Library User Education and Training Needs. A Case of Nyeri National Polytechnic – Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The library holds a central place in learning institution and its main goal is provide resource for teaching, research, publishing, and innovation. This study sought to find out the effect of library user education on access and use of library services and resources. The study used a descriptive research design. The totaltarget population was 640, comprising of 600 students, 30 lecturers and 10 librarians. Stratified sampling technique was used to categorize sample into student's, lecturers and librarians. The Krejci and Morgan formula was used to calculate a sample size of 240 respondents. Data were collected using questionnaires, observation checklists, and field notes. Qualitative data were thematically analyzed and the StatisticalPackage for the Social Science (SPSS) was used to analyze quantitative data. The study observed that Nyeri National Polytechnic promotes fairness in the use of library, the extent in use of library resources, depends largely on users' skill and knowledge of information search and retrieval and that at Nyeri National Polytechnic, there is increased access of information needed by library users after holding of promotion campaigns. The study concludes that library user education, library policies and library promotion all had a positive impact and on utilization of library services and sources in Nyeri National Polytechnic. Based onthe study findings this study recommends that the management of technical training institutes should comeup with policies that touch all areas of library operations and educate the users about the policies.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Teachers require various kinds of information for teaching and research for imparting knowledge in students and self-development. To achieve these, the right information must be available for the right person at the right time in its appropriate format, which is the responsibility of the library. Accessibility of information sources is very important (Ajith, 2019). The more accessible information sources are, the more likely theyare to be used. Students tend to use information sources that require the least effort to access and this can be eased by offering user education programs. The quality of teaching, research, and community services of teachers in any institution depends on information sources and services. Information accessibility andutilization are essential to the teaching, research, and service activities of students.

Ajith (2019) was able to show that students who used library services and resources for project citations reported a significant improvement in their critical thinking abilities. Troy (2017) found a positive correlation between student's academic achievement and the use of library resources and services such as catalog, seeking assistance from library staff, and using different library materials such as electronic resources, journal articles, books, and reference works. According to Anyaoku (2015) academic libraries'

performance in response to research, which demonstrates that library usage contributes to the academic achievements of students.

The three key aspects include; availability of resources, accessibility, and use of the resources.

Across the globe, higher learning institutions are ensuring access to library resources a technique of improving education. In the United Kingdom, Muir, Spacey, Cooke, and Creaser (2016) observed thatlibrary resources play and essential role in supplementing the educational needs of students. In India, Sinha (2016), found that library user education has a positive impact on the quality of students' education. Further, the study established that user education is paramount for the effective utilization of library resources. Similarly, Suleiman (2018) in Malaysia also reaffirm that user education program is useful to students bothin caring out a class assignment and in their overall academic performance.

A survey by Asemi and Riyahiniya (2016) investigated the relationships between awareness and the use of digital resources among students at Isfahan University of Medical Sciences. The results indicated that 70 percent of students were aware of digital resources, but only 69 percent of them have used them; 62 percent were aware of offline databases, whereas only about 19 percent used them through the Central Library LAN network. About 70 percent were aware of online databases, accessible via the Central Library website, and about 53 percent of respondents have used them. A total of 64 percent were aware of the "CLBJ Database", while over half of them made use of it. In total 87 percent of students felt that the available data resources met their information needs.

Troy (2017) study on access and utilization of library services by students from M?ori, a New Zealand, indigenous and minority tribe, concluded that the students faced three main challenges in utilizing library services: including inadequate structural/physical resource, institutional challenges and personal perspectives on the use of library services. Students studied by Anyaoku (2015) found out that the students visited the college library to read personal textbooks, newspapers, sourcing information for research or project work, and class assignments.

The access and utilization of library services and resources as an essential element in improving education as posited in the Vision 2030, Kenya's development blueprint covering the period 2008-2030. The blueprint aims at making Kenya a globally competitive and prosperous nation with a high quality of life by the year 2030. This policy comprises three pillars: economic, social, and political. The social pillar, which is geared towards a just and cohesive society enjoying equitable social development in a healthy and secure environment, outlines issues on education and training (Kelemba, 2018). A student who performs well in their exams tends to use library services and resources more.

Chibini (2017) studied the use of electronic resources in the Strathmore university library. The studyrevealed that users were aware of the resources but the use of the resources was low. This was attributed to inadequate skills, low bandwidth, work overload, and publishers' embargos. The core functions of research, teaching and learning are enhanced by access and use of library products and services by the students, administrators, and other staff. The university library acquires, organizes, and ensures irretrievability of information resources such as books, theses, journals, government publications, encyclopedia, dictionaries, e-journals, e-books among others. A university library also renders reference, lending, current awareness, dissemination of information, photocopying, user education, online database searching services, among others.

Statement of the Problem

The study was prompted by the observation that, despite government effort in building institutions' library capacity, there is less utilization of the library resources and services. Studies have been conducted to

establish the various factors affecting utilization of library services in the institution of higher learning but not much has been done to investigate factors impeding utilization of library services to enhance learning in technical and vocational education and training institution in Kenya, hence the study intends to fill this gap. Therefore the study investigated the influence library user education in the access of library resources.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Library User Education

In India, Chalukya (2015) evaluated user education in libraries. The study established that library user education was important in facilitating and improving the use of library services. According to the findings all Library users should be educated on how to use the resources available to enhance effectiveness Thestudy argued that the library has many resources, therefore, without educating the users, the visits may notbe fruitful. The study recommended the use of web based user education programme to educate library users therefore improving training activities in the classroom The study was limited as it was based in India while this study is based in Kenya

According to Sinha (2016), user education encompasses all activities undertaken to help students become an efficient use of information by equipping them with skills instrumental in the identification of an information need and search using the various techniques. The program is offered in the forms of orientation sessions, workshops, handouts, and course-integrated instruction (Sinha, 2016). Santhalingam, Devi, and Revath (2017) assert that, user education aims at making library users aware of the available informationand scope of library resources and services in the context of their information needs. Further, it ensures that library users are aware of, and can effectively use information sources and retrieval techniques that canassist in their learning and future careers.

The program also aims at contributing to the personal and intellectual development of students including the ability to continuously learn outside the formal education (Sinha, 2016). A post-impact user education survey carried out by Philip (2016) at the University of Uyo library in Nigeria showed that 74% knew how to effectively use the catalog. The study also informed that 80% of the user agreed the course had enhanced their knowledge on library use. Consequently, the researcher found that, 27% of the respondents 27% disclosed that, they do not use the University library at all. Aderibigbe and Emmanuel (2015) establishedthat in some technical institutions in Kenya, user education does not cover the most important areas such as the use of various search engines to locate information in the online catalog.

Suleiman (2018) conducted a study at International Islamic University (IIUM) to identify users' perception of user education programs, the module of user education program, and to establish the impact of user education on library users' searching skills. The study findings informed that user education led to positive achievement in the change to the user behaviour towards library use. Moyane, Dube, and Hoskins (2016) informed that, despite the abundance of information in most technical institutions, the majority of library users lack essential skills for locating information due to the complexity and dynamism of information. According to a study carried out to investigate the effectiveness of user education programs for postgraduate students in the School of Management, Information Technology, and Governance at the University ofKwaZulu-Natal, Westville Campus established that the users were taken through the program once they are admitted. However, the study pointed out that, there was a need to reconsider the content, mode, scope, presentation strategies, and overall relevance and suitability of user education programs in line with user needs. According to Santhalingam, Devi and Revath (2017), there is a need to consider issues of appropriateness, effectiveness, and efficiency of instructional methods and pedagogical matters while offering user education.

According to a study to evaluate the effect of a library education program on undergraduate Students in

Southern Part of Nigeria use found that, user education and use of library remain one huge challenge (Chinyere, 2016). The Study as well established that user education boosted library use; however, the library should intensify its efforts to educate the users yearly since the introductory orientation program does not cater to the user information needs sufficiently.

A study by Oliver and Uchenna (2015) revealed academic libraries had not taken considerable effort to test students' library skills and the application of such skills for day-to-day learning activities. These findings imply that academic librarians were much interested in library orientation programs rather than conducting library instruction / bibliographic instruction programs. A study by Ilo (2017) on various types of user- education offered in Covenant University established that library orientation, the teaching of the use of library and study skills, and bibliographic instructions were part of issues covered in the institution user education. A study in Nigeria by Onifade et al (2018) showed that the major challenges hindering students from maximizing user education are the library schedule and a large number of student participants, resulting in noise. A study by Maduako (2016) in Abia and the Imo States, in Nigeria showed that user education program structured in form of library orientation, library tour, and bibliographic instruction does not prepare the user fully in terms of search and access of information. Therefore, there is a need to empower the staff providing user education through training since user cites inappropriate teaching method by inadequately prepared staff.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive research design was used for this study. According to Gravetter and Forzano (2016) "descriptive research design involves measuring a variable or set of variables as they exist naturally, it is not concerned with relationships between variables but rather with the descriptions of individual variables." The descriptive research design was used to describe factors affecting the use of library services and resources in Nyeri National Polytechnic. The design helped in obtaining information concerning the status of access and use of the library. It also helped to describe the factors affecting library access and use. The target population of the study was 640 respondents drawn from students of 600, lecturers of 30, and librarians. The Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula was adopted to calculate the sample size of the study of 240 respondents.To select the 240 research participants of students 225, lecturers 11 and librarians 4 and a disproportionate probability sampling technique was employed for selection. The researcher used a questionnaire for data collection. Consequently, the researcher carried a pilot study before the actual study at Thika Technical Institute, which has similar characteristics to the institution of the study. The researcher physically delivered the questionnaires, though the class representatives were requested to distribute the letters of introduction and questionnaires to the sampled population to take part in the study. The researcher approached the lecturers and the librarians and requested them to fill the questionnaire.

The data collected was analyzed into meaningful and relevant information using descriptive statistics and mode of the ordinal data.

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION, AND PRESENTATION

User Education on Access and Use of Library Services

The study sought to determine the extent to which participants agreed with the following statements on the effect of user education on access and use of library services and resources.

Table 1.1: User Education on Access and Use of Library Services and Resources

Statement	Mean	Std Dev
Users need instruction in how to use the wealth of information stored within the library system	4.2	60.63
Our library is equipped with adequate instructional materials	4.0	10.72
User education is paramount for effective utilization of library resources	3.8	10.92
The extent in use of library resources depends largely on users' skill and knowledge ofinformation search and retrieval	4.0	20.58
There cannot be a connection between user and materials or tools without proper education givento users who may not have prior knowledge or idea on the use of such materials or tools	4.1	70.96

Source: Research data, (2021)

From the findings, the majority of the participants agreed that, users need instruction in how to use the wealth of information stored within the library system (M =4.26 SD=0.63) and that at Nyeri National Polytechnic, there cannot be a connection between user and materials or tools without proper educationgiven to users who may not have prior knowledge or idea on the use of such materials or tools (M =4.17 SD=0.96). These findings support the contention by Goodall & Pattern (2019) that user education makes students learn how to make effective use of the library and its resources.

Also, results show that the extent in use of library resources, depends largely on users' skill and knowledge of information search and retrieval (M=4.02 SD=0.58) and that Nyeri National Polytechnic library isequipped with adequate instructional materials (M=4.01 SD=0.72). These findings concurred with results by Sinha (2016), that library user education has a positive impact on the quality of students' education.

Further, the study established that user education is paramount for effective utilization of library resources (M = 3.81 SD=0.92). Similar findings by Suleiman (2018) also reaffirm that user education program is useful to students both in caring out a class assignment and in their overall academic performance.

Table 1.2: Training

	Mean	Std Dev
Training is effective and successful when it links to the organizational needs	4.27	0.63
Effective training is designed with the aim of teaching skills and behaviors which help the organization achieve its goals	3.89	0.72
Poor managerial support affects effectiveness of training negatively	4.10	0.92
Trainer with open-mindedness affects training effectiveness positively	4.34	0.58
Effectiveness of training always depends on how the training was given	4.18	0.96
Training is effective and successful when it links to the organizational needs	4.16	0.64

From the findings, the majority of the participants agreed that, training is effective and successful when it links to the organizational needs (M=4.27 SD=0.63) effective training is designed with the aim of teaching skills and behaviors which help the organization achieve its goals (M=3.89 SD=0.72),Poor managerial support affects effectiveness of training negatively (M=4.10 SD=0.92), trainer with open-mindedness affects training effectiveness positively (M=4.34 SD=0.58),effectiveness of training always depends on how the training was given (M=4.18 SD=0.96),training is effective and successful when it links to the organizational needs (M=4.16 SD=0.64). The findings are in line with Noe (2010), who supported the view that the

effective training is designed with the aim of teaching skills and behaviors which help the organization achieve its goals. Thus training is effective and successful when it links to the organizational needsand its outcomes fulfill the organization target.

Library User Education

In line with the second objective, the study revealed that a change in library user education while holding the other factors constant would enhance the utilization of library services and sources in Nyeri National Polytechnic. The findings also revealed that users need instruction in how to use the wealth of information stored within the library system and that at Nyeri National Polytechnic, there cannot be a connection between user and materials or tools without proper education given to users who may not have prior knowledge or idea on the use of such materials or tools. These findings support the contention by Goodall & Pattern (2019) that user education makes students learn how to make effective use of the library and its resources.

Also, results show that the extent of use of library resources depends largely on users' skill and knowledge of information search and retrieval and that Nyeri National Polytechnic library is equipped with adequate instructional materials. These findings are similar to outcomes by Sinha (2016), that library user education has a positive impact on the quality of students' education. Further, the study established that user education is paramount for the effective utilization of library resources. Similar findings by Suleiman (2018) also reaffirm that user education program is useful to students both in caring out a class assignment and in their overall academic performance.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study established that user education determined individual extent in the utilization of library services and sources in Nyeri National Polytechnic, thus users need instruction in how to use the wealth of information stored within the library system, also the extent in use of library resources depends largely on users' skill and knowledge of information search and retrieval and to enhance user skills, Nyeri National Polytechnic library is equipped with adequate instructional materials.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings show that library services and resources are essential for improved training in learning institutions and the library should come up with policies that touch all areas of library operations andeducate the users about the policies. The policies should aim at promoting the access and use of library services. The study also indicated that the poor attitudes towards librarians was a hindrance to the use of library services and resources. Therefore, the study recommends that the librarians ought to be friendlier and be educated on how to handle library users so as to encourage more visitations to the facility.

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