



# Promoting Media and Information Literacy: A Case Study of Bangladesh Public Sector

Dilara Begum  
Librarian, Head of Library  
East West University  
Dhaka, Bangladesh

# What is Media and Information Literacy?

“Media and Information Literacy consists of the knowledge, the attitudes, and the sum of the skills needed to know when and what information is needed; where and how to obtain that information; how to evaluate it critically and organize it once it is found; and how to use it in an ethical way.”

**IFLA**

# Information Literacy in Bangladesh

- In Bangladesh the term 'Information Literacy' is not a popular one. Peoples are confused about this term.

# Information Literacy Programmes Conducted in Bangladesh

## **Workshop:**

- International Workshop on Information Literacy, Organized by Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB), Sponsored by International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), 22-26 June 2009
- Workshop on Information Literacy, Organized by East West University, Bangladesh from 05-06 January 2010
- International Workshop on Health Information Literacy, organized by East West University, Sponsored by International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) from 27-30 July 2011
- International Workshop on Health Information Literacy (2<sup>nd</sup> Phase), Organized by East West University, Sponsored by International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) from 12-13 February 2012

# Information Literacy Programmes Conducted in Bangladesh

## **Seminar:**

- Seminar on Media and Information Literacy, Organized by East West University and University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh, 13 December 2010

# Information Literacy Programmes Conducted in Bangladesh

## Training:

- The Centre for Information Studies, Bangladesh (CIS,B) and United Nations Information Centre (UNIC), Dhaka, jointly organised a two days training course on 'Information Literacy and UN literacy' for the students of Haji Md Ekhlash Uddin Bhuiyan School at Ekhlashnagar in Rupganj, Narayanganj (south of Dhaka) in 2010
- Centre for Information Studies Bangladesh (CIS,B) conducted another training programme on Information Literacy during 23-24 January 2010 at Ratanpur Abdullah High School, Nabinagar, Brahmanbaria



# International Information Literacy Survey Project

To observe and collect baseline data on the existing behaviors, attitudes, habits and practices of young people, adults and senior citizens, all of whom need to search for knowledge, information and data they need, in all mediums and formats - - audio, video, printed text, numeric, etc.

# International Information Literacy Survey Project

- The overall goal of the project is to collect baseline data on the information, media, digital and ICT literacy behaviors, attitudes, habits and practices of university students in selected countries.



# RTI ACT

The RTI Act 2009 in Bangladesh has some unique features to guarantee the right of the citizens. Information commission of Bangladesh is conducting campaign to grow awareness among people about the right of people to get information from Govt Offices and NGO through mobile phone, rally, seminar etc.

# Survey of Peoples' Awareness of Govt Information

- The study was conducted on 100 respondents who live in Dhaka district at different location. The gender profile of the respondents shows that the majority of the respondents are male. Most of the respondents are private service workers.

# Survey continue

- Majority of the respondents are graduate and their income level range is Taka 20,000 to 30000 per month. With the help of a structured interview format, the respondents were asked for their views. Due to some practical difficulties in accessing these respondents at their workplaces, the interviews were conducted door to door.

# Objectives of the study

- The main objectives of this study are to
- Assess the media and information literacy of educated people of Bangladesh
- Identifying the obstacles for implementing media and information literacy in Bangladesh, and
- Put forward recommendations for enriching and strengthening the media and information literacy campaign in the country

# Analysis of data and responses - I

- As the analysis shows, the majority of the respondents agreed that media can play a vital role to improvement of access to information will improve transparency and accountability of the Government.
- The most interesting information is that people are not getting most of the information from Internet (45%).
- There is a large information gap between government and public information delivery (74%)
- The most important finding is that there is no information desk at the government offices (80%)

# Analysis of data and responses-2

- It shows that 86% of the respondents believe that receiving information is fundamental human rights.
- 70% believe that the overall condition of Bangladesh is not conducive to receiving their desired information.
- A large majority of the respondents (78%) think that, government workers are neither motivated nor prepared to provide information to the common people.
- 68% respondents are of the opinion that, bureaucracy is the major roadblock towards receiving information.

# Analysis of data and responses - 3

- 25% indicate that, weak telecommunication infrastructure of the country is to blame for this predicament.
- Other notable responses are: widespread illiteracy, corruption, political turmoil, lack of policy support from the government, apathy of Govt and NGO workers, lack of proper legal support, weakness of mass media, etc.
- 58% respondents believe that, launching a massive awareness campaign in educational institutions is the key to overcoming these problems and to make people more media and information literate.

# Analysis of data and responses - 4

- A large majority of them think that, the government must link media and information literacy to their ongoing campaign for creating a Digital Bangladesh by the year 2021.



# Media and Information Literacy in rural area


Although there is no reliable survey in large scope in rural area, it is believed by the information specialist that Media Information literacy rate is comparatively lower in rural area than urban area. In the recent years, number of internet user have increased even in rural area for availability of mobile internet and people themselves learn literacy concept.

# Recommendations

- Government should take proactive role in promoting media and information literacy in Bangladesh.
- To enable a large number of people use these media for receiving their required information, the country's telecommunications infrastructure must be strengthened
- An all-out campaign should be taken to introduce media and information literacy studies in all educational institutions including schools, colleges and universities.
- Steps need to be taken to lessen and gradually remove bureaucratic complexities in the govt. offices and NGO sector.

## Recommendations

- Library and Information professionals should play vital role for promoting media and information literacy under the leadership of Library Association of Bangladesh (LAB) and other professional organizations.
- New and innovative ways of disseminating information to the different cross sections of people must be devised.
- Adequate funds need to be allocated and necessary logistics and policy supports for carrying out media and information literacy campaigns.



Thank You