Chapter 11
Research on Information Literacy at Academic Libraries:
A Comprehensive Open Distance E–Learning Context

Leslie S. Adriaanse

https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5363-5059

University of South Africa, South Africa

Leila Goosen

https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4948-2699

University of South Africa, South Africa

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this chapter is to present research on information literacy in academic libraries, especially as it is implemented in a comprehensive open and distance e-learning (CODeL) context. Against the background of data, information ,and knowledge literacy, as well as self-directed learning (SDL), the main focus of the chapter will point out challenges related to information literacy and open distance education. Future research directions in terms of information literacy and emerging technologies will also be discussed.

INTRODUCTION

This section will describe the general perspective of the chapter and end by specifically stating the objective.

Examining Information Literacy in Academic Libraries

Information Literacy (IL), "the ability to find and use information ethically, has been on the agenda of academic librarians for a very long time now. The driving force behind the" e-journal article on library

philosophy and practice by Moyo and Okemwa (2022, p. 1) was determining what students' perceptions were of information literacy at two South African universities.

Information Literacy in the Artificial Intelligence Sphere

Artificial Intelligence (AI) had become prevalent in academia and has had a significant impact in tuition models within Open distance learning environment. This is especially evident in student assessment (Naidu & Sevnarayan, 2023) and the application of emerging trends related to these technologies (Kim, Merrill, Xu, & Sellnow, 2020).

Information literacy instruction in academic libraries had been provided using different pedagogies, methodologies, standards and beliefs all over the world. In some contexts, information literacy instruction had been presented formally in a standalone format, embedded in a program or informally with the aim of developing students' information and research *skills*. The term information literacy in itself has been a subject of debate with various new terms being proposed by different researchers. In describing the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) approach as applicable to information literacy and academic libraries in e.g., the United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland, Bainton (2001, p. 2) indicated that both information *skills* and Information Technology (IT) "*skills* are essential parts of a wider concept of information literacy." A broadly-based definition "of information *skills* in higher education reflects twin dimensions of the 'competent student' and the 'information literate' person." In addition, there had been changes to how students learn, with a shift from physical interactions to online or hybrid learning and the introduction of disruptive technologies, such as *artificial intelligence* and ChatGPT, which requires a radical transformation of information literacy pedagogy. Therefore, it is important to understand how information literacy is taught and how it can be enhanced at various levels of study in universities. In the fields of information studies, information systems, knowledge management, etc., there exists a need for an edited collection of original research in this area of information literacy in academic libraries. Students, whether born digital or not, mostly lack information literacy *skills* and are often ill-prepared at the time they enter higher education. This could manifest in academic malpractices, such as plagiarism.

Target Audience

Like that of the book that it proposes to form part of, the target audience of this chapter will be composed of professionals and researchers working in the field of information and knowledge management in various disciplines, e.g., library, information and communication sciences, informatics, education, adult education, sociology, computer science, and information technology. Moreover, as part of the book, this chapter will provide insights and support policymakers, data, information and knowledge specialists, academics and researchers, among others, concerned with information literacy in the 21st century.

Recommended Topics

From the recommended topics suggested for this book, the chapter will specifically focus on:

- Information Literacy in the Artificial Intelligence Sphere
- Information literacy: Blended learning multi-literacies

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