



# **Information Literacy a Cornerstone of Democratic Society**

**A Component of an Information Policy**



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# Outlines

- Introduction
- Literacy and Multi-literacy
- Information Policy
- Information literacy: a cornerstone of Democratic Society



# *Lessons Learned in ALFIN Programs in Latin America*

“establishing links and cooperative relationships among organizations, areas, sections, and other institutions, in several contexts, educational levels, and scopes, that work to train in the fields directly or indirectly related with information and its efficient, ethical, and critical management to search for spaces and a manner of training which tend for the integration of several fields and necessary literacy (multi-literacy) to properly interact in the current information society (written-read literacy + functional + informatics + visual + media + academic and/or informational)”



# Perspectives

- Higher Education
- Digital literacy
- Communication and multi-modality



# MULTI-LITERACY

- Written-read literacy
- Visual or iconic literacy
- Numerical literacy
- Sound or musical literacy
- Audiovisual literacy
- Informational literacy
- Technological or digital literacy.



# SKILLS

- Know how to propose strategies and processes for problem resolution related with information
- Know how to search for information in databases and files of any nature
- Know how to analyze and interpret information presented by any format and/or technology
- Know how to produce information and diffuse it through any format and technology.



# MULTI-LITERACY

- *“as a way to focus on the realities of increasing local diversity and global connectedness.*

*Dealing with linguistic differences and cultural differences has now become central to the pragmatics of our working civic and private lives”.*

*NEW LONDON GROUP, 1996*





# INFORMATION LITERACY IN GOVERNMENT SCOPE

*“individual citizens are faced with considerable practical difficulties in knowing what government information exists that might help, then searching for it easily and cost effectively and then understanding and utilizing once located”*

SWINDELLS, 2008



# EFFECTIVE CITIZEN

- COMPUTER LITERACY
- INFORMATION LITERACY
- POLITICAL LITERACY



## PERSPECTIVE OF CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLE

“the actual constitutive effect of information creation, processing, flows and use”. So information is not just affected by its environment, but affects its environment as well”

BRAMAN, 2006



“information as a constitutive force in society is at the top of the definitional hierarchy [...] and can be applied to the entire range of phenomena and processes in which information is involved; of any degree of articulation and complexity; and they grant information an enormous power in constructing our social reality”.

BRAMAN, 2006



In an information society, the concept of information means power and informational literacy empowers the small worlds of society.



“If a free society is to survive it must ensure the preservation of its record and provide free and open access to this information to citizens. It must ensure that citizens have the resources to develop information literacy skills necessary to participate in the democratic process”

KRANICH, 2001



# ESSENTIALS

- *Public space*: refers to the physical and spatial aspects of the library as the public use and behavior, and underscores the pre-eminent value of the library as a place for common experiences.
- *Community information* as a medium for engagement touches on the library's ability to play a leadership role through creation of local information network.
- *Community dialogue* and problem solving are essential for addressing important local issues and concessions.
- *Citizenship information and education* lie at the heart of civic life. Citizenship and participation in the culture of democracy are learned skills, which newcomers may lack when they arrive, even many native residents.
- *Public memory* refers to library's responsibility to preserve and make accessible the records, images and other cultural artifacts that are meaningful to its audience especially as they relate to historical and cultural experience of local residents.



**“to be well-informed” means “to arrive at reasonably founded opinions in the fields which as he knows are at least mediately of concern to him although most bearing upon his purpose at hand”.**





- the starting point of the information generation process is the involvement of the whole society which will have as outcome that will take advantage of the information”.
- Every society has a different way of participation whether it may be a democratic society or not, participation depends on the value they have given to the information and its function in society.

MORALES CAMPOS, 1999



# TO BE ANSWERED

- Can a form of government and a way of life, in which the basic decisions are made by the people themselves, in people's interest, and after the discussion and reflection, survive in competition with a form of government and a way of life in which the basic decisions are made in secret by a single will?
- If the basic decisions are to be continue to be by the people, and if they are now to be made by the people, ... how are the people to be informed?
- How can government policies, including language, literacy and educational policy, be coordinated to enable the “just in time” access and the delivery of the requisite kinds of educationally required capital, health and social resources, jobs and work to enhance communities and individuals' lives?



**Most of the studies on information literacy can be describes as literacy events. There is a need to develop abstraction, depersonalization, syllogistic reasoning, even, and some formulation, of modern orientation and democratic inclination.**



*policy interventions are, by definition, synergistic and potentially counter-synergistic in local effect, both across government silos and within each department or ministry such as education.*

*That is, educational policies are never stand-alone phenomena. In order to be effective they must orchestrate a series of inter-textual embedding in relations to other extant educational and social policy*



**From an ideological viewpoint literacy, in this specific case informational literacy, will be of great help for the construction of a more participative and a better democratic society, which will foster the citizens to seek those instruments of political constriction (laws), of social constriction (customs), of moral constriction (norms) and test theme with the reality (facts)**



Considering literacy as a social practice and also as a social problem, an interest group can provides direct support for the policy preference of the elite considering interest group as organizations that seeks to influence government policy- to obtain benefits, subsidies, privileges and protection for their sponsor, be they financed by and responsible to corporate, banking, financial, professional, legal, media or civic institutions that compose the national elite



- Working from the bottom-up policy process model, librarians, the library and other social and cultural institutions can define plans of action organize themselves and gain access to government to promote issues concerning information literacy and literacy promotion.



# CONCLUSIONS

- Information literacy as a social practice has been studied from the literacy event aspect, but there are a lot of issues for research on the information research practice, in particular community model and the ideological preconception of every community.
- The library, librarians and other social and cultural institution may have a more political participation as an interest group to promote information literacy from two scenes: first from a bottom –up process model and from a top-down process model. Action plans need to developed for both processes.





THANK YOU VERY MUCH

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