of social education, in which people are taught media literacy to remain information literate and build a sound knowledge society. Media literacy education is a part of media culture. It ought to help build ethical communication, foster creativity, build collaboration, and enable critical thinking skills among children, young people, and adults in relation to mass media, popular culture, and digital technologies. Technological developments have changed the paradigm of media education and media literacy. Since the media reflects society and is a social practice, media literacy is about a kind of social situatedness and the use of media within social circumstances (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006). We live in a digitally mediated culture. Our activities are dependent on media technology. Digital culture entails varied relationships with media that differ from those of earlier eras. Digital society is characterised by technological participatory culture, where technology is embedded in every part of human life and social practice: in work, leisure, home, education, the community and the public sphere. For a progressive knowledge society, a Participatory culture of participatory media literacy is needed. Because the social dimension of participatory culture aligns with social media literacy, a large domain of the crux of the concept of media literacy extends beyond the cognitive realm. In participatory media literacy, the application of media literacy applies much more than Potter's definition of media literacy. Jenkins (2006) expands the term to include practical aspects such as performance, play, appropriation, simulation, multitasking, distributed cognition, judgment, collective intelligence, networking, transmedia navigation, and negotiation. Becoming media-literate means being sensibly involved in social practices. The

application of Web 0.2 creates an active audience. This social media literacy implies the concept of focal practice (Borgmann, 1984), the focal things being signs and texts (media technology) in a shared social context. The three components are technology, knowledge and skills (Scribner & Cole, 1981). Media technology, as a focal thing bringing out focal practices, necessitates media literacy. Literacy has traditionally been understood as an individual and cognitive skill, in turn, as a social process: texts (visual, linguistic, aural, tactile, etc.) are not simply decoded, skimmed, scanned, and written, but discussed, collaborated on, mixed, designed, rendered, and shared. (Kupiainen & Sintonen, 2010). Media literacy education can be an exclusive, out of the wit of the general curriculum of media education. Focal practices, communities of practice, and apprenticeship mainly constitute media literacy education. Meaning as a form and form as meaning are retained as a cognitive lump in the domain of media literacy. Media education distinguishes itself from other social science disciplines epistemologically by focusing on the core properties of media. The inherent functionality of media spanning large numbers of people, and its operation across one-way and two-way modalities involving the paraphernalia of society, entails a great deal of social theory in its epistemological stance. The concept of apprenticeship occupies a large domain in media education. The application of technologies to create media products necessitates rigorous hands-on training. Media literacy, though not necessarily acquired through media education, is normatively acquired by all people. It is an epistemological tool, an essential structure for a progressive knowledge society. Media education, as an academic discipline, is based on a pedagogical framework and a knowledge system that focuses on the workings of media, while also helping people acquire media literacy.

 Ruokamo and Tella (2005) suggest media skills as a hard activity, connoting an alternative to media literacy as a reading ability concept. The five aspects of reading defined by PISA studies (2006) can serve as simple examples of the type of activity 'reading' actually implies: drawing information, gaining understanding, interpreting, and reflecting. These activities apply to both analogue and digital texts. Tella and Ruokamo (2005) say media skill embodies more than a technical ability; they also encompass verbal, cultural, communicative, social, educational, ethical, and aesthetic sensibilities. Further, Potter (1998, 2009) claims that media literacy comprises a continuum without a beginning or end and encompasses cognitive, emotional, aesthetic, and ethical abilities and knowledge. Being literate can also be considered a type of knowledge. Gustavsson (1996) derives his definition of being media literate from Aristotle's distinctive knowledge viz., scientific knowledge, practical knowledge and practical wisdom, as 'knowing something about media, being able to use media, and doing the right things with the help of media', the lessons on texts (sound, text, images and videos) being fluent.

INITIATIVES

UNESCO has been a pioneer in providing programs in media literacy and media education. Following this, the European Charter for Media Literacy has been commissioned in individual countries. The World Summit on Media for Children and Youth is centred on the growing need for media literacy education and governmental intervention in its curriculum development, the need for institutionalisation across formal and informal learning, and the advocacy for authentic policies to protect and empower children. UNESCO considers media and information literacy as vital to the teaching and learning curriculum, empowering citizens with essential knowledge about the essence of media, its significance in democratic societies, and their social and political engagement by enabling critical evaluation of information dissemination from state media systems.

UNESCO and members of the UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Alliance have celebrated Global Media and Information Literacy Week each year since 2011, focusing on various themes. 'Media Literacy Now' is a politically neutral advocacy non-profit organisation in the US with the goal of making media literacy widely understood and accepted as an essential element in public education at the local, state, and national levels. It is taking the grassroots movement to drive reform of the U.S. public education system, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to learn the key 21st-century literacy skills they need for health, well-being, economic participation, and citizenship. They run public awareness campaigns, conduct education policy-making and research, and influence regulations and legislation.

In India, "FactShala", a news and information literacy initiative, is striving to tackle misinformation by empowering communities with the skills to critically analyse online content and address information overload. In a context where millions of users from smaller cities and rural areas are coming online each year, the initiative involves training journalists, media educators, non-profit workers, and community radio representatives to teach media and information literacy skills to communities living in remote villages and smaller cities. The initiative was launched in 2020 by Internews in collaboration with Data LEADS and with support from the Google News Initiative.

CONCLUSIONS

Media literacy education (MLE) is a general education for the general public to consume media responsibly and act ethically and democratically in an ethical, democratic society. It rhetorically aims for a fulfilled knowledge society: ie, information literacy, digital literacy, and media ecology. It inculcates media literacy in understanding its effects on social and cultural texts in our evolving society. It is much more than textual analysis; it is more about ideological and political-economic issues for the audience. Media education encompasses media literacy education and other pedagogical practices in media studies.

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