

Guest Editorial Preface

Special Issue on Information Literacy and the Role of Libraries

Nkosingathi Dlamini, University of Swaziland, Kwaluseni, Swaziland

Sipiwe Tevera, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa

Satyabati Devi, University of Swaziland, Kwaluseni, Swaziland

We live in the Information Age, and “Information” is increasing at a rapid pace. We have the Internet, Television, Radio, and other information resources available to us 24/7. As Information is easily and quickly available it does not mean that all of it is worthwhile or even true.

Information literacy is a skill set that is helpful for a lifetime. It helps people do well in school, work, and personal matters because they can recognize the difference between good information and bad information and evaluate situations from several perspectives. Everyone needs to know how to find answers to their questions, no matter what they may be. People who understand information literacy can solve almost any problem with precision and accuracy.

Everyone has a certain level of information literacy education. For instance, elementary-age children know that they can turn to their teacher for any information they need. As people get older, they become more independent and find other sources of information, such as books, but primarily the Internet. There are varying levels of information literacy because it is a learned skill that must be practiced.

By the time a child enters high school, he or she should have a good grasp of information literacy. However, these skills should continue to improve and adapt through college and beyond. Many schools offer literacy classes that teach students how to research information for papers and find credible information that is backed by research.

University libraries all over the world teach library skills in a more contextual and integrated manner by designing library orientation that incorporate information literacy as a learning outcome.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The journal articles will be useful for Librarians and Lecturers who are designing the course for Information literacy.

The first article “Digital content consumption trends in the website of Singapore’s National Information Literacy Programme” discuss how the National Library Board (NLB) undertook the National Information Literacy Programme (NILP) to promote awareness of information literacy among Singaporeans. The nationwide public awareness campaign was branded with the acronym SURE to simplify the concept of Information literacy into four basic building blocks as Source, Understand, Research and Evaluate.

The second article “Supporting Information Literacy Skills of Students for a Successful Transition to Higher Education: Opportunities and Challenges for Libraries in the Digital Era,” is a study on how Librarians are helping students to prepare themselves for higher education as the teaching of Information Literacy in primary and secondary schools is uncommon.

The third article “Opportunities and Challenges of Academic Librarians in Teaching Information Literacy in Institutions of Higher Learning in Zimbabwe is designed to understanding the Academic

Librarians in utilizing the opportunities provided by Information literacy and increase their visibility and deals with the challenges that they are facing in the present information era.

The fourth article “Role of Library Professional Association in Enhancing Information Literacy Programme” highlights that the Library Association should be the main player in improving the Information Literacy programme. Library professional Associations, if they play their part well, can help in enhancing lifelong learning and information literacy programme in the society.

The fifth and the last article “Information Literacy: A Challenge and Need for the Rural Communities in Manipur, India” stress the need and importance of information literacy as an essential component in information society. It discusses the role as well as the impact of Information technology especially in the rural areas.

CONCLUSION

Information literacy has become a global issue. It is not just about learning facts but about learning to learn a skill that lasts for a lifetime. Librarians and faculty will need to work together to provide the education needed in the age of information to make sure that everyone is educated, skilled and information-literate person.

The discussion on various aspects of Information literacy brings a lot of challenges so we need more collaboration with each other's help beyond time and space and across the boundaries of countries, cultures, and even generations. Let's take the challenge.

Nkosinathi Dlamini

Sipiwe Tevera

Satyabati Devi

Guest Editors

IJLIS