Computer literacy and information literacy essays example

The ability to use any computer program effectively reflects a person's literacy in computers. The ability to use the computer and its technology efficiently, right from elementary skills to advanced programming and problem solving shows that a person is computer literate. With people and organizations becoming dependent on computers, it is imperative that improving computer skills can help the individual and the benefit the organization where they work.

Information literacy on the other hand is the ability to find, identify and evaluate a problem effectively with the available resources. Information literacy is a valuable skill to possess as it improves critical thinking and ensures an individual's economic and social well being in this complex world. Both computer and information literacy go hand in hand in serving an individual by helping him/her improve skills using technology effectively (Mitra, 2005).

Being a computer literate can benefit individuals in many ways. For example, a student is able to procure a lot of information for school or college products, as he or she is able to find the information they need using technology effectively. A businessman on the other hand is able to process details of his work or business if he knows how to use the technology at hand. The same is true of information literacy. As information literacy is the technic and skill learned by a literate in order to solve problems using a wide range of information tools, it has now risen to a national level where in governments have begun to recognize the need for independent sources of information and the need for understanding of information's impact in society. In fact, the United States even proclaimed October as National

Information Literacy Awareness Month (Merritt, 2005).

The common attitude towards the concept of computer and information literacy is a sense of awe over the vast sources of information that can be accessed. There is a lot of advantage in using the computer skillfully and understand the technology behind it. Being skilled in computers ensures an individual's success in an organization. However, there is also the fear of an information overload. Being literate in computers makes the individual aware of a wide range of information is accessible. There is also the danger of misusing information or using the wrong information. For instance, if a person is sick, the first thought is to find information through the computer about his ailment. As there is a lot of information in the computer, the individual can interpret available information that is not remotely connected to his symptoms. This can affect the individual as he will continue to look for more information and this may prove to be detrimental to his wellbeing (Mitra, 2005).

There are both advantages and disadvantages in using technology. People have to work effectively with information and use it to remember, understand, apply, analyze and evaluate. With information overload, people have to gain new skills in order to handle it. People have also begun to expect a lot from technology. This includes reading websites, using search engines, researching on the Internet, email, chat, social sites and others (Merritt, 2005).

According to Bob Berkowitz and Mike Eiserberg, regarding information literacy is that it is important to understand the problems for which information is sought, that is, about the topic and what kind of information is

needed and where it can be found. Then the sources of information have to be found through the electronic or print media. Once the material is selected it has to be analyzed if the information is useful and then if it is useful it has to be organized and processed. By organizing the authors believe that there should be discrimination between fact and opinion, interpreting the data collected and organizing ideas and information logically (Wallace, 2005). UNESCO's Shigeru Aoyagi has drawn parallels between the organization's information goals and defining the concept of information literacy concept and identifying its role in transforming communities. All the experts are of the uniform view that the concept of information literacy will soon be accepted as a cornerstone of education and the information society (Merritt, 2005).

Meanwhile, information infrastructure has been making inroads in developing an alternative approach to infrastructure design by establishing local solutions and supporting local practices that are linked together. The major components of information infrastructure include the Internet, health systems and corporate systems. The information infrastructure can shape work routines and is an important factor in shaping organizational practices (Wallace, 2005).

The Internet is one of the most powerful technological revolutions of our time. It has enabled better communication between people and organizations. It has a great reach among businesses, government and other regulatory bodies and provides a platform to get access to people in different ways. Another advantage of the Internet is that businesses are able to access their applications from anywhere at any time of the day. Global

customer relationship has become possible and thriving due to the emergence of the Internet. It helps build valuable relationships over time and expand customer base. Some of the commercial issues that arise with information and automation is that enforcing legal and contractual rights and managing privacy issues are some of the problems that arise with the use of the Internet. Another issue is anonymity that cannot be contested in protecting privacy (Wallace, 2005).

Management information system is a powerful tool that helps in decision-making relating to the data the company generates. In order to address common issues it is preferable to get a system that will help in improving the performance of the company. First the company has to decide what the system needs to do for their company. Most information systems track only fundamental data and display on reports.

Another problem faced by companies is the maintenance of up-to-date and the provision of data. Usability is another problem that has to be considered. A powerful system for a company could go to waste if the employees are not able or skilled enough to use it. If the user interface is complicated, the management information system can fail. So it is essential that if the users want to generate reports they should be able to get it with minimal training and little effort. Researchers have always drawn on theories from other disciplines like general management, economics and computer science to help in theories and conceptual foundations (Wallace, 2005).

Computer literacy and information literacy are an essential part of today's world. One cannot be singled out from the other. In order to get sufficient information, to be computer literate is important. The computer can be used

skillfully to find out any number of information in any field. Right from schools, business organizations and government agencies, people rely on information from computers and the Internet. Information systems are evolving each year with better technology to enable better forms of communication. Research is being conducted in all spheres of technology for better information management. The future has a lot more in store for the world in terms of better technology and other information resources.

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