

Information literacy on the global stage looks very different than it does in North America, and this issue of *Global Knowledge, Memory and Communication* invites those differences into the scholarship of information literacy. Information literacy exists beyond the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, adopted by the ACRL Board in 2016, and a few of the articles offer helpful critiques of the framework as a universalizable tool for information literacy. Many of the articles call for greater awareness of cultural differences, even within the same nation, when teaching IL.

“A contextual framework for primary education: fostering information literacy in Pakistan” by Syeda Hina Batool and Sheila Webber proposes an information literacy curriculum framework at the primary school level in Pakistan. Using multiple case studies, the authors explored six primary schools (public, private trust and unregistered private schools) and collected data from 12 focus groups of first and second graders through task-based activities. Findings varied, but in general the authors found that students from elite schools were more familiar with technology than their less elite peers. The framework the authors propose is specific to the educational context in Pakistan, and they invite further research.

Reysa Alenzuela, Elizabeth Fong, Jamie Bloss and Vasiti Chambers’s “Building information research skills in the Pacific Region: the University of the South Pacific Initiative” articulates that information literacy looks different in different cultures. The libraries at the USP explored a variety of information literacy models from around the world, including New Zealand’s Research Skill Development Framework (RSDF). Many non-Western cultures, for instance, have an oral tradition, whereas Western cultures (and ACRL’s notion of information literacy) prioritize writing. The authors explain, “As Pacific consciousness has always been a thrust of the institution, cultural context and personalistic approach is equally important”.

In “An information literacy teaching model for Vietnam’s schools,” Huyen Ngo, Alison Pickard and Geoffrey Walton write about changes in educational practice in Vietnam’s schools from a traditional, memorization-based and teacher-centered model of education to a constructivist model and how information literacy might fit into that context. This push toward constructivism is influenced by international factors, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Ngo, Pickard and Walton write:

Instead of identifying IL as a set of skills, this point of view [IL as an integral part of social practice] recognizes IL in its relationship with the information setting, which has a strong influence on how people understand information.

The article promotes a culture-specific approach to information literacy.

“Multi-lingual and multi-cultural information literacy; perspectives, models, and good practice” by Shohana Nowrin, Lyn Robinson and David Bawden also calls for a more multi-lingual and multi-cultural conception of information literacy and suggests that the ACRL Framework:

[...] may also be lacking in their treatment of cultural differences, because of their emphasis on academic and library-related concepts, and also because of the relatively limited importance which they attach to collective and social practices.

A multi-lingual, multi-cultural conception of information literacy is more important than ever, as increasingly there is a lack of national linguistic homogeneity. They also write, “relatively few writers have used any recognized framework in analyzing cultural



differences in the context of the development of IL.” Their article examines six issues that have implications for multi-cultural context: “individuals and groups; content of IL instruction; specific and generic IL; IL models; pedagogical models; and gamification.” They conclude that “the need for multi-lingual and multi-cultural IL is great and growing, and more evidence of good practice is urgently needed”.

In “Information literacy assessment of incoming students in an information studies graduate program,” Charlene Al-Qallaf looks at the state of information literacy in incoming information studies graduate students at Kuwait University. She concludes that university students have a superficial understanding of information literacy and that more comprehensive information literacy programs at the undergraduate level are needed.

“Global information literacy: a content analysis of three journals” by Rayla Tokarz and Rosalind Bucy explores three information literacy journals to discover the countries and themes most represented in the literature. Unsurprisingly, North America, especially the USA, is overrepresented in these three journals, two of which are international. The authors call for more international collaborations to better understand information literacy’s manifestation across cultures.

As this collection of articles demonstrates, information literacy varies across languages and cultures. There needs to be more than one standard or framework that guides it on its way.

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