



# INFORMATION LITERACY IN ZIMBABWEAN PUBLIC LIBRARIES : TOWARDS INFORMATION LITERATE COMMUNITIES

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# OVERVIEW

- Background
- Purpose
- Objectives
- Methodology
- Results and Conclusions
- Recommendations



# BACKGROUND

- Significant growth in the internet penetration rate [49.8 % as at March 2016 (Postal and Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe) ]
- Information literacy is the key to long learning (Wooliscroft, 1997, Godwin 2003 and Tettey 2013).
- Public libraries are central and critical in the information literacy matrix (Hall 2010, Kahlert 2000).
- Nhendo and Musemburi (2016) study indicated that;
  - most public libraries in Zimbabwe have no formal user education or instruction programmes in place.
  - public librarians interviewed were not competent and experienced in Information Literacy theory and practice.



# PURPOSE

- This paper sought to make a case for information literacy training in public libraries and identify strategies for developing effective information literacy training programmes in Zimbabwe public libraries.



# OBJECTIVES

- To assess the information literacy training needs for public library users in Zimbabwe.
- To determine approaches to information literacy training applicable to the public library set up in Zimbabwe.
- To identify challenges faced by public libraries in developing and implementing information literacy programmes in Zimbabwe.
- To make recommendations for advancing the development and implementation of effective information literacy programmes in Zimbabwean public libraries.



# METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research approach was employed for this study.

- Document analysis
- Observations



# RESULTS



# IL TRAINING NEEDS FOR PUBLIC LIBRARY USERS

(Whitworth 2009, Lai 2011, Mahdizadeh & Siamian 2011)

- Searching the Internet
- Searching the catalogue
- Use of e-mails
- Searching databases
- Using computers
- Evaluating sources
- Social media use
- Word processing (Word, Excel, Access)
- Internet safety
- Subject-specific training (health, legal)
- Resume writing
- Study skills
- Knowledge of reference sources





# APPROACHES TO IL TRAINING IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Digital unite offers free online resources for those wishing to teach IT skills to others.

The screenshot shows the Digital Unite website interface. At the top, the URL is <https://digitalunite.com/digital-inclusion-services>. The header features the Digital Unite logo with the tagline "unleash your DIGITAL talents" and navigation links for "Login" and "Register". A yellow star graphic promotes the "Digital Champions Network" with the text "Join the much-acclaimed Digital Champions Network! Find out more >>". The main navigation bar includes "Home", "Guides & Support", "Housing Associations", and "Digital Inclusion Services", along with a search bar. The content area is titled "Digital inclusion services" and includes a quote from Bryan: "With Bryan's help I can now log on to a computer and search the internet". The text describes Digital Unite's long history of providing digital skills training and its flexible approach to digital literacy. A photo shows an older man being assisted with a computer. Below this, it states that all products and services are practical, sustainable, and scalable. On the right, a section titled "The Digital Champions Network" features a quote: "It definitely makes me feel like a Digital Champion" and a "Find out more" link. A "Computer tuition" section is also visible at the bottom.

# APPROACHES TO IL TRAINING IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES CONTD...

## Wales

- Welsh Information Literacy Project (WILP) initiated in April 2012.
- The WILP had a concept of Public libraries IL Champions who are disseminating training to public library staff and users.
- Champions ensure local IL strategies and plans are consistent with the national policies developed by WILP.



# APPROACHES TO IL TRAINING IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES CONTD...

- Leeds Library and Information Service has a programme of around 20 ICT learning sessions in its Learn in the Library booklet (LCC 2012) which is available to download.
- About 600 sessions are delivered every quarter to 40 public libraries over 1000 people attend.
- These sessions are designed to improve the learner's ICT competencies for the general audience.



**Discover Digital  
with Leeds Libraries**

For more information visit  
[www.leeds.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/libraries)  
f leedslibraries t @leedslibraries

 Leeds Library and  
Information Service  
*The world at your fingertips*

# IL TRAINING APPROACHES FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES

- Introduction to the Internet searching
- Basic computer instruction
- Introduction to e-mail
- Web awareness/Web safety
- Introduction to databases
- Workshops
- Children-specific courses
- Presentations/visits to organizations, schools, etc
- Host school groups
- On-demand to small groups
- Senior-specific courses
- Subject-specific training .
- Library tours
- Homework help
- Study skills
- Training of volunteers in literacy education
- Research skills



# CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING IL PROGRAMMES

- Financial resources constraints
  - insufficient staffing
  - space constraints
  - inadequate ICT equipment
- Lack of understanding of IL
- Staff attitude (librarians often do not see themselves as or want to be teachers )
- Lack of competent librarians to train IL
- Diverse clientele



# RECOMMENDATIONS

- IL Continuous Professional Development programmes/workshops for public library staff.
- Collaborative partnerships between Academic Libraries and Public Libraries.
- City Councils must honor its role in ensuring that public libraries are sufficiently funded.
- Refurbishment of the public libraries into 21<sup>st</sup> century spaces .
- Responding to call for proposals on Public Library Development.



# RECOMMENDATIONS CONTD...



**Information Literacy Toolkit for Public Librarians**



*Thank  
you*





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