Health Information Literacy in Changing Media Landscape

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Meet the Top Scientist: Metabolism, Obesity and Weight Management
Biocenter Oulu, University of Oulu
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Content of my Presentation

- Media landscape related to health information
- Literacies in the context of health
- HIM-Oulu & Åbo studies on health information literacy
- Future directions for research
Or

Is It?
Are these health claims outdated?

Is our contemporary health information environment an outcome of ’medialization’?

If so, who has the authority to present relevant health claims?
Aim of my Presentation
To describe the conceptions of health literacy (HL), eHealth literacy (eHL) and health information literacy (HIL) incl. related measures in relation to the development of media and their authority in society.

To reflect these changes in the light of the empirical studies on health information literacy (HIL) conducted by the researchers of Health Information Mastering, HIM-Oulu&Åbo from 2008 to present.
The degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.


Basic reading and writing skills, working knowledge of computers, a basic understanding of science, and an appreciation of the social context that mediates how online health information is produced, transmitted, and received.

Health Information Literacy

A set of capabilities and skills that enables individuals to specify their health information needs and to seek, retrieve, evaluate, and use health information to make adequate health decisions.


Combines two constructs from different research traditions: “health literacy” and “information literacy”.

Research draws on theories and methodologies from both fields.
Literacy (reading and writing) including numeracy essential to understand health information.

Relate to the concept of health literacy (HL) and first measures introduced for screening patients in health care settings.

Often one-way information flow (from sender to receiver) based on the mathematical theory of communication (see Shannon & Weaver 1948).

Easy to identify the cognitive authority of information sources.

In Information Studies the horizon of information sources also includes people with a variety of roles from whom a patient or client of health care services or an individual in his/her everyday life contexts needs and receives information (and can also give information to them).

Information flow semi-interactive typically.

Together with print and digital media relate to the concept of health information literacy (HIL) and when used in everyday life contexts, to the concept of everyday health information literacy (EHIL) (Niemelä et al. 2012).

Besides printed media, influential people can have cognitive authority of information (Wilson 1983).
Digital literacy essential to deal and cope with health information provided via the internet and by all applications of social media.

Relates to the concept of eHealth literacy (eHL) and measures introduced (Huhta et al. 2018).

Multidimensional information flow based on interaction, includes information giving and receiving from a variety of information sources.

Multivoiced cognitive authority of information.
Social Media Applications

SEE: https://markfaul.wordpress.com/tag/mapping/
Who knows what is healthy when being part and acting in the contemporary media environment...
EHIL Studies among Different Populations
<table>
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<tr>
<td>EHIL</td>
<td>Namibian first year university students (n=271) (Namibian study, Huotari et al. 2016)</td>
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<td>in</td>
<td>Finnish call-up-aged men (n=1,450) (MOPO-studies, Hirvonen et al. 2012, 2015)</td>
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<td>Different</td>
<td>Finnish adults with an increased risk for metabolic syndrome (n=571) (PreDiabEx-study, Enwald et al. 2016)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Older adults (n= 918) (Gasel-study, Enwald et al., 2018)</td>
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<td>Groups</td>
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Interventions with the Aspect of EHIL

→ PrevMetSyn consortium studies

→ PreDiabEx study
Or
Is It?
CogAHealth-studies, namely, our current Academy project focusing on cognitive authority of health information environments of children and young people (school health education, free-time, the web) (see www.cogahealth.fi)

Authority distributed both in school classrooms and web-discussions of young people but critical assessment of information sources is rare. However, young people are aware of norms of assessment and have multiliteracy competences. (Hirvonen & Palmgren-Neuvonen 2019, Hirvonen et al. 2019.)
Health information literacy is a wider level competence, that is, a social phenomena, rather than an individual’s capability and skills to deal with information.

Suggested that HIL is a social practice that takes place in different types of situations.

Therefore, focus should be placed on values and norms that influence people’s information practices in different everyday life contexts of health and health behaviour.

This may increase our understanding about effective interventions to modify people’s health related behaviour.
References


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