

Designing Community-Informed Learning Experiences with and for Immigrant Teens to Critically Examine Political Information

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ABSTRACT

As newcomers to the United States, immigrant teens make sense of abundant civic and political information as they adjust to the country's political climate. Supported by community information mediators in public libraries and nonprofits, teens broker this information for their families, which makes them an asset to communities. This dissertation reports on a co-design process to create a learning experience with and for immigrant teens to acquire Political Information Literacy (PIL)—skills, knowledge, and confidence—to engage in politics, avoiding misinformation. Utilizing an asset-based community development approach and the experiential learning theory through participatory design methodology, the study aimed at centering teens' contexts through design, identifying teens' motivations to engage in informed politics, and defining information mediators' roles and responsibilities. The design underwent three iterations with a local community, inviting teens and their information mediators in public libraries and youth organizations as design protagonists and partners. The final iteration is a complete learning experience that includes customizable sessions, supportive materials, and recommendations for future facilitators. Findings emphasize how facilitators and scholars should use experiential learning principles in civic learning, suggest language support systems for teens, and explain how communities can provide teens with opportunities to engage in digital political participation. Moreover, findings demonstrate how teens are motivated by improving how knowledgeable they are perceived and by promoting positive community narratives. Finally, the findings highlight the multifaceted role information mediators navigate and offer an asset-sharing system that communities can use to alleviate the demands of this role, navigate constraints, and identify local opportunities.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

Information literacy; Information use; Public libraries; Community and civic organizations; Community-led services.

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

Political information literacy; Immigrant teens; Civic engagement; Participatory design; Misinformation.

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