**THE ROLE OF KENYA NATIONAL LIBRARY SERVICES IN PROMOTING LIFELONG LEARNING THROUGH INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS**

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**Abstract**

In Kenya there is no lack of information, but the skills needed to search, select, use and evaluate information can vary from total lack of information retrieval skills to some level of literacy. Public libraries have rightfully staked their claim as gateways to participation in society through lifelong learning and information skills. This study investigated the role played by public libraries in promoting lifelong learning through information literacy skills and to come up with a framework for developing Information Literacy skills in KNLS. The specific objectives of the study were to: examine the kind of information literacy programmes if any that have been put in place; establish how KNLS assist users in the promotion of lifelong learning through provision of information services; assess the adequacy of information literacy policies if any; determine how ICT can be applied in KNLS to promote access and use of information; identify the challenges preventing users from acquiring information literacy skills; propose an information literacy training framework to promote lifelong learning among the users of KNLS. The study was informed by the Big6 information literacy model. The research was a case study which employed survey research methods. The study was predominantly qualitative with some aspects of quantitative techniques. The sample comprised 120 users who were selected through convenient sampling and 30 informants comprising 25 librarians and 5 senior management officers who were selected using purposive sampling. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, using qualitative techniques. The key findings of the study were: KNLS lacks a standardized information literacy programme; inadequate professional staff to promote lifelong learning; lack of information literacy training policies; the institution has not integrated ICT’s and internet connectivity in all its libraries and the heterogeneous nature of users affects information literacy training. The study concludes that there are some forms of information literacy training in the institution, however the training offered is not adequate to promote lifelong learning due to lack of standardized information literacy programmes and lack of information literacy policies. The study recommends that the institution should improve the information literacy programs and teaching methods; address human resource readiness to help in the promotion of lifelong learning; formulate information literacy training policies; integrate ICT and internet connectivity in all its branch libraries; explore alternative sources of funds; embrace attainment of online readiness and enhancement of capacity building for staff. The research also recommends a framework for developing information literacy skills whose components includes strategy, ICT infrastructure, users training, building partnership with local organizations and evaluation of the information literacy programs.

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