

Information Literacy: A Key to Access, Evaluate & Use of Information.

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Abstract:

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, the ability to access, evaluate, and effectively use information has become paramount. Information literacy, the set of skills required to navigate and make sense of the vast amounts of information available, has emerged as a crucial competency for individuals in the 21st century. Information literacy goes beyond basic reading and writing skills. It encompasses the capacity to locate and access information from diverse sources, evaluate its credibility and relevance, and apply it effectively to meet specific needs. In an era of information overload, individuals who possess information literacy skills have a distinct advantage. They can distinguish between accurate and unreliable information, discern bias and propaganda, and make informed judgments based on evidence. The present article will review the information literacy skills and the types of information literacy.

Keywords: Information Literacy; Information Literacy skills,

Introduction:

Information literacy in today's society information as played a very necessary role into makes the right information decision information literacy. The basis of the innovative concept of collecting knowledge on information, information literacy makes us gain good knowledge collection such as lifelong learning as well as distance learning and it creates such learning environments at all levels of education on information literacy and it displays the competence of educators, research scholars and students.

The term information literacy was first conceived by Paul Zurkowski in 1974, the then-president of the Information Industry Association. Information literacy is the collection of ability to search and understand the sources which will obtain accurate information.

"Information literacy (IL) is a set of ability requiring individual to recognize when information is needed and the ability to locate evaluate and use effectively the needed information literacy" by the American Library Association, 1989 (ALA)

Information literacy skills:

Information literacy or the ability to identify, analyze and use information ethically has become increasingly important with the proliferation of information resources and rapid technological advancements. You can develop this skill through coursework, personal and professional experiences and interactions with technology. By developing and highlighting your information literacy skills, you can make yourself an ideal candidate and a valuable asset to any organization. In this article, we define information literacy skills, explain their importance and discuss how to improve these skills.

- Determine whether there is knowledge of the information gap and the type of information required to fill it.
- Identify and access information resources.
- Plan and monitor the search for relevant information.
- Review and critically evaluate information.
- Present information in the right manner.
- Familiar with the legal, ethical, and social implementations of using information.

1 General skills

a. Problem-solving

Problem-solving skills involve taking corrective action to accomplish better results and improve performance. This involves defining the problem, analyzing and generating feasible solutions, selecting the best solutions and planning the next course of action. With technology, you can improve your problem-solving skills by automating routine tasks, storing data for easy retrieval and improving data methods.

b. Teamwork

The Team is nothing but to make sure to be able to make understand the information and to share the feelings and emotions of others. So this skill is a necessity for all working professionals. Having empathy for others in the workplace also helps to identify problems people face, find potential solutions and resolve conflicts.

c. Communication skill

Communication skills are the set of skills and the ability to communicate effectively with people. It includes verbal and non-verbal communication and communication through media. This life skill helps to gain a deeper understanding of people and situations. Strong communication skills encourage the exchange of ideas, build trust and create the conditions for solving problems. Some of the communication skills include:

d. Critical thinking:

Information literacy involves developing critical thinking skills, which enhances the ability to access information and closely linked ideas. Critical thinking refers to making a reasonable judgment by evaluating observations, data, facts and research findings based on an objective analysis of information. Instead of relying on intuition or instinct, critical thinking involves identifying, analyzing and solving problems systematically.

2 Information skills

a. Information seeking

Information seeking is instrumental in identifying how academics communicate, new ideas and comment on existing research. Observing how academics make informed choices and identify resources and strategies to stay on top of the literature is an important element of academic research.

b. Information use

it indicates the use of the right information, which may be used in the right context and thus lead to a proper message to the information seeker. The usage of a piece of information depending upon the context and situation and must be clear and precise.

c. Information technology fluency:

A key aspect of information literacy is knowledge of information technology skills for advanced search skills and the range of information sources. Most search engines offer advanced search options. By limiting the scope of search queries, they can eliminate irrelevant results and help you find the information you need. You can use specific search strategies to make your online search results more relevant and accurate. This involves things like the proper use of keywords and using quality databases other than your basic search engine.

Types of information literacy:**1. Computer literacy:**

Computer literacy skill is refers to the ability to recognise a computer and its hardware. Acquaintance with the use of Computer hardware and software applications in routine. World Computer Literacy Day is observed on 2 December every year. Computer literacy helps to face the digital world which has surrounded us.

2. Media literacy:

Media Literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, & create media. Media literate youth and adults are better able to understand the complex messages we receive from television, radio, video, internet, newspapers, magazines, books music and all other forms of media

It empowers people to know worldwide information when they need particular information. UNESCO supports and champions media and information literacy initiatives across the globe.

3. Technology Literacy

Today's world depends upon technology so we should know technology usage and its application. Literacy is the ability to responsibly use appropriate technology to communicate, solve problems, and access, manage, integrate, evaluate, and create information to improve learning in all subject areas and to acquire lifelong knowledge and skills in the 21st century.

4. Digital literacy:

Digital literacy is the knowledge, skills and behaviours used in a broad range of digital devices such as smartphones tablets laptops then computing devices, digital literacy is the ability to navigate our digital world using reading writing technical skills and critical thinking. Is more than just the ability to operate devices such as browsing information with appropriate sites, digital literacy is nothing but the information available in digital format so when we start learning about digital information we should know digital literacy so that we can use the proper way of digital sources. That is why digital literacy is very important to learn through digital environment literacy skills.

5. Cultural literacy:

Cultural literacy is the culture-specific skill set. India is the only country in the world which is having diversity in its culture and it has a rich cultural heritage. Hence, there are too many different cultures to be literate in all of them. Most people have fluent cultural literacy in their culture of origin, as they will have been learning their culture's assumed knowledge from childhood. One needs to develop new cultural literacies when someone enters into a new culture or interacts with members of that culture.

Conclusion

Beyond personal and professional realms, information literacy plays a critical role in democratic societies. Informed citizens are the cornerstone of a healthy democracy, and information literacy equips individuals with the skills to engage critically with news, evaluate sources, and detect misinformation or disinformation. It fosters a sense of agency, empowering citizens to actively participate in civic discourse, make informed choices during elections, and hold those in power accountable.

However, the challenges associated with information literacy are significant. The abundance of information, coupled with the spread of misinformation, presents obstacles that require individuals to develop discernment and critical thinking skills. Efforts should be made to promote media literacy, digital literacy, and the development of critical evaluation skills to ensure individuals are equipped to navigate the complexities of the digital age.

In conclusion, information literacy is not merely a desirable skill; it is an essential competency for individuals in the 21st century. The ability to access, evaluate, and use information effectively empowers individuals to make informed decisions, engage critically with information, and actively participate in their communities. By prioritizing information literacy, we can foster a society that thrives on knowledge, reason, and democratic values in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

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