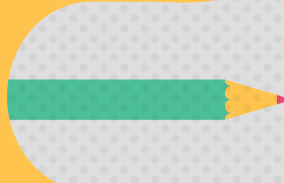




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MEDIA AND
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LITERATE CITIZENS

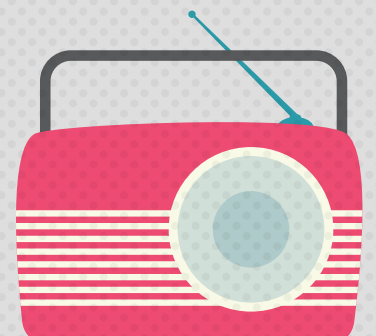
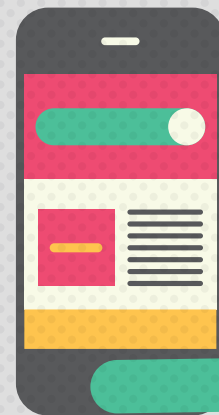
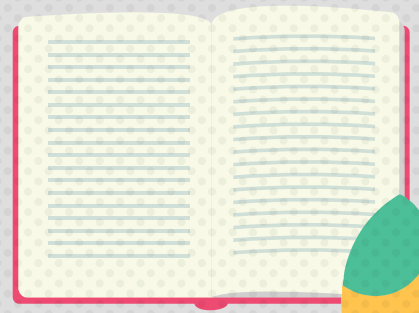


THINK
CRITICALLY,
CLICK WISELY!

Part
2

Module 5
Audiences as Citizens

Media & Information Literacy Curriculum
for Educators & Learners



Published in 2021 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 7, place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France

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ISBN 978-92-3-100448-3



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Graphic design by UNESCO/Katharine Mugridge
Cover design by UNESCO/Katharine Mugridge

Typeset by UNESCO
Printed by UNESCO

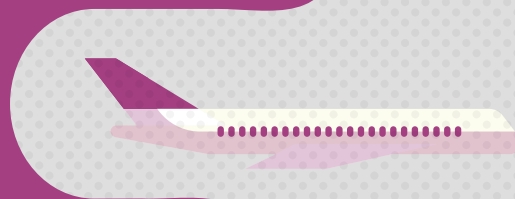
Printed in France

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MODULE 5:

AUDIENCES AS CITIZENS



BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

We all have different experiences as audiences of online or offline content. Increasingly, this is via digital communication companies and online digital entrepreneurs buoyed by social media and digital technology such as mobile phones and applications. In many regions, children and adults both spend a significant amount of their time each day engaged in media and digital communications activities. In the latter part of the twentieth century, a common assumption was that a given audience may have been a homogeneous group of passive or receptive individuals who would interpret a text or a media form in the same or a similar way. This was often the case with television, especially in its earlier phase, in that the communication was not generally multi-dimensional with multiple feedback loops. Today's Internet-based context has greatly complexified not only the ways that we communicate but also with whom we communicate. We can now be considered, concurrently, consumers (sometimes referred to as “target audiences” including targets for data driven advertising and selected content items) as well as active participants, which means that we are also producers and creators of content.

Target audiences are groups of readers, viewers or listeners, and increasingly users, defined by specific demographic and other characteristics, such as age, ethnocultural background, socio-economic status, gender, identity or interests. These could be considered a specific group for whom various actors develop and shape messages. For example, traditionally, advertisers have been concerned with buying time or space that will provide them with access to a specific demographic or target audience. In the television industry, advertisers will buy commercial time-slots from a network during a particular programme, if that programme is attracting the audience they want to reach. Many programmes are designed from the get-go to attract types of advertising. Presently, within the context of new media and social media, in particular, there are algorithms, tracing measures and digital footprints that can surreptitiously identify or isolate users. Thus, sophisticated marketing schemes can be developed to present users with advertisements and other content without an audience asking for them or even being aware of the ads being interwoven into their consumption. For example, someone interested in travelling to a specific destination may look for information through a web browser, and then find advertisements pop up through social media sites that they access afterward in a seamless way, illustrating how access, usage and targeted information and messages can be interwoven exponentially. See Module 10 for more on advertising.

However, people are citizens and not mere audiences. People have value far exceeding those relating to consuming content. How we interpret messages and interactions can relate to our socio-psychological and lived experiences, as well as our values, attitudes and behaviours, given our cultural, economic, ethno-racial and other identities. While there are still inequalities, barriers, obstacles and divides that can impede and diminish social relations throughout the world, there are also myriad possibilities and openings to engage and communicate with others across linguistic, geographic, cultural and political boundaries. This reality, combined with serious issues that transcend national and local concerns, such as the environment, migration, racism, conflict, poverty and economic policies, connect directly to global citizenship. With increasing mobility of people (threatened by the COVID-19 crisis at the time of writing), access to Internet-based communications, and the circulation of ideas, culture and education, global citizenship is becoming increasingly necessary in order to confront long-standing problems, and to strive for peace, social equality, and cultural survival, significantly for marginalized groups and indigenous peoples. According to IDEAS for global citizenship (and Oxfam):

A Global Citizen is someone who:

- Is aware of the wider world and has a sense of their own role as a world citizen
- Respects and values diversity
- Has an understanding of how the world works
- Is outraged by social injustice
- Participates in the community at a range of levels, from the local to the global
- Is willing to act to make the world a more equitable and sustainable place
- Takes responsibility for his/her actions

UNESCO approaches the subject like this: “The definition of citizenship is discussed and there is no widely agreed definition of global citizenship. In all cases, global citizenship does not entail a legal status. It refers more to a sense of belonging to the global community and a common sense of humanity, with its presumed members experiencing

solidarity and collective identity among themselves and collective responsibility at the global level. Global citizenship can be seen as an ethos or a metaphor rather than a formal membership. Being a framework for collective action, global citizenship can, and is expected to, generate actions and engagement among, and for, its members through civic actions to promote a better world and future.”¹

To be effective Global Citizens, young people and adults alike need to be flexible, creative and proactive. They need to be able to solve problems, make decisions, think critically, communicate ideas effectively and work well within teams and groups. These skills and attributes are increasingly recognized as being essential to succeed in other areas of 21st century life too, including many workplaces. These skills and qualities cannot be developed without the use of active learning methods through which pupils learn by doing and by collaborating with others.

Education, and, for our purposes, global citizenship education (GCED), has an enormous relevance to media and information literacy (MIL) education. As shall be illustrated in the below, MIL and GCED have some common objectives.

This module will explore several key questions:

1. How does global citizenship affect the ways that we might consider the notion of audience in relation to content, institutions, and technologies?
2. How might a producer/author’s background and experience influence the understanding of a text in all forms?
3. What are the other factors shaping how content is interpreted, including cultural, educational and identity variables?
4. How could the construction of a text guide, or a media and information literacy model strengthen a critical interpretive process?
5. How do audiences use the communications ecology in their daily lives, and what is the impact?

THE MODULE COVERS THE FOLLOWING UNITS:

1. UNESCO. 2017. The ABCs of global citizenship education <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000248232.locale=en>

UNIT 1: UNDERSTANDING GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

UNIT 1:
UNDERSTANDING GLOBAL
CITIZENSHIP

UNIT 2:
AUDIENCES

UNIT 3:
MIL, CONTENT PROVIDERS AND
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

UNIT 4:
CITIZEN-DRIVEN INFORMATION,
CITIZENS JOURNALISM

DURATION 2 HOURS

Key Topics

- The MIL competencies required to analyse and work toward solving real-life challenges
- The importance of media and information literacy in relation to global citizenship
- The need for multi-stakeholder cooperation in and outside the learning space
- Acknowledging our assumptions, experiences, backgrounds and beliefs and how they affect our worldview
- How globalizing information and communication can drive global citizenship. See Modules 13 and 14 for more on this topic.

Learning Objectives

After completing this unit, educators and learners will be able to:

- Describe the link between MIL and GCED and its relevance to learning
- Understand the importance of thinking critically about, and acting with respect and ethics toward global, regional, national and local issues and recognize the interconnectedness and interdependence of different countries and populations
- List the benefits of belonging to a common humanity, with shared values and agency, empathy, solidarity and respect for differences and diversity.

GCED Unpacked

Almost all aspects covered in this MIL Curriculum are related to GCED. UNESCO has developed many teaching and assessment resources on GCED. Many of these are listed in the Resources section further below. The focus of this unit, then, is to give the users insights into how MIL relates to GCED and to direct them to GCED resources from UNESCO and other partners.

UNESCO defines GCED as follows:

Global citizenship education aims to be transformative, building the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that learners need to be able to contribute to a more inclusive, just and peaceful world. Global citizenship education takes ‘a multifaceted approach, employing concepts and methodologies already applied in other areas, including human rights education, peace education, education for sustainable development and education for international understanding’ and aims to advance their common objectives. Global citizenship education applies a lifelong learning perspective, beginning from early childhood and continuing through all levels of education and into adulthood, requiring both ‘formal and informal approaches, curricular and extracurricular interventions, and conventional and unconventional pathways to participation²’.

When we consider “audience”, think of this also in the context of global citizenship. It is important not see audience in a singularly isolated way as there are many divergent, overlapping publics and “mini-publics” that can easily form and be informed not just receivers, but also as producers and distributors of content. Mainstream and official media outlets, although still important, can now be challenged, shaped and obscured by a multiplicity of alternative content providers, networks, applications and systems. We may not be exactly sure who is reading, viewing, listening or engaging otherwise with content at any given time. This is significant because some of our messages, videos, podcasts, comments, images, etc. may become “viral” or they may be disregarded, or they may be misinterpreted, or they may find new, unknown audiences with which and whom to build alliances. They may be mixed, revised in different contexts, and mashed with other elements (e.g. different visuals or audio aspects). This reality has several implications. It can compromise or enable the stated objectives of global citizenship mentioned above. It creates repercussions for content producers/providers and consumers alike. This is in addition to the challenges in the education sector, which must mediate the usage, interpretation and engagement with content products in a broad sense. At the same time, the information and communication ecology is permeated with global citizenship considerations. Youth, in particular, are preoccupied with the type of world that they are seeing, contributing to, and inheriting.

Global Citizenship Education & MIL

UNESCO and many stakeholders around the world promote the concept of global citizenship education. According to the UNESCO framework, there are several distinctive dimensions of global citizenship education. In the introduction to this module, we emphasized the importance of social learning and social-emotional learning. There are two key elements of global citizenship education that pertain to social learning and being an active digital citizen. See a detailed listing of the objectives of global citizenship education in the UNESCO resource *Global citizenship education: Topics and learning objectives*, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000232993>

Table 5.1 below illustrates this relationship and how social media can be used for creative learning, with suggested activities related to the purposes of global citizenship education.

2. Global citizenship education: topics and learning objectives (UNESCO, 2015). <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000232993>

TABLE 5.1: MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

PURPOSES OF GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION ³	PURPOSES OF MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY	LINKING GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AND MIL	ACTIVITIES: USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR CREATIVE MIL LEARNING AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION
Encourage learners to analyse real-life issues critically and to identify possible solutions creatively and innovatively.	MIL is about acquiring competencies to critically analyse and engage with real-life issues that are reflected and sometimes amplified by individual or institutional content providers on various technological platforms.	MIL is one way to stimulate people's critical thinking and has more force when integrated with other social competencies such as intercultural competencies or cultural literacy.	Social media are algorithmically curated, commercially driven resources that allow you to discover, evaluate, and analyse discussions or issues that are taking place in our country or in the world. Social media can enable online public squares, but also fragmented and even polarised communities. Educators and learners could identify themes, or topics, that are of specific interest to them and their learning objectives. From here, they can critically analyse and discuss the elements of the debate on that topic which is ongoing on social media – the context, players, issues, or perspectives of the discussion; what is the more dominant narrative, do all actors have equal access to the debate, is it representative, how does this influence policy making? There are a variety of ways in which we can design critical thinking activities that allow people to examine real-world debates. Educators can also develop activities to teach learners how they can practice their research techniques and how they can verify information through multiple sources on social media. These sources can be cross-referenced and fact-check with other trusted sources of information, such as credible news sites or reporters. (See section on Activities below in Unit 2 for more examples). See examples above. (See section on Activities below in Unit 2 for more examples).
Support learners to revisit assumptions, world views and power relations in mainstream discourses and consider people/groups that are underrepresented/marginalized.	A crucial part of MIL is to enable people to critically evaluate how content providers assert power, privilege some content or enable a diversity of voices and freedom of expression, represent reality, information, politics, social groups, ethnicity, gender, races, etc. This understanding includes assessment of whether the content providers support or allow or perpetrate abuses of people's rights. This relates to the individual's role in all and what Frau-Meigs (2013), refers to as "self-management as well as engagement" (p. 183 cited in <i>ibid</i>).	MIL is both a means and an end to achieve global citizenship education.	See examples above. (See section on Activities below in Unit 2 for more examples).

Focus on engagement in individual and collective action to bring about desired changes.	MIL enables people to consider their social structures and environments. It empowers them to individually, collaboratively and autonomously operate in their communications ecology, taking actions that can lead to positive effects, change, debate or desired goals...	MIL is a form of civic engagement.	As above, educators could develop activities around the UN Sustainable Development Goals to explore with learners how one individual or group brought about changes in social discourses or changes in the private sector or public policies. In carrying out these types of activities, ensure balance between movements or actions that have been successful and those that have not - explore why this may be the case.
Involve multiple stakeholders, including those outside the learning environment, in the community and wider society.	MIL spans learning in the classroom and learning that takes place outside of the classroom, enabling both to enrich each other.	MIL enables critical linkages to be made between content, institutions and stakeholders in the formal learning environments.	Social media can be tools for learning outside the classroom as well as within the classroom. Educators could design activities that draw on peoples'/citizens' learning experiences outside the classroom and integrate these into the formal learning settings. Explore what constituted learning in this context, what content led to the learning, is there a contradiction between what was learnt online for instance, and the realities offline; explore which stakeholders influenced the content; for what purpose, and did the learning benefit as a result of their input or not? (See section on Activities below in Unit 2 for more examples).

3. UNESCO (2014) Global Citizenship Education Preparing learners for the challenges of the twenty-first century. UNESCO, Paris, France, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf000022729?posInSet=1&queryId=36ccc9a-72ad-4fae-86f8>.

4. Frau-Meigs 2013, p. 183 in Carlsson and Culver (2013), Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue. Yearbook 2013, The International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media, Nordicom, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

Assessment & Recommendations

- Written examinations
- Essays, reflection and reaction papers to lectures, case studies, audiovisual presentations/viewings
- Participation in group learning activities
- Production of information-education-communication materials (e.g. posters, brochures, infographics, social media cards, vlogs)
- Research paper
- Investigative story/report.

UNIT 2: AUDIENCES: NATIONAL AND GLOBAL CONTEXTS

DURATION 4 HOURS

Key Topics

- Developing and targeting audiences
- How audiences negotiate meaning
- How audiences are affected by the notion of global citizenship
- How we consider media users as both active consumers, producers and users.

Learning Objectives

After completing this unit, educators and learners will be able to:

- Explore the notion of audience, including the factors that may affect how individuals and audiences interpret content differently
- Analyse how audiences are identified and targeted, explicitly and implicitly
- Explain how audiences elect to consume and interact with specific types of information, print media, and how this is a fluid situation
- Analyse how audiences respond to information, print media and digital texts, and explain the determining factors, especially within the context of global citizenship
- Examine the dynamic, inter-related and potentially transformative relationships between production, message, engagement and audience
- Consider the importance of global citizenship education in the production, consumption and engagement with media.

Audiences and Exclusion

Negotiating meaning from texts (including images, videos and interactive media like electronic games), in general, can be influenced by a number of factors at the production and audience interpretation levels. The same content can be understood quite differently, depending on who is the audience. The presence or omission of, for example, girls in media can send explicit and implicit messages and meanings to recipients. There is no neutrality in how people infer meaning from what they see as we are all biased, owing to our real-life experiences. For instance, consider this question as an example: what is considered racist or discriminatory, in a given narrative or set of discourses? Depending on who is consulted, the answer may vary widely. Social media plays a significant role in allowing people to develop compassion and understanding, and to form alliances in solidarity, while they can also provide niches and spaces where further discrimination, stereotypes and marginalization can be fostered.

Funk, Kellner and Share (2016) have highlighted the dimensions of the audience, and other key questions, within their framework on critical media literacy (CML). We can also say critical media and information literacy for a broader reference and adapt their ideas in the table below.

CML QUESTIONS	CML CONCEPTS
1. Who are all the possible people who made choices that helped create this text?	Social Constructivism: All information is co-constructed by individuals and/or groups of people who make choices within social contexts of power and influence.
2. How was this text constructed and delivered/ accessed?	Languages / Semiotics: Each institutional content providers use language with specific grammar and semantics including visual and audio genres. See Module 7 for more information on this topic.
3. How could this text be understood differently?	Audience / Positionality: Individuals and groups understand media messages similarly and/or differently depending on multiple contextual factors.
4. What values, points of view, and ideologies are represented or missing from this text or influenced by the provider?	Politics of Representation: Messages and the institutions through which they travel always have a bias; they support and/ or challenge dominant hierarchies of power, privilege, and pleasure.
5. Why was this text created and/or shared?	Production / Institutions: All texts have a purpose (often commercial or governmental) that is shaped by the creators and/or systems within which they operate.
6. Whom does this text advantage and/or disadvantage?	Social Justice: Content is a terrain of struggle that perpetuates or challenges positive and/or negative ideas about people, groups, and issues; it is never neutral.

This model, in addition to the context of global citizenship (and GCED) and the background on the quickly-evolving media environment, underscores how dynamic, far-reaching and impactful engagement in the information and communication ecology can be. Even when we are not engaging with media, we are often influenced and shaped by it, given that certain cultural forms and global events may be overwhelmingly infused in local discourse and information diffusion. For this reason, we should be concerned about hegemonic control and influence through the information and communication ecology, which can disproportionately disadvantage and marginalize groups and even societies or regions.

Pedagogical Approaches and Activities

- In summary: as discussed earlier in this Curriculum (Part 1) various pedagogical approaches are possible. Please review the list in Part 1 and decide which approach to apply to the suggested Activities below and others that you may formulate.
- Collect and describe examples of how people use various content providers and ICTs in their daily lives. Explore and examine the focus of entertainment celebrities, and discuss who might be the target audience? Who is included, who is omitted, and what are the central themes and indicators that may reaffirm identity and audience? What do these sources tell you about how audiences use content? How might these uses be different from what the producers intended?
- Imagine how a family from a completely different background from the ones featured in the reality show, the entertainment performance, the news, etc. interpret some current television programmes or advertisements. What would this say about content providers and audiences today? What are the implications for society?
- Consider how marginalized groups--which might include Indigenous peoples, racialized groups, groups with a low socio-economic status or those in poverty, ethnic and religious minorities, women, members of the LGBTQI+ community (the groups may vary depending on the context)--relate to the mainstream media in terms of media representations and audience response.
- Examine the differences between the mainstream, traditional media, including mainstream newspapers, television and radio, and the newer, alternative providers such as alternative media networks, and activist groups formed online, etc.
- Discuss how people, especially students, engage with social media, and how their engagement with it affects their daily lives in terms of attitudes, behaviours and actions. What are the implications? Does their social media engagement go along with greater citizen participation or not? Is there an increase in “slack-tivism” meaning that civic actions are limited to clicking “Like” buttons or sharing of posts? What are their key concerns and interests? Educators should research and further develop other activities in connection with the nexus between global citizenship and social media.

- Consider how advertisements affect our usage, interpretation and understanding of content providers and content? Are we aware of advertisements being planted surreptitiously in films, television, print publications, radio and throughout the Internet? How do we understand algorithms that infuse our reading of the world and media usage with advertisements that are programmed based on our digital foot-prints or what decision-makers believe will interest us individually? Analysing social media ads could be a starting-point to determine how we are targeted. Have students interrogate the economic dimensions of advertisements, and how this may affect what we know, including how we are encouraged to engage? Can media and digital platforms exist without advertisements or at least without data-driven micro-targeted advertising that is able to manipulate behaviours? What would be alternative business models? See more on advertising in Module 10.
- Examine how Internet search engines present data. Discuss how advertisers or producers may purchase higher rankings in the way Internet searches include certain information more than others. How is local context considered when using the Internet? Importantly, what information, images, ideas, and concerns are not emphasized or omitted, and which are more predominantly displayed? What are the implications for content consumption, production and global citizenship?
- Analyse the messages and values conveyed through a popular media text, such as a television programme and on social media. How might the messages change if people of a different social group (e.g. age, ethnic background) were included, or if the male and female characters switched roles? How might this impact the audience? What would change, why, and what might be the consequences if these changes took place?
- Analyse how language is a key factor in determining what content is presented, how, to what degree, and how it may affect what we know and how we act? Are local languages as readily available, presented and influential as some other languages? What is the impact of some languages being more predominant than others? Does it shape our knowledge-base in favour of values, attitudes and comportments that may not align with our local cultural values? Can hegemony be transformed into diversity?
- View and discuss *memes* that are diffused throughout social media, and seek to understand who the audience may be for them. Select a number of memes, and analyse what is required to understand them, and if they would be understood differently depending on the audience. Have students construct memes to contextualize and elucidate problems and issues within their own societies. Then discuss the implications of how memes are used, disseminated (sometimes becoming viral), and interpreted. Include in the analysis the variables of humour, irony, creativity, cultural knowledge and interpretation of audience as a means to evaluating the influence of memes on global citizenship.
- What can be said in and through the media and what is blocked or excluded and why? How are images used to convey messages? Discuss why some topics appear to be taboo and are profiled less than others. What does this say about audience and power relations in relation to content providers?

- Examine the promotional material that is available for colleges and universities in your region. If students are shown, what do they look like? What are they doing? What image of the school is being shown in this material? What impression do they give of the school they represent? Are they real students or models? Is there gender bias? If students do not appear, what images were chosen and what do they say about the institution? Based on your analysis of the material, who is the target audience? What message is being conveyed? How does the intended framing affect the reception?

Assessment & Recommendations

- Development of a model, table or evaluation-instrument to determine who the audience is for specific types of content
- Collage of messages in media and online along with a word-map or Wordle that describes the major influences as well as audiences
- Textual analysis of mainstream media and digital platforms (the orientation, the focus, the potential impact, the audience, etc.)
- Textual analysis of social media (i.e., Facebook, WeChat, VK, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, Taringa!, YouTube, etc.) to determine key factors (the orientation, the focus, the potential impact, the audience, etc.)
- Design and launch a small survey on peoples' understanding of the significance of global citizenship in relation to audiences, content and institutions that provide content.

UNIT 3: MIL, DIGITAL MEDIA AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

DURATION: 2 HOURS

Today the need for, and interest in, “global citizenship” and “civic engagement” seems to have gained a new urgency, caused, at least in part, by the unprecedented access to content providers and digital tools that people have today, and which allow for collaboration, communication, and participation on a scale that we have never seen before.

Over a half-century ago, communications expert Marshall McLuhan developed many of the ideas that would come to have a significant influence on the way we define our “global consciousness”. McLuhan was aware of the profound impact of technology on our identity, our relationships, and our communities, including the ways in which we could participate in them. Long before the use of the Internet and social media, he coined the phrase “the global village” to describe the ways in which content providers would connect audiences and users. Indeed, he believed that content providers would influence our actions, attitudes and behaviours, including the way we think about the world and ourselves. McLuhan (1964) said, “We shape our tools and thereafter our tools shape us.”

Going further today, scholars examine more closely who is this “we”. They ask which entities create the tools and why, what their business model is and if there are internalities and externalities that are potentially harmful. This in turn points to assessing who benefits and who does not, in the growth of ICT in the current world.

The infusion of social media usage, consumption, production, engagement and creativity into all aspects of our personal, social, professional and community-based lives has altered the ways we think about citizenship, democracy and civic participation. Thus, the question of MIL is central to this new communication and information ecology, opening up interrogation into how we engage with others and with audiences - known and unknown, visible and invisible, engaged and casual - and what the potential impact of this engagement might be.

Key Topics

- The implications of new technologies for global citizenship and civic engagement
- The role of voice and collective and individual “agency” in civic engagement
- Pedagogical strategies that emphasize active involvement with social media, and that connect it to democratic rights, active citizenship, and competencies
- Examples of strategies that recognize and promote a diversity of users, digital communications companies and opportunities for civic participation
- The potential for media and information literacy and civic engagement in the classroom, in the community, and in civic institutions.

Learning Objectives

After completing this unit, educators and learners should be able to:

- Examine the strategies that are used to attract audiences to various online spaces
- Identify the roles that participants can assume in online spaces
- Analyse the ways in which identity, purpose and intended audience are created and communicated through various social networks and other content providers
- Identify the ways in which audiences can become involved in civic engagement or social action through digital communications companies.

Civic Engagement and the Classroom Environment

In exploring possibilities for civic engagement, many educators and students become involved in a process of inquiry where they analyse social networks and the ways in which they can be used for social actions. They discuss the ways in which digital communications companies create online spaces where people who share an interest in a similar issue or “affinity” can come together, and where information can be easily obtained and widely distributed through existing social networks (Jones & Hafner, 2012).

These classroom experiences highlight the need for critical pedagogy which focuses on technology and its usage. Critical pedagogy, as developed by Paulo Freire and

taken up by many other scholars and activists, aims to examine and problematize inequitable power relations and the meaning of oppression in social relations, seeking to lead to emancipation and conscientization. More simply put, critical pedagogy is not a methodology but, rather, an endless process of considering how to cultivate and achieve meaningful, critically-engaged transformative education for all students and members of society.

Critical pedagogy in MIL invites learners to consider how technology can be used to enhance or suppress opportunities for civic engagement and transformation. MIL requires that educators create opportunities for learners to not only use new technologies to explore topics and issues relevant to their classrooms (i.e., to teach through diverse technologies) but to also use these opportunities to teach critically about technology. This involves providing learners with the opportunity to think critically about online spaces, online content, techniques for attracting audiences, their own online behaviour, and key aspects of the engagement process. How learners themselves use social networking sites, social media, applications and related practices are important topics for any classroom.

The analysis and evaluation of an online space, including its social and political implications, are based on three key areas: 1) identifying the purpose for the space itself, and examining the ideology and values that underpin and are represented in the space; 2) identifying who created and controls the space, and analysing why it is designed in a particular way; 3) identifying who the target audience is for the space, how people use it, and who benefits as a result.

The following questions can be used by educators and learners to further this line of inquiry. Questions such as these can help to develop a framework for critically analysing and understanding digital communications companies as constructed “spaces,” which represent certain ideologies and values, and which can be used in different ways by different audiences.

Pedagogical Approaches and Activities

In summary: as discussed earlier in this Curriculum (Part 1) various pedagogical approaches are possible. Please review the list in Part 1 and decide which approach to apply to the suggested activities below and others that you may formulate.

- How do these spaces bring people together – or drive them into echo-chambers and potentially exclusivist communities? Are these different from the ways in which you could come together off-line? What kind of social relationships are created through the site?
- What kind of communication or interaction is possible? One-to-one, one-to-many, many-to-many? What is the effect of this type of communication? What are the rules or norms for interaction? How do you learn these rules?
- What do you know about people in the network? What do they know about you? What information is revealed and what is hidden? Why is this the case?

- What values are promoted in this space? How are these values made visible? Is the space owned and controlled by an individual, institution, or corporation? How do you know?
- Who has access to the site? What is the “cost” or the method for becoming part of, or communicating in this space? What other opportunities for participation exist? How effective/accessible are these?
- What tools does the site make use of for attracting the attention of others, or for sharing information? What strategies are used for involving participants and engaging them in some kind of actions?
- How does the space use text and visual elements to create and convey meaning? What are the key elements that define or construct the space? What kind of “reality” or community is created as a result? (Jones & Hafner, 2012)
- Examine digital communications companies that are used by development agencies and/or NGOs to encourage civic engagement. What are the factors that, in your opinion, will contribute to their success?⁵

Assessment & Recommendations

- Develop a plan for creating an online space to promote a current global issue to a youth audience. Consideration should be given to strategies that will “push” information out, and “pull” a youth audience into the space.
- Analyse online spaces for their design elements, messages and values conveyed, opportunities for engagement, the potential impact on audiences, etc.
- Create audience profiles for existing digital communications companies. The profile should highlight which features of the sites are key in determining the target audience.
- Design and launch a small survey to determine the impact of online spaces on people’s understanding of global issues and their willingness to become engaged in social action.
- Analyse an online space to determine issues of ownership and control, how the space is financed, and whether or not it is connected to a larger online network or community.

5. Source: Adapted from Johnson, M. and Wilson, C. “Media Literacy, Digital Technologies and Civic Engagement: A Canadian Perspective” in Carlsson and Culver (2014), Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue Yearbook, Global Citizenship in a Digital World. The International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media, Nordicom, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

UNITS 4: CITIZEN-DRIVEN INFORMATION AND CITIZEN JOURNALISM

DURATION 4 HOURS

Key Topics

- Understanding the concept of citizen-driven information for public good from Media and Information Literacy (MIL) perspectives
- Citizens' journalism in relation to citizen-driven information
- Media and Information Literate citizens as intellectual base for citizens-driven information
- Citizen journalism's role in open society and liberal democracy
- Citizen-driven information for civic engagement and intercultural dialogue
- Media and information Literacy driven citizen journalism.

Learning Objectives

After completing this unit, educators and learners should be able to:

- Describe the link between citizen-driven information and citizen journalism
- Understand the importance of Media and Information Literacy in citizen-driven verifiable information in civic engagements and meaningful intercultural dialogue
- Understand the role of media and information literate citizen journalists in advocating for open and democratic society and information for public benefit
- Describe the benefit of media and information literate citizen journalists as influencers in today's public sphere information and communication ecosystem.

Citizens and Information

Advancing education for sustainable development and global citizenship education raises issues such as: 1) decision making and informed action by citizens (for instance citizens' consultation and inputs into the implementation and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals or voting patterns based on debate), 2) civic engagement and mass participation in information for public good; governance, holding business, local community leaders, public officials, and those in power, to accountability and transparency; ownership and democratization of communication channels; civic participation, public access to information and ensuring equitable access; public debate and democratization of ideas in the public sphere, etc.

Based on the principles of civic engagement in development and democratic representativity, institutions-based journalism can be questioned based on how it

represents diverse multilingual populations. This is why UNESCO and partners are champions for community radio. <https://en.unesco.org/themes/community-media-sustainability>. At the same time, conventional media and digital communication companies should democratize their practices for more engaged diverse opinions. This consideration ought to form the basis for plurality of media and digital platforms, thereby providing more opportunities for citizens to own their own media, compete for more sources of information and counter the effects of years of gaps, omission or marginal reporting on certain societal issues occasioned by concentration of media ownership and algorithmic amplification of a limited number of ‘influencers’ by digital communications companies.

With the advent of new media and social media afforded by the new information and communication technologies, citizens are now being captivated with prolific content which has now become a challenge. The challenge in many countries of today’s public sphere is no longer a dearth or scarcity of information, but that of overload with all its attendant conflation of misinformation, disinformation, hate speech and deep fakes. In order to achieve information for public good, citizens need to become media and information literate.

In other words, citizens in today’s 21st century, need the critical thinking skills to assess diverse content and to contribute to information for public good and effectively navigate the ‘infodemic’ in making informed decisions. In this sense, media and information literacy is itself a public good. Contributing information by citizens can take many forms - from corrections posted on social media, through to Wikipedia entries, and even citizen journalism, involving reportage and professional ethics.

Pedagogical Approaches and Activities

- In summary: as discussed earlier in this Curriculum (Part 1) various pedagogical approaches are possible. Please review the list in Part 1 and decide which approach to apply to the suggested Activities below and others that you may formulate.
- What is your understanding of citizen journalism? Discuss, interview and collate divergent view of people’s (in different social and economic status) understanding of citizen journalism. Summarize their different perspectives. Do you notice discerning trends?
- How do conventional media view the notion of citizen journalism? Make a deliberate effort to interview different people in the conventional media houses in order to know their perception about citizen journalism and compare with the results in the exercise above. Do you notice any difference in perception?
- Citizens participation in community media can include production of information and journalism, but also equally engagement in dialogues, representing culture, etc. “UNESCO advocates strongly for community media that are independent, and which are run for and by the community... Community radio is crucial for providing an outreach mechanism for increased access to education, self-expression and communication among rural and hard-to-reach populations. Such stations

allow communities a sense of ownership about their own development agenda, becoming self-empowered to publicly express opinion, debate issues, and promote the culture, history and language of their community.” Organize a classroom debate around this statement. Appoint a group of learners that will document the outcomes of the debate and prepare a report. Which organizations are promoting community media in your country or region? Are there community media in your communities? If no, discuss why not? If yes, are they sustainable? Are women and girls involved in managing the community radio and reflected in content equally with men and boys? Formulate and answer other questions through the debate. Share the report with relevant authorities in your community or country.

- Use the UNESCO *Community Media Sustainability Policy Series* as a basis of further discussions, research and actions. <https://en.unesco.org/community-media-sustainability/policy-series>.
- Consider how people share information (text, video, graphics etc.) on different social media platforms. Would you say citizen-driven information on these platforms has contributed positively to the public sphere and is an enabling information and digital communication ecosystem?
- Discuss how mainstream media engage with social media, and how citizen journalists through social media influence their news content. What are the implications of these engagements for citizen-driven information? Does social media engagement lead to greater citizen participation in civic public sphere discourse? What do you consider as likely key concerns and interests?
- Consider how media and digital technology ‘influencers’ relate to citizen journalism. Considering this reflection, discuss the various ways that algorithm-driven information on the Internet has affected the citizen driven information? What are the implications of these influenced narratives in citizens’ public access to information for future political engagement and intercultural dialogue? See Module 11 for more on Artificial Intelligence and algorithms.
- Discuss the imperative of Media and Information Literacy education training for citizen journalists and the impact such training has on citizen-driven information, more broadly. Consider the UNESCO resource *MIL in Journalism: A handbook for journalists and journalism educators*, https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/mil_eng.pdf, in the discussions for this and other activities in this section.
- Analyse how Media and information literacy education can influence the quality of information that citizens access on Internet search engines and the impact of such literacy on citizens’ empowerment for civic engagement. Organize hands-on activities online in the process.
- Divide learners into groups. Guide them to research different Open Databases as well as databases of masters and doctoral theses. Guide a discussion around these repositories as citizen-driven information. Search for research reports related to gender equality, community development, or any other topics of interest. Discuss the following questions and write additional questions. Are these sources of information being used in local and national debates? Why not? What can be done to make the local community, national governments, and international

development organizations more aware of some of these findings? Are there topics of interest to you where you find that there is little or no research reports at the masters and doctoral level? What can be done? Prepare a brief report of the process. Plan follow-up actions in school, community centres, etc. See more about the information lifecycle and how academic information is constructed and validated in Module 3.

Assessment & Recommendations

- Develop an evaluation-instrument or comparative analysis table to determine media influencers and opinion moulders of citizens' narratives in both conventional media and social media
- Do a textual analysis of social media narratives of a particular social or political issue and determine the key citizen information-driven factors (the mindset, the sentiment, the potential bias, the media orientation, etc.)
- Design and launch a small survey on people's understanding of the concept of citizen journalism
- Carry out a focus group discussion and interview on the citizen journalist's influence of today's conventional media content whether online or offline
- Design and launch a small but comprehensive survey on citizens' understanding of media and information literacy.

Resources and References for this Module

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UNESCO (Office Bangkok and Regional Bureau for Education in Asia and the Pacific). (2018). *Preparing teachers for global citizenship education: a template*. Bangkok: UNESCO. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000265452>

UNESCO (Santiago Office). (2017). *GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: "Towards a world without walls: global citizenship education in the SDG 4 – E2030 Agenda"*. Santiago: UNESCO. https://www.bridge47.org/sites/default/files/2018-12/22_gce_in_latin_america_and_the_caribbean.pdf

UNESCO. (2014). *Global Citizenship Education Preparing learners for the challenges of the 21st century*. Paris: UNESCO. https://www.bridge47.org/sites/default/files/2018-12/20_unesco_gce_2.pdf

Websites/Data-Bases

Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU)

Since its establishment in 2000 through an Agreement between UNESCO and the Government of the Republic of Korea, APCEIU has put forth its utmost efforts in search of measures to empower learners with such values. APCEIU has strived to become an influential catalyst of GCED through the following main programme areas: capacity-building of educators, research and policy development, dissemination of information, development of teaching/learning materials and international teacher exchange programme. APCEIU is fulfilling UNESCO's mandate through various programmes of Education for International Understanding and Global Citizenship Education. <http://www.unescoapceiu.org/en/index.php>

Bridge 47

Bridge 47 was created to bring people together to share and learn from each other. It mobilizes civil society from all around the world to contribute to a transformation towards global justice and eradication of poverty through Global Citizenship Education. <https://www.bridge47.org/about>

GENE Global Education Network Europe

GENE – Global Education Network Europe – is the network of Ministries and Agencies with national responsibility for Global Education in European countries. GENE brings together Ministries, Agencies and other bodies that develop national policy and provide funding for Global Education in European countries. Ministries and Agencies participating in GENE combine their expertise through structured networking, sharing strategies, and a peer learning approach that leads to enhanced results nationally. <https://gene.eu/>

Global Citizenship Education Clearinghouse

The GCED Clearinghouse is a global database on GCED jointly set up by UNESCO and APCEIU to facilitate information sharing and enhance knowledge and understanding of GCED. <https://www.gcedclearinghouse.org>

IDEAS for global citizenship

International Development Education Association Scotland (IDEAS) is a network of organizations and individuals across Scotland (United Kingdom) that actively support and promote Development Education and Education for Global Citizenship. <http://www.ideas-forum.org.uk/>

Media Smarts (Canada's Centre for Digital and Media Literacy)

MediaSmarts is a Canadian not-for-profit charitable organization for digital and media literacy. Its vision is that children and youth have the critical thinking skills to engage with media as active and informed digital citizens. To achieve this goal, it provides leadership in advancing digital and media literacy in Canadian schools, homes and communities; develops and delivers high-quality Canadian-based digital and media literacy resources; and conducts and disseminates research that contributes to the development of informed public policy on issues related to media. https://www.mediasmarts.ca/?gclid=CjwKCAjwnK36BRBVEiwAsMT8WEBH51ws5Rb6k7iQ_cFukbkNjFs8nI0oneVhyQflqzoZZNwX09In_hoCOPMQAvD_BwE

McLuhan Foundation for Digital Media Literacy

The McLuhan Foundation is committed to digital media literacy, and to establishing a real and virtual Global Village Square. The Foundation facilitates the sharing of best practices among the thousands of initiatives, NGOs, associations and agencies involved in digital media literacy worldwide. The Square is a virtual and real meeting place for educators, practitioners, industry players and policy makers. Through collaboration, exploration and public outreach, the Global Village Square is an international hub to navigate innovation and partnerships in digital media literacy. www.mcluhanfoundation.org

UNESCO – Global Citizenship Education

UNESCO works by supporting Member States in their efforts to implement GCED. This includes raising awareness on GCED, advocating for its implementation, and developing guidance and capacity-building tools.

UNESCO's approach to GCED is:

- Holistic: addressing learning content and outcomes, pedagogy and the learning environment in formal, non-formal and informal learning settings
- Transformative: seeking to enable learners to transform themselves and society
- Contextualized: adapted to local needs and cultural realities
- Value based: promoting universally shared values such as non-discrimination, equality, respect and dialogue
- Set in a larger commitment to promote inclusive, equitable quality education.

<https://en.unesco.org/themes/gced>



unesco

United Nations
Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organization

“... the States Parties to this Constitution, believing in full and equal opportunities for education for all, in the unrestricted pursuit of objective truth, and in the free exchange of ideas and knowledge, are agreed and determined to develop and to increase the means of communication between their peoples and to employ these means for the purposes of mutual understanding and a truer and more perfect knowledge of each other’s lives...”

– Extract from UNESCO Constitution

“Media and information literacy is an essential dimension of moral and civic education. It is also a fundamental right of every citizen, in any country of the world, and thus it enables everyone to protect their privacy and find their place in a society whose technological environment is changing faster and faster.”

– Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO,
at the International Consultative Meeting on
Media and Information Literacy Curricula,
on 13 September 2019, in Belgrade, Serbia



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