

Information Literacy Competencies and Programmes in India

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Abstract

Information literacy is the vital process in modern changing world. Information technology is taking a new shape day by day. Information is greatly generating. For that, people should be enabled to interpret and make informed choice as user of information sources. Information literacy makes the person capable to recognize when information is needed and how to locate, evaluate, and use effectively of the needed information. Here, is discussed the information literacy programmes in India. Now, India has become the Information Technology Powerhouse and to become the people enabled, there is the need of information literacy in India.

Keywords: Information Literacy, Information Literacy competencies, Information Literacy programmes.

Introduction

Information Literacy is the vital process in the modern changing world which is mostly used for higher education particularly, at the university level education. In our information-centric world, students must develop skills early on so they are prepared for post-secondary opportunities, whether in the workplace or in pursuit of higher education.

Information literacy “enables people to interpret and make informed judgments as users of information sources, as well as to become producers of information in their own right. Information literacy means information awakening in person about the needed information. Information literate people are able to access information about their health, their environment, their education and work, empowering them to make critical decisions about their lives, e.g. in taking more responsibility for their own health and education”. Government of India has planned to run many programmes to make people information literate. There are projects like e-government project playing a amazing role in information literacy and the social, economic and cultural relevance and its immense potential to improve the society in which it functions.

Such projects are also needed in rural areas in India. In addition, standard institutions in India are also running information literacy programmes at their institution level to create awareness about changing the role of information technology. UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization Estd. in 1946) is playing a greater role in information literacy not only in India but in the whole world. To further these efforts information literacy should be introduced within national curricula at all levels including lifelong learning programmes..

Definition of Information Literacy

The American Library Association’s (ALA) Presidential Committee on Information Literacy, Final Report states, “To be information literate, a person must be able to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information” (1989).

Objectives of the Study

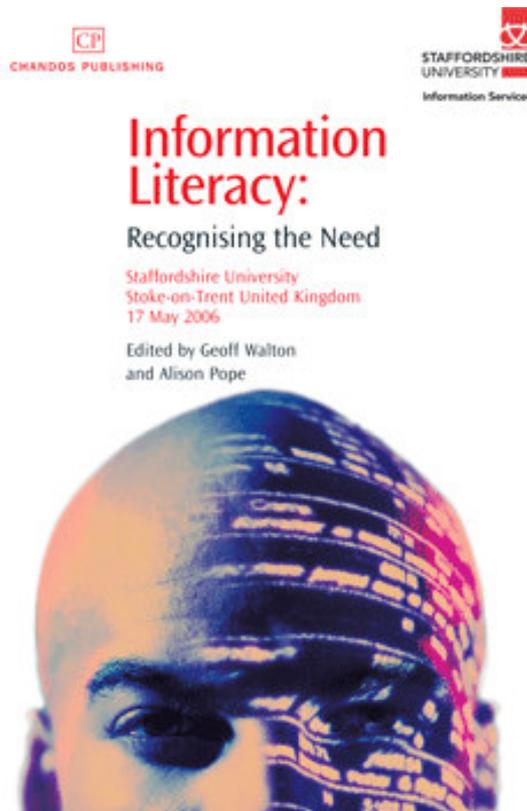
- To know Information Literacy Programmes at the National Level.
- How the Information Literacy Programmes are playing a significant role in India.
- To analysis the Information Literacy Programmes at state level.
- To know e-governance initiatives are playing an outstanding role in Information Literacy

Research Methodology

- Surfing on the Internet with the Keyword “Information Literacy Programmes”
- Find a list of “Information Literacy Programmes”
- After browsing all the individual sites, found Information Literacy Programmes at National and International Level But, It is selected Information

Literacy programmes at National level working for the people to become the IT Literate in colleges, in rural areas by Government, community information centers. In this way, Information

Literacy programmes are selected for the Study and their links, resources for Information Literacy programmes represented in this paper.



(Source: www.woodheadpublishing.com/en/book.aspx?bookID...1)

The Need of Information Literacy in India

1. To develop information literacy skills in learners.
2. To become independent learners.
3. To make the common people part of IT revolution.
4. World Wide Web has taken the new shape. Hence, there is need to promote information literacy.
5. To provide knowledge and motivate people to acquire IT ability.
6. To help librarians to develop, assess and improve their information literacy Programmes.

Use of Information and Communication Technology

The modern world is known as Information Technology. Information technology skills enable an individual to use computers, software applications, databases, and apply related technologies to achieve a wide variety of academic, work-related, and personal goals. Among these are information literacy focus on content, communication, analysis, information searching, and evaluation; whereas information technology "fluency" focuses on a deep understanding of technology and graduated, increasingly skilled use of it. For the effective teaching and learning we use demos,

tutorials, course materials in electronic form as interactive and ordinary CDs, animated and multimedia programmes running on cable TV network, FM, All India Radio, local Newspapers that attract the learners.

Role of Information Literacy in India

In the recent decades India has tried to increase the population of information literate and educated citizens through organizing different programmes like, *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA), District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), National Literacy Mission and so on and established the community information centre and village knowledge centers are the recent additions to this effort that would transform India into an information society, where information and knowledge resources are considered as critical ingredient for development. Here, information literacy can play a vital role in educating the users of libraries on various information and documentary resources, where to start searching of information, what where and how to access them, how to assess and compare retrieved information, how to communicate their information or findings to the general masses and experts, and so on. To provide right information to the users, public librarians should be trained to develop information literacy competency and should able to educate the user that will make user information

Table 1: Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education

Information Literacy Competency Standards	Performance Indicators
<p>Standard One IL person determines the nature and extent of the information needed.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. IL person defines and articulates the need for information. 2. IL person identifies a variety of types and formats of potential sources for information 3. IL person considers the costs and benefits of acquiring the needed information. 4. IL person reevaluates the nature and extent of the information need.
<p>Standard Two IL person accesses needed information effectively and efficiently.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. IL person selects the most appropriate investigative methods or information retrieval systems for accessing the needed information. 2. IL person constructs and implements effectively designed search strategies. 3. IL person retrieves information online or in person using a variety of methods. 4. IL person refines the search strategy if necessary. 5. IL person extracts, records, and manages the information and its sources
<p>Standard Three IL person evaluates information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. IL person summarizes the main ideas to be extracted from the information gathered. 2. IL person articulates and applies initial criteria for evaluating both the information and its sources. 3. IL person synthesizes main ideas to construct new concepts. 4. IL person compares new knowledge with prior knowledge to determine the value added, contradictions, or other unique characteristics of the information. 5. IL person determines whether the new knowledge has an impact on the individual's value system and takes steps to reconcile differences. 6. IL person validates understanding and interpretation of the information through discourse with other individuals, subject-area experts, and/or practitioners. 7. IL person determines whether the initial query should be revised.
<p>Standard Four IL person, individually or as a member of a group, uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.</p> <p>Standard Five IL person understands many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. IL person applies new and prior information to the planning and creation of a particular product or performance. 2. IL person revises the development process for the product or performance. 3. IL person communicates the product or performance effectively to others. 1. IL person understands many of the ethical, legal and socio-economic issues surrounding information and information technology. 2. IL person follows laws, regulations, institutional policies, and etiquette related to the access and use of information resources. 3. IL person acknowledges the use of information sources in communicating the product or performance.

(Source: www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/standards.pdf Last Accessed on 13/5/09)

literate. In the Indian context, it has been noticed that libraries have well-trained information professionals who are increasingly ICT-literate and can work with government to create content and provide information services to the masses.

- Implementing Information Literacy programs to users of the all types of libraries
- Integrating Information Literacy across the Curriculum at all levels of education
- University Grants Commission (UGC) may take the proper steps to induct the component of Information Literacy in higher education, so also the related bodies in engineering and other profession courses. In addition, the professional societies, academics and associations like ILA, SIS, IASLIC and IATLIS can make efforts to bring together the professional expertise along with academic and media experts to design and develop the viable Curriculum for various levels of education
- Collaborating teachers, librarians and media experts to design and promote Information Literacy programs
- Carrying out surveys and studies on the usefulness of Information Literacy at Regional, State and National levels
- Forming a National Information Literacy Forum to enable people from all walks of life to interact, discuss and bring out policy guidelines to strengthen the Information Literacy movement across the country
- Frequently conducting workshops/seminars/symposia in order to enable broader and thorough discussion on the concept of Information Literacy and bring out more literature of national importance
- Conducting programs like training the trainer in order to upgrade the Information Literacy knowledge and skills of both librarians and faculty
- Organizing brain storming sessions for wider discussion on the concept of Information Literacy and bring out policy statements
- Designing the National Information Literacy Policies, Standards and Guidelines by suitably reviewing existing educational policies
- Designing National Information Literacy Portal, through which information on Information Literacy ideas, projects, initiatives, activities, education resources, programs, tutorials, self-assessment tests etc., will be shared and organizations network

Table 2 (A): Information Literacy Programmes Conducted by National Institutions/Organizations in India

Sr. No.	Information Literacy Programmes	Date Held/ lunched	Aims
1.	Information Literacy Programme in Colleges The Hindu (e-newspaper)	Oct 04, 2006	The programme aims at bridging the awareness divide between colleges in the urban and rural areas and to enable students in the latter category of colleges access subject-related information across a variety of formats. The Information Literacy package will aim to provide students the basic information about IT tools, to introduce to them electronic sources of information, train them in searching for information stored in a multi-media format, train students to use computer-aided instruction packages, introduce various online search programmes and methods to identify sources of information, including subject gateways, in the Internet and train students to use the 'Online Public Access Catalogue. < http://www.hindu.com/2006/10/04/stories/2006100409900400.htm
2.	Central Library, Indian Institute of Technology, Madras	27-09-2007 17-09-2007 13-07-2006 21-02-2006 16-18 July, 07 03-11-2006	1. Springer Link Database 2. JCCC 3. CAPITALINE: CORPORATE DATABASE, Chennai 4. Science Direct and Scopus by Elsevier India, New Delhi 5. National Workshop on E-Resources Management for Excellence, Education Programme 6. Web Resources and Services available at the Central Library of IIT Madras

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Sr. No.	Information Literacy Programmes	Date Held/ lunched	Aims
		30-10-2006 16-03-2006 16-11-2005 07-03-2005 09-08-2005 13-01-2005 16-17 Dec, 04 23-08-2004 21-01-2004 13-08-2003 24-09-2003 01-04-2003 22-02-2002	7. Half-Day Workshop on Information handling in Digital Era 8. Role of Electronic Databases in R&D Excellence by Edutech India Pvt. Ltd 9. Presentation on Web of Science and J-Gate by Informatics India, Bangalore 10. Role of Knowledge Centre in 21st Century, Director DELNET 11. Convincing Multi Faculty Users in a Modern Learning Resources Center, Bhopal Noida, Campus 12. Digital Information Management, Anna Malai University 13. National Workshop on Building Digital Libraries using DSpace 14. Web of Science , Informatics India 15. Tutorial on Development and Mangement of Digital Resources 16. Seminar on Web Resource Management 17. Presentation on Web Searching Techniques 18. Presentation on Web of Science 19. Industrial Information Services www.cenlib.iitm.ac.in/docs/library/index.php?page=infolit
3.	RTI India		The complete Online Portal for Right to Information in India. The RTI literacy programme being conducted in the district with the objective of spreading information among the sections www.rtiindia.org/.../15883-right-information-literacy-programme.html
4.	'SALIS' (Society for the Advancement of Library and Information Science)	6-10 Nov. 2006	1. The primary focus was to provide need-based service to the profession and to work for the advancement of Library and Information Science (LIS). The current focus of SALIS is to reach the unreached LIS professionals with rural settings in order to minimize the digital divide. 2. The Society for the Advancement of Library and Information Science (SALIS), in collaboration with UNESCO and the Madras School of Social Work (MSSW), is organizing a Workshop on Information Literacy Competency Development for Library and Information Science Professionals and Special Educators at MSSW, lists.spc.int/pipermail/piala_lists.spc.int/2006.../000121.html
5	International Information Literacy Workshop in India (New Delhi)	06-10-2005	1. An international workshop to promote information literacy in South and South East Asia presently working in Panjabi University Patiala in India with the support of UNESCO and other participants.

Table 2 (B.a): Information Literacy Programmes Conducted by Government of India

Sr. No.	Information Literacy Programmes	Date Held/ lunched	Government Projects Initiatives
1.	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA),	2001-2010	India's flagship Programme to achievement of Universal Elementary Education in India, Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, MHRD, Government of India, New Delhi, www.educationforallinindia.com/ssa.htm

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Sr. No.	Information Literacy Programmes	Date Held/ lunched	Government Projects Initiatives
2.	District Primary Education Programme (DPEP)	Initiated in 1994	Universalisation of Upper Primary Education Assam, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, M.P., Maharashtra, Tamilnadu, Gujrat, Andra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Orrisa, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orrisa www.educationforallindia.com page81.html
3.	National Literacy Mission	1988 lunched	National Literacy Mission Programme is an Indian programme which aims to make 80 million adults in the age group of 15 – 35 literate en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Literacy_Mission_Programme
4.	TARA Akshar	2005-06	developed our own Hindi literacy program that would take a very short time with minimal dropout rates www.tarahaat.com/Literacy.aspx
5.	CBFL 'computer-based functional literacy'		Making this possible is a remarkable initiative from the Tata Group that has changed the lives of thousands of adults in different parts of India. Born of the Tata Group's ever-enduring commitment to community causes and bred by its expertise in information technology, this is a project as novel in methodology as it is ambitious in scope. www.tata-literacy.com/index.htm
6.	Portal of Government of India		This section introduces you to the Government of India, its origin, and the governance process being followed in the Country. http://ngo.india.gov.in

Table 2 (B.b): E-Government Projects Initiatives By Statewise

Sr. No.	Statewise	E-Government Projects Initiatives
1.	Andhra Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● APSWAN (Andhra Pradesh Statewide Area Network) ● TWIN (Twin cities Network Services) ● SKIMS (Secretariate knowledge Information Management System) ● GIS (Geographical Information System) ● Fully automated services of Transport ● Rural e-Seva (www.westgodavari.org) 1 District (West Godavari district AP) ● CARD, VOICE, MPHS, FAST, e-Cops, AP online – One-stop-shop on the Internet, Saukaryam, Online Transaction processing ● SmartGov
2.	Gujarat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GSWAN (Gujarat State wide Area Network) ● Mahiti Shakti (Citizen Service Portal, Oct 2001) ● Tele-Fariad
3.	Karnataka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Government Millenium IT Policy "Mahiti" ● Yuva.com ● Small Scale Industries ● Polocy IT 2000. ● Zero Piracy territory ● INVITE (IBM & Govt. of Karnataka) ● Bhoomi (www.revdept-01.kar.nic.in)
4.	Tamilnadu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● STAR (Simplified and Transparent Administration of Registration across Tamilnadu) ● SCHOOL (Computer literacy to 1300 high secondary school) ● Telemedicine ● Village Knowledge Centre
5.	Kerala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A Successful computerization model has been evolved in the office of the controller of entrance Examinations.

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Sr. No.	Statewise	E-Government Projects Initiatives
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Networking of all the sub-treasuries through VSAT ● Co-operative banking network interlinked ● Secretarial WAN linking offices of all ministers, secondary and individual sections. Akhaya (www.akshaya.net) ● FRIENDS (Network for the Disbursement of Services)
6.	Lakshadweep	● Govt. Project
7.	Pondicherry	● Police Net
8.	Mizoram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ZENICS (Zoram Electronics Development Corporation Limited) ● NIC ● GoMIB (Gove of Mizoram Internet Backbone) ● Community Information Centre
9.	Uttar Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● UP Portal (Darshan & Pooja) ● ICDP (Ganga Institutional and community Development Project) ● Digital Gangetic Plane (www.iitk.ac.in/mladgp) ● Lokvani (Sitapur District Nov. in 2004)
10.	Maharashtra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CMC (Computer Maintenance Corporation) ● Motor Vehicle Department ● Stamps & Registration Projects ● Pravara (Ahmednagar) ● Warana Wired Village Project by NIS
11.	Punjab	● Microsoft has set up a centre for Excellence at the Regional Engineering College at Jalandhar to certify students on Microsoft technologies
12.	Chandigarh	● Project Telemedicine
13.	West Bengal	● WBS WAN (The project West Bengal State Wide Area Network)
14.	Orrisa	● BDA (Bhubaneshwar Development Authority)
15.	Rajsthan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vikas Darpan ● rajSWIFT ● RajNIDHI ● E-Mitra (LokMitra and JanMitra lunched in 2002)
16.	Tripura	● http://www.tripura.nic.in/ - official site launched the state Government mainly for computerization taxes, treasuries, information system for rural infrastructure.
17.	Madhya Pradesh	● GYANDOOT (Dhar District)
18.	DRISHTEE includes Haryana, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bihar	● DRISHTEE (5 States)
19.	Several States	● SRISTI (Society for Research and Initiatives for Sustainable Technologies and Institution) is aiming at easing the task of accessing the innovation database of Honey Bee Network by breaking the barrier of language and medium of data transmission. (http://www.sristi.org/cms/en/ict_initiative)
20.	Haryana	● NaiDisha
21.	PURA (several states)	● PURA (Providing Urban amenities in Rural Areas) since 2004
22.	E-choupal includes in Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan	● e-Choupal,; 6 states, 31,000 villages (www.echoupal.com) (www.tarahaat.com) 4 States

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Sr. No.	Statewise	E-Government Projects Initiatives
23.	TARAHaat includes in Punjab, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh	
24.	Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, Jammu & Kashmir includes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Information Centres (CIC) 10 States (www.cic.nic.in)
25.	Village Knowledge Centres (VKC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Village KnowledgeCentres (VKC) www.mission2007.org
26.	Remote Himalaya Villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched in 1991 in a remote Himalayan village by Dr. Antonia Neubauer, Headquater Gurgaon

The above tables shows institutional, government and e-governance information literacy initiatives have been undertaken throughout India, its services and positive benefits that the rural citizens can get from these programs require good publicity. In order to teach them skills required for realizing their information/service need, and developing the skills to make India a knowledge society, people from all walks of life. Government of India along with the state governments and other competent organizations and professional bodies need to undertake some of the programs/initiatives that are needed to be implemented and practiced. Information literate persons acquire knowledge; then use knowledge resources to generate wealth and welfare.

Conclusion

With the modern day technology changing day by day people should be enabled to access the information and using it. For this, by government of India and academic institutions, organizations should conduct workshops, seminars, programmes to make more and more people IT literate. Some e-government programmes have been initiated and community centers have been opened to provide both the services to the people and enhancing their IT awareness.

Information and Communication Technology provides a dynamic way to connect people with their government and provides access to information easily, efficiently and cost effectively. Such types of e-government projects are needed in rural areas of India where ICT has a significant role to play.

Libraries in general and public libraries in particular have a great role as e-government content creators and disseminators. The information literacy programmes are running at school level, Higher Learning Institutions and for LIS professionals. India

essentially needs to transform into complete knowledge society and hence the efforts be concentrated to develop the absorbing, analyzing and integrating abilities of the people and to make them understand how to use information to bring real value to everything they undertake. Information literacy has become a global issue calling for greater attention. As a result several countries have taken initiatives in starting national as well as international programmes. These programmes are addressing many issues relating to technology and information skills. People will need information skills for the personal, professional and even for the entertainment activities. In the context of India, it is essential for librarians, teachers, technologists, media experts and policy makers to make all possible efforts to start the Information Literacy movement with a big bang.

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