

## **GITA BAMEZAI, IIMC**

- 1. Outrage against Media Influx and Influence:** In the past Protectionism against the mounting pressure exerted by the media messages was to be best addressed by following the inoculation procedure. This meant guarding children against onslaught of media , Films and TV to begin with, followed by use of videos and CDs and more recently use of social media and access to profusion of e-content unregulated and without any control or supervision. This has led many agencies to work in a way to circumvent the flow of media messages and use of new media by denying access and in some ways driving the urge to use such media underground and more insidious.
- 2. Process of Empowerment and Building stakeholder's Agency:** There is an increasing realisation that protectionism can have dangerous consequences since the media technologies are becoming dominant in our lives. They are part of our everyday life experience and can be trusted to impart meaningful learning, knowledge and solutions as well as recreation. It is important to help children learn how to use media technologies with better understanding and appreciation. Facilitation in appreciating the media content and technologies will empower children to consume it with responsibility and maturity.
- 3. Importance of Research:** With little research and evidence to provide direction to the efforts of giving MIL programme a fillip would be at best a failure from start. Instead, research efforts will provide a more substantive proof of the direction in which the MIL programme should be directed towards. Lack of sufficient empirical data works to defeat the argument of making cogent and valid argument for making MIL programmes not just another subject but a more inclusive programme for building a more purposeful learning and building capacities and skills. Research can also demystify the notions of direct and powerful impact of media since it is realised that media is pervasive but not persuasive in all situations and conditions.
- 4. Policy Imperatives and programme Direction;** We need to understand that there is a shift from Literacy to Multi-Literacy since apart from the relevance of different channels (verbal and visual) various skills and competencies are germane to the MIL programme.
  - i. Access to media content and Use of media technologies and associated software is guided by social and economic context. These contexts provide a better understanding about the reach and use of media content and technologies among various social and economic groups.

- ii. Doing Things with media: There is more focus on what uses people make of media than how media affects audiences.
- iii. Studies can provide a more rich understanding of how young and adults engage with media as active or passive users. Increasing propensity of users to become actively engaged in creating content has made it incumbent on MIL proponents to look at possibility of engaging young to have a critical literacy approach in downloading and uploading content.

- 5.** We need to attend to three important areas: **Digital Divide, New participatory Culture and Cyber-safety.** Those who have the technology, leisure time and financial stability will have more access and actively build their capacities but this will leave some sections powerless and insignificant. Creation of different class structures based on types of engagement with the new media can portend dangers and lead to social strife and anomie. Secondly, rather than static new media technologies have helped people to freely and actively participate in the new digital eco-system. Participation is the key word but this participation has to be harnessed for constructive and creative abilities. The increasing cyber crimes rates suggest that the need for oversight and monitoring mechanisms can assist than assault the sensibilities. But at the same time rather than taking a censorship approach, children should be allowed to explore and navigate the virtual with more acumen and diligence.
- 6.** MIL programme has to come out of the confines of the school programme to become more inclusive. The MIL can become a life-long learning in which critical approach is the mainstay of appreciation and understanding of the media content and technologies.

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