CUACE 101 : COMMUNICATION SKILLS LEVEL : 1.1

INTRODUCTION TO INFORMATION LITERACY

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Introduction

- What is meant by information literacy?
- Is there a need for information literacy skills?
Introduction

- Advent of information and communication technologies (ICTS)
- Exponential growth of information characteristic of today’s information society. According to the Internet Live Statistics (ILS) http://www.internetlivestats.com/ as of (08/03/16):
  - there were almost 1 billion registered websites on the internet although only about 25% of them are live,
  - over 3 billion internet users
Introduction

- over 3 billion google searches
- almost 3 million blog posts were written
- almost 7 billion videos were viewed on You Tube,
- over 55 million photos were uploaded on Instagram
- almost 2 billion facebook users,
- almost 118 million skype calls.
Presentation Outline

- Introduction
- Learning Objectives
- Definition of information
- Definition of data
- What is information literacy?
- Skills of an information literate individual
- Organization of information
- Evaluation of printed sources of information
- Assignment
Presentation Outline cont....

- Conclusion
- References
- Evaluation
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of the session, students should be able to:

- Distinguish between data and information
- Define Information Literacy.
- Outline the importance of Information Literacy.
- List the skills and abilities of an information literate individual.
- Distinguish and list the different types of sources of information and their purpose
WHAT IS DATA?

Data is information in raw or unorganised form (such as alphabets, numbers or symbols) that refer to, or represent conditions, ideas or objects.
Information has many definitions:

- According to the American Library Association (ALA), information is “...all ideas, facts, and imaginative works of the mind which have been communicated, recorded, published and/or distributed formally or informally in any format.”
Scott (2012) defines information as “Data which has been recorded, classified, organized, related, or interpreted within a framework so that meaning emerges.”
From the definitions given above, we can say that the characteristics of information are that it:

- is connected to knowledge and communication
- consists of spoken words, written communication, sheets of music, photographs, paintings and scientific formulae.
- must have a context from which we can understand it.
- must have a meaning.
- comes from many sources.
- can be discovered and created (research)
INFORMATION LITERACY

- Scott (2012) defines information literacy as “the ability to find, evaluate, and use information efficiently, effectively, and ethically to answer an information need.”
- Information literacy is knowing when and why you need information, where to find it and how to evaluate, use and communicate it in an ethical manner (CILIP 2004).
Writing an assignment or a research paper is an information literacy process. It involves finding and applying information to answer your research questions to either support or disprove your hypothesis. To do this well, you want to evaluate the information you use to ensure its quality and authenticity. While doing this you need to give credit to the people whose ideas you use.
SKILLS FOR AN INFORMATION LITERATE INDIVIDUAL

According to The Association of College and Research Libraries document called *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education*, an information literate individual should be able to:
SKILLS Cont..

Determine the extent of information needed.

- If you need only a quick fact or definition, you consult an *encyclopaedia or dictionary*.
- If you have to write a paper, then using an *encyclopaedia* will not give you enough information to answer your research question.
- You might need to consult multiple sources of information.
SKILLS Cont…..

Access the needed information effectively and efficiently.

- You know **where** and **how** to look for the information you need
- and you can find it **quickly**.
SKILLS Cont..

- Evaluate information and its sources critically, and incorporate selected information into one’s knowledge base.
- You can determine if the information you found is appropriate to your research and whether the information, or its source, is good or bad.
- You learn from all that information you gathered.
SKILLS cont.....

- Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.
  - You write your research paper.
  - Develop your new process or market a product
  - You accomplish your task well.
SKILLS Cont...

Understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally.

- You understand the concept of intellectual property and know the consequences of plagiarizing someone else’s ideas.
- You know how to cite your sources (Association of College and Research Libraries 2000).
According to the Association of Research and College Libraries (2000),

- Information literacy forms the basis of lifelong learning.
- It is common to all disciplines, to all learning environments, and to all levels of education.
- It enables learners to master content and extend their investigations, become self-directed, and to assume greater control over their own learning.
RATIONALE FOR ILS TRAINING

• Advent of information and communication technologies (ICTs);-
  • Exponential growth of information characteristics of today’s information society.
  • Information from unauthenticated sources is becoming increasingly available
  • Necessity to expose students/learners to a diverse range of information resources.
There are 2 approaches to organizing information and these are:-

- **format**,
- **content**
FORMAT

Format refers to the medium used to present or store the information.

- Information comes in many configurations:
  - Paper / Print
  - Audio (cds, audio cassette)
  - Visual (Digital video disk, DVD, video cassette, images/pictures, sculptors, charts)
- Audio-visual (DVD, slide tapes)
FORMAT Cont...

- Digital/Electronic – computer hard disk, external drive, memory stick/flash stick, CD-ROM

**Formats** affect the ease of access to information.
Audio cassettes
Microfiche and microfilm
DVD and CD ROM
External Hard Drive and Memory / Flash stick
Can you think of any other storage device that is not mentioned above?
Content has two aspects

1. The **subject** of the information in an item
2. The **characteristics** of information in an item
THE SUBJECT

- Most information is organized by subject or discipline. In a library setting, information on the same subject is grouped together. This practice is called classification and it creates order and easy retrieval of information resources in the Library (Library of Congress Classification scheme at CUT Library)
THE CHARACTERISTICS

Information could be:

- Primary
- Secondary
- Factual
- Analytical
- Subjective
- Objective
PRIMARY SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- These are original materials on which other research is based.
- They are usually the first formal appearance of research results in the print or electronic literature.
- They present information in its original form, neither interpreted nor condensed nor evaluated by other writers.
- Not translated by anyone else.
- Have not been published elsewhere.
PRIMARY SOURCES Cont...

Examples include:

- Autobiographies
- Correspondence
- Diaries
- Interviews
- Paintings
- Photographs
- Research journals
SECONDARY SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Secondary sources are edited primary sources.
- Repackaged primary sources
- They represent someone else's thinking.
- They describe, interpret, analyse and evaluate the primary sources.
- They comment on and discuss the evidence provided by primary sources.
SECONDARY SOURCES Cont...

Examples include:

- Biographies
- Bibliographies
- Books
- Literary criticism & interpretation
- Historical criticism
- Review articles
FACTUAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

These are also known as **reference sources** of information.

- Provide quick answers to queries
- Not normally read from cover to cover
- Can be general or subject-oriented
- Can be current or retrospective
- Can be hard copy or electronic
- Made up of real facts/things that actually exist
Question

- Can you think of examples of factual sources of information?
FACTUAL SOURCES Cont…

Examples include:

- Dictionaries
- Atlases
- Handbooks
- Directories
- Almanacs/Year books
- Catalogues
- Encyclopaedias
ANALYTICAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Information in analytical sources is usually provided by experts in a subject.

- Interpretations
- Analysis
- Criticisms
Examples include:

- Reviews
- Statistical digests
- Dissertation/theses
- Political commentaries
- Books
- Subject Encyclopedias
- Reports
Analytical Sources cont....
SUBJECTIVE SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Subjective information advances a unilateral perspective on an issue for example an editorial in a newspaper

- Personal view (particular to a given individual)
- Can emanate from a person's emotions
- Not easily verified.
- Can be interpreted differently by other people; as opposed to "Objective" information
SUBJECTIVE SOURCES Cont...

Examples include:

- Individual opinion
- Newspaper editorials
- Political party manifestoes
OBJECTIVE SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Objective sources of information advance a balanced or impartial perspective.

- Non-judgemental and balanced reporting
- Without bias
- Not influenced by personal feelings or interpretations
- Present all sides of a topic.
- Helpful in decision-making.
- Based on facts
OBJECTIVE SOURCES Cont...

Examples include:

• Encyclopaedias
• Subject Dictionaries
Evaluation is the process of determining the value or worth of an item. In other words, there is an attempt to establish whether the item meets its intended objectives or not.
Evaluation Criteria

- Content
- Relevance
- Accuracy
- Authority
Evaluation Criteria cont....

- Qualifications of the production team, ie the editor, the contributors or the author and the publisher
  - Academic qualifications
  - Suitability for the task (eg An Introduction to Accounting/ by Winky D or 100 Ways to Simplify Your Life /by Joyce Meyer)
  - Professional reputation of the publisher(eg Longman vs College Press )
Evaluation Criteria cont....

- **Language**
- Appropriateness of the language for the intended audience eg Is the language suitable for undergraduates, postgraduates or researchers?
- **Comprehensiveness/ Coverage/ Scope**
- No book is totally comprehensive on any subject field.
- Comprehensiveness is determined from the *preface* of the book.
Evaluation Criteria cont.....

- Objectives
- inclusions
- omissions
- emphasis
- bias. eg consider a book entitled HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa which gives 80% coverage to Zimbabwe and 20% coverage to the rest of the Southern African countries
Evaluation Criteria cont.....

- Organisation /Arrangement/
- Ease of retrieval of information
- Table of contents
- Headings – are they clear and self – explanatory
- Indexing – does it point to the correct information
  - Author index versus subject index
  - Bibliography/ Referencies
Evaluation Criteria cont....

- **Up to dateness/ Currency**
  - For books, how often is the publication revised
  - How many editions since the first edition
  - For serials, consider the frequency of publication

- **Technical Aspects**
  - Is the book a hardcover or a paperback?
  - Are the graphics (charts, diagrams, illustrations, photographs etc) clear
Assignment

- Can you select any 3 printed sources of information and evaluate them according to the criteria for printed sources of information.
Conclusion

This presentation looked at the definition of data, information and information literacy as well as the skills that are characteristic of an information literate individual. It also looked at the different ways in which information is organised and finally at the evaluation criteria for printed sources of information.
References

Evaluation

- The lecture covered many concepts
- There was a lot of interaction between the lecturer and students through discussions and question and answer sessions.
- Graphics were used to illustrate technical concepts.
- The use of the power point slides helped to explain concepts.
- Students were given an assignment at the end of the lecture
Evaluation cont.....

- Students indicated that they had understood the lecture and they expressed their appreciation by clapping hands.