

Information Literacy in Academic Library

Dilip B. Doifode*

*** Librarian**

Moreshwar Arts, Science and
Commerce College
Bhokardan Dist: Jalna,
Maharashtra, India.

QR Code



Abstract: - *The present paper deals with how information literacy in academic libraries plays the important role of educating the users in an academic environment for effective use of information. To become effective information users students must have the skills to handle all kinds of information, and be capable of locating, interpreting, analyzing, synthesizing, evaluation and communicating information. This should become a part of every subject across the curriculum. In this paper also discusses the importance of information literacy, information literacy competency standards in higher education.*

Keywords: Information Literacy, SCOUNL, Consortia, Database, Internet, Information Sources.

Introduction

The greatest challenge for society in the twenty first century is keeping place with the knowledge and technical expertise necessary for finding, applying and evaluating information. Information as a term has been derived from the Latin words *formatio* and *forma* which means giving shape to something new to our awareness of our ideas. The society has information on all knowledge divisions recorded in books, Video, audio files, computers etc.

Information literacy is the vital process in the modern changing world which is mostly used for higher education particularly at the college and university level education. Information literacy

enables people to interpret and make informed judgment as users of information sources as well as to become a producer of information in their own right. Information literacy means information awaking in person about needed information. Information literacy forms the basis for long learning. Information literacy is a natural extension of the concept of literacy in our information society. Information literacy education is the catalyst required to transform the information society of today into the learning society of tomorrow. Information literacy is generally seen as pivotal to the pursuit of lifelong learning and control to achieving both personal empowerment and economic development.

Information Literacy:-

Information literacy is a survival skill in the information age. Most people think of information literacy as a set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the need information. Information literacy responsibilities are increasing in all areas of life. According to a presentation done at the first international conference on information and technology and information literacy in Glasgow in 2002, the SCONUL approach to information literacy can be described as “Information literacy is knowledge rather than simply skill achieved by education rather than training, created through partnership between professional and is a lifelong endeavor that is contextual in the field and service access”.

“Information literacy is an intellectual framework for recognizing the need for understanding finding evaluating and using information. These are activities which may be supported in the part by fluency with information technology. In part by sound and investigative method but most importantly through critical discernment and reasoning information literacy initiates, sustains and extends lifelong learning through abilities that may use technologies but are ultimately independent of them” (Bundy A., ed., 2004)

ALA’s presidential committee on information literacy (1989): To be information literate an individual must recognize when information is

needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the information needed. Ultimately information literate people are those who have learned how to learn.

Need of Information literacy

- To become independent learners.
- To develop information literacy skill in learners.
- To develop access and improve their information literacy programmer
- To provide knowledge and motivate people to acquire information technology ability
- To make a common people part of information technology reevaluation.

Objectives of Information Literacy

- To recognize an information gap.
- To construct alternative strategies to reduce the information gap.
- Recognition of importance of and responsibility for information.
- To Store the information for future use
- To select the strategy.

Importance of Information literacy In Higher Education:-

Now we are living in the information age where information sources are proliferating and individuals are faced with diverse and abundant information resources in their studies, workplace

and lives. Information is available through libraries and information sources like internet, consortia, data bases. Too much information can create a barrier in our lives called the data smog. Information literacy is the solution to data smog. It allows us to cope by giving us the skill to know when we need information and where to locate it effectively and efficiently. It includes the technological skill needed to use the modern library as a gate way to information. It enables us to analyze and evaluate the information we find this giving us confidence in using that information to make a decision or create a product.

Student should learn to respect the authors right. The cutting and pasting culture that is widespread among the students can be addressed with the help of information literacy programmer. Information Literacy is required to have a critical thinking approach, an approach that would lead to economic and cultural and progress of the nation. So information literacy is important for a strong democracy.

Students need their own internal navigation system to manage the information rich environment that now surrounds them. Without the ability to sift, process and evaluate information a student will be unable to function. Information literacy requirements are being intergraded into State and National curricula. Academic librarians are the natural in-house experts for teaching both students and colleagues how to find, evaluate and use information effectively.

Benefits of information literacy

- Motivation for self directed learning.
- Expansion of knowledge through knowledge creation.
- Synthesis of data and information into knowledge.
- Enhancement of the critical thinking.
- Appreciation for lifelong learning.
- Incorporation of validated information in the personal or corporate knowledge base.
- Appropriate and critical application of information and knowledge in problem solving.

Information literacy competency standards in higher education

Information literacy competency standards provide a framework for assessing the information literate individual. It extends the work of American Association of School Libraries. To implement the standard fully the institution should first review its mission and educational goals to determine how information literacy would improve learning and enhance the institution Effectiveness.

Following are the information literacy competency standards in higher education.

*The information literate students know the nature and extent of the information needed.

*The information literate student accesses needed information effectively and efficiently.

*The information literate student evaluates information and its sources critically and

incorporate selected information in to his knowledge base and value system.

*The information literate student individually or as a member of a group uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.

* The information literate student understands may of the economic, legal and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally.

Conclusion:

The aim of information literacy is raising awareness about the importance of information literacy at all levels of the education process and establishing guideline for integrating information literacy issues in higher education. Information literacy is a survival skill in the information age. Instead of drowning in the abundance of information that floods their lives students can use information effectively to solve a particular problem or make a decision whether the information they select comes from a computer, a book, library website or any other possible resources. A librarian has to take cooperation from faculty to plan effective information literacy programmes. Librarian, administrator, head of faculty can together achieve the mission of the academic institution and promote skilled efficient responsible student tomorrow.

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