Role of Information Culture in Workplace Information Literacy: A Literature Review

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Background

- Academy of Finland research project Impact of Information Literacy in the Digital Workplace (2016-20)

    - Aim to explore how workplace information literacy has been studied and identify possible measures to study the impact of literacies

Aim

- Growing consensus that information literacy is beyond a skill-set when studying it in workplace context

- A need to discuss information literacy at an organizational level

- How can information literacy be supported by the management?

Information culture framework

Information culture is described as the contextual prerequisites for information management and information use. Information handling skills and information use are shaped by how information is valued and how information processes are supported within the organization.

Method

- A literature review was conducted to identify articles that discussed information literacy and possibly with an information culture perspective

  - Approximately 1800 references retrieved on "information literacy" and related terms

  - A search on "information culture", "organization culture" and "organizational culture" was then conducted on these articles

  - 23 articles were found relevant and further analyzed

Method of analysis

- For the detailed analysis of the literature a clustering method of the studies was executed.

- The clusters were determined according to the focal area of the study, impact of information literacy and information culture on different parameters and the role of information literacy and culture in workplaces.

Results

Five major areas of information literacy and information culture
1. Organizational information and knowledge management (4)
2. Organizational Effectiveness (4)
3. Workplace information use (4)
4. Adoption of IT and ICT process and infrastructure (4)
5. Workplace information literacy (2)
The remaining 5 articles were left out while only briefly mentioning information culture and therefore not possible to categorize to the above groups

Organizational information and knowledge management

- The role of information culture in relation to IKM

- Values that construct information culture in different contexts were identified

- A balanced information culture promotes effective creation, use and management of information

Organizational Effectiveness

- The relationship between information culture and effectiveness is focused

- Different types of information cultures are studied and their link to e.g. organizational effectiveness, innovation, and employee satisfaction

- Information culture explains how information is communicated and used and possible measures to assess information culture and performance are addressed

- It is seen that information culture is influenced by leadership style, institutional regulation and information politics

Workplace information use

- The role of information culture in connection to the organizational *information use outcomes* is focused

- The information culture of an organization is determined by a large number of variables such as its mission, history, leadership, employee behavior and values

- Enhancing the information use and its outcomes can be exploited by developing an information culture that fosters conversations and exchange of information

Adoption of IT and ICT process and infrastructure

- The importance of information culture in adopting information and communication technologies is focused

- ICT investment and implementation has often failed to produce expected outcomes

- The diversity and complexity of information culture may create barriers in the synergy between information and communication technologies and the business itself

- The studies pointed out that the key issue is not in the technology rather the social factors such as cultures and individual information capabilities

Workplace information literacy

- The complex workplace is focused and the capabilities to effectively collect, analyze, assess and synthesize relevant information is imperative

- Information usage in the workplace is often about social interaction and must be studied in relation to information culture, information infrastructure and IT

- An encouraging information culture helps employees understand the importance of the value and utility of information in achieving business goals

- Information literacy should be determined by multiple factors: information infrastructure, information sources, human resources, IT, management's attitude, policy and information culture

Advantages of combining the perspectives in future research

- Information culture brings a holistic framework to study workplace information practices (and individual information literacy skills)

- Information culture highlight the importance of a transparent, open and positive environment towards information and knowledge

- Information culture affects the information use and knowledge sharing in organizations, the attitudes towards information, its impact on information infrastructure and how it reduces barriers during implementation of information technologies and systems

How can information literacy be supported by the management?

- **Information literacy should be managed** not only as an individual set of abilities, but also **as a collective attempt in performing the tasks at workplaces** including multiple social and cultural factors. Individual information handling skills should be supported in interaction with the workplace culture

- **Information literacy should be managed as an organizational level of information awareness**. To be able to identify relevant information sources and critically evaluate information needed for problem solving as well as being fluent in navigating the IT landscape of the workplace.

- Acknowledging the cultural aspect in connection to workplace information literacy will help to design more concrete implementation and assessment frameworks

Thank You!