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Design and Validation of Media Literacy Education Model in Education: A Qualitative Study

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The current study was carried out with the objective of formulating and validating the media literacy instructional model within the educational framework.

Methods: Employing a qualitative exploratory approach, this study utilized purposeful sampling and criteria-based techniques for sample selection. Data collection involved semi-structured interviews during field research and examination of primary documents and educational materials in the library. Theoretical saturation was reached after interviewing 20 individuals, with data analysis conducted through thematic analysis. Following validation and alignment with existing theoretical frameworks and literature, expert opinions were sought regarding the scope and elements of media literacy education.

Results: The findings facilitated the identification of 49 elements distributed across 6 dimensions: media literacy instructors, educational practices, curriculum development, school environment, governmental involvement, and Ministry of Education contributions.

Conclusions: Overall, the results offer valuable insights for educational policymakers aiming to enhance media literacy within the realm of Education.

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Introduction

In the contemporary media landscape, where more than seventy percent of individuals' daily time is reportedly spent engaging with media (Potter, 2004), it is essential for the audience to possess an understanding of the media and its public-facing operations. Through diverse methodologies, the media endeavors to engage and guide the audience towards predetermined objectives. Concurrently, the evolution and diversification of media formats, their capacities, and the varied content they offer have led to audience perplexity (Meehan et al., 2015). Consequently, individuals often unwittingly find themselves recipients of media messages; messages that are unsought yet provided by the media, leading individuals to passively accept and internalize them (Torkzadeh et al., 2019). This underscores the significance of acquiring knowledge and awareness prior to engaging with media, urging individuals to comprehend the workings of the media in their interactions with the public (Aufderheide, 2018; Lin et al., 2013).

Media and information literacy constitutes a fusion of knowledge, perspectives, competencies, and encounters necessary to access, scrutinize, assess, utilize, generate, and communicate information and knowledge in an innovative, lawful, and ethical manner, with a focus on human rights (Hobbs & Frost, 2003; Hobbs & Jensen, 2009). Individuals equipped with media and information literacy can navigate various media forms, resources, and information outlets across their personal, professional, and communal spheres. They can discern the timing and necessity of information acquisition, along with the methods and sources of obtaining it. They grasp the origins and motivations behind information production, as well as the roles, obligations, and functions of media and information providers. These individuals are adept at scrutinizing information, messages, convictions, and principles conveyed through the media and other content creators, while appreciating the value of the information (SHARIKOV, 2017).

Possessing media literacy is imperative for educators and students alike. Equipping students to navigate the contemporary era is a key responsibility of the education sector, which must fulfill its educational mandate while addressing societal needs and demands (Boutorabi et al., 2019). Educational directives underscore the enhancement and reinforcement of media literacy, laying the foundation for adept utilization of the evolving learning environment (Boutorabi et al., 2019).

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The education of present and future generations necessitates dedicated and effective educators. The pivotal role of teachers in sustainable development is clearly delineated, and efforts should be made to bestow upon this profession a lofty social standing by creating conducive working conditions (Alizadeh & Rezai, 2009). Determining the educational policies of the academic period falls under the purview of the Supreme Council of Education, while the responsibility for planning and forecasting the regulations of this course lies with the secondary education office. The primary goal of secondary school education encompasses religious, cultural, artistic, political, educational, social, and biological objectives, aiming to nurture students' talents, interests, and readiness for the labor market and university enrollment based on their chosen field of study. Although media literacy has long been a standalone subject in certain countries, Iran is still in the nascent stages of incorporating media literacy into its education system, lacking a specific framework. Consequently, significant efforts are required to establish an optimal model for media literacy education, with this research endeavor seeking to lead in this domain.

The escalating volume and diversity of information producers, coupled with the ever-evolving landscape of knowledge and information technologies, have contributed to the complexity of information retrieval (Bawden, 2008; Kellner & Share, 2007). Hence, the acquisition of information skills, particularly in media literacy, has become increasingly essential to effectively navigate the plethora of available information and identify relevant resources. Media literacy, a broad concept encompassing individuals' ability to leverage information effectively, has gained prominence in recent years, emerging as a critical element in the education and cultivation of learners' media literacy skills in the 21st century (Afzali & Tafreshi, 2010; Torkzadeh et al., 2019). Given the transformations in knowledge and technology globally, various definitions of literacy have emerged over time. Recent years have witnessed a proliferation of definitions in response to the rapid advancements in information and communication technologies, according to UNESCO. Literacy now entails the capacity to comprehend, adapt, generate, communicate, and compute using diverse printed and written sources across different domains. Literacy serves as a continuum of learning that empowers individuals to attain educational objectives, fosters the development of learners' knowledge and potential talents, and facilitates their active engagement in local and broader societal contexts (Altun, 2012; Vodă et al., 2022).

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Regrettably, media literacy education in Iran has not yet been integrated into schools and universities. This is due to limited policies regarding media literacy from key institutions such as the Ministry of Education and Culture, and the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology. Criticism from the Islamic Council Research Center highlights the need for introducing media literacy into the formal education system. Despite the presence of propositions related to media in the education system's value propositions, practical steps for media literacy development have not been taken. The adaptation of curricula to learners' needs and the recognition of media literacy's educational role are underscored in official documents. These documents also stress the importance of utilizing media intelligently to prevent negative consequences.

The research problem of media literacy and its implementation in the teaching-learning process is of utmost importance. Educational systems have focused on addressing information gaps by promoting information literacy skills, including media literacy across various domains. Access to information is crucial for achieving educational objectives in political, social, and cultural spheres. Information-literate individuals form the cornerstone of knowledge-based organizations. Therefore, the establishment of a model for media literacy education holds significance in the national education system. The aim of this study was to delineate the dimensions and constituents of media literacy education, formulate a model for media literacy education, and validate it.

Materials and Methods

The current study was carried out with the objective of developing and validating a media literacy teaching model in the field of education. The research methodology employed was an exploratory qualitative study conducted under the interpretive paradigm framework. A case study was conducted in Shiraz city to thoroughly examine the dimensions and components of media literacy in education. Data collection was done through in-depth interviews. Additionally, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to explore existing documents related to media literacy and teaching methods worldwide, such as books, articles, theses, and recommendations from international organizations like UNESCO and the European Union. This review also encompassed the history of leading countries in media literacy education, as well as various instructional models, to support the research objectives and enhance interview findings in developing the desired

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models. Grounded theory approach was utilized to gather qualitative data through observation, interviews, and text analysis, enabling the identification of key variables and exploration of their interrelationships.

The study population consisted of education specialists and experts, particularly educational planners and managers specializing in media literacy education within the Ministry of Education. Interviews were conducted until theoretical saturation was reached. A total of 20 interviews were carried out in this study, achieving saturation. Detailed demographic information of the interviewees is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic statistics of interviewed participants

Section	Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Field	Education	Graduate	10	50
		Master degree	6	30
		PhD	4	20
	Educational management position	General director of education, assistants and educational directors	6	30
		Media literacy teacher	14	70
	Gender	Female	7	35
		Male	13	65
Library	Upstream documents and documents of education and media literacy		-	100

Data collection tools included document analysis and interviews. Initially, relevant literature was reviewed, and then a measurement tool was developed and implemented based on the initial model through document scanning. Model validation was assessed through the feedback obtained from the interviewees. Data analysis was performed using GT methodology, involving open, axial, and selective coding stages. Three factors were employed to establish trustworthiness in the research. Various data collection methods were used, including document analysis and interviews. In terms of ensuring information credibility, engaging the research team and consulting experts in the field aided in achieving research goals. To enhance the verification aspect, the final template was shared with research participants for their feedback and confirmation, aiming to increase the reliability of the study findings.

Results

In the semi-structured interview conducted in the spring of 2022, 20 participants were engaged in discussions regarding the indicators and components of media literacy, the design of the media

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literacy education model, and its suitability. The interview process was initiated, guided, and sustained through the participants' responses, culminating in theoretical saturation and the emergence of a structured framework. Subsequently, a review of 20 documents in the library section led to the extraction of themes pertinent to the design and validation of the media literacy education model.

Qualitative data analysis was conducted utilizing an interpretive approach and theme analysis through a thematic network framework. Initially, quotations from the semi-structured interview responses and relevant documents were extracted and subjected to initial coding. Through a process of conceptual grouping, fundamental themes were identified, leading to the categorization of certain themes based on functional similarities. Ultimately, these organizing themes were integrated into an abstract and comprehensive framework, resulting in the compilation of a final table comprising triple theme categories.

Subsequent to the qualitative analysis, a researcher-designed questionnaire was developed to assess the model's efficacy from the perspective of experts, drawing insights from upstream documents and educational materials. This questionnaire, pertaining to the media literacy training model in education, encompassed 6 dimensions and 49 components, utilizing a 5-point Likert scale to evaluate various aspects such as government policies, Ministry of Education directives, educational practices, school initiatives, teacher roles, and curriculum components.

In this research, in order to identify and analyze the dimensions and components of the media literacy education model, the theme analysis method was used. Based on this, first, a classification framework was chosen in order to shred the text and initial coding. The framework of the initial coding stage and the extraction of basic themes was data-driven descriptive. In this way, first the primary codes and then the basic themes were identified based on the research data. Since the abstract framework of organizing themes was based on theory, the words were chosen based on theories and researches. In the first stage, quotations were extracted from the text of the interviews of the participants in the open interview and also by studying and reviewing the upstream documents and key documents and documents of education and data-oriented coding was done in separate tables.

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Table 2. The final analysis of the three themes of media literacy

No.	Basic themes	Organizer themes	Overarching themes
1	Media literacy movement	Government	Media literacy education
2	Technology Development		
3	The capacity of mosques and cultural centers		
4	The capacity of radio and media		
5	Incentive policy	Ministry of Education	
6	Teacher training course		
7	Training of education managers		
8	Book review		
9	Educational standards	Department of Education	
10	Supporting gifted students		
11	Media literacy conference		
12	Platforming of virtual space		
13	Training school principals		
14	Explanation for school administrators		
15	Providing teachers with media literacy		
16	Media literacy equipment	School	
17	Cheering at school		
18	Interaction with the media		
19	Choosing a media literacy teacher		
20	Interaction with parents		
21	Explanation of media literacy for school staff		
22	A teacher with professional qualifications	Teacher	
23	Teaching method		
24	Media literacy learning facilitator		
25	Quranic literacy		
26	Media studies		
27	Technical ability		
28	Believer in Islamic lifestyle		
29	Value for Iranian culture		
30	Critical Thinking		
31	social order		
32	Educational ability		
33	Communication skills		
34	Assessment		
35	Self-esteem	Media literacy curriculum	
36	Critical Thinking		
37	Hope		
38	Recognize enemy		
39	Media studies		
40	Power of analysis		
41	Active audience		
42	Media piety		
43	Self-Knowledge		
44	Futurology		
45	Optimal consumption planning		
46	Self-control		
47	Knowing the Islamic lifestyle		
48	Knowing local values		
49	The ability to publish and republish		

Validation of qualitative data is conducted iteratively throughout the process of data collection and analysis, rather than as a distinct and isolated procedure. A key aspect of this validation process

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involved providing feedback to the participants. Moreover, the validation was influenced by frequent revisions and the researcher's position. The researcher's inquiries resulted in the accumulation of both theoretical and empirical evidence. The finalization of the validation process involved the utilization of the alignment method (consisting of three components). Through the integration and comparison of field observations, literature sources, research findings, and theoretical evidence derived from scholarly works, the coherence of the identified themes was justified. The validation of qualitative data during the analysis phase was carried out by adapting the methodologies outlined by Gall and Vojtek (1994) in specific ways.

1- Researcher's stance: Based on the researcher's instructional background within academic institutions and extensive exploration of theoretical underpinnings, research history, and educational literature, a position was established concerning the subject under investigation, supported by relevant quotations. 2- Participant engagement: Interviewees were given the opportunity to review and amend the statements presented in the researcher's report for accuracy and comprehensiveness. Subsequently, following the coding and categorization of themes, the findings were shared with three participants for further feedback. 3- Consistency: To enhance the trustworthiness of the qualitative research outcomes, other research results were consulted to validate the findings, utilizing corroborative evidence to confirm their convergence. Upon validating the qualitative data and aligning the results with theoretical frameworks, prior studies, and educational literature, a proposition was made concerning the media literacy education model in the field of education, supported by expert opinions. Validation of qualitative data is conducted iteratively throughout the process of data collection and analysis, rather than as a distinct and isolated procedure. A key aspect of this validation process involved providing feedback to the participants. Moreover, the validation was influenced by frequent revisions and the researcher's position. The researcher's inquiries resulted in the accumulation of both theoretical and empirical evidence. The finalization of the validation process involved the utilization of the alignment method (consisting of three components). Through the integration and comparison of field observations, literature sources, research findings, and theoretical evidence derived from scholarly works, the coherence of the identified themes was justified. The validation of qualitative data

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during the analysis phase was carried out by adapting the methodologies outlined by Meredith Gall, Walter Borg, and Joyce Gall (1994) in specific ways.

In the present investigation, these actions were implemented: 1- Researcher's stance: Based on the researcher's instructional background within academic institutions and extensive exploration of theoretical underpinnings, research history, and educational literature, a position was established concerning the subject under investigation, supported by relevant quotations. 2- Participant engagement: Interviewees were given the opportunity to review and amend the statements presented in the researcher's report for accuracy and comprehensiveness. Subsequently, following the coding and categorization of themes, the findings were shared with three participants for further feedback. 3- Consistency: To enhance the trustworthiness of the qualitative research outcomes, other research results were consulted to validate the findings, utilizing corroborative evidence to confirm their convergence. Upon validating the qualitative data and aligning the results with theoretical frameworks, prior studies, and educational literature, a proposition was made concerning the media literacy education model in the field of education, supported by expert opinions.

Discussion

The main goal of the current research was to design and validate the media literacy education model in education. Now the issue of media literacy has become a comprehensive and important issue for education. The current research is sequential exploratory combined research, in this stage, we link the findings of qualitative and quantitative research together to interpret the findings.

The theme network showed that from the point of view of experts and experts, it is necessary to pay attention to the number of 6 dimensions and 49 components in media literacy education. The interpretation of the dimensions of the government, ministry, education, school, teacher and curriculum indicates that the most important components of the government dimension are: the media literacy movement, technology development, the capacity of mosques and cultural centers, and the capacity of radio and media. The results of the research show that the most important components of the Ministry of Incentive Policy are the teacher training course, the training of media literacy education managers, and book review. Also, the most important components of education are: educational standards, support for gifted students, media literacy conference,

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creation of virtual space, training of school principals, explanations for school principals, and providing teachers with media literacy. According to the respondents, the school component includes: media literacy equipment, encouragement in school, interaction with media, selection of media literacy teacher, interaction with parents and explanation of media literacy for school staff. The teacher component includes: teacher with professional qualifications, teaching method, media literacy learning facilitator, Quranic literacy, media studies, technical ability, believer in Islamic lifestyle, value for Iranian culture, teacher with critical thinking, social order, educational ability, skills It is communication and evaluation, and finally, the curriculum component also includes themes: self-confidence, student critical thinking, hope, enemy knowledge, media studies, analytical power, active audience, media piety, self-knowledge, future research, optimal consumption planning, self-control, knowledge of Islamic lifestyle. It is the recognition of native values and the ability to publish and republish.

The results of this research in the government dimension are consistent with the researches of Bashir and Jafarian (2017) and Salavatian et al. (2016). The results of this research in terms of the Ministry are consistent with the researches of Karami Namivandi et al. (2018) and Alizadeh and Rezai (2009). In the education aspect of this research, are consistent with the researches of Alizadeh and Rezai (2009) and Bashir and Jafarian (2017). The results of the research in the school dimension and curriculum, are consistent with studies of Khaniki et al. (2016) and Karami Namivandi et al. (2018).

Based on the results of this research, it is suggested to place the deputy of media literacy education in the educational chart of the Ministry of Education, to use local capacities for media literacy education, and to organize national and regional conferences focusing on media literacy education. In addition to the obtained findings, the present study has been associated with limitations, which being limited to education and research in Fars province and conducting research in the conditions of the outbreak of the Corona disease are among the most important of these limitations.

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Data availability statement

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

Ethics statement

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by ethics committee of Islamic Azad University.

Author contributions

All authors contributed to the study conception and design, material preparation, data collection and analysis. The author contributed to the article and approved the submitted version.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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