Information Literacy and Education

Teaching ILS at the University of Botswana
by

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The library is the centre of any educational institution. Therefore, it has a role to empower users by ensuring that they have the knowledge and skills to effectively become lifelong learners.
User Education: defined as various programmes of instruction, education and exploration provided by libraries to users to enable them to make more efficient and independent use of information sources, resources for which those libraries provide access (Fleming, ed. 1990). It further notes that the focus of user education in academic libraries is upon such programmes offered within formal educational establishment other than schools which offer learning opportunities to the post-16 age group (Fleming, ed., 1990).
Bhatti (2010) views user education as systematic efforts to teach a set of principles or search strategies relating to the library, its collections or services using pre-determined methods in order to accomplish a defined set of objectives. Moyane, Dube and Hoskins (2015: 30) note that user education offers comprehensive instruction in the use of resources while other terms such as library orientation lacks in depth focus found in user education.
BI is regarded as a “grass roots” service started by reference or undergraduate librarians who perceived an instructional programme as a solution to many of the problems they encountered daily at the service desk (Reiford and Henrickson, 1980: 1).
Melon, ed. 1987) Melon, ed.(1987) observes that bibliographic instruction focuses on teaching at the expense of learning. Smalley (1977) offers a slightly different perspective when noting that a primary assumption underlying most programmes in bibliographic instruction is that librarians are teachers and that the activities in which they engage in the execution of programmes they devise constitutes teaching. Further, Smalley (1977) further notes that librarians can without difficulty transfer their library professional expertise inherent in their everyday activities as librarians in more formalized educational settings.
Williams (2010: 148) describes information literacy as the ability to recognize when information is needed and having the ability to locate, evaluate and effectively use the needed information. The American Library Association (1989) also defines information literacy skills as

...the ability to know when there is need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate and effectively use the information for the issue or the problem at hand.
Background on the teaching of Information Literacy Skill at UB

- 1994 – Bibliographic Instruction offered in collaboration with Science faculty (see Appendix 1)
- 1994 – ILS Course Outline (Appendix 2)
- 1994 – Meeting planned for ILS (Appendix 3)
- 1994 – minutes of meeting (Appendix 4)
- 1999 – Minutes of meeting between Social Science and Science
- 1999 – Joint Workshop (Appendix 6)
- 1997– ILS Equipment Justification(Appendix 7)
- 2002–2010 – Information Literacy Skills offered in collaboration with Computer Science Departments as part of the General Education Course (GEC 121/122)
Purpose of the Study

- Share University of Botswana’s experiences in the teaching of IL
- Show how proliferation in the use of modern technology; access to the internet; changes in the teaching of IL has altered use of the library as a place for knowledge creation
- Show how these modern changes have affected librarians opportunity to fully contribute to the education process
Review of the Literature

Seeks to do the following:
To find out what educational roles library professionals play.
Librarians roles have evolved from being providers of information to facilitators of teaching and learning (Moyane, Dube and Hoskins, 2015: 32)
Notes that academic librarians role has always involved teaching, research and critical thinking with the goal of educating learners (Warnken, 2004)

Technology has dramatically transformed and expanded librarians instructional roles (Warnken: 2004)
Librarians require training and qualifications as educationists in order to play their full part in the provision of a quality teaching learning environment for students (McNamara and Core (1998) cited by Peacock (2001))
Methodology

- Personal experience teaching information literacy skills
- Primary sources (Memos)
- Desk research
Challenges Affecting UB Librarians Effective Teaching of IL

- Lack of a teaching experience by most of the staff
- Lack of professional development geared towards teaching ILS
- Reduced times allocated for the teaching of ILS
- Declining student intake at the University of Botswana
Ineffective collaborative partnership between academics and librarians
Conclusion

- The main purpose of this paper was to share the experience of UB librarians in the teaching of ILS.
- Evidence has shown a lot of initiative and contribution made by UB library in providing lifelong learning skills to students.
- The literature has clearly stated how changes in technology has impacted librarian’s roles in teaching.
- What remains is for librarians to keep abreast of the new developments.
Recommendations

- User education be offered only when students are aware of their information needs and not at the beginning of the academic year
- User education sessions should be made compulsory and should be assessed
- User education should be linked to the course
- Librarians need empowerment for them to be effective and confident
Reference

- Bruce, C. and Candy, P (2000). People, politics and potential in information literacy around the world.

University of Botswana: Communication and Study Skills Unit. [n.d.]. Information literacy skills course, prepared by Dr Theophilus Mooko.
Appendixes
MEMORANDUM

Reference: LIB/71

To: Mr. P. Uboye
Mr. L. Adamson
Mr. E. Yekani

From: University Librarian

Date: 15th August 1994

Subject: INFORMATION SKILLS COURSE IN BIOLOGY

Thank you very much for the latest information on the above. Although the time allocated for the course is excessive, I am happy that the issue of information skills training is being tackled in conjunction with the Library.

Gladly monitor performance as much as possible to facilitate evaluation of the course after a period. I hope this programme will be shared with subject librarians and teaching departments. Your curriculum, will be of interest.

Best wishes.

H.K. Rantsego
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN

cc: Deputy Librarian
Reference Coordinator
UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM LIBRARY

MINISTRY OF THE MEETING OF JUNIOR LIBRARY STAFF HELD ON THE 17TH
OCTOBER, 1994 AT 2.00 PM IN THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIANS OFFICE

PRESENT:

Mrs G. E. Mawdewo
Mr P. A. Usho
Mr O. A. Aderinokun
Mr B. A. Awokun
Mr T. T.泡泡
Mrs E. A. Akinfari-Adaye
Mrs A. E. Abioro
Mr L. A. B. Abioro
Mrs S. Ayegun
Mr J. C. Eta	
Mr S. B. D. Dey
Mr E. Lamorde
Mr N. B. O. Chiwondo
Mrs R. Y. Risani
Mrs D. B. Chiwondo

This meeting was held to inform staff about the information skill course offered Mr Usho, Mr Lamorde, Mr Okejide and Mr Aderinokun for biology course students.

1. Information Skill Course

Reported: i) that the provision of the Information Skills course to library staff had been reported to the Library Committee.

ii) that the faculty representatives would be introducing the subject to their faculties and library staff should know more about the course to help faculty representatives explain to their departments.

2. Brief Introduction of the Course

Reported: i) that the course was introduced in response to complaints from employers that the graduates of the university were not competent in information seeking skills.

ii) that the objectives of the course were to develop skills in the effective acquisition, evaluation and interpretation of information from literature sources through a specific literature search and subsequent written report and oral presentation.

iii) that course was part of the Biology programme.

Note: Information skills I was offered in third year students doing single major in Biology.
Minutes of the meeting of the Social sciences and Science faculty subject
across held in the Social science unit office on the 20th April 2000 to discuss
the Information Literacy skills Programme

Present:
B. Whithers
M. Swings
J. E. Lee
E. Aubry-Aubry
A. A. Quaddaf
A. M. Aoun
E. T.
S. B..
S. E. Fazende

The chairperson opened the meeting by informing the participants that the meeting was to be held to discuss the Information Literacy skills Programme. The meeting was attended by representatives from the Social sciences and Science faculties. The meeting was chaired by B. Whithers, and the proceedings were recorded by S. E. Fazende.

The meeting discussed two main issues:

1. Curriculum of the current ILS programme

The current ILS programme needs to be reviewed and updated. The following issues were discussed:

- The curriculum of all the units for ILS was outlined, and the following issues were found to be common in all modules: basic skills, information retrieval, information analysis, critical thinking, research methodology, and the use of online resources.
- The evaluation of the programme is done through a written examination, and the results are used for the improvement of the programme.

2. Issues and concerns over ILS

- There was a concern raised regarding the lack of emphasis on the importance of ILS in the curriculum.
- The meeting was adjourned with a commitment to review the curriculum and to implement changes as necessary.
MEMORANDUM

To: CSSU and Library Staff
From: Tony Morrison
Date: May 11, 1999
Re: Joint Workshop
Copy to: Dir. Rosetina, Prof. Kumar, Dr. Rosetina, DVC (AA)

The joint one day workshop between CSSU and Library staff will be held on Tuesday, 18 May in Room 211, Block 214 (Educational Technology).

Background Information

Have included with this memo a number of documents that will hopefully help orientation. Please read these before the workshop.

If participants feel that they have resources or other information to share with the group please bring all copies to the workshop.

Suggested Program

Facilitator: Tony Morrison

Aim: to develop a cooperative relationship between the two units.

Objectives: By the end of the workshop participants will:
1. Have an understanding of the respective roles of CSSU and the Library.
2. Be able to work cooperatively regardless of different cultures.
3. Be able to work effectively with different students.
4. Be able to work effectively with different college courses.
5. Be able to work effectively with different departments.
JUSTIFICATION FOR AUDIOVISUAL EQUIPMENT
BUDGET ESTIMATES 1997-1998

INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS INSTRUCTION

Education requires more and more that students develop lifelong learning skills and information literacy as a vital component of the learning process.

Number of teaching hours

During the academic year 1994-1995 a programme totalling 18 hours for Information Literacy Skills was developed for BS 401 and BS 403. In 1995-1996 Information Literacy Skills instruction was integrated into the SMAAS and Nursing Education Courses. Instruction in each course totalling 18-20 hours spread through out the first semester and into the second. BS401 received 6 hours per week for one semester, BS403 received 4 hours per week for one semester. Year 3 and Year 4 students in all Humanities departments were given a scaled down version of 6 hours instruction for each year. The time table for the 1995-1997 academic year is attached.

The amount of teaching hours is more than doubling each year as more departments are requesting courses. It is expected that eventually every student should receive full Information Literacy Skills instruction as an integrated component of one of the courses or seminars.

Facilities and Equipment

Information Literacy Skills instruction requires the librarians to demonstrate and give instruction in the use of various information resources which are available both within the University of Botswana Library and Information System and from external systems.

Ideally, much of the instruction should be given in a small lecture-style computer environment. However, until the Library has such facilities or is able to access computer laboratories in the faculty buildings, instruction will have to be through group demonstration using audio-visual equipment. In order to be effective, especially where large classes are involved. such instruction requires high-quality projection equipment.

Since the library does not yet have suitable classrooms for such instruction, in addition to using the lecture study for large groups, a temporary area accommodating up to 40 students is being set up in the Multimedia area of the Library.

In addition, because of the increasing number of courses, and the need to split larger classes into smaller sections, librarians will have to conduct several modules of the Information Literacy Skills instruction in the lecture rooms. These will require carts or trolleys to transport the library materials and audio-visual equipment.

Many video-cassette players have been acquired and their use has been increasing. As more students become aware of their availability, this use is expected to increase even further. Therefore an additional combine television/projector would be useful. The more powerful one to be used with the LCD for computer based presentations would also be used for training library staff. A combined video projector would be even better for large group presentations.