



The Role of Libraries in Promoting Digital Literacy and Information Ethics

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ABSTRACT

Libraries play a pivotal role in bridging the digital divide by promoting digital literacy and information ethics, ensuring equitable access to information in an increasingly digital world. As trusted community hubs, libraries provide essential resources, training, and expert guidance to empower individuals especially marginalized groups with the skills to navigate, evaluate, and ethically use digital information. This article explores how libraries address challenges such as the digital divide, misinformation, and privacy concerns through initiatives like workshops, online tools, and partnerships with schools and community organizations. Despite their critical role, libraries face barriers like competition from non-library entities, staffing shortages, and ethical dilemmas around internet filtering. The discussion highlights the need for collaborative efforts to enhance digital literacy programs, leveraging libraries' unique position as mediators of information access and ethical use. By integrating emerging technologies and fostering inclusive policies, libraries can continue to serve as catalysts for social justice and lifelong learning in the digital age.

Keywords: Digital Literacy, Information Ethics, Public Libraries, Digital Divide, Misinformation, Information Access, Social Justice, Lifelong Learning, Community Partnerships.

1. Introduction

The vision of Public Libraries is to make all available information resources accessible to all without barriers in the digital future. On the other hand, the mission of Public Libraries is to create the public space that promotes enlightenment and better understanding of the use and relevance of information resources. Public Libraries make available and promote a diversity of existing library and information services, bring together cultures, and focus on creating learning opportunities. The Digital Divide continues to be a reality. The Digital Divide goes beyond home access to high-speed networks. The Digital Divide discourses need to be widened to include lack of access to inclusive information resources needed for digital literacy and a better life (Visser, 2013). Furthermore, the Digital Divide not only needs to be tackled at government and political levels. Access to information resources is more than ever required to promote equal opportunities for all in the Information Society.

Public Library, the third place with internet access, information resources and the expert staff to make these available, has an important role to play in this respect. It is the focus of the standard that measures progress made towards the implementation of this vision on library cyberspace design. The Public Libraries must develop and make available information literacy programmes that provide everyone, including the under-privileged, with the skills, information literacy and media literacy needed to interact with information resources relevant to their own personal situation (Jetty et al., 2010). By doing so Public Libraries assure that all have the right and opportunity to search for the information needed to develop an understanding of and interact with the relevant available information resources. In order for information to have value a user must be 'information literate,' which enables them to maximize the value of information resources. It has been shown that 'information literacy' is currently the protecting arm of traditional libraries. Information literacy refers to a set of abilities requiring individuals to 'recognize

when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information' and to 'seek, evaluate, and use information effectively to become competent and ethical users and producers of information.'

2. Understanding Digital Literacy

Several recent events are raising awareness of the need for greater digital literacy among users of the Internet, in particular, the use of social media technologies such as Facebook and Twitter. Academic libraries are generally well aware of users' information-seeking behavior and the role of librarians in this area (Tinmaz et al., 2023). Librarians' understanding of digital literacy, on the other hand, is quite varied with some holding views generally consistent with digital literacy having a close relationship to information literacy and others believing that digital literacy is a much broader concept that encompasses more than information literacy does. It is very probable that libraries in general need to raise their own awareness of this newest iteration of literacy and related issues. There is also a need for a clearer understanding of the pros and cons of different conceptions of digital literacy. School and academic libraries' traditionally strong concerns for information literacy may cause misunderstandings between them and library associations, notably the American Library Association (ALA), which have attempted to broaden the scope of literacy to include digital literacy. Libraries' own conceptions of this still very new and rapidly evolving concept may differ from those of educators and businesses (Marie Cordell, 2013).

A prerequisite for greater understanding is a widely-shared definition of digital literacy, the components of which may reasonably be inferred from various sources. There is also a need for library and information literacy associations and organizations of educators and information technology specialists to discuss and collaboratively develop a more complete definition of digital literacy that would be acceptable to all parties. Some conclusions regarding how libraries should proceed can reasonably be drawn. An understanding of those component skill sets that most directly overlap with information literacy skill sets and the potential for collaboration between libraries and educational and social agencies to provide more fully-staffed and equipped digital literacy learning facilities may assist libraries in deciding how best to cooperate with these groups (Visser, 2013).

3. Information Ethics in the Digital Age

Libraries have, traditionally, acted as guardians of the public forum, safeguarding freedom of expression, privacy of information and scholarly inquiry. It is paramount that these rights are fully applicable in the digital realm, and that library professionals keep a watchful eye on the emergent challenges facing the sector and the implications for society. Drafted in 1934, Becker's "Freedom to Read" remains troublingly prescient in its contemporary expression of anxiety over censorship, intellectual freedom, privacy and informed citizenry, despite a world transformed by the all-pervasive Internet and digital communications. Digital ethics presents a range of new challenges based on old values and controversies, as far from being a democratizing force, the Internet frequently seems to amplify existing prejudices (McMenemy, 2016). There will always be those in power with an agenda they wish to promote, and their means of doing so is continually developing, and so too must the means of opposing them, but in the interval between these developments the gap in power widens, and monitoring and defence are rendered difficult.

It is widely acknowledged that the Internet operates on principles of free speech, and this phenomenon is not a simple binary. The opportunities afforded by the Internet are so varied and diverse as to be nearly impossible to categorize fully. Some organizations pursue a cheap and reversible model that allows for quick adaptations and changes, while others have established business models that simply do not transfer easily to an online platform at all. Moreover, different types of news are produced according to various methods and motivated by differing intentions (Mondal, 2021). The Internet has indeed become a common space for everyone to share and discover information, regardless of the barriers that may exist, be they data-related or rooted in differing ideas. However, it is precisely this very openness that has made the network increasingly vulnerable, with various forces continually attempting to undermine it for their own ideological or commercial ends. Many of these powerful forces are capable of concealing their own interests while simultaneously revealing a dark and unsettling truth about their opponents. In light of the complex nature of information as a commodity, navigating this information age can be quite challenging, making it hard to exist without cultivating a strong sense of realism, if not outright cynicism. This nuanced understanding is necessary to engage effectively with the multifaceted nature of online discourse and the challenges it presents.

4. The Role of Libraries

America's libraries boast a long and proud history that significantly contributes to the promotion of literacy and ensures that all individuals have access to essential data and information. Across the nation, many libraries are equipped with a diverse range of programs specifically designed to teach fundamental computer and Internet skills, along with effective strategies for gathering information. These invaluable institutions are not just simple book repositories; they play an integral role in the nation's data infrastructure by providing both access to a wealth of information and critical assistance to help community members effectively utilize that information (Abumandour 2021). Information Policies delve deeper into the vital role of libraries in fostering digital literacy among the populace. To further understand this dynamic, a comprehensive report has been compiled from a national survey that details thorough assessments of digital literacy programs and services currently offered in public libraries throughout the United States. This detailed report outlines an ambitious vision for libraries to function as pivotal anchors for enhancing digital literacy within their communities. It also discusses the various challenges faced in order to realize this vision while providing inspiring examples of libraries that are actively engaged in innovative work to promote these essential skills. Through their dedicated efforts, libraries are transforming into community hubs that empower individuals to navigate the ever-evolving digital landscape confidently (Whiteside et al. 2022).

As digital literacy policy efforts grow at the local, state, and national levels, the nation's public libraries with long histories of digital literacy work are well positioned to help educate and inform constituents about equitable, effective approaches to building digital literacies for everyone (Wang & Si, 2024). Library leaders identified ten priority opportunities where their skills and resources can be most effective in advancing information ethics. These priorities complement the recently adopted National Policy Agenda and alignment with social justice. Public libraries are the quintessential community information hub and help promote digital literacy, both directly through robust programming and access to content and tools, and indirectly by providing support for the skill development needed to make effective use of these tools and services. As this role in community engagement and promotion of digital literacy presents new challenges and opportunities,

libraries' digital literacy roles and programming have evolved.

The direct access to the complex information environment necessitates a change in the role of librarians and information professionals not just as gatekeepers but also as guides in the new information world. In the present knowledge society, the librarian must support learning at all levels, be it school, college, university, or continuing education and lifelong learning. The drastic changes from print to digital and the need for all citizens to develop a skill set of technological, information, and media literacies means that librarians will have to be incorporated into learning programmes in schools, colleges, and other institutions to teach these abilities (Harisanty et al. 2024). As schools, colleges, and other institutions are not adequately equipped to teach or do not teach these skills, the role of the librarians takes a high priority in enabling or ensuring that the membership or users of public libraries acquire the necessary skills to survive and thrive in the digital world.

5. Programs Promoting Digital Literacy

Not as well known are the ways in which libraries are also in the forefront of efforts to support digital literacy, in both media and information literacy. Libraries are not waiting for leadership from others on this topic, but instead are stepping forward with innovative programs (Visser, 2013). For decades now, America's libraries have served as experts and leaders in advancing literacy, from early childhood through adults. Expertise and an excellent record of achievement in supporting literacy efforts along with the capacity of a nationwide network of institutions are assets that many of America's libraries can bring to bear on the growing challenges posed by the online information environment. This expertise and capacity can contribute substantively across the various facets of digital and media literacy. But as with other latent strengths, the potential inherent in libraries' expertise and capacity will not lead to progress unless expressed in tangible ways.

There are numerous significant barriers that impede libraries from fully advancing in the critical areas of digital and media literacy. One prominent barrier is the intense competition from various non-library entities, which are actively and aggressively trying to attract library patrons. These entities often offer alternative resources and services that can divert attention away from the library's offerings. Additionally, a concerning trend is evident in the diminishing number of library workers possessing the skills necessary in relevant technologies (Bhatt, 2022). This situation is largely due to a wave of retirements that is not being matched by an equivalent number of new hires with the requisite expertise. Consequently, this imbalance may eventually erode the library's ability to provide valuable support and resources to its patrons in the digital age. Furthermore, the practice of internet filtering of online content by libraries raises pressing ethical questions. It prompts scrutiny regarding whether libraries are setting a positive and constructive example for students in their ongoing fight against the pervasive issue of information pollution. It is also crucial to emphasize that, despite these challenges, there are ongoing efforts and initiatives across all types of libraries aimed at overcoming some of these barriers. These initiatives seek to enhance the libraries' involvement in fostering digital and media literacy skills among their communities effectively.

5.1. Workshops and Training Sessions

Digital literacy is the ability to use information and communication technologies, which has become an increasingly critical skill for people in the digital age to meet personal needs. While universities and colleges have long engaged in delivering workshops and training sessions to develop students' information literacy ability, increasing awareness of the importance of digital literacy also encourages libraries to engage in providing training on the use of digital tools and services. The utility of

training sessions and workshops offered by libraries can be enhanced through proper promotion, organization, and engagement (Gibbon & Castek, 2017). The promotion of workshops and seminars is vital to developing awareness and interest among the target audience. Libraries should leverage multiple platforms, such as social media, email newsletters, and online advertisements, to reinforce key content and desired actions. Targeting different platforms with slightly varied content will maximize the reach of the promotion on various media channels. Additionally, it is essential to encourage invited speakers and stakeholders to share the advertising materials on their channels, which could attract more attention. The use of engaging media content, such as vibrant images and short videos, may also be more appealing to the audience in attracting their attention. Moreover, providing easy access to additional information, such as a brief overview of the workshop, is also highly recommended (Margarita Ramírez Leyva, 2017).

Effective organization of workshops and training sessions is critical to achieving the desired outcomes. Libraries should look for engaged speakers or facilitators with relevant expertise, knowledge, and a passion for the topic to enhance the engagement of the attendees. A proper format can assist the delivery of training needs and assist with the preparation of the audience. Additionally, establishing an ice-breaking activity can help make the participants comfortable in sharing and attending. It is usually helpful to inform participants about the background knowledge requirements and practical requirements, such as the preferred browser, at least one day before the session (Ergashevich & Mado, 2024). Encouraging participants to ask questions and engage in discussions during or after the session can facilitate the development of personal connections with them and encourage ongoing engagement with the library.

5.2. Online Resources and Tools

Libraries are natural partners in extending the value of digital literacy to the entire community and are already engaged in many digital literacy efforts. Libraries are trusted institutions that serve individuals of all ages, income levels, and ethnicities. There are public, academic, K-12, and specialized libraries that can be venues for training and information dissemination. Many librarians are experienced and knowledgeable about the common goals and motivations of their patron populations. Librarians will seek partners and venues to promote information ethics. Libraries can extend the outreach of information ethics efforts into communities that may be marginalized or cut off from these resources. As librarians are dedicated to the free access, use, and dissemination of information, they will bring their principles and expertise to efforts supporting information ethics. Because some types of information ethics information may not be freely available or freely disseminated, it is critically important to prepare messages that will not raise suspicions or adversarial responses (Willis et al.2021). The libraries should be included in message development efforts to access messages that will resonate with underprivileged and marginalized communities. These libraries are already trusted institutions in these communities. On the other hand, these communities are more likely to not have access to the Internet or to legitimate forms of digital information.

The educational institutions will be essential partners in developing information ethics messages and training for youth. Schools, higher education institutions, and other organizations educating youth should be recruited to develop multi-part educational videos, modules, and lessons to use in training youth ages 12-24. While youth are traditionally thought to often be on the front lines of digital media and information creation, use, and dissemination, there are many challenges today's youth face. This is especially true for underprivileged and marginalized youth who have less sophisticated access to

digital media and the information they create. Trust, reliability, and safety of digital information are often less well grounded where issues of credibility, ethics, and safety may be ignored. Youth education about information ethics is critical, especially training in recognizing, using, and disseminating non-predatory information in personal communications. The libraries will serve as important venues in which this education could take place. Youth can be reached in after-school programs, as libraries are often extended use spaces for communities (Young et al.2021).

6. Collaborations and Partnerships

Libraries are resource-rich organizations that play a critical role in supporting the needs of their communities, and they possess a vast array of resources that can be effectively leveraged to further the efforts of other organizations in various fields. It is essential to devote explicit attention to the creative and collaborative use of library resources, as well as the extensive expertise that libraries have, specifically regarding technology, teaching practices, training opportunities, and outreach initiatives. The resources available in libraries encompass both physical assets, such as access to computers, printers, and high-speed internet connections within the library, and the related expertise that library personnel provide in helping patrons navigate these technologies. This includes offering training and information literacy courses, which are vital for fostering a well-informed community. While it may not appear immediately obvious that digital literacy and libraries are interrelated topics, the connection is indeed strong and significant, allowing libraries to serve as logical and effective partners in community efforts to enhance digital literacy. By working together, libraries and community organizations can create a more digitally literate population capable of navigating the complexities of today's technology-driven world (Gupta, 2025).

This library lens on digital literacy holds tremendous opportunities for public policy practitioners to strengthen existing efforts and support new initiatives. Public policy options are provided regarding legislation and policy development, funding of initiatives, and support for program evaluation and research (Visser, 2013). Partnership development strategies illustrate the critical importance of involving libraries in future efforts regarding digital literacy. Libraries represent tremendous resources for communities and should be supported in efforts to promote digital literacy. Future work should begin with a few, targeted options illustrated herein to build a solid foundation for further investment. Efforts to increase digital literacy and build a digital country must include equal consideration of every community, structural or systemic barriers to participation, and immediate and long-term financial viability.

Libraries should be central partners in initiatives to promote digital literacy. Their role in supporting vocational education, the education of information professionals, digital and other literacy programs, and other areas of 21st-century education positions them as ideal collaborators in efforts to enhance digital literacy. The need for library partnerships with academic libraries is less immediate than with another level of libraries, but public and school libraries need to be educated about the potential roles they can play before they can be active partners. While implementation challenges exist, most of the need for awareness-building and training is not insurmountable. Developing strength in public and school library capacity will pave the way to a much stronger partnership with academic libraries in the long term. Plans to mitigate potential partnership challenges should not prevent efforts to work collaboratively or preclude decisions based on incomplete knowledge.

6.1. Schools and Educational Institutions

Libraries play an important role in the promotion of information literacy. Once they have worked through transparency issues with their users regarding access,

rights, security, and ethical conduct, they can become platforms for the development of other literacies. As the world tries to overcome the impacts of misinformation and disinformation formations and behaviors by some digital platforms, the demand for information literacy grows. Being able to analyze, reflect, contextualize, and act critically upon information is a necessity for societies to reproduce, culture, and democracy realistically (Visser, 2013). Through a transparency approach toward their users regarding regimes of access, rights, security, and ethics, libraries can help produce another form of literacy: information literacy. In a world in need of overcoming the impacts of misinformation and disinformation formations and behaviors of some digital platforms, information literacy is in great demand. The ability to analyze, reflect, contextualize, and act critically on information is a vital necessity in order for societies to realistically reproduce their culture, including their democracies. The former hopes to stimulate the library field to embrace information literacy as its own domain of expertise.

Many libraries already serve educational institutions and have established solid partnerships with schools, teachers, and other actors therein. Those who build on this tradition will have a relevant and strong story to promote literacy and learning opportunities in today's world. They may choose to focus on their partnerships with informal educational institutions, community-based programs, or on other societal actors, including their own user communities. Partnerships can also focus on strengthening a less visible mission, hidden agendas, a covert knowledge base, or a forgotten practice of libraries, such as supporting local traditions, music, oral storytelling, or film in the community. Some libraries may decide to open up a different road. They can draw in more global perspectives; knowledge can be adapted or multiplied, but then also hybridized, remediated, re-worked, and elaborated in local practices. Libraries could use this role to open up the debate on the global South influence on the local North when it comes to information ethics and literacy (Tikkanen & Korkeamäki, 2023). This counter-approach concerning different knowledge regimes of literacy could engulf guardian, preservation, covering, enabling, and opportunity discourses on societal literacy and literacy access. In addition, lenses of coloniality could help uncover blind spots, facilitate shifts, and radically challenge knowledge regimes of decision-making on education, politics, economy, and other relevant issues concerning social life.

6.2. Community Organizations

Community organizations are fundamental in determining strategies that ensure universal access to and use of information and information and communication technologies (ICT), in sustainable and empowering ways. Organizations involved in efforts to achieve information freedom have to be active in policy-making processes. In the context of national development goals, they need to raise awareness, promote capacity development, and work with the private sector and all levels of government on regulations promoting free and equal access to information. Community organizations need to invest in capacity development, such as the drafting of policies, standards and protocols, compliance with legislation, human rights training, and technological literacy. It is also important for them to collect data about basic levels of digital literacy or ICT related skills, and user competence and efforts to develop the capabilities framework of the Information Literacy Framework can inform this. It is imperative that organizations empower each other, join forces and share costs, pursue joint activities, lobby for the same causes, share knowledge, skills, resources and experiences (Corcuff et al.2022). In this regard, benchmarking efforts should be put in place. Strengthening capacity development programs and partnerships for collaborative liberation of information for social inclusion and development should be considered

cornerstones of strategies adopted by organizations engaged in work on information issues.

Libraries are an irreplaceable component for making progress on the national and global agenda with regards to promoting universal access to knowledge through the establishment and maintenance of open and free information infrastructures and structures to connect the digital underprivileged to the knowledge society (Visser, 2013). Libraries provide essential social infrastructure for building social capital and connectedness, which are conducive to citizen participation in democracy and development of cities and nations. Countries with a wider level of Internet use tend to have more effective governments, use ICT wealth for more effective public service delivery and experience enhanced citizen participation.

7. Assessment of Digital Literacy Initiatives

Considering the importance of digital literacy, it is vital to assess digital literacy initiatives in higher education institutions to indicate whether specific initiatives undertaken to enhance digital literacy are successful. The evaluation may inform decision-makers of needed intervention to improve the initiative. Consequently, this section presents a quantitative assessment of the service learning initiative to enhance digital literacy at a university in the MENA region. The assessment is based on responses to a survey administered to participants after completing the digital literacy initiatives. Digital literacy has received significant recognition internationally in recent decades. Recognition has taken on a proactive dimension with the realisation that educational institutions including schools, colleges, and universities – need to teach students digital and information literacy skills. In some cases, this recognition has led to the introduction of new curricula in settings where the previous need was neglected (Coffin Murray & Perez, 2014). The discourse around education and digital literacy has generally focused on how educators need to plan and implement specific initiatives to improve students' digital literacy levels. Although it is accepted in some settings, discussions around digital literacy may not necessarily be perceived as encompassing the entire academic community. Higher education institutions may lead the way in tackling educational needs, including digital literacy.

The current public university in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region regularly offers an undergraduate course to enhance digital literacy as part of the University Core Curriculum. The course focuses on a variety of information literacy topics. Students must take the course in their second year of study. In addition, a one-off two-hour seminar was introduced to educate students studying in the final, graduation year. The seminar briefly highlighted various information literacy topics to improve students' digital information literacy prior to graduation. Several intervention options, including discussions around the importance of fostering a higher-level digital literacy culture, were explored. Such options were assessed with online anonymous surveys to investigate perceived information literacy levels before the seminar. Response rates were low, perhaps due to issues around the voluntarily attended seminar and participants' digital literacy levels being high.

8. Challenges Faced by Libraries

Today, one can hardly imagine life without writing, which has become essential for expressing one's thoughts and feelings. Access to the written word will enhance the quality of intelligence. But this situation is changing as inventions of devices for storage, manipulation and distribution of information resources are developed. Information intensifies and spreads rapidly. Human brain cannot possibly cope with the situation. Libraries were originally meant to sort and control the ever-increasing mass of information resources for easy access by the users. As libraries grow, the range of their activities and services

expands. Libraries are expected to gather, store and protect the information resources, to organize and manage them, and to package and disseminate the information. The greatest challenge of libraries today comes from Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Dealing with the flood of information, economic consideration while procuring information resources, unpredictable technological changes, increased requirement of computer literacy, demands for new skills and functions, control of massive data flow in digital format, providing remote, off-campus access, etc. have become all time concerns of libraries on the path to implementing technological advancements (A Alvi, 2005).

Information access and retrieval have improved with the introduction of mechanization and automation in library operations and services. Manual cataloguing and classification are giving way to web-based bibliographic utilities, metadata and standardized cataloguing practices. Information can be retrieved by specifying keywords likely to be in the information resources, thus liberating the end-users from an overhead of knowing known-Universe resources for quick textual match which was characteristic of former bibliographic controls. Libraries have been provided with communication infrastructure. Wide Area Networks, the Internet, intranets and other kinds of networks have developed. Access to millions of information resources as web pages of varied kinds is made possible. The subject based, interest based and gate keeping approach of the librarians in gathering, cataloguing and organizing information resources is substituted by locational RFC 1895-based approach.

9. Future Directions

For a long time, libraries were thought of as mere reservoirs of books, magazines, newspapers, and other usual kinds of information. Thanks to the advent of computers and other useful devices in communication technologies, our perspectives regarding libraries have changed remarkably now. There is almost no aspect of human life social, cultural, economic, political, and educational which has not been touched and transformed by ICTs today. They are propelling the world rapidly towards a new society which is variously characterized as the Information Age, Information Society, or Knowledge Society. Libraries throughout the world are now faced with the challenge of providing electronic access to these burgeoning digital resources and globalized, distributed, and increasingly sophisticated information access services to their widely divergent clientele sets scholars, academicians, teachers, educationalists, LIS professionals, school children's pupils, macro and small level businesses, and so on from a wide arc of socio-economic, political, linguistics, and educational backgrounds. Information access in the Information Age calls for far-reaching changes, and fundamental transformation of a library's traditional modes of operations and services.

Library buildings, collections, and staff require major alterations and upgradation. Libraries, being the custodians of information, must start taking initiatives urgently to prevent the misuse of ICT in cyberspace the infrastructure of the Information Age (A Alvi, 2005). Recognizing the possibility of the new-fangled electronic wonders being used to garner not just information but also misinformation, mal-information, and disinformation, libraries will have to zealously regulate and monitor the information highways on which information is transmitted. To deal with networks of crooked and nefarious minds who are busy indulging in hacking, federal agencies in most nations have empowered law enforcement authorities to be Sherlock Holmes on the net. The information police need to keep watch with the help of the information should-be and would-be vigilantes on malicious minds that carry on cybercrime in its different manifestations spreading hate materials, viruses, committing identity thefts, selling of illicit drugs, maintaining owning pages on child pornography,

conducting financial scams like Nigerian and other lotteries, etc. Libraries have to deal with all these new challenges in the Information Age. Staff would need to be trained and suspicious behavioral patterns of netizens recognized and flagged for close monitoring. Librarians always maintained practices for regulating and controlling the supply of information in the libraries. They would now need to take on far greater responsibilities on web pages (K. Gireesh Kumar & Murali, 2013).

10. Ethical Considerations in Digital Literacy

It is a common misunderstanding that digital literacy is purely technical as a topic. Digital literacy requires the ability to critically evaluate content, find authoritative information, and recognize how information is 'framed' by a context, including commercial and institutional agendas. Most people will need help in developing these critical or interrogative skills, just as most of them will need help in developing personal agency. In this context, information literacy is about power, control and agency, with an emphasis on the moral, social and cultural aspects of information as well as the economic and functional dimensions. Design for better digital information literacy across a range of public and community sectors requires balancing considerations of knowledge power, information ethics, epistemological justice, and open purposeful information against interventions, systems and approaches that might create unintentional harm (McMenemy, 2016). A major part of information ethics is the debate around privacy and the right to know, which must largely recognize the importance of place in benefiting from the information age. Access to information, information literate skills development, and participative interventions may constitute conduits through which power relations shift and social justice is enhanced. To sustain these processes, more than toolkits are necessary, as the whole idea of information power sharing may operate more on the level of towering ideology than of practical, implementable, startable action. From the provision of just the very basic material tools, there is a chain of consequences on social justice, civil society and citizen agency, taking place across divergent geographical locations.

11. Conclusion

This paper discussed the role of libraries in promoting digital literacy and information ethics. Digital literacy emerges on the heels of the rapid growth and wide proliferation of information and communication technologies. With digital devices and media widely diffused and penetrated into all aspects of life, people depend more than ever on digital devices and media for their everyday needs. Current developments highlight the increasing recourse to social media by libraries, as they seek to connect more actively and dynamically with their communities. Information literacy programs can inculcate good principles in the fundamental skills of using information in the knowledge society. Librarians can effectively foster good literacy and associated roles with creativity, relying on storytelling and exposition, act, and drama.

In the present knowledge society, information literacy exceeds a hit-or-miss, do-it-yourself approach to the education of tech-savvy learners. Engaging them in a collaborative and cooperative process of learning and identifying, developing, and integrating the technological assets of their respective communities is the challenge. New channels, tools, and programs are needed to support the dissemination of and access to information in a wider arena. Unhindered by tradition, rules, devises, or mended minds in cyberspace, information societies are developing. Laws, controls, and consequences of use of nature-made or human-made information have yet to keep pace with the fast-growing technologies of cyberspace and the media across the globe. This is likely to engender unforeseen divisions in patterns of information and erstwhile

contented customers of products, services, and benefits of information.

New programs need to be put in place to inculcate skills for managing e-readiness and e-ethics, awareness of the rights and responsibilities ushered in by the new media. A concerted endeavor is needed to address the awareness of the accountability of both the furnishers and the fiduciaries of the media. It is but imperative that the media regulate themselves for the safety of information and the education and empowerment of the customers. Programmers need to be developed to redefine roles of media, furnishers, industries, and the public in cyberspace.

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