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Information literacy competencies and social media as a source of information for integration of newcomers

Study in progress

ABSTRACT

This poster presents research in progress. The research aims at exploring the concept of information literacy from the women refugees' perspective while using social media platforms (i.e., Facebook and Instagram) for accessing everyday life information needs in a new host country. The initial results show how women use some Facebook groups and specific Instagram hashtags to increase their information literacy competencies on social media and get benefits for job-seeking, health-management and learning language. They also face information overload and misinformation on these social media platforms and need to get more information literacy skills in order to avoid these challenges. 20 semi-structured interviews are conducted with women refugees in Sweden and 10 more interviews are planned to be conducted in Finland in near future. The interview data is analysed with the content analysis method. This research has potential to contribute to information and library science field and migration studies and help organizations dealing with refugees' well-being and integration plans in Nordic countries.

INFORMATION LITERACY

Information literacy is understood as an information practice which is organized by certain skills to understand the context (Lloyd, 2017)

PRELIMINARY RESULT

- They use social media (particularly Facebook and Instagram) as an information source
- They follow different groups on Facebook such as, "Syrians in Sweden" or "Jobs for Immigrants in Sweden" and follow hashtags on Instagram to learn about local language and culture such as, #Swedishculture #svenskpoddar #learnSwedish #swedishforforeigners #hälsa-svenska

OBJECTIVE

The study aims to understand how refugee women use information literacy competencies to access and use every day information on social media platforms in Sweden.

CONCLUSIONS

In this study, participants use social media as a source of information and a channel to read, seek, and share information. Information literacy are the competencies that participants use to navigate the sources and manage the information flow such as, Instagram hashtags. They also lack right information literacy competencies according to the new culture. They need to improve their literacy skills in order to use social media more efficiently for seeking relevant information.