MILID Yearbook 2018/2019

A collaboration between UNESCO UNITWIN Cooperation Programme on Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue, UNESCO Chair on Media and Information Literacy for Quality Journalism, the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) and the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport, Egypt.

Media and information literacy in critical times: Re-imagining learning and information environments

Edited by José Manuel Pérez Tornero, Guillermo Orozco and Esther Hamburger

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
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Empowering women and ensuring gender equality in India through Media and Information Literacy approach

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Informing, educating, and empowering women through access to information is an essential pathway for progress in the United Nations' fifth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) to "achieve gender equality". Access to information is helping women to realize their potential to do better and to stand up for their rights and freedoms. This new awareness facilitates social change in the patriarchal, conventional, and orthodox mindset of society. The current study presents some cases, particularly from the field of agriculture, which demonstrates how access to information and the use of knowledge helps to empower women and improve their economic situation. It also describes how their growing presence on social media is making Indian women more communicative, helping them to overcome the social taboos and unleash their power. It portrays how media and information literacy (MIL), and its different stakeholders, can change the information environment ubiquitously providing new opportunities to women to access relevant information, education, as well as acquire skills, interact, collaborate, network, and have their voices heard; in turn, this leads to their educational, social, economic, health, and political empowerment. MIL competency helps in self-awareness and lifelong learning and in increasing the informational level of women. It thus facilitates their empowerment, promotes gender equality and helps women to realize and stand up for their rights. This paper thus makes a plea for integrating MIL training in women's education. However, factors such as illiteracy, poverty, poor technical skills due to limited access to technology, inadequate infrastructure, lack of appropriate content in local languages, the high cost of connectivity, prejudiced and inequitable social norms, are some of the aspects that may affect women's access to information.

Keywords: Women's empowerment, Gender equality, Social change.