A Study of Analyzing Level of Media Literacy among Youths in India

Dr. Tarika Nandedkar[1], Dr. Amit Kumar[2]

[1]Assistant Professor, Mathematics and Statistics, IBMR IPS Academy, Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India

[2]Assistant Professor, Marketing, IBMR IPS Academy, Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India

ABSTRACT

Digital media has become a prominent source of information other than entertainment and technology has given easy and uninterrupted access to youths. These two phenomenon are the center point of this research. Are youths ready to handle such information? Do they understand the real means of messages? Are they really capable to read between the line of the media messages? Such questions form the basis of current study. Media literacy plays an important role in understanding how much youths of todays' are media literate. Media literacy is an ability to understand 'What messages are revealing? Who created the message? What is the purpose of the message? The current research examined 490 youths of various age groups and various academic background with the help of 'Cognitive Media Literacy Model' introduced by W. James Potter. The elements of model are used to make judgment on respondents and to examine how they are competent to process information getting from various media sources. Further, gender & age impact on media literacy is also observed with the help of 'T-test and One Way ANOVA'.

Keywords : Media Literacy, Social Media, Media Channels, Digital Marketing

I. INTRODUCTION

Media literacy is the ability to understand the messages send by different types of media. All types of media like TV, radio newspaper, magazines, books, packaging, marketing materials, internet, social media etc. are part of this Media Literacy. Media literate people are able to understand how media massages are constructed and what is between the line meanings of these massages. Media literacy is nothing but an extension of literacy, the only difference is the inclusion of media into it (Tyner 1998, cited by Thoman and Jolls, 2004). Author also stated in her study that in present world, media tools are most important for proper communication, and proper communication is only possible through creative and independent use of these tools. So the Media Literacy is a very important concept for study, which leads 21st century (Buckingham 2003, Buckingham and Rodriguez 2013, and Warlick 2008). This concept of media literacy is first appears in 1992 at National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy by Aspen Institute. In this conference definition of media literacy was given as "the ability to access, analysis, evaluate and communicate massages in a wide variety of forms" (Aufderheide & Firestone, 1993). Media literacy is not only essential to understand hidden massages but also important to provide awareness about issues created by media. All faces of coins can be seen, if individual is media literate. People who are media literate are only able to create their own media massages meaningfully and form a media culture for society.

"Introduction to Media Literacy –Media Literacy Project distributed by Montana Office of Public

Instruction" categories this concept of media literacy into three concepts-Basic, Intermediate and Advance. Basic concept deals with the effect of media on society, Intermediate concept talks about creation of meaning from media massages by individuals, and the third concept – Advance concept deals with the interaction of media with society, and also examine the changes which media literacy has bring.

According to every individual meaning of media literacy can be different and unique, but media literacy skills of individual can be changed over the time. Education on the nature of media will be a factor which effect the media literacy, specially the entire knowledge of media like who created massages, why these messages are created, what effect these messages will have and so on (Potter, 2004). Potter in 2008 further identified the five categories of knowledge structures for media literacy development and these are namely media effect, media content, media industries, the real world and the self. Orientation towards media literacy is also considered as empowerment model by Hobbs, Cohn- Geltner and Landis in 2011 which helps to communicate different ideas and taking social actions which helps to make a framework for developing knowledge and understanding about current happenings. Media is very important for constructing perception of reality, it reflect our culture and social status. People in society are directly or indirectly affected by the media massages like video, games, advertising, news, movies and music. Imaginations are sometimes inspired by media, it create fantasy world around us, media literacy helps to recognize these all imaginations and fantasy and also help to correlate it with reality. This paper tries to analyze media literacy among youth, identifying the factors which affect the attitude of youth towards media literacy, so can be able to work out for betterment of increasing their knowledge.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Media literacy is a complex term which needs a framework to understand (Gillen & Barton, 2009).

According to Martin, 2006 media literacy is awareness and ability of individual to use technological facilities provided by different digital resources, for gaining knowledge and creating communication with other persons, in order to make social networks. Baynham (1995) consider it as a switching of mode of literacy from books to social media. Media literacy is suggested as communal experience and necessary competency for the citizen of any country by (P Mihailidis, Mihailidis & Thevenin2013, 2014). David Buckingham suggested three dimensions of media literacy as - Access, Understand and create. First dimension is concern with the media content, that this content is appropriate for individuals need. Access includes gathering and application part of available information. Understanding of massages refers to the content of massages that what receiver of that massages do when they go through the content of massages. The third dimension of media literacy is concerned with create which is the idea of literacy from reading to writing of massages. The individuals who are media literate are able to manage effect of media massages in better ways, they are least affected by the negativity of these media massages and feel less aggression towards the matter due to media literacy (Nigel Aw Heng Liang, 2011).

In 2004 W. James Potter provide a cognitive theory for media literacy in which he provide a model for effectiveness of media literacy. In his theory he analyses that how individuals attend, remember and learn dimensions of media effect. He also placed media literacy within the media effect pattern. According to him effect of media is result of media literacy of people, how individuals are media literate will placed an impact of massages on them. Harris and Sanborn in 2014 revealed that study of media effect is an approach which study mass communication. Its effect is considered as in three parts- direct, conditional and cumulative.

In the study Kaiser Family Foundation, "Generation M2: media in the lives of 8 to 18 year olds" it is

revealed that to different media for an average young generation is exposed to different media for an average of 10hrs. 45 min., while among 5 young person, 1 individual is using media resources for about 16hrs a day. It is found in the research that if media literacy training is provided to youth then it increases the critical approach of youth towards media as different people approach media differently (Webb & Martin, 2012). In Ofcom's survey it is found that with the training programs in educational institutes media literacy can be increased and so the media education (Livingstone & Olafsson , 2017; Ofcom 2016). For screening the information and smearing its effect and dealing with this effect is only possible with the help of media literacy (Jack, 2017, Caplan, 2016).

III. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study focuses on analyzing media literacy level among the youths. Taking different 'age groups' as well as 'gender', the study want to measure the strength of respondents' for information processing. With the help of five knowledge structure of Potter's 'Cognitive Model of Media Literacy' the research tend to evaluate self-locus of youths for receiving, handling and processing information coming from various media sources on various topics. It is also kept in sense to monitor respondents' approach to five parameters of the model.

Table 3.1

Category	Knowledge Structure's Parameters	Combined Score of Knowledge Structure's Parameters	Description
Male	Media Effects Media Content Media Industries Real World Self	3.9229	Responses were evaluated on five parameters for 'Male' respondents
Female	Media Effects Media Content Media Industries Real World Self	3.6647	Responses were evaluated on five parameters for 'Female' respondents
18-21 yrs	Media Effects Media Content Media Industries Real World Self	3.6098	Responses were evaluated on five parameters for 'Age group 18-21' respondents
21-24 yrs	Media Effects Media Content Media Industries Real World Self	3.7769	Responses were evaluated on five parameters for 'Age group 21-24' respondents
24-27 yrs	Media Effects Media Content Media Industries Real World Self	3.9448	Responses were evaluated on five parameters for 'Age group 24-27' respondents

IV. OBJECTIVES IN SUMMARIZED FORM

1. Evaluating youths' media literacy level and awareness about media literacy education.
2. To study the role of Age & Gender in Media Literacy level of respondents.
3. Pointing out the role, importance and scope of media literacy towards formation of rational attitude of youths and its consequent effect.

V. METHODOLOGY

The study is empirical in nature that involves primary data collection directly from the respondents through questionnaire technique. The questionnaire was developed using 'W. James Potter's' cognitive model of media literacy. Each elements of the model is used in such a way that could provide right direction towards understanding the respondents' level of media literacy. Five parameters of the model (refer table 3.1) including sub-elements were used. For data processing, SPSS 20 version has been used and statistical tools like 'T-test and ANOVA' has been used to evaluate result. Test analysis and model processing summary has been included after every test's explanation for better understanding of the readers. Total 8 months were spend to conduct this research on the given topic. The results are quite referable to the psychologists as well as the ad world's agencies.
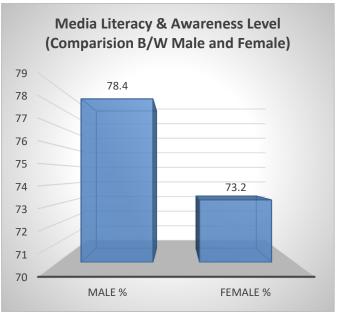
VI. ANALYSIS

This part of the study comprises three stages which is based on three different objectives of the study. Each objective has been met separately using statistical and non-statistical tools. The processing of the objectives are as follows:

First Objective-

1. Evaluating youths' media literacy level and awareness about media literacy education.

Graph 6.1

Media Literacy & Awareness Level (Comparision B/W Male and Female)

There is a significant difference in the media literacy and awareness level of 'male and female' youths. The above graph 6.1 depict the quantitative output into graphical form to make clear understanding of the result. The data shows that, male youths are more aware than female youths regarding media messages and information. The rate of media literacy of male youths' is also very high than female youths'. It is observed that, female youths are still lacking behind in media message receiving, processing and extracting correct meaning from it. The general understanding of female youths needs to be increased through enhancing media interaction. It is also observed that, media following of female youths is also restricted to few media sources which may be one of the reasons of this lacking. The lack of media literacy leads to mistaken of messages and misleading of thoughts regarding various crucial issues. It also affects viewers' perception towards the ongoing problem or matter in the society and the country at large. Hence, media literacy and awareness is as much as important as media presence is important in the country, so that, media messages can never be miss leaded to the youths and youths are competent enough to handle these information.

Second Objective-

2. To study the role of Age & Gender in Media Literacy level of respondents.

The above objective has been fulfilled with the help of two null hypothesis viz.:

H_{01}:	There is no significant difference in media literacy level of 'male and female' youths.

H_{02}:	Age has no significant impact on media literacy level of respondents.

Analysis of Null Hypothesis H_{01}-

H_{01}: There is no significant difference in media literacy level of 'male and female' youths.

Table 6.2

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Media Literacy	Female	270	3.6647	.35607	.02167
	Male	220	3.9229	.33236	.02241

Table 6.2 representing the descriptive statistics of the data in which two independent groups 'male and female' are observed. The mean score of both the groups shows significant difference and establish the relationship of 'gender and medial literacy' of youths.

Table 6.3

Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Media Literacy Equal variances assumed Equal variances not assumed	.573	.449	-8.225	488	.000	-.25820	.03139	-.31988	-.19652
			-8.283	479.053	.000	-.25820	.03117	-.31945	-.19695

The test has been performed between male and female youths in order to check whether gender has significant influence on level of media literacy of youths or not? The result of independent T-test reveals that, male and female has significant difference in their level of media literacy.

The null hypothesis H_{01} is found to be rejected at 5% sig. level as the value of sig. is found 0.00 < 0.05. The T-test is found significant at 95% level of confidence that reveals both the groups differ significantly with each other. Further, the difference is measured by mean score of both group male (3.9229) & female

(3.6647). Hence, the study found that, gender influence the media literacy level of youths.

Analysis of Null Hypothesis H₀₂-

H_{02}: Age has no significant impact on media literacy level of respondents.

To test the above null hypothesis H_{02}, One-way ANOVA is used. With the help of three independent variables (three category of age) and one dependent variable (media literacy) one-way ANOVA is conducted.

Table 6.4
ANOVA

Media_Literacy					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8.580	2	4.290	36.148	.000
Within Groups	57.798	487	.119		
Total	66.378	489			

The null hypothesis H_{02} is found to be rejected at 5% level of sig. as the sig. value is calculated 0.00 < 0.05. Which indicates that, different level of age does affects the level of media literacy among youths in today's technological world. The test is found significant at 95% level of confidence with ANOVA statistics of $F(489)= 36.148$. Further investigation explains where actually differences lies among the three age groups. With the help of below table 6.5 the study confined that in which age group media literacy level is high and low.

Table 6.5
Descriptives

Media_Literacy						95% Confidence Interval for Mean				Between-Component Variance
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum	
18-21 yrs		148	3.6098	.40666	.03343	3.5438	3.6759	2.00	4.29	
21-24		184	3.7769	.29316	.02161	3.7342	3.8195	2.83	4.46	
24-27		158	3.9448	.33634	.02676	3.8920	3.9977	3.09	4.63	
Total		490	3.7806	.36843	.01664	3.7479	3.8133	2.00	4.63	
Model	Fixed Effects			.34450	.01556	3.7500	3.8112			
	Random Effects				.09416	3.3754	4.1857			.02565

With the help of above table 6.5, the study propound that, as the age grows the level of media literacy increases. The statistics (mean score) of all three age group viz. 18-21 yrs (3.6098), 21-24 yrs (3.7769) & 24-

27 yrs (3.9448) are increasing with increase in age. This indicate, as person grows he/she earns experience, knowledge and general awareness which help them to understand the messages coming from different source of media at rational background and draw significant meaning.

Third Objective-

3. Pointing out the role, importance and scope of media literacy towards formation of rational attitude of youths and its consequent effect.

While meeting the third research objective, the study draw following points to put light on role, importance and scope of media literacy towards formation of rational attitude of youths-

- Media literacy enlarge the vision to see messages coming from different media sources carrying specific purpose. It also helps youths to escape from negative exposure of media messages.
- It helps to form cognitive attitude towards media information and develop skills of eliminating impurity from the messages.
- Media literacy plays crucial role in developing logical thinking ability among the youths and enhance critical thinking skills to evaluate messages.
- Media literacy make youths a smart user and consumer and protect them from false messages.
- Media literacy enable youths to judge media content hampering thoughts, culture, society etc.
- It clearly identifies the manipulation done into the message to wrongly guiding viewers.
- It also helps youth to understand why media is pursuing them, what is their purpose and what actually it is?
- Media literacy bring positive transformation in the overall personality and increase knowledge of events among the youths.
- Media literacy is a weapon to fight with wrong persuasion of senders with wrong purpose.

VII. CONCLUSION

Media literacy form foundation for the youths to handle messages efficiently that they encounter every day at various media channels. Messages floating on various social platforms are more prone to false contenting, wrong purpose, misleading and manipulation. Media literacy helps youths to filter such impurity from the messages and understand the real purpose of the message. It is an armor to protect viewers from purposive messages trying to create misperception or attitude towards the matter or subject. Media literacy helps in understand what content is being used to channel purposive information and what could be its implication on the society. Such discussion help us to know medial literacy concept from closer. The result of the current study reveals that, youths are quite literate about media to understand the messages. Media literacy level is quite high among the youths but there is a slight difference in the level. Even age of the person also decides the level of media literacy a person has. Due to media access, awareness and technological change the level of media literacy among youths has significantly rise up which help in comprehensive attitude formation.

VIII. REFERENCES

[1]. Barton, D. 2001 Directions for Literacy Research: Analyzing language and social practices in a textually mediated world. Language & Education, 15, 92-104.

[2]. Barton, D. 2007 Literacy: An introduction to the ecology of written language. 2nd edn. Oxford: Blackwell.

[3]. Buckingham D., 2003. Media education. Literacy, learning and contemporary culture. Polity Press, Cambridge.

[4]. Buckingham D., Rodríguez C., 2013. "Learning about power and citizenship in an online virtual world", Comunicar, Vol.40, pp.49-58.

[5]. Caplan, R. (2016, November 22). Facebook must acknowledge and change its financial incentives. The New York Times. Retrieved from

https://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2016/11/22/how-to-stop-the-spread-of-fake-news/facebook-must-acknowledge-and-change-its-financial-incentives

[6]. Harris, J.H., & Sanborn, F.W. (2014). A cognitive psychology of mass communication (6th ed.). New York, N.Y.: Routledge.

[7]. Hu Dahl, I., & Newkirk, C. (2010). Understanding news literacy: A youth media perspective. Youth Media Reporter, 448-50.

[8]. Jack, C. (2017). Lexicon of lies. New York: Data & Society Research Institute. Retrieved from https://datasociety.net/output/lexicon-of-lies/

[9]. Livingstone, S. (2011). Digital learning and participation among youth: Critical reflections on future research priorities. International Journal of Learning and Media, 2, 1-13.

[10]. Livingstone, S., & Blum, A. (2017, August 2). Screen time for kids: Getting the Balance Right [Blog]. Retrieved from http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/parenting4digitalfuture/2017/08/02/screen-time-for-kids/

[11]. Livingstone, S., & Olafsson, K. (2017, January 26). Children's commercial media literacy: New evidence relevant to UK policy decisions regarding the GDPR [Blog]. Retrieved from http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/mediapolicyproject/2017/01/26/childrens-commercial-media-literacy-new-evidence-relevant-to-uk-policy-decisions-regarding-the-gdpr/

[12]. Martin, A. 2006 A framework for Digital Literacy, DigEuLit Project working paper, www.digedlit.ec/docs/public.asp

[13]. Mihailidis, P. & Thevenin, B. (2013). Media literacy as a core competency for engaged citizenship in a participatory democracy. American Behavioral Scientist 57(11), 1611-1622.

[14]. Mihailidis, P. (2014). The civic-social media disconnect: Exploring perceptions of social media for engagement in daily life of college students. Information, Communication & Society 17(9), 1059-1071.

[15]. Nigel Aw Heng Liang (2011). "A Study On The Cognitive Development Of Media Literacy And Its Influence In Limiting Media Effects", A Research Project Submitted In Partial Fulfillment Of The Requirements For The Bachelor Of Mass Communication (Hons) Journalism Faculty Of Arts And Social Science University Tunku Abdul Rahman.

[16]. Ofcom. (2016). Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2016. London: Ofcom. Retrieved from https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/children/children-parents-nov16

[17]. Potter, W. J. (2004). Argument for the need for a cognitive theory of media literacy. American Behavioral Scientist, 48(2), 266-272.

[18]. Potter, W. J. (2008). Media literacy 4th edition. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

[19]. Potter, W. J. (2014). Media literacy (7th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. Rama subramanian, S., & Oliver, M. B. (2007). Activating and suppressing hostile and benevolent racism: Evidence for comparative media stereotyping. Media Psychology, 9(3), 623-646.

[20]. Warlick D. F., 2008. Redefining Literacy 2.0. Columbus: Linworth books

[21]. Webb, T. and Martin, K. (2012). Evaluation of a US school-based media literacy violence prevention curriculum on changes in knowledge and critical thinking among adolescents. Journal of Children and Media, 6(4), 430-449.