Media Literacy Education in Secondary School: Teachers’ Attitudes

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Abstract. The media and technological advances have massively changed our lives. Therefore, in light of the emerging media landscape, the notion of literacy has been expanded and the need to develop media literate learners who are producers as well as consumers has been reinforced. Being literate in the 21st century requires the integration of new curricula in the current education system to challenge the critical understanding of learners and help them assimilate the diverse codes involved in the contemporary media system. Given this context, this research aims to investigate the state of media literacy education in the secondary school system in Morocco. The purpose of this study is to examine the integration of media literacy education in the secondary school focusing on teachers’ attitudes. For this purpose, a survey research is conducted with a sample of 190 teachers. The survey data are described and analyzed using descriptive as well as inferential statistics. Based on the findings, the implementation of media literacy education as an official component in the Moroccan secondary school curriculum is significantly influenced by organizational, systematic, and attitudinal factors. The challenges of incorporating and developing media literacy in the Moroccan educational system are multiple, including inadequate school support, weak professional development, and obsolete classroom practices. Eventually, this study is an attempt to provide a starting point to the quantitative evaluation of media literacy education and make an argument for the implementation of the field within Moroccan educational institutions.

Keywords: Media literacy education; Secondary school; Curriculum; Media; Information and communication technologies; Integration.
1. Introduction

The idea that media is ubiquitous and pervasive in the human life has been an accepted fact for decades. The media is substantially growing in recent years. At an ever accelerating pace, it penetrates cultures and inundates people with a flood of information. All over the world, masses are increasingly influenced and shaped by the infinite number of messages coming from different media platforms. Especially for children and young people, media is considered as an area of danger that provokes delinquency and violence, undermines social and cultural norms, and cultivates some obnoxious ideologies, such as consumerism, and materialism. The new media and cyberspace in particular allow users to have free access and exposure to uncensored contents holding destructive messages. Therefore, as reported in the Kaiser Family Foundation study, it is imperative for educators including parents and teachers as well as policymakers and public groups to consider the relationship between media and young users (2010).

Media scholars and educators agree on the need for preparing and empowering the millennial generations to participate in the media environment as critical consumers and active producers. Buckingham (2003a, 4) asserts that the current media landscape reinforces the urgent need for developing systematic pedagogies of teaching and learning about the media. He further explains that media literacy pedagogy or as he named it “media education” serves to address the complex media experiences that are part of everyday life in a more rational and perceptive way. Implementing media literacy across the school curriculum enables students to understand the various ways in which the media confines and defines its discourse on diverse issues. Scholars confirm that media literacy education challenges students to take a critical stance in receiving media messages, and encourages them to take advantage of media opportunities for democratic participation and citizenship (Buckingham, 1993; Jenkins et al., 2009; Masterman, 1985, 1997; Semali, 2000).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The integration of media literacy in educational settings is rapidly growing worldwide. Recognizing the significant role media literacy plays in the millennium age, departments of education and media educators from around the world have been working for twenty-five years now to develop elements of media literacy into their frameworks (Kubey, 2003). It is mandated and taught in many parts of the world such as Australia, England, Canada, Russia, France, Spain, and the United States providing curricula, research, strategies, and performance. As for the Arab region, many initiatives have been taken to support media literacy education across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region like in Lebanon, Jordan, Qatar, Egypt, and Morocco (Abu-Fadil, Torrent & Grizzle, 2016). According to Melki (2013), the underlying rationale for promoting media literacy in
the Arab states and Lebanon in particular is based on the willingness to achieve a wide spectrum of social, economic, and political development goals. As far as Morocco is concerned, a considerable number of measures have been taken to develop media literacy programs, such as the introduction of media studies and cyberspace curriculum in the departments of English at the faculties of Arts and Humanities (Nfissi, 2013). Besides, the 2009-2012 Moroccan Emergency Plan for Education launched projects aiming at encouraging both teachers and students to better discern their use of media and information and communication technologies (ICTs) in primary and secondary schools (Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research, 2008). Such programs help the field of media literacy gain a primary foothold in the Moroccan education framework and in the community as a whole. However, according to the United Nations Alliance of Civilization (UNAOC) report, media literacy is not officially integrated within the school system in Morocco (2009). There is an enormous lack of theoretical as well as descriptive work regarding teaching media literacy. Starting from the conviction that media literacy education integration is not formally considered in Moroccan instructional settings, the present study is driven by the desire to discover its status in terms of curriculum approach, investment of materials, professional support, and classroom practices.

1.2 Rationale of the Study

As mentioned earlier, the media is something unavoidable in today’s society. We live in a saturated media and technological era characterized by increasing quantities of information that are transmitted with ever-greater speed. In Morocco, according to The High Commission for Planning (2015), as reflected in the Sixth General Census of Population and Housing (RGPH 2014) that took place in September 2014, the rate of population’s access to media and technology has known a remarkable proliferation in the last years. As a result, this complex and ambivalent relationship between media and the public has prompted a fundamental question facing education today: How can schools prepare the future generations for living full, healthy, and productive lives in an information age?

Many studies examine the integration of media literacy education and present evidence on its significance but they are mostly conducted in the Western context. In the Moroccan context, the area of media literacy research is relatively new. Based on this understanding, this study aims to comprehensively explore the manifestation of media literacy education in the Moroccan secondary school. The motivation behind this study is to shift media literacy education from an international context to a local setting. In fact, this study is an attempt to considerably contribute to the body of literature and enrich the theoretical and practical frame of reference for further research in the field.
1.3 Purpose of the Study

This research is undertaken to find out the current situation of this approach in the Moroccan secondary school by providing a comprehensive perspective to understanding its integration shedding light of different variables. It aims to get an insight into the several factors that may place an additional drag on the ability to develop media literacy pedagogy within the educational system, as well as to outline the forms and purposes of teaching media literacy in secondary schools in Morocco from teachers’ perspectives.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the stated objectives, the following questions are formulated to guide this research:
Q1: From a descriptive perspective, what are the key factors that prevail in the incorporation of media literacy education within the Moroccan secondary school?
Q2: How do secondary school teachers approach media literacy education in their classroom practices?

1.5 Research Methodology

In order to find an answer to the above mentioned research questions, a quantitative survey was conducted. This instrument is employed to collect data relating secondary school teachers’ perceptions of the integration of media literacy education in the school system in Morocco. The motivation behind choosing survey research is to get an insider perspective on what is being studied. Besides, as a self-reporting data collection instrument, a survey provides subjective data from the sample who can express themselves in words through questions and answers.

2. Media Literacy Education: Theoretical Framework

2.1 Changing Conceptions of Literacy

The media, old and new, leads to salient and remarkable changes at all living aspects using both words and symbols. Thus, it is crucial for a community to become well-versed in the skills needed to recognize when, how, and why this new set of symbols— the media— is put together to form messages.

The concept of literacy is not static; it is based on the changing of people’s needs and wants in a society. With the arrival of mass media, a new reality emerged. The written text somehow lost part of its social predominance as the power of image and sound has massively gained ground to transmit information and knowledge instead. The new media originates new sign systems that require new skills extending beyond the classical literacy (Thoman & Jolls, 2003). Within this context,
literacy would automatically shift into *media literacy* to mean the body of operative skills needed to properly understand and assimilate the language involved in the contemporary media system (Tornero & Varis, 2010).

The literature reveals that media literacy as a term is seen as a problematic and contested phenomenon to be defined. It is a concept that holds a huge variety of perspectives, and it is differently recognized from one person to the other (Brown, 1998; Christ & Potter, 1998). In 1992, participants in The National Leadership Conference agreed on an umbrella definition for media literacy as “the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information is a variety of forms and formats” (Aufderheide, 1997, 79). This definition has been widely used by scholars all through the literature. Later on, several experts start to comprehensively elaborate on the field trying to come up with new key ideas and conceptions. Besides, Kellner and Share (2005) define media literacy as a critical ability. It stands for the cultivation of a set of competencies in analyzing media code and interpreting their multiple meanings, as well as critically evaluating, dissecting, and constructing media contents. By exposing and opening up ourselves to the wider variety of messages and texts, we should be familiar with media literacy which is now becoming at the same time a requisite knowledge and an essential skill. Moreover, Adam and Hamm (2001) reveal that media literacy does more than simply helping students decode media messages. Rather, it enables the public to construct their own meaning from the various visual and verbal codes they are daily exposed to. Media literacy, in fact, aims to ensure that audiences are actively reacting to and controlling what they receive.

### 2.2 Media Literacy Education

From the previously examined definitions, it is argued that media literacy covers a large learning process of a broad-based competence in relation to all forms of media. The field of media literacy is inseparable from media education. According to Buckingham (2003a, 4), media literacy is the outcome of “media education” which he defines as the “process of teaching and learning about media”, while media literacy is the knowledge and skills learners acquire in order to understand, interpret, and communicate the media content. Besides, Worsnop (1999) claims that media education is considered as all activities that take place in a media-oriented classroom with the purpose of achieving the media literacy skills namely analysis, interpretation, evaluation, and production of media contents.

Being literate in the 21st century requires a change in pedagogy of the current education system that has, for so long, promoted very little discourse and even less accommodation for new modes of literacy. In today’s world, the student population and younger generation are engaged with media and technology more than before. They have a wide variety of choices when it comes to media preferences
especially with the number of online platforms which allows social participation (Buckingham, 2003b). Hence, what is worth questioning in here is how much able those young users are to deconstruct what they are daily exposed to. This is what media education attempts to answer.

The terms media literacy (ML) and media education (ME) are used synonymously and interchangeably. They have the same goal, which is of establishing a systematic and pedagogical method of inquiry for critically decoding messages embedded in all media texts (Semali, 2000). At the core of these concepts are the basic critical understanding and effective participation skills, intended to empower young people to make informed judgments as effective consumers and active producers of media.

The importance of media literacy education and the need to include it in formal educational settings as fundamental part of the curriculum emerges from students’ increasingly media consumption patterns and reciprocal relations with the media. Teachers, parents, and educators cannot afford to ignore the media power and the opportunities offered by technologies. Therefore, the school curriculum ought to update its content and make relevance from the media messages for learning purposes. Integrating media literacy, therefore, emphasizes on establishing rationales for pedagogy within the international academic community, and the contemporary cultural context (Buckingham, 2003a). That is so say, education today should no longer be limited to the traditional skills employed to understand alphabets and words in the print. Most considerably, the United Nations’ Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2012 declared that media literacy education is part of the fundamental rights of every citizen in every country in the world like the freedom of expression and the right to information (Silverblatt et al., 2014).

3. Research Methodology and Design

This study addresses the integration of media literacy in the Moroccan secondary school system focusing on teachers’ perceptions. For this purpose, surveys were conducted with a large sample of secondary level teachers from all around the country to elicit their different attitudes about media literacy education. The sample size was 190 secondary teachers who were randomly approached and selected from various secondary schools in Morocco to respond to a quantitative survey. The latter was administered in two different formats: a paper-based and an internet-based, combining both open-ended and closed-ended questions design (mixed questionnaire design). The teachers’ survey was four pages long, initially written in English and translated into Arabic.

Demographic information on gender, teaching experience, grade level taught, and discipline were collected. First, as reported in table 1, the number of female respondents (54%) in this survey was higher than males (46%). As for the teaching
experience variable, it was divided into four main categories which range from below 6 years to above 24 years. The first group of teachers having less than six years of experience represented 21%, the second group (between 7 and 14 years) formed the most dominant category with a percentage of 31 of the overall participants, the third group (between 15 and 24) made 21%, and the fourth (above 24) made 27%. As far as the teaching level is concerned, 50% were middle school teachers and 50% were high school’s. Finally, for the major subject areas, table 1 shows the frequency description according to the participants’ answers. English language teachers made the most dominant group of respondents with 24% (N=45), followed by Arabic language teachers (19%, N=37), French language teachers (18%, N=35), History and Geography teachers (8%, N=15), Islamic Education and ICT teachers (6%;

### Table 1. Distribution of percentage for demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEMOGRAPHICS</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Male</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Female</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 1 to 6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 7 to 14</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 15 to 24</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More than 24</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade level (taught)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Middle School</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• High School</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline (taught)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Arabic</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• French</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• English</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Spanish</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• German</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Translation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Islamic Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• History and Geography</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Philosophy</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mathematics</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Physics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Biology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Economics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Technology</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Family Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ICT</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Arts</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
N=12), and Biology and Geology and Mathematics teachers (4%, N=8). The other subject areas such as Spanish, Philosophy, Physics, and Family Education were represented by 2% (N=3) of the participants, and only 1% (N=1) teaches German Language, Technology, Translation, Economics, and Arts. Ultimately, the aim of this statistical distribution is to thoroughly explore and to have an insight on how media literacy education is perceived by secondary school teachers in Morocco according to different disciplines.

4. Findings of the Teachers’ Survey

One of the major goals of this research is to examine the manifestation of media literacy in the Moroccan secondary school system. In this regards, Rogers (1983) confirms that in order to measure the rate of adoption of an innovation, it is important to take potential adopters’ attitudes as a key predictor. Therefore, this study conducted a survey with secondary school teachers aimed at garnering a wide range of their perceptions of the integration of media literacy education in terms of different external and internal variables.

4.1 Teachers’ attitudes towards teaching media literacy education in the school system

4.1.1. Media Literacy Familiarity

As a first question, the survey asked respondent teachers to determine their familiarity with the media literacy education as a term.

Figure 1. Respondents’ familiarity with the concept of “Media Literacy”

Figure 1 shows that the majority (65% = 123) of participants knew about this concept, while 35% (N=67) stated that they have no idea about what it stands for. Subsequently, teachers had an open-ended question where they were requested to define the conception according to their knowledge. Only 43 (23%) teachers answered this question. After analyzing the verbatim answers using a coding frame, it was found that the most common argument put forth by respondents was their belief in the importance of integrating media literacy education in the school sys-
tem. Out of the 43 teachers who responded to this question, two thirds defined media literacy as a new approach to education and one of the main effects of globalization, new media, and digital culture. Teachers asserted that media literacy is a requirement for the 21st century learning skills which the public, mainly students, need to acquire in order to think intelligently and face the current media challenges. They explained that it is an educational strategy that teaches the student to rationally and effectively use the media messages for their personal achievement, social participation, and responsible citizenship. From a different perspective, few other teachers defined media literacy as the use of media and technology in the teaching and learning process by both teachers and students. A middle school teacher of History and Geography pointed out that the emergence of information and communication technology (ICT) has led to the development of new teaching pedagogies which are meant to increase the quality of the classroom practices.

4.1.2 Government Promotion for Media Literacy Education

Moreover, in order to examine the manifestation of media literacy education within the Moroccan secondary school, teachers reported their attitudes towards the government efforts, notably the Ministry of Education, to consider the teaching and learning of media literacy. The findings in figure 2 show that 81.92% (N=154) of respondents believed that the government represented by the Ministry of National Education does not work to promote media literacy in the secondary school system, while 17.77% (N=36) confirmed that there are some noticeable efforts done in this regard.

![Figure 2. The Moroccan Government promotion for media literacy education](image)

Out of the 36 teachers who agreed on the government mobilization towards developing media literacy education, 10 respondents (28%) commented that the Moroccan education sector is increasingly interested in developing the use of ICTs in the teaching and learning process. To achieve one of the main objectives of the “Education Emergency Program 2009–2012” to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery and educational outcomes, the Ministry of National
Education has launched a number of programs, such as Génie, which aim to enable teachers, educators, and administrators to effectively use information and communication technologies. This strategy has called for two major key outcomes: the equipment of schools with the necessary digital materials and technologies, and the establishment of a continuous training for teachers on the use of these technologies. Respondents confirmed that these programs were in fact inaugurated specifically to encourage the use of digital media in the teaching and learning operation by offering technological equipment as well as providing continuous trainings to teachers of different subject areas.

Besides, eight teachers (22%) confirmed that the Ministry of Education is annually issuing a number of provisions in the form of ministerial briefing notes, aimed at scheduling school activities related to media and media education. A middle school teacher of Arabic stated that schools are now required to have what is called “the digital club” [Annadi Arraqmiy]. He explained that this club is equipped with ten mini laptops for students and one for the teacher trainer. Students receive trainings in different useful programs and softwares such as Microsoft Word and Power point, Cloud Storage, Picture Manager, and Google. These workshops, according to the teacher, help students in their classroom performance as well as in their creative skills in order to produce their own media contents. Another teacher of Islamic Education added that their school is now working on a new project which is the establishment of the “digital library” [Almaktaba Arraqmiyya] made by and for students. In addition to the digital club and the digital library, another middle school French language teacher referred to the establishment of the “school channel” [Alida’ah Lmadrasiyya]. This initiative according the teacher-respondent allows students to discover their media productive skills and exploit them to create new forms of educational, social, and cultural participation.

On the other hand, as illustrated in figure 2, 154 respondents (81.92%) argued that the media literacy is not seriously considered to be part of the secondary school education system. The majority of these teachers asserted that media literacy education in Morocco may be correct in theory but it is of no use in practice. Teachers affirmed that the sector of education lacks all necessary facilities to develop media literacy. They further explained that the teaching and learning process in the country is based on traditional paradigms contrary to media literacy education, which supports contemporary theories of teaching and learning.

4.1.3 Manifestation of Media Literacy in Secondary Level Curriculum

In the same line of thoughts, teachers were asked, according to every one’s subject area, to determine whether or not media literacy is integrated in the secondary level curriculum. Results in figure 3 highlight that almost two thirds of the respondents (62.98% =114) affirmed that media literacy is not part of the fundamen-
tal curriculum, neither as a cross-curricular nor as an independent subject. Only 76 teachers (37.01%) said that, to some extent, the textbook includes some units designed to introduce students to some basic components of the media culture.

Moroccan secondary level teachers, hence, confirmed that media literacy is not implemented in the curriculum; they explained that the latter is rigid, standardized, and overloaded. According to these teachers, both middle and high school curricula are based on a set of contents and pedagogies that do not always serve the needs of the students and do not help them realize their personal potentials, especially in the 21st century.

4.1.4 Barriers to the Integration of Media Literacy Education

After investigating teachers’ attitudes towards curriculum, respondents’ identified other challenges which impede the integration of media literacy in the education system in Morocco, secondary school specially. Figure 4 reveals that 71.05% (N=135) of respondents confirmed that the lack of facilities and educational materials is what mostly faces the inclusion of media literacy in the Moroccan schools, whereas the poor professional training for teachers is the second obstacle with a percentage of 65% (N=124) of the sample. A third group, representing 53% (N=100), believed that the media literacy education gap is due to lack of time, and 32% (N=61) claimed that teaching overcrowded classrooms is what prevents the incorporation of media literacy into the curriculum. 10% (N=19) of the sample selected the “others” option.
4.2 Teachers’ Incorporation of Media Literacy Education in Classroom

The second set of questions in the teachers’ survey was designed to examine the extent to which teachers of the secondary level approach media literacy education in their teaching settings and to encourage their students and raise their media awareness and understanding of different media contents.

4.2.1 Teachers’ Willingness to Integrate Media Literacy Education

First, respondents determined their level of willingness to incorporate media literacy education in their classrooms. Teachers had to choose among two statements to define their attitudes. Figure 5 illustrates that 78% (N=149) expressed their favorable disposition to integrate media literacy education in their teaching in order to raise their students’ media awareness despite its absence from the national curriculum. However, 22% (N=41) asserted that they are unready to teach
media literacy. Therefore, the vast majority of respondents chose the first statement confirming their willingness and high motivation to integrate media literacy in their school context.

4.2.2. Media Literacy Education Practices by Secondary Level Teachers

As we move to the following management stage, teachers were exposed to two types of questions. The first question explored secondary level teachers’ use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the teaching process. Figure 6 depicts that a total of 46.3% (N=88) of respondents use ICTs in teaching: 42% (N=79) use computer, 37% (N=71) use data show, 15.78% (N=30) use interactive whiteboard, and 7% (N=12) use recording and/or capturing materials. Whereas the majority of teacher-respondents (54% = 102) claimed that they do not use any of the above mentioned materials in their classrooms. These findings are by no means surprising since the majority of respondents identified the absence of educational tools and facilities and lack of professional training as the main issues facing the development of media literacy in the sector of education in Morocco.

![Figure 6](image)

**Figure 6.** Respondents' use of ICTs in classroom

The following question in the survey aimed at examining teachers’ management stage of concern vis-à-vis media literacy education deals with the activities that teachers opt for to teach media literacy as a cross-curricular subject. Figure 7 shows that 159 teacher-respondents (83%) claimed that they adopt media literacy in their classroom, and only 31(17%) stated that they do not.

Additionally, in order to have an insight on the way these secondary level teachers approach media literacy practices, another question asked them about the type of activities used in their classrooms. As illustrated in table 2, 54% of the respondents animate discussions about televisi-
sion programs with their students, 32% include creation of media texts such as school magazine, posters, and short video documentaries, 37% work on print articles (from newspapers and magazines), 31% analyze magazine pictures, covers and/or advertising posters, and finally 21% screen and discuss movies and/or documentaries.

### Table 2. Distribution of frequency and percentage for media literacy activities implemented in classroom by respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ML activities</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• TV program discussion</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Film/documentary screening and discussion</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Analysis of magazine picture, cover or ad poster</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reading and analysis of a print article</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Creation of media contents (e.g., poster, article, video…)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.2.3. Media Literacy and Students’ Motivation

Accordingly, respondents evaluated their students’ attitudes and reflections on such media literacy activities using a 4-point Likert Scale (ranged from 1 poorly motivating to 4 highly motivating). Figure 8 reveals that 24 teachers (15%) acknowledged that implementing media activities in the classroom is highly motivating their students, while 77 (49%) believed that it is motivating, and 36 (23%) confirmed that it is fairly motivating. Few teachers (13%, N=22) found that media literacy activities are poorly motivating.

![Figure 8. Students’ level of motivation towards media literacy activities according to respondents](image)

Teachers explained that the fact of including media literacy in the course enhances students’ learning attitudes. For instance, a middle school teacher of French affirmed that the fact of introducing media texts in his teaching enhances students’ communication skills through group discussion, debate, and nego-
tiation. Respondents further stated that today’s students show less interest to the classroom and the syllabus as a whole because they are more fascinated by the other animated world, this world of image, sound, motion, and creativity. The integration of media literacy education in the classroom is able to change the status quo of students’ poor achievement as it will give them chances to discover some of their unknown skills.

5. Findings and discussions

The survey data raise several issues of relevance to media literacy education in Morocco. It tries to provide a comprehensive perspective to our understanding of the integration of media literacy education. Moreover, the findings cannot be significant for approaching media literacy education in the Moroccan context only, but can also contribute to the literature related to MLE in the international context. More specifically, using a survey research, this exploratory research is an attempt to explore the way secondary school teachers perceive the media literacy approach, its usability and challenges in the Moroccan educational environment, to what degree they think media literacy is promoted as part of the curriculum, their experiences with teaching media literacy related issues in their classrooms, and finally how concerned they are to participate in developing MLE in the Moroccan secondary school. These aspects can notably increase the importance of the conditions for considering the incorporation of MLE in the country by policy makers, education proponents and professionals, and curriculum designers.

The overall findings indicate Moroccan teachers’ high level of awareness of the prominence of teaching media literacy. Because of the emergence of high culture and students’ proliferating exposure to media-saturated environment, respondents who were involved in this study believed in the value and effectiveness of media literacy education. They reported their concerns and motivations towards integrating media literacy in their classroom performances. As Masterman (1985) states in the introduction of his book Teaching the Media, the high rate of media consumption, the rapid expansion of media industries in contemporary societies, the increasing importance of visual communication, and the fast-growing need of educating students to meet the future requirements are what evoked the development of media education programs. According to the statistical results, the majority of secondary school teachers have positive attitudes to adopt media literacy related practices, aiming at raising their learners’ sensibility towards media content. Teacher-respondents argued that teaching media literacy in schools ensures learners’ ability to understand the transmitted messages they daily receive within their appropriate context. At the same time, it helps learners develop a critical reflection to express their opinions and support their beliefs. Media literacy education, according to the representative sample of teachers, is as an educational strategy set
to establish new pedagogies and mechanisms, aiming at enabling young learners to intelligently deal with media messages and to effectively use media as a means of personal achievement, social participation, and responsible citizenship.

Thus, this considerable degree of attention to and conviction about media literacy education can definitely support the implementation of the field in the Moroccan educational system. Nevertheless, findings reveal that despite being recognized as a priority in the teaching-learning environments, media literacy is still not formally promoted as an official component in the Moroccan school system. According to teachers, media literacy education is something that is applied in theory but not yet in practice. In spite of the considerable efforts made in inaugurating numerous reforms at the level of curricula and pedagogical approaches, the education system encounters a number of constraints that impede the fulfillment of its role satisfactorily. Education should stress the importance of helping the students develop their inherent faculties so that they can independently observe and interact with the world around them. Respondents explained that teaching in Morocco abides by the old traditional paradigms and does not allow learners to develop their critical thinking abilities.

On the other hand, the results presented in the previous chapter report on some aspects which the education system in Morocco has been working on in order to promote the media literacy approach in school settings. On the authority of respondents, the ministry of National Education has developed a systematic plan which encompasses resources, pedagogies, and training to integrate information and communication technologies (ICTs) into the teaching-learning process. Secondary level teachers mentioned a number of projects in this regard, such as the Génie program, which was launched in 2006 to improve the quality of education in Morocco in order to successfully meet the demands of modernization and the challenges of globalization. In addition to Génie Program, teachers referred to other initiatives taken to empower students in making the best use of media and in cultivating their digital literacy for learning purposes. Literacy in the 21st century is defined as “multiliteracy”, characterized by the inclusion of linguistic, social, cultural, and technological practices. Therefore, some respondents maintained that the Moroccan education, to some extent, attempts to achieve this technological competence by encouraging students to use information and communication technologies (ICTs) in instructional settings. The initiatives that teacher-respondents mentioned in the survey encourage students to look for information, share knowledge, and compose messages using language, graphic design, images, and sound.

Ultimately, the integration of media and technology in the school context generally aims at achieving two main goals. First, it is for the pedagogical improvement. The application of ICTs in teaching ameliorates students’ academic performances through innovative approaches. It attempts to create authentic contexts
for learning, rather than depending absolutely on the traditional methods. The second purpose concerns amending learners’ technological or digital literacy and preparing them for a skilled work force in the global market that relies deeply on new technologies.

However, as far as the current secondary level curriculum is concerned, the survey findings show that media literacy does not appear in the national syllabi neither as an independent subject nor as a cross-curricular one. Teachers stated that what the curriculum covers in relation to media literacy is poor as it is limited to teaching about media related vocabulary and media advantages and drawbacks. In other terms, teaching about the media in the Moroccan curriculum has been in most of the times characterized by defensiveness. Accordingly, Masterman (1985) explains that schools continue to produce skeptical students who have complete distrust in media. In order to temper students’ use of media and inoculate them against the harmful messages they may uncontrollably receive, education curricula stress on bringing to the forefront the negative aspects of media and popular culture and on sensitizing them to the best way to avoid its threat. However, media literacy curricula need to be flexible, comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and practical. For the National Curriculum Reform in China, Xu (2016) recommends that media literacy education curriculum should be developed to serve students’ lifelong learning. He further adds that this objective can only be achieved if there is a connection between the curriculum content and students’ interest and experience beyond the existing textbook. Students need to recognize the significance of the media messages and critically explore their implicit aspects before the explicit ones. In the same line of thought, according to the White Book [Al-kitabou-labyad] for the Moroccan National Education, the educational curricula are considered, at the same time, a mirror of the Moroccan society and an attempt to find out the present and future needs of this society including the social, economic, political, and cultural needs. Additionally, the educational curricula seek to help the learner--the Moroccan citizen-- to be well-placed regionally, nationally, and internationally and to be highly qualified to face the challenges and meet the expectations (Ministry of National Education, 2002).

In addition to curriculum design, this study demonstrates that the implementation of media literacy in Morocco faces other barriers including expense, access to materials and resources, professional development for teachers, constraints of curriculum, and time overload. According to the survey data, the lack of facilities and educational resources is the first issue that impedes the inclusion of media literacy in the Moroccan secondary school. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the Moroccan educational system has launched several projects aiming to improve the quality of education and to respond more effectively to the demands of modernization and globalization through integrating ICTs in education. Moreover, ac-
According to the *White Book*, educational curricula need to be updated and evaluated taking into consideration universal standards especially while referring to the role of technology and its endorsement within the school systems. Working on curricula alone is not enough for a strategic education reform. It is of great importance to equip schools with the necessary didactic and technological materials and facilities, as well as to provide professional trainings for educators (Ministry of National Education, 2002).

Additionally, media literacy scholars examine the poor investment in teacher education and training as another problem that hinders the development of media literacy programs in education environments (Goetze, Brown & Schwarz, 2005; Hart, 1992; Hobbs & Frost, 1998). Although teachers who participated in this study expressed their positive attitudes towards the prominent role of media literacy education, more than half of the sample (65%) asserted that the education system does not provide them with the necessary training and pedagogical support to successfully include the instruction in their teaching. Similarly, Yates’ (1997) study reports that out of 350 elementary and secondary school teachers, 48% consider the importance of teaching media literacy and support its main goals and values. Nonetheless, they affirm that they lack the necessary skills that allow them to effectively incorporate this approach. Flores-Koulish *et al.* (2011) state that recognizing the role of pre-service and in-service education helps teachers understand their needs and develop their skills associated with teaching their students how to effectively get engaged in the media culture. That is, training and professional programs for teachers are useful for strengthening specific aspects of students’ media literacy skills. A matter of fact, adopting media literacy education in classroom practices requires professional development experiences in order to increase teachers’ interest, confidence, willingness, and motivation.

Overall, the survey findings imply that the task of inquiring media literacy education in the Moroccan secondary school classroom is shaped by a number of external factors, such as the insufficient provision of resources, services, and professional support, as well as the lack of an adequate curriculum design and planning. Nevertheless, media literacy professionals confirm that the realization of a successful media literacy education is not only a matter of technique and training but it is also related to the engagement and motivation of the teacher (Hobbs & Cooper-Moore, 2013). As a result, the second section of the survey examined how secondary school teachers approach media literacy education, focusing on their level of willingness, media literacy classroom practices, and their ML expected outcomes.

Across the survey, respondents supported the important role of integrating media literacy as a component within the school system. Even though media literacy is not formally included within the national curriculum, the majority of re-
spondents revealed their willingness and interest to adapt this approach into their teaching in order to support their learners’ media awareness. Thus, they stated that despite the fact that media literacy is not taught as a formal subject, it is addressed fairly widely in the classroom. More than half of the teachers claimed their incorporation of media literacy in different ways and through various activities while teaching their core subject areas. These activities include discussion of TV programs, analysis of magazine’s pictures and posters, analysis of print articles, screening of movies and documentaries, and creation of media texts. In a similar study, Yates (1997) states that more than half of secondary school teachers adopt media literacy into their teaching through spontaneous discussion of general TV viewing, analysis of advertisements, and use of print media. According to the author, teachers have always an opportunity to integrate media literacy education in their classroom through discussions. He further explains that this type of classroom activity helps the students work on their media reception skills, and develop their critical thinking abilities. That is, implementing media literacy constructs in the teaching and learning contexts encourages the constructivist and inquiry-based approaches. Media literacy activities create opportunities for learners to actively participate in knowledge building instead of being passive recipients.

Accordingly, the survey findings indicated that when media literacy takes place in the classroom context, learners demonstrate positive reflections and attitudes. The majority of teachers mentioned that including media in the instructional settings motivates their students and gets them actively involved in learning. As teachers commented, media literacy is an inspiring and a motivating learning approach as it targets the learner ordinary day-to-day experiences. Today, students are increasingly engaged with the different forms of media. Thus, the teaching and learning process should be based on better understanding learners’ needs and attitudes in order to select and implement the strategies that reach them more effectively. In the same line of thought, Hobbs and Cooper-Moore (2013) suggest that the best media educators are those who adopt the uses and gratification theory in order to make media and technology opportunities meet their learners’ needs. Media literacy education is constructed upon the idea of connecting between students’ daily and informal out-of-school media experiences and their school learning situations (Buckingham, 2003b).

6. Conclusion

The current study is an attempt to contribute to research in the field of media literacy education in Morocco. First, the findings of the quantitative survey provide an inclusive examination of the integration of media literacy education in the secondary school context from different variables. Secondly, this research tries to provide grounded framework for stakeholders and policy makers to develop
plans and strategies aiming at developing the implementation of media literacy in the Moroccan school curriculum. Teacher-participants are identified as supporting predictors for the development of media literacy education. They showed a heightened awareness and conviction about teaching media literacy skills to students, which can support the adoption of evidence-based practices. Additionally, this study aims to present a profile of teachers’ attitudes, concerns, and practices regarding teaching media literacy in instructional settings. In spite of the obstacles and lack of support, this research identifies priorities for the future, concerning the relationship between media, literacy, and education. The findings imply the motivation of secondary school teachers for the opportunities that media literacy offers to reform the classroom culture into a space where students can learn, share, express themselves, and develop their knowledge.

Ultimately, this research calls for a serious clinical therapy at the level of the Moroccan educational system in order to adjust itself to the millennial challenges. Including media literacy in educational settings requires a deep paradigm shift. It needs a substantial reform in the traditional top-down approach of setting plans and curricula, bringing all collaborators’ efforts together through innovative institutional channels.

**References**


