

Information-Seeking Behavior in Multilingual Digital Libraries: A Study of the Saudi Digital Library

Hany M. Alsalmi^a

^aFlorida State University, U.S.

hma16c@my.fsu.edu

ABSTRACT

Few studies have investigated the information-seeking behavior of multilingual digital libraries accessed by Arabic users for academic purposes. This dissertation investigates and reports on the user's information-seeking behavior of the Saudi Digital Library (SDL) in terms of successfulness in finding Arabic and English resources. The SDL, a consortium of databases and electronic resources, provides services to Saudi universities and their faculty, staff, and students inland and abroad. Four questions guided this research to reflect on the SDL users' search experience. Stimulated Recall method is applied in this dissertation. A convenience sample of eight SDL users' participants, who completed three imposed search tasks and then were interviewed. The desired number of participants was 12, but due to the spread of COVID-19 and following the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) rules, it was decided to stop data collection to ensure proper social distancing and stay-at-home orders. The interviews were in Arabic and then translated and transcribed into English. Data were analyzed via NVivo 12, and thematic analysis has been applied. Results reveal a lack of accuracy in finding relevant Arabic resources and a lack of accessibility in English resources. Users faced difficulties while completing the search tasks due to technical and human challenges. Most participants were not able to find related results in Arabic. The dissertation suggests implementing a more robust multilingual search system and provides 24/7 support for SDL users. The study contributes to the literature regarding SDL users' behavior and Arabic users' information-seeking, which is understudied.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

Information seeking; Cross-language information retrieval; Academic libraries.

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

Multilingual digital library; Information-seeking behavior; Arabic search.