

The design and implementation of an information literacy training course that integrated Information and Library Science conceptions of information literacy, educational theory and information behaviour research: a Tanzanian pilot study. Mark Hepworth and Evans Wema, Loughborough University

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Abstract

This paper reviews the implementation of an Information Literacy Training course at the University of Dar Es Salaam in Tanzania. The training lasted seven days and involved Masters students from the Faculty of Education. The course was created as part of a PhD research project on information literacy that was undertaken by the second author of this paper at the Department of Information Science at Loughborough University. The objective was to develop a training course that inculcated information literacy and could be implemented by staff in the library. The success of the course was therefore partly judged on whether it effectively enabled knowledge transfer. This was tested by involving librarians in the pilot, and who took the entire course, and then seeing whether they were able to effectively implement the course themselves. This paper explores the implementation of the information literacy training programme attended by Master students from the Faculty of Education at the University of Dar Es Salaam. The course was innovative in that it integrated knowledge from information behaviour research and educational theory with current perspectives of information literacy from Information and Library Science. The style of training was influenced by the pedagogical theories of Kolb and Vygotsky that stress the importance of experiential and reflective learning and mediated communication. The notion that learning information literacy is more akin to learning a culture rather than skills and that learners are active participants in the learning process further emphasised the need for communication and sharing of learning throughout the course. All stages of the course were evaluated using quizzes, exercises, group reflection and presentations that related to each stage in the course. Trainees' knowledge of information literacy was evaluated before and after the course to provide an indication of changes in knowledge. A review of the course content and its rationale is given here, challenges are identified, and questions about future initiatives are raised. The course, judging from the various forms of feedback, was effective. It also enabled the

librarians to run subsequent courses, including the training of Masters students described in this paper. Hence, the programme proved successful in terms of knowledge transfer. Keywords: Information literacy training, educational theory, information behaviour, knowledge transfer, teaching, independent learning, information skills.