

INFORMATION LITERACY FOR LIBRARIAN IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

The present paper overviewed the definition and concept of Information literacy with parameters of identifying information literate persons. The various programmes like orientation programme, in-house publications, display of new arrivals carried out under the information literacy activities by libraries in higher education have greater impact on their readers and creating awareness among students as well as teaching community. The authors focused on the skills or competencies that are required to conduct information literacy programme for librarians. How the librarians can play an important role in providing quality services as well as teaching learning programme with the help of information literacy activities in library is outlined here.

Introduction: Information literacy forms the basis for lifelong learning. It is common to all disciplines, to all learning environments and to all levels of education. The concept of information Literacy built upon and expanded the decades –long efforts of librarians to help their users learn about and how to utilize research tools and materials in their own libraries. Librarians to wanted users to be able to transfer and apply this knowledge to new environments and to research tools that were new to them. Information literacy expands this effort beyond libraries and librarians and focuses on the learner, rather than the researcher. The current environment provides an opportunity for librarians to play a key role in the evolution of an integrated information literacy curriculum.

Information Technology and Information Literacy: The growth of computer networks and information services has already enabled learners at all levels to share resources, collaborate with one another and publish their results electronically. To use information sources effectively,

we need both technology infrastructure and Information Literacy infrastructure in place. Information Technology is a tool for writing papers, communicating with colleagues worldwide and exchanging experiments, ideas and programs internationally. As community colleges are considering distance learning and new technologies to their curriculum, ensuring students information literacy becomes vital.

Importance of Information Literacy: Information Literacy empowers people in all walks of life to seek, evaluate, use and create Information effectively to achieve personal, social, occupational and educational goals. It is a basic human right in a digital world and promotes social inclusion in all nations. The following IL elements are consistent with the definitions of IL developed for use in higher education and, as argued by Campbell (2004), are applicable across all domains of human development.

- Recognize Information needs
- Locate and evaluate the quality of information.
- Store and Retrieve information.
- Make effective and ethical use of information, and
- Apply Information to create and communicate knowledge.

Information literacy is a competence, a set of skills possessed by an individual to interact with information through the use of information resources in making rational decisions. Association of College and Research Libraries (2002) reveal that 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 searching, and evaluation. It is a vital ability for the modern information-intensive world, enabling personal, economic, social and cultural development.

Curriculum and Information Literacy: To become effective information users, students must have frequent opportunities to handle all kinds of information. Locating, interpreting, analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating and communicating information should become a part of every subject across the curriculum. Resource based learning calls for all members of the educational community to become partners in a shared goal, providing successful learning experiences for all students. Learning environments should be structured to allow students unlimited access to multiple resources in the classroom, the library media centre and beyond the school walls.

Electronic Information Literacy: The more electronic resources libraries acquire and make available to users, the greater the demand for instruction in how to access and use those

resources effectively and efficiently. Bruce, a well-known Australian information literacy researcher, notes:

“The idea of information literacy, emerging with the advent of information technologies in the early 1970s, has grown, taken shape and strengthened to become recognized as the critical literacy for the twenty-first century. Sometimes interpreted as one of a number of literacies, information literacy is also described as the overarching literacy essential for twenty-first century living. Today, information literacy is inextricably associated with information practices and critical thinking in the information and communication technology environment”

Information Literacy and Life Long Learning: Both these concepts are interrelated as below;

- Largely Self Motivated and Self-Directed.
- These are Self Empowering.
- These are Self Actuating.

Role of Information Literacy in Academic Library: The need for information academic library system due to following reason:

- There is an ample evidence that newly admitted students often find library is a confusing place as they do not have idea how to make effective use of libraries for their curricular needs as well as for general knowledge.
- In some cases it observed that even teacher themselves did not make systematic use of library and its service fails to guide properly how to make effective use of library source.
- The entire users are not acquainted with the use of different techniques methods for storage of resources and retrieval of information of the library and application of IT in library operations
- Further many users are not aware of the different types of resources and services available in the academic libraries.

Role of Librarians in Information Literacy: Information and communication Technologies have changed the complete scenario in libraries. Now a day, library has become point of resource-based learning the role of librarian is changing radically with skills of education paradigms. The impact of moving from text based learning to resource based learning will involve heavier use of library materials and a demand for more and a varied media resources, including print and non-print. The librarian is responsible for locating, acquiring, disseminating and tracking information resources of many types. It might include database searching, interlibrary loans, monitoring internet new groups or maintenance of a computerized library

information system. Libraries and Librarians play an important role in education of people for effective and efficient information use by teaching them information skills at all levels of education to enable to be informed citizens of the country.

Conclusion: The academic library becomes a teaching library, which is actively involved all aspects of higher education teaching, research and community service. A teaching library is characterized by its commitments to instructing students, faculty and staff to fostering a climate, which encourages lifelong learning to maintaining a collection, which stimulated inquiry to making the library the cultural centre for the campus and community and to engaging in research to improve library services.

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