Information literacy impact framework

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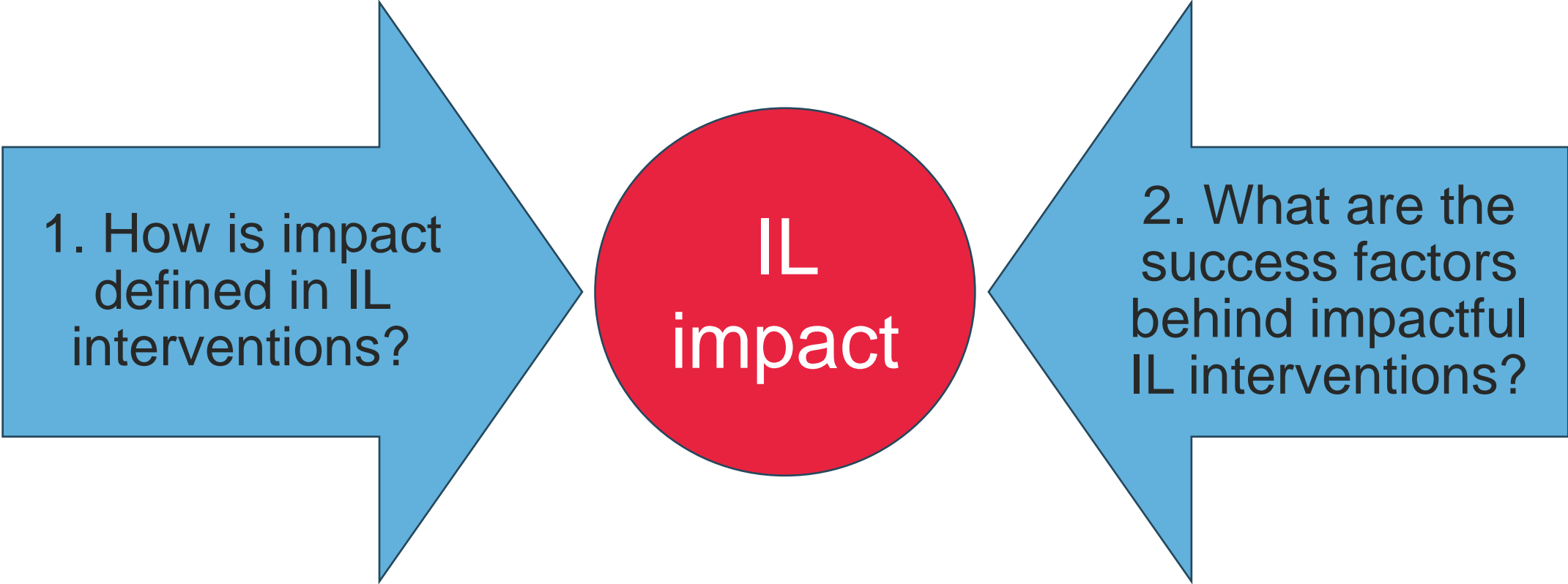
Background and context

- **Aim**: produce a scoping review of the literature reporting on IL impact.

- Developed in association with MILA and informed by UK Government's Online Media Literacy Strategy.

- It was completed in April-July 2022.

Rationale

- The impact of IL interventions across non-educational settings is not well understood.
- This is in part because there is no agreed definition of IL intervention impact and there are no set parameters to guide impact assessments.
- This project therefore explores the meanings of IL impact and the success factors associated with IL impact in practice.

Research questions

1. How is impact defined in IL interventions?

IL impact

2. What are the success factors behind impactful IL interventions?

Methodology

Development of keywords

N=170

Drawing up a longlist of impact-focussed IL research

From 3861 papers to 26 items for rigorous review

N=6177

Database searches: LISTA & Web of Science

Recency filtering: focus on results from 2005 onwards

Filtering of results that do not contain 'IL' in title or abstract

N=3707

N=3816
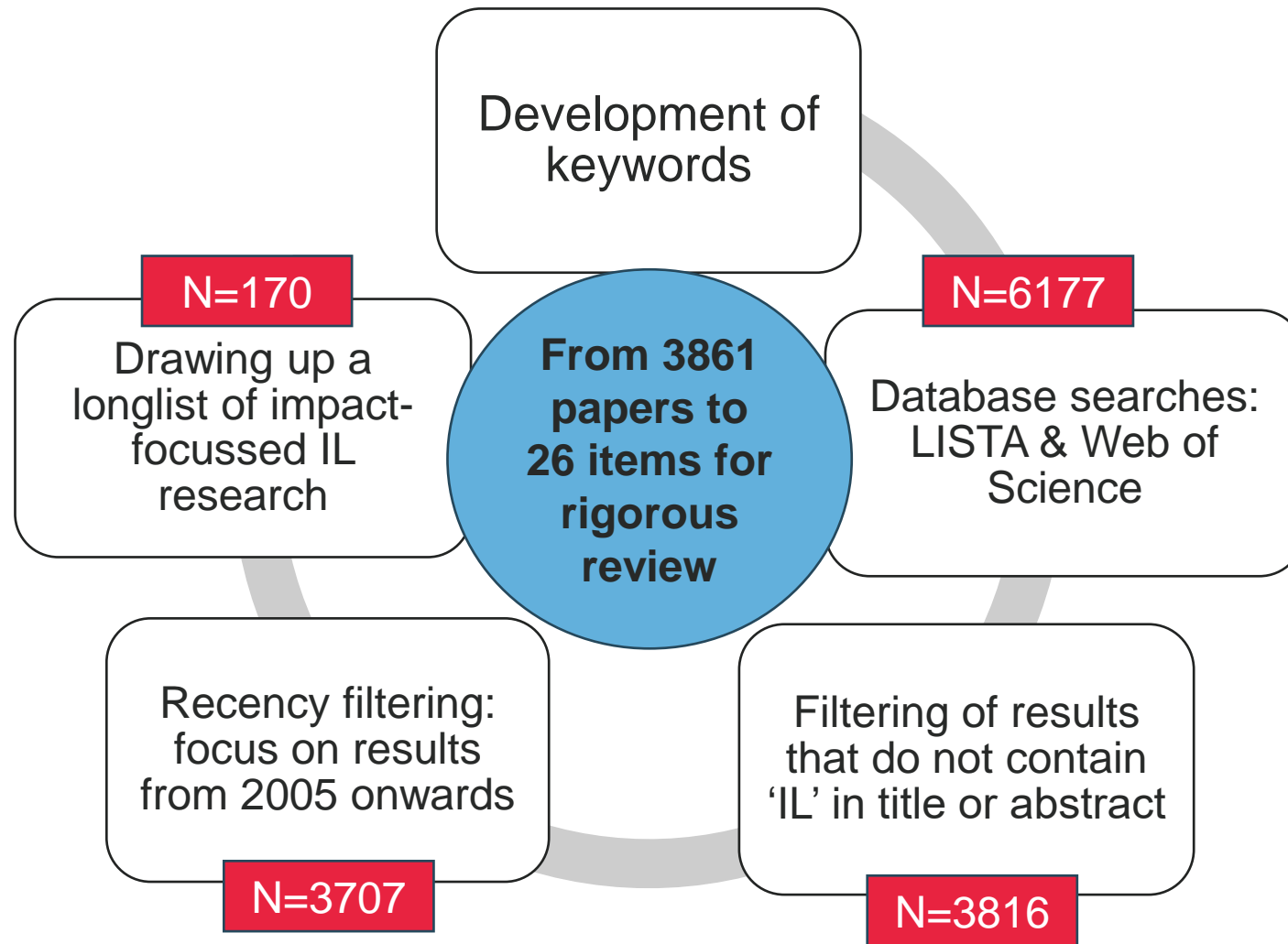
Methodology: some considerations

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- Working definition of IL impact: the outcome of an IL intervention.

- Flexibility in interpretation: across several contexts, outcomes may not always be seen as 'impact'; phenomena may not be described as 'interventions' .

- Classification: by **geography, context and method** of study

- Scoring: by **significance, quality and rigor** (SQR) scores, to generate the longlist.

Classification of papers

Geography	Long-list	Final sample	Context	Long-list	Final sample	Method of study	Long-list	Final sample
Europe	38	12	Education	91	15	Quantitative	64	11
Americas	56	7	Library	22	3	Mixed	18	8
Africa	14	2	Workplace	11	3	Qualitative	20	4
Asia	18	4	Everyday	5	2	Literature review	9	0
Oceania	11	1	Health	10	2	NA/none	59	3
Global	4	0	Citizenship	3	1	--	--	--
NA/not stated	29	0	Conceptual	1	0	--	--	--
--	--	--	NA/not stated	27	0	--	--	--
Totals	170	26	Totals	170	26	Totals	170	26

Impact assessment themes

- Formal and purposeful impact assessment is rarely performed.

- Long-term impact is rarely measured.

- Impact assessment that is reported is most often found in institutions (in education and to a lesser extent in the library).

- Only a few contributions discussed the impact assessment: Crawford (2013), Markless and Streatfield (2017).
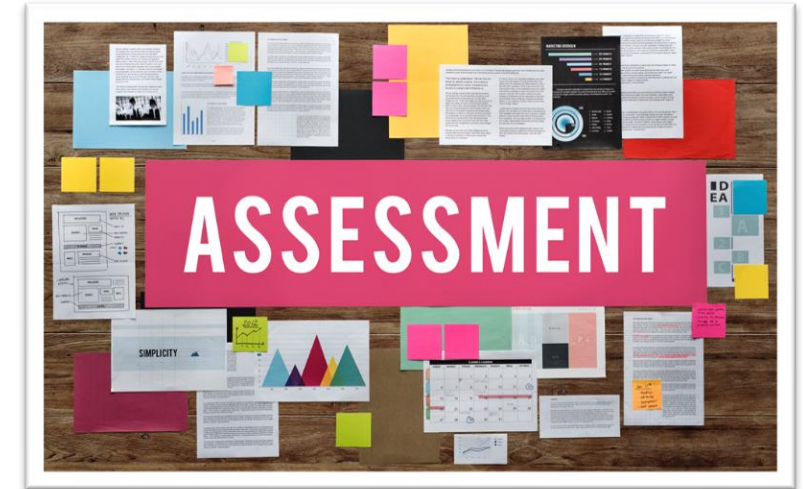

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Findings: defining successful impact in IL interventions

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In the literature, impact has been defined not in terms of **outcomes** but by considering **outputs:**

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- Doney (2006) evaluated increases in numbers of IL-education sessions, literature searches and book-issues, rather than showing that healthcare outcomes had improved.

- Impact is not defined as beneficial societal impact but merely as the result (planned or not) of an intervention.

- Papers do not report how impacts are generated and evaluated.

Findings: defining successful impact in IL interventions

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Success factors

1. Evaluation should be around effectiveness and outcomes.

2. Choice of clear frameworks and structures to measure impact.

3. Ensuring integration and relevance of the intervention.

4. Collaboration between stakeholders.

5. Design of content and delivery methods.

6. Repetition and follow-up.

7. Management buy-in and budget.

1. Evaluation should be around effectiveness and outcomes

- Markless and Streatfield (2017, p. 113) strongly suggest that people running IL interventions should not simply collect 'busyness statistics' (i.e. outputs).

- It is necessary to understand the nature and extent of interventions' impacts.

- Where possible outcomes should be measured using substantiated tools (Crawford, 2013).

2. Choice of clear frameworks and structures to measure impact

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- Frameworks and structures to bolster the assessment of IL impact.

- Linked to clear, evaluable objectives focussed on participants.

For instance: scales have been used by e.g. Seifi et al (2020) who based their intervention on SCONUL (2011) and Kulthau (2003).

3. Ensuring integration and relevance of the intervention

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- IL is context-dependent so IL interventions must be integrated into their contexts.

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For instance: Hopkins and Julian (2009) report on an intervention that was administered to undergraduates. It was found that IL intervention should take into account what students already know.

4. Collaboration between stakeholders

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- Collaboration between IL intervention workers and others can be undertaken to integrate IL interventions into workplaces and teaching.

- Crawford (2013) recommends collaboration around national policies.

- Middleton's (2005) project included collaboration between lecturers and library staff.

5. Design of content and delivery methods

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- Few of the papers describing interventions gave clear detail of their content and delivery to enable others to reproduce them.

- Some had given details of the frameworks that informed their approach: one thoroughly detailed the intervention in an annex.

6. Repetition and follow-up

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- Several papers advocate repeating or reinforcing IL interventions, because IL learning soon fades without such support.

- Delayed post-testing is beneficial, as is testing before and immediately after an intervention.

- Ahmad et al. (2020) state that workplace IL training programmes should be conducted at least twice yearly.

7. Management buy-in and budget

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- Impact assessment requires support from management, including budget.

- Ahmad et al. (2020) showed that developing an innovation mindset needs investment in information-processing capabilities.

Next steps

'Information Literacy & Society' project

1. Identify core research into the role that IL plays for different user groups in society

2. Identify core research into the barriers/enablers to shaping an information literate population

3. Map research methodologies used in the literature and which appear to be most effective at delivering societal change.

Some preliminary results on
blogs.napier.ac.uk/social-informatics

Media and Information Literacy Alliance

CILIP The library and information association

Thank you - get in touch!

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And visit our Social Informatics research blog at
https://blogs.napier.ac.uk/social-informatics

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