The e-ARTISTS Media and Information Literacy Model for Managing Access to Quality Information

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ABSTRACT

Information is necessary for eliminating uncertainty and facilitating decision-making. Quality of decisions depends upon the quality of information available to the stakeholders. But to manage access to quality information, information seekers have to depend upon different sources of information, media, and other information providers. Unfortunately, the commercial media is controlled by corporate tycoons, governments, politicians and various non-government organisations (NGOs). These information providers have some motive behind the stories flashed by them. Hence, media and information literacy (MIL) skills are necessary for ascertaining truth behind the story. Earlier, information literacy and media literacy were used as separate concepts but now UNESCO is using (MIL) as a composite concept, appreciating the symbiosis between media and information. This article gives an overview of a few MIL related developments and describes the e-ARTISTS MIL Model developed by Jagtar Singh and Alton Grizzle. Differentiating the e-ARTISTS Model from the Big6 Model and the Empowering 8 Model of Information Literacy, it justifies the need for e-ARTISTS MIL Model for managing timely access to quality information for facilitating quality decision-making.

Keywords: Media and information literacy; e-ARTISTS MIL model; Big6 model; Empowering8 model; Five laws of Media and Information Literacy

1. INTRODUCTION

In the information society, there is immense information deluge and information seekers are overwhelmed with information overload and also suffering from massive info-stress and huge assimilation deficit. Therefore, in this information age, all people must be trained to get timely access to relevant information to make quality decisions pertaining to their life and work. Similarly, people should also be capable to internalise information into their tacit knowledge base through MIL skills and hands-on-experience for quality decision making and effective problem solving. That can be ensured only by promoting (MIL) across frontiers. The real wealth of a nation is its human resource, therefore, peoples' capacity building through (MIL) skills is very much necessary for enabling people to manage timely access to reliable information for quality decision making. MIL must empower people with the ability to search, browse, evaluate, access and use information critically to counter disinformation, misinformation and fake news. MIL must liberate people from undesirable boundaries and exclusion, as well as facilitate intercultural and inter-religious dialogue for peaceful coexistence and sustainable development.

UNESCO is promoting (MIL) as a composite concept through MIL Alliance; MILID University Network (MILID UniTwin); MIL MOOC; Media and Information Literacy: Critical-thinking, Creativity, Literacy, Intercultural, Citizenship, Knowledge and Sustainability (MIL CLICKS); MIL Policy and Strategy Guidelines; MIL Curriculum for Teachers; MIL Indicators; MIL Framework; and MIL Week Feature Conference and Youth Agenda Forum. IFLA-the International Federation of Library Association and Institutions has also its valuable programme entitled 'Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE)'. IFLA/FAIFE' programme is committed to ensure freedom of access to information and freedom of expression to empower people to realise their 'right to be.'

It is an established fact that the learning outcomes of (MIL) are critical thinking, independent learning and recognition of the MIL champions. In fact, MIL must be placed under the core of instruction across frontiers. The purpose of education is to realise the hidden potential of the learners and liberate them from all boundaries and barriers. Basically, education is a time bound opportunity but learning is a lifelong process. In fact, learning 'to be' is the basic right of every citizen, and learning by doing is the best practice for the people 'to be.' Media is popularly acknowledged as fourth pillar of democracy**.** Unfortunately, in countries like India, the mainstream media, which is expected to serve as a "watch dog" to safeguard democracy, has become the "lap dog media". The mainstream media, in many cases, is controlled by corporate tycoons, governments, politicians

and non-government organisations (NGOs). Another bias in the mainstream media is the inadequate representation of different marginalised sections of society in the mainstream media. In such a situation, mainstream media cannot be accepted as democratic platform. Exclusion of historically disadvantaged social groups like Dalits and tribals in India, and inadequate representation of other marginalised groups in India, such as Muslims, other backward classes (OBCs) and women, disregards the need and importance of intercultural and inter-religious dialogue and cultural diversity. That is why, the UNESCO has founded MIL Alliance, and Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue (MILID UniTwin) to facilitate peaceful coexistence, harmonious living, respect for difference of opinion, and sustainable development. MIL can serve to engage and empower information seekers to have timely access to reliable information to inform education policies, make quality decisions, solve lingering problems, ensure good governance and safeguard democracy. The advancing MIL for all is a potent way to elevate this crucial awareness. According to Grizzle and Hamada (2019)[4], "More research is needed to explore if and how the planning and implementation of interventions that theorize media and information literacy competencies for groups, institutions, and individuals - connected to what the author and a co-researcher call MIL Expansion (MIL^x)".

2. INFORMATION LITERACY MODELS

2.1 Big6 Model

According to Eisenberg and Berkowitz[1] The Big6 is a process model of how people of all ages solve an information problem. From practice and study, we found that successful information problem-solving encompasses six stages with two sub-stages under each. It includes the following steps.

- Task Definition: It means defining the information problem and identifying the information needed
- Information Seeking Strategies: These include determining all possible sources and selecting the best sources
- Location and Access: It means locating the sources intellectually and physically and finding information within the sources
- Use of Information: It focuses on empowering the information seekers to engage in reading, hearing and viewing to extract relevant information
- Synthesis: It includes organizing and presenting information from multiple sources
- Evaluation: It means judging the product for its effectiveness and the process for its efficiency.

It is obvious from the above description that the Big6 Model is a process model of solving problems related to information seeking. But there are three gaps in this model as it does not focus on creating the information-based product, presenting it for feedback and then applying the feedback. These gaps are covered in the Empowerin8 Model of Information Literacy.

2.2 Empowering 8 Model

According to Wijetunge and Alahakoon[5], "Empowering Eight (E8), an Information Literacy Model was developed at a workshop organised jointly by IFLA-ALP and the National Institute of Library & Information Sciences (NILIS) of Sri Lanka. There were participants representing ten South and Southeast Asian countries. The objective of the workshop was to enhance the resource-based learning in these countries by sensitizing the participants to Information Literacy, which as a concept has not taken roots in majority of the countries in the region." The eight steps of the Empowering 8 Model of Information Literacy are given below:

- Identify: It means defining the topic, choosing the format, keywords and information sources.
- Explore: It includes locating the reliable resources and finding relevant information.
- Select: It means choosing relevant information and collecting appropriate citations.
- Organise: Distinguishing between facts, opinions and fiction, and logically order information.
- Create: Editing information in a meaningful way and finalizing the bibliographic format.
- Present: Sharing information with appropriate audience in a relevant format.
- Assess: Accepting feedback from the teacher and determining the skills needed.
- Apply: Using the feedback and assessment for the next learning activity.

The two arrows in the Empowering 8 Model represent librarian and the teacher as facilitators for promoting MIL and the Model. As compared to the Big6 Model, the Empowering 8 Model of Information Literacy is more clear and comprehensive for the students and learners. In fact, all the IL standards and models have common elements of information life-cycle, that is generation, acquisition, processing, storing, disseminating and using information legally and ethically. The Seven Faces of MIL below categorise users MIL perceptions as shown in Fig. 1.

(Source: https://sllim.sljol.info/articles/abstract/10.4038/sllim.v1i1.430/)

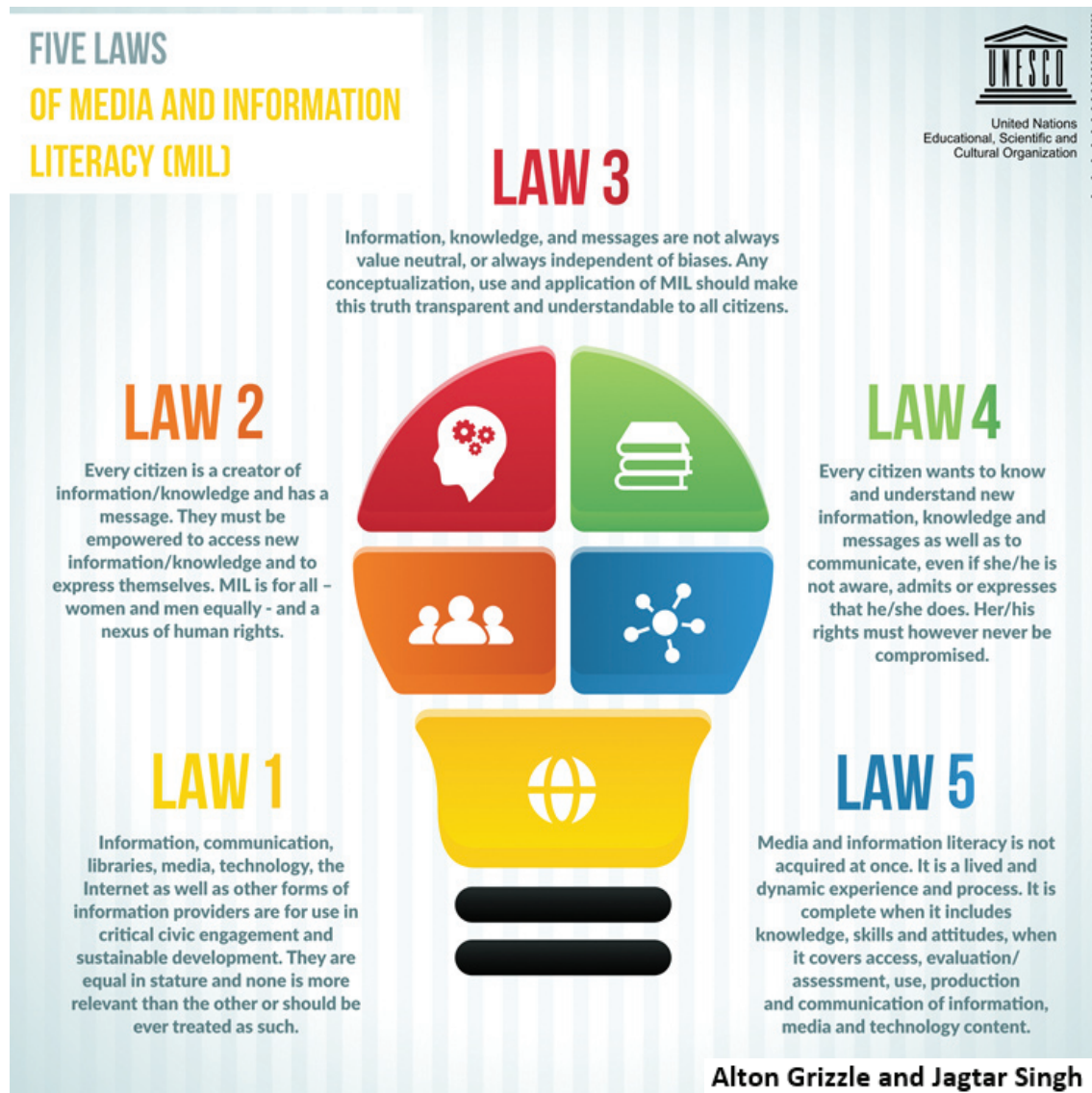**Figure 1. Image of the empowering 8 Model of Information Literacy.**

Figure 2. Image of the five laws of Media and Information Literacy.

3. SEVEN FACES OF MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY

Seven Faces of Information Literacy are the outcome of the research conducted by Christine Bruce[6]. These are based on perceptions of information literacy by various groups of information seekers. Bruce has categorised these experiences into following seven categories:

- The IT Experience: It concentrates on the use of IT in information scanning and use
- The Information Sources Experience: Here the focus is on various information sources
- The Information Process Experience: It deals with decision making and problem solving
- The Information Control Experience: It means managing and linking information to tasks
- The Knowledge Construction Experience: It includes learning for building tacit knowledge
- The Knowledge Extension Experience: It means contributing to the explicit knowledge
- The Wisdom Experience: It focuses on ethical and value-based application of knowledge.

'The Seven Faces of Information Literacy' is an essential reading for all information seekers. It gives implicit reference to the domains of information, knowledge and wisdom that is information is for decision making, knowledge for problem solving, and wisdom for application of knowledge in an ethical and socially desirable manner. But learners must remember that no single experience in the 'Seven Faces of Information Literacy' can be called information literacy. In fact, combination of all the seven experiences constitutes information literacy. The learning outcomes of MIL are critical thinking and independent learning. The information literacy models, and the MIL models such as 'Triple E MIL Model' and 'eARTISTS MIL Model' along with 'Five Laws of Media and Information Literacy' are valuable mechanism for promoting MIL across frontiers.

4. FIVE LAWS OF MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY

The 'e-ARTISTS MIL Model' described in the section five of this paper is not sequential. But is certainly a sequel to the 'Five Laws of Media and Information Literacy' (Grizzle, A. and Singh, Jagtar; 2016). These laws have been formulated by Alton Grizzle and Jagtar Singh for UNESCO. For a complete discourse on the Five Laws of Media and Information Literacy see Grizzle, A. (2018)[3]. These are given in Fig. 2.

To highlight the shift from IL to MIL, Fig. 2 shows the two MIL models.

5. MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY MODELS

5.1 Explore, Engage and Empower Model of MIL

Alagaran[7] II has also given the 'Engage, Explore and Empower Model of MIL'. He believes that MIL competencies set must be reflected in national education policies to guide curriculum development and promote it as a framework in crafting institutional and programme outcomes among educational institutions. His 'Triple E MIL Model' is as follows.

- Explore: It means, how to identify, access, and retrieve information and media content skillfully
- Engage: It includes, how to evaluate media and information critically
- Empower: It means, how to create, share, and use information and media content ethically, safely and responsibly for decision-making and taking action

This model basically covers most steps of MIL but is very compressed to be easily understood by the students. In fact, it is a good tool for information analysis, consolidation and repackaging. It underlines the need for quality access management and ethical use of information. Complete access to information includes bibliographical, physical, language and conceptual access to the needed content. The eARTISTS MIL Model is partly informed by the 'Triple E MIL Model'.

5.2 e-ARTISTS MIL Model

The e-ARTISTS MIL Model is developed by Jagtar Singh and Alton Grizzle to address the implications and ramifications of increasing information overload and assimilation deficit. It enables information seekers also to engage with the issues related to disinformation, misinformation and fake news to empower them to make sound choices and decisions for obtaining their personal, professional, educational and social goals.

- **e'** is to **explore** one's knowledge base about one's subject of study or the issue in hand. The stakeholder must ascertain at this stage, what he knows about the subject and the issue and what he needs to know further to address the issue.
- **A'** means to **assimilate** into one's tacit knowledge the relevant content from existing analog and digital sources using one's commonsense for analysis of the content and then to take steps to attach meaning to the content in context of the subject of study or the issue in hand.

- **R'** means to **reflect** critically on the steps to be taken to make sense of the assimilated content to obtain one's personal, educational, professional and social goals.
- **T'** means to **truncate** the unnecessary content to make one's writings as brief as mathematics and as deep as philosophy to add value to the product.
- **I'** means to **integrate** content into the assignment in hand to contribute to the existing body of knowledge and add value to the quality of life and work of people.
- **S'** means to **share** the product or service with the stakeholders to get feedback for further improvement and value addition.
- **T'** means to **transform** the existing body of knowledge to bridge the existing capacity and information gaps and divides for social transformation.
- **S'** means to **sensitize** the stakeholders about the ethical and legal use of information and information-based products.

Basically, the e-ARTISTS MIL Model is open to diversity and focuses on information seekers' "Right to Be." It is more detailed and understandable than the "Triple E Model."

6. CONCLUSION

The scientific and technological developments have made human life comfortable on the upside but the mobile phone and the social media have made peoples' life miserable on the downside. Technology is value neutral but the human mind of the greedy and power hungry people is corrupt, misplaced and misdirected by their vested interests. The quest for profit by the corporate tycoons, lust for power by politicians, and urge for violence by criminals have made need for MIL more compelling. Only MIL can change misplaced thinking of these derailed segments of society, and empower the 'have nots' to counter discretion, discrimination and injustice, disinformation, misinformation, malinformation and fake news across frontiers. For that we shall have to develop capabilities of the masses and promote application of IL and MIL models, such as described in this article. UNESCO facilitated MIL Alliance and the MILID University Network (MILID UniTwin) are innovative initiatives to promote media and information literacy, as well as intercultural and inter-religious dialogue in theory and practice. IL models and the e-ARTIST MIL Model are need of the hour to enhance awareness of the 'have nots' about their rights and duties, and ensure intercultural and inter-religious dialogue for facilitating peaceful coexistence, harmonious living, and sustainable development. But the above vision will remain a rhetoric unless it is translated into reality by informing the education policies about the importance of MIL on the one hand, and placing MIL at the core of instruction, on the other hand. MIL is the necessary mechanism to ensure that no one is left behind in realizing one's personal, occupational, education and social goals. In fact, the biggest human right on earth is the 'right to be' and the biggest contribution of MIL and the eARTISTS MIL Model is to liberate people from all types of boundaries and exclusion and the colonisation of their minds.. MIL must promote critical thinking, independent learning, attention management, socio-emotional intelligence, access

management and information analysis and evaluation skills to ensure quality decision making for peaceful coexistence and sustainable development. The eARTISTS MIL Model can contribute profoundly to realise the above said vision.

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