

Assessing the Impact of Digital Information Literacy Workshop among Open University Malaysia Postgraduate Learners

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Abstract. The Open University Malaysia Digital Library promotes digital information literacy skills among its learners by organizing frequent workshops. The aim of the workshop is to improve learners' digital information literacy skills. This paper presents the findings from the investigation on the impact of digital information literacy skills workshops especially on THE intrinsic motivation and attitude of the postgraduate learners. The objectives are three-folds: (i) to determine the level of information literacy skills in term of searching and retrieving information among postgraduate learners; (ii) to measure correlations between level of information literacy skills and motivation; and (iii) to measure correlations between level of information literacy skills and attitudes. The ability to search and retrieve (gather) information is one of the Seven Pillars of Information Literacy Core Model for Higher Education developed by SCONUL (Society of College, National and University Libraries). The three dimensions were measured using an instrument that were adapted using existing tools. The target respondents were postgraduate learners who had participated in the workshops. The data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 2.90. Findings from this study shows that there was a high impact of digital information literacy workshop on the searching and retrieving skills of the participants. The study also showed that the effectiveness of the workshop is not influenced by neither the learners' intrinsically motivation nor their attitude.

Keywords: Digital Information Literacy Skills, Self-assessment, SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy Core Model for Higher Education, Motivation, Attitude.

1 Introduction

Libraries have long assumed a vital and important role in academic institutions. However, in recent years, the urge to assess the outcomes and contributions of libraries in academic world has been increasing. Online database usage, book circulation, and patron library visits are some outcomes which are selected to assess the library contribution to the academic institutions. In order to ensure all these resources and services are

fully utilized and contribute to the institutions, library instruction session or digital literacy workshop must be planned and conducted properly and effectively. The Open University Malaysia (OUM) Digital Library is not exempted in conducting online digital information literacy workshop to its learners. Starting May 2020 semester, the library has implemented the workshop in online mode, which is called Digital Information Literacy Workshop (Digital ILW). The workshop is opened to all learners with primary objective is to introduce and guide learners on searching and retrieving various information resources available in the Digital Library. Effective and efficient searching techniques, keyword selection in searching, using searching & retrieving tools and introduction in using online databases are some contents in the workshop. In addition, learners are informed about library services available for them such as Interlibrary loan, Intralibrary loan, document delivery service and users' advice service. This basic level workshop is opened to all OUM learners. The advanced level of the digital IL workshop is then introduced. Postgraduate learners are the targeted participants. The workshop will primarily focus on a higher level of searching techniques, in depth using of graduate level database such as thesis & dissertations databases and various ways on submitting articles for journals. The one-hour online workshop is conducted by a librarian and organized by OUM Graduate Centre in collaboration with the digital library.

2 Literature Review

Digital literacy or information literacy (IL) is a very important and essential skill to all learners especially for open & distance learning (ODL) learners. Higher education institutions depend strongly on IL in education and research activities [1]. It not only helps learners to develop their academic and research capabilities, but also for their life skills and workforce [2]. It is a skill which learners could not only apply during their studies, but also after completing studies and during their work life.

2.1 Information literacy

According to the American's Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) [3], IL is defined as "a set of integrated abilities and skills encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning". Another authority body, the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) in

United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland have developed a core model for IL namely, the SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy Core Model for Higher Education (SCONUL Seven Pillars). The model defined information literate person as a person who understand and able to gather, use, manage, synthesize, and create information and data ethically and effectively [4].

Based on the definitions, IL requires a person to possess several skills and abilities. One of the skills is searching and retrieving information. According to SCONUL Seven Pillars, it is called gather information. Hence, proper and designated training programs

such as Digital Information Literacy Workshop must be developed to ensure most, if not all learners, in the academic institutions possess the skill of searching and retrieving information.

2.2 Digital Information Literacy Workshop

The global COVID-19 pandemic has created major changes to the structures and patterns of education in general. Almost all face-to-face activities in universities and colleges including teaching and learning have been changed to either synchronous or asynchronous online teaching. Furthermore, due to increasing demand for teaching information literacy, the capabilities of many university libraries to provide traditional face-to-face instruction are being overstretched. Online teaching or workshop is seen as an effective way to manage this situation [5]. Therefore, the "one-shot" library workshop is one of the most common delivery modes for information literacy [6]. Libraries in collaboration with faculties organized these workshop sessions to 1st semester learners at the early stage of their study in the university.

There are many differences between traditional learners and adult learners in developing and delivering IL workshops. Experience in working environment is one of the main differences. According to Gold [7, p. 467], "There is frequently a significant chasm separating the educational experience of traditional students and nontraditional students." He added that developmental and social differences such as technology, computer skills, working and family responsibilities are the reasons for a need to a different pedagogical and design in educational delivery including IL workshops.

IL workshops also referred as user education, library orientation or library instruction, is an instructional program designed to teach library users on how to locate the information they need quickly and effectively [8]. According to Teague [9], getting a snapshot of audience, careful usage of library terminology, clear communication, and good initiative in ensuring students retain what they have learned are some criteria in providing an effective IL workshop. Variation in instruction techniques is also important. This is due to learners and library users are diverse in respect of their study and life experience, computer literacy and cognitive capabilities. One survey by Matteson and Gersch [10] shows that "judging" (interpret, evaluate and use of information) is the most IL area covered and interacted by instructors during IL workshops.

2.3 Academic Motivation

Motivation is the desire to perform an action. Motivated people are those who are moved to take action in the direction of a goal, whereas unmotivated people are those who lack the urge or inspiration to act [11]. According to Deci et al. [12], the three types of motivation are autonomous (intrinsic), controlled (extrinsic), and lack of motivation (amotivation).

Intrinsic motivation is an individual's desire to engage in an activity for the satisfaction of doing so as well as for success. It is a type of action-motivation that emerges in natural settings [13]. Intrinsic motivation is regarded as an essential psychological concept linked to self-determination, academic success, and personal well-being [14]. In

learning perspective, if a learner is driven by interest and pleasure to learn, then their learning activities are driven by intrinsic motivation.

Another type of motivation, extrinsic motivation is the practice of performing duties or fulfilling obligations out of a sense of duty [15]. It is influenced by external stimuli to perform and carry out a task in a preferred or desired manner. Some examples of stimuli are rewards, punishments, pressure, appreciation, and affection. Ryan and Deci [16] argue that rewards in extrinsic motivation undermine intrinsic motivation, thus make the individual feel like they are being controlled, which is detrimental to the performance outcome.

Amotivation, meanwhile, is not a motivation to act but instead reflects a lack of intention to act [17]. It has a number of detrimental effects, including less involvement in productive activities [18], lower academic persistence [19] and lack of involvement and commitment [20].

According to Gottfried [21, p. 525], academic motivation refers to the "enjoyment of school learning characterized by a mastery orientation, curiosity, persistence, task-endogeny, and the learning of challenging, difficult, and novel tasks". Learners who are lack of motivation avoid participating in academic activities. They believe there is little or no connection between their acts in academic activities and the results of those efforts [19]. Therefore, academic motivation is very crucial to all learners to ensure that they engage in academic activities, and this will result in a higher academic outcome and performance. Sogunro [22] suggested that there is a significant association between students' motivation and their academic performance. Hence, all parties in academic institutions including the library, have to play their roles in ensuring learners are motivated in their learning.

2.4 Learners' attitude

Learning attitude is another important factor in learning success. According to Eagly and Chaiken [23], attitude is a psychological tendency that is exhibited by assessing and evaluating a certain item or entity with varying degrees of favor or disfavor. Attitude may influence an individual's choice of action, and responses to challenges, incentives, and rewards. They also suggest that attitude can be divided by three components. Eagly and Chaiken further elaborated that the three components are the cognitive component, the affective component, and the behavioral component. The cognitive component of attitude is what the individual thinks or believes about the attitude object while the affective aspect of attitude is the feelings or emotions of the individual associated with the attitude object. Meanwhile, the behavioral component is the tendency to respond in a certain way to the attitude object.

Experts also agree that the formation of attitude is experiential. People develop attitudes as a result of their life experiences. Classical conditioning, operant conditioning and observational learning are the three major learning theories used in explaining how attitude are formed [24].

Suggested by Ivan Pavlov's, classical conditioning is a procedure for modifying behavior in which repeated pairing of conditioned stimulus with an unconditioned stimulus

lus leads to the development of a conditioned response. In B.F. Skinner's Operant Conditioning theory, organisms develop the ability to link a behavior to its outcome. A positive outcome increases the likelihood that the action will be repeated in the future. Observational learning meanwhile refers to learning by "watching others and then imitating, or modeling, what they do or say" [25, para 12]. It is a type of social learning that manifests in different ways and is based on different processes. Tzu-Chi [26] suggests that exposing learners to observation learning will be helpful in enhancing students learning in online environment. Educators and librarians in academic institutions should understand and apply these 3 learning theories while planning and organizing all instructional programs including IL workshop. This will result a more effective IL workshop which may change positively learners' attitude towards learning.

In perspective of student attitude, once a positive attitude is formed, it can improve students' learning and performance. It is well known that students who display a positive attitude towards their studies and learning such as actively engaged in the learning process, tend to obtain greater learning outcomes [27]. On the other hand, a negative attitude towards studies may prevents learning to be effective and, as a result, impacts academic performance of the students [28]. Therefore, attitude is an essential element that cannot be overlooked. Depending on the individual student, the effect of attitude on students' performance might be positive or negative.

The study was undertaken with several research questions in mind: 1) The effectiveness of digital information literacy workshop in providing searching and retrieving information skill to postgraduate learners; 2) The relationship between postgraduate learners who attended the digital information literacy workshop and their academic intrinsic motivation; 3) The relationship between postgraduate learners who attended the digital information literacy workshop and the attitude towards their learning.

3 Methods

The study adopts and adapts from several existing tools in creating the survey for data collection. The first tool is a perception-based Information Literacy Self-efficacy Scale (ILSES). It is originally developed in 2006 by Kurbanoglu et al. [29]. In developing the 28-item scale, the domain in information literacy were reviewed and seven dimensions were identified. However, for this research only one dimension that is locating and accessing the resources was applied. This is due to content of this IL workshop which focuses on instructing learners in searching and retrieving various information resources from the digital library collection.

In determining the correlation of the competency taught in the IL workshop and academic motivation, Academic Motivation Scale (AMS-C 28) instruments was adopted and adapted [30]. There are seven types of constructs measured in the scale. However, only intrinsic motivation was selected in developing the survey.

Another tool that was adopted and adapted in developing the survey is Attitudes towards 4Cs in Learning Process [31]. It tries to identify the relationship between the digital IL workshop and learners' attitude towards their learning. The survey consists

of a 5-point scale of 30 items to determine the 3 constructs as mentioned in the aims of the research above.

4 Results And Discussion

The sample (n=52) are from respondents of two digital IL workshops organized in July and August 2023. The workshops were organized via online platform and were open to all postgraduate learners. Almost all of the participants were new learners. The demographic profile of the respondents indicates that 73% or 38 of the 52 respondents are female postgraduate learners. Close to half of the respondents (44.3%) are aged between 41 to 50 years old. The older age group participation is due to the level of the program (postgraduate level). Undergraduate learner population then to be of a younger age group. The largest group, 39% are from Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching program, while 12% are from the Doctor of Education program. Half of the population are from the teaching profession or seeking to join the teaching profession. Around one third of the respondents have between 16 to 20 years of experience in their current working sector.

The effectiveness of the workshop is measured based on 4 capabilities: (i) identifying resources, (ii) using search tools, (iii) using retrieving tools, and (iv) using the library services. Each of the capabilities are measured using two or three items. A total of ten items were used to measure the effectiveness of the workshop. The mean score for each item is depicted in Table 1. The item, 'Retrieve and download article journal published in the last 5 years' scored the highest mean at 4.54, while the item, 'locate resources using the library catalogue' was recorded as the lowest value, 3.67 (Table 1).

Table 1. Means of searching & retrieving skill after joining the digital IL workshop

| Item | Statement | Mean |
|------|---|------|
| 1 | I feel confident & competent to use different kinds of print sources (i.e., books, periodicals, encyclopaedias) | 4.15 |
| 2 | I feel confident & competent to use electronic information sources (e.g., Emerald, ProQuest databases) | 4.17 |
| 3 | I feel confident & competent to locate information sources in the library. | 4.06 |
| 4 | I feel confident & competent to use the library search box | 3.73 |
| 5 | I feel confident & competent to locate resources in the library using the library catalogue | 3.67 |
| 6 | I feel confident & competent to request for materials such as book and journal not owned by OUM Library | 4.27 |
| 7 | I feel confident & competent to locate 'peer-reviewed' article journal | 4.50 |
| 8 | I feel confident & competent to retrieve and download article journal published in the last 5 years. | 4.54 |
| 9 | I feel confident & competent to use 'Advanced Search' function when I am searching for a more specific topic. | 4.27 |
| 10 | I feel confident & competent to search and request print book to be sent to my Learning Centre. | 4.32 |

The mean values for the four capabilities (identifying resources, using search tools, using retrieving tools, and using the library services) are shown in Table 2. Most of the respondents show a good competency in using retrieving tools (4.44), using library services (4.30), and identifying resources (4,13). However, the distinct least competency was measured at only 3.70 for the capability in using search tools. The three items under this capability showed the lowest scores: item 3 (locate information sources in the library) at 4.06, item 4 (use library search box) at 3.73, and item 5 (locate resources in the library using the library catalogue) at 3.67.

| Scope | Mean |
|------------------------|------|
| Identifying resources | 4.13 |
| Using search tools | 3.70 |
| Using retrieving tools | 4.44 |
| Using library services | 4.30 |

Table 2. Digital IL workshop's capabilities

The results suggest that more efforts should be placed in teaching learners on how to use search tools. A hands-on session on the use of search tools will be introduced in the next workshop. A recording of the session will also be shared with the respondents of this study. A total of three tools were introduced to the postgraduate learners: discovery tool, database search tool, and online public access catalogue (OPAC).

In determining the impact of the workshop, the score 0 to 1.66 is regarded as low, 1.67 to 3.32 as medium and 3.33 to 5.0 as high. The research shows the mean value of 4.17 indicates there is a high impact of digital IL workshop towards searching and retrieving skills of the participants. The score on standard deviation (sd = 0.72) also shows the skills are clustered around the mean (Table 3).

| | Searching & retrieving skill |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Mean | 4.17 |
| Standard deviation | 0.72 |
| Minimum | 3.67 |
| Maximum | 4.54 |
| Mode | 4.0 |

Table 3. Summary dimension of searching & retrieving skill

The mean for intrinsic motivation is 3.74 (Table 4). This indicates an average intrinsic motivation among the participants of the workshops. The standard deviation shows (sd = 0.74), which also indicates the intrinsic motivation are clustered around the mean. The study also shows that the correlation of the searching & retrieving skills and intrinsic motivation, r = -0.564. It indicates that there is a moderately negative relationship between searching & retrieving skills and intrinsic motivation after the participants

joining the workshop. Therefore, motivation of learners does not influence the outcome of the workshop.

| Table 4. Summary dimension of intrinsic moti | vation and correlation with searching & retriev- |
|--|--|
| ing | skill |

| | Intrinsic motivation |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Mean | 3.72 |
| Standard deviation | 0.74 |
| Minimum | 3.5 |
| Maximum | 3.92 |
| Mode | 4.0 |
| Pearson Correlation | -0.564 |

On learners' attitude, as showed in Table 5, the mean recorded 3.73. It indicates an average learners' attitude among the participants of the workshops. The standard deviation (sd = 0.74) shows the attitude are clustered around the mean. The study also indicates that the correlation of searching & retrieving skills and learners' attitude, r = 0.013. The approximately zero value of r means that there is no correlation between searching & retrieving skills and learners' attitude. As such, the attitude of learners also does not influence the outcome of the workshop.

Table 5. Summary learners' attitude towards studies and correlation with searching & retrieving skill

| | Learners' attitude towards their studies |
|---------------------|--|
| Mean | 3.73 |
| Standard deviation | 0.74 |
| Minimum | 3.29 |
| Maximum | 3.98 |
| Mode | 4.0 |
| Pearson Correlation | 0.013 |

Future work could also expand the scope of the workshop to include additional components of information literacy such as evaluation of information and using information legally and ethically. The number of respondents which is 54 learners from the two digital IL workshops limits the scope of the research. Further study involving a larger population would be beneficial.

5 Conclusion

The digital IL workshop often help learners in improving their capability in searching and retrieving information. The impact of the two digital IL workshops that were conducted to develop the learner's skill in searching and retrieving information is discussed in this paper. Generally, the results showed a positive impact. Nevertheless, there are room for further improvements, especially in the learners' capability in using search tools. The effectiveness of the workshop can be improved further by introducing a hands-on session on the use of search tools (discovery tool, database search tool, and OPAC) in the next workshop. It is also noted, the effectiveness of the workshop is not influenced by neither the learners' intrinsically motivation nor their attitude.

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