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Information literacy: Need and importance

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Abstract

The advancement in the ICT has transformed the way of information generation and consumption, the sources of information scattered around various sources and different formats and to get the needed information at the right time with the help of Information and communication technology is essential today. The concept of Information literacy has predominant since from the last decade, IL is set of skills, attitudes and knowledge to know when information is needed to solve the problem or make decisions. It comprises what information is needed, where it's available or different sources of information, and locating information, evaluation, accessing the needed information. In this paper we discussed about the basic concept of information literacy, skills required for the information literate, need and importance of IL.

Keywords: Information literacy, skill, dimensions, need and importance of information literacy

1. Introduction

In the age of Information explosion the use of information timely is playing a vital role in the present day. The information literacy skills are needed for the information seekers to find the needed information, how to locate and utilize the information resources when it's needed. In the present knowledge society, one needs to acquire high levels of information literacy skill and the need to develop the absorbing, analyzing and integrating abilities and to make them understand how to use the information to bring real value to everything they undertake. The term was first discussed in the U.S. in 1974. Fundamentally, information literacy is the ability to recognize when information is needed, then locate, evaluate and use it effectively and responsibly as well.

"Information literacy is a set of abilities requiring individuals to "recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information"(Association of College and Research Libraries, 2000)

Library Association (ALA) definition:

Information Literacy "ability to recognize when information is needed and to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information"

The following skills implied by the above definition are:

- The available resources
- How to find information
- evaluate results
- How to exploit results
- Ethical and responsible use
- How to communicate or share your findings

Because information now comes in many different formats/ quality varies considerably, there is need for students to develop the intellectual, transferable skills to be able to work efficiently. Finding and evaluating information has never been more important nor has the need to develop skills in the ethical use of information, in order to avoid plagiarism.

2. The Need of Information Literacy

- To develop the information literacy skills in learners.
- Help to become independent learners.
- To impart skill of Information Technology to common people.
- World Wide Web has taken the new shape. Hence, there is need to promote information literacy.

- To support the people who has lack of ability.
- To help information professionals to develop, assess and improve their information literacy Programmes. (Source www.woodheadpublishing.com/en/book.aspx?bookID.. .1)

3. Importance of Information Literacy

In the present days understanding the Information literacy is very important it encourage problem solving approaches, thinking skill, asking question and seeking answers. It helps to find needed information, to locating, evaluating sources and fostering the decision making. It is at the core of the Curriculum for Excellence and Literacy across training and outcomes a responsibility of all practitioners

- Information literacy is important for the effective and civilized society, and has implications that can impact the lives of many people around the world.
- For effective utilization of information technologies to find and manage information.
- In the age of Information explosion, information resources available to us 24/7 in verity of information sources, however so much information is so easily and quickly available does not mean that all information is worthwhile or even true.
- Because of resources like the Internet, it's is difficult find quality information, finding the good stuff is not always quick and the good stuff does not always come cheaply.
- Information literacy will improve employability, today's employers are looking for people who understand and can adapt the characteristics of the Information Age. Whereas information literate has "learned how to learn," they are a much more attractive job candidate. Information literate individual--with their strong analytical, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Can be expected to be an adaptable, capable and valuable employee, with much to contribute.

4. Dimensions of information literacy



- **Media Literacy:** Is the ability of access, analyze, evaluate and create media. Or sum of the skills needed to know when and what information is needed, where and how to find that information, how to evaluate it critically and organize it once it is found and how to use it in an ethical way. The concept extends beyond professional and educational boundaries
- **Network Literacy:** It's an emerging digital literacy which deals with computer and network skills. It helps citizens to participate in the networked society. Web

Literacy relates a subset of information literacy requires the ability to access, search, utilize, communicate and create information on the World Wide Web (WWW).

- **Digital Literacy:** It is very relevant in the current context, DL deals with the knowledge, skills and behavior of the users in wide range of digital devices such as smart phones, laptops etc.
- **Scientific Literacy:** It deals with the knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and processes needed for personal decision making, participation in civic and cultural affairs, and economic productivity. It also includes specific types of abilities. In the National Science Education Standards, the content standards define scientific literacy
- **Visual Literacy:** It is the ability to understand the information in the form of images, presentations and interpret the same this includes thinking, learning, and expressing oneself in terms of image. Photographs, cartoons, line drawings, diagrams, concept maps, and other visual representations are all important in visual literacy ; and Critical literacy i.e., the ability to evaluate critically the human, intellectual and social strengths, limits, benefits and costs of IT

5. Conclusion

Information Literacy (IL) is essential in order to access the needed information at the right time and use them to make intelligent decisions. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has facilitated information explosion and knowledge boom in all disciplines. The role played by the Library and Information science professional is even greater. Librarians are now dynamic managers of information. UNESCO's Millennium Development Goal also focuses on Information Literacy. Librarians are accountable to their institutions to inform broader discussions of curricula whenever we have compelling input to offer, and this is such a time. Let's employ both digital literacy and information literacy, with this efforts we can provide rich educational experiences for students in higher education.

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