

INFORMATION LITERACY IN LIBRARIES

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Introduction

In Educational Institutions, information is an essential resource for supporting and enhancing teaching, learning, and research activities. In this context, Information Literacy is essential in educating readers about different information sources and, more specifically, where and how to search for specific information. It also educates users how to compare and evaluate the information they've retrieved, and also how to share that with others. Libraries should develop Information Literacy Competency Development Programs that help users become much more information literate in order to provide the appropriate information to the right reader. Though it includes similar ideas such as "user

education," "library education," "bibliographic instructions," and "library research," "Information Literacy" has broader perspectives and applications.

Definitions

'Information Literacy' is "the ability to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information".¹

[<http://en.wikipedia.org>]

'Information Literate' is ultimately information literate person who knows how knowledge is organized, how to find information, how to use information & communicate it to others. Such information literate person is

prepared for lifelong learning. (ALA, Presidential Committee on Information Literacy) ²

Need for Information Literacy

Information is being published at an ever-increasing rate as a result of the information explosion. The emergence of new information media, such from print to electronic resources and ICT applications in libraries, has a significant impact on information storage and retrieval. Information is generated through a variety of documents and disseminated through a diversity of formal and informal communication channels. This decentralization of information makes it easier for users to obtain information overcoming challenges such as geographical or information deficit. Users may access any information from any place, which motivates them to use it whenever and wherever they desire. In today's ever-changing world of information, users must have certain skills in order to achieve adequate information. The lack of information literacy amongst library users, as well as their insufficient knowledge of ICT applications in libraries, pushes libraries to conduct information literacy programmes.

Basics of Information Literacy

The following are some of the fundamental activities for the library users

- Recognize the importance of information
- Recognize the importance of information
- Recognize one's own information needs
- Recognize Realise the significance of information

Use of Library WEBOPAC

- E-resources, Internet, Library Networks, Websites, and e-mail utilization.

Users and librarians both must realize that need much Physical Access to information instead of Intellectual Access. Intellectual access to knowledge is determined solely by one's abilities and capabilities, that vary from person to person.

Information Literacy Programmes

User Orientation and User Education

Information Literacy Program activities such as "User Orientation" and "User Education" are being used to educate, instruct, and help users in obtaining information. The orientation is for new/inexperienced users, whereas Users Education is for all users. These exercises improve users' ability to seek for, evaluate, and use information independently.

Advantages of Information Literacy Programme

- The users can determine the Nature and Extent of their information needs.
- They can critically evaluate their sources of information and independently get a prompt and accurate access to desired information.
- The users can develop their information search skills and satisfied users intend to revisit the library and advise others to visit.
- It strengthens teaching, learning and research activities.

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