

Research Article

## An Assessment of Information Literacy Activities and Their Effectiveness

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**Abstract:** This paper assessed Information Literacy activities practised among the undergraduate students at the University of Eastern Africa, Baraton, and considered the effectiveness of IL activities at the UEAB library. This paper was a case study and used both qualitative and quantitative research methods. This study used both stratified random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. A sample size of 194 respondents, comprising of 188 undergraduate students and 6 key informants, was used. This study used both face to face techniques and self-administered data collection techniques. Qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed descriptively and by using SPSS respectively. The major findings of this study were: lecturers supported IL activities but the students' enrolment in IL activities was very low; the student training time on the use of library skills was not enough to equip them with the library resource utilization skills; the library staff lacked leadership and resource utilization skills; there were no IL policies, and there was lack of funds to run IL activities. The recommendations for UEAB Library are: to employ competent library staff to handle orientation activities; to develop a well-structured IL curriculum and avoid offering IL activities in an informal manner; the Faculty to work hand in hand with the librarians in the design of IL courses and finally, to provide funds to run IL activities.

**Keywords:** Information Literacy; Information Services; Undergraduate students; IL activities; University of Eastern Africa, Baraton; Kenya

### Introduction

Information Literacy is a skill that enables an individual locate, identify, evaluate and use information to perform any given task efficiently. Those without IL skills are not usually able to survive the pressures of life, especially in academic circles where research is crucial for success. IL has attracted a lot of discussion in the past. The UEAB library operates unstructured IL activities ranging from library orientation, library instruction courses, reference services and use of library guides and manuals.

In most cases, at UEAB, the orientation exercise is hurriedly done at the beginning of every semester. The university administration usually slot only one or two hours for the exercise. Personal attention at the UEAB library is hampered by the shortage of competent library staff. Professionals in library and information science have the noble task of restructuring library skills' instructions in IL, which serves to develop lifelong competent skills in people so as to function in different areas. The UEAB does not have IL policy guidelines. For any program to realize

its meaningful objectives, sound policies need to be formulated and implemented. Good libraries ensure that marketing is superb. The adequate marketing of library resources at the UEAB may not have been maximized due to issues related to finances. This paper is based on a larger study whose aim was to assess information literacy activities among undergraduate students at the University of Eastern Africa, Baraton, and assess its effectiveness. It was guided by two research questions: What IL activities are currently being conducted at the UEAB library? How effective are IL activities at the UEAB library?

### Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will inform both university libraries in Kenya in general and the UEAB in improving their IL activities for undergraduate students. It will also generate knowledge that will add onto and trigger further research that will benefit professionals to improve information literacy activities.

### Scope and Limitations

This study was limited to undergraduate students, members of staff and key administrators of the University of Eastern Africa, Baraton. This study was also limited to the information that was given by the respondents and the availability of the funds and the period of time that was given for the study to be conducted.

### Theoretical Framework

Theory refers to a systematically organized body of knowledge that can be applied in a relatively wide variety of circumstances, especially a system of assumptions, accepted principles and rules of procedure devised to analyze, predict or otherwise explain the nature or behaviour of a specified set of phenomena (Mason & Culnan 1995). This study was anchored on the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education formulated by the American Library Association's Presidential Committee on Information Literacy in their final report in 1989. The standards

reviewed by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Standards Committee were approved by the Board of Directors of the ACRL in January 2000. The parameters under which a good IL program should operate are (Thompson, 2005):

*Standard 2: Goals and Objectives:* The goals and objectives for an IL program should be in harmony with the mission, goals and objectives of programs, departments and the institution. Measurable outcomes for the evaluation of the IL activities also need to be established so as to reflect sound pedagogical practices. IL activities need to accommodate input from different areas so as to ensure the integration of IL across the curriculum.

*Standard 10: Assessment or Evaluation:* Program evaluation establishes the process of ongoing planning or improvement of the program; measures directly progress toward meeting the goals and objectives of the program; integrates with course and curriculum assessment as well as institutional evaluations and regional professional accreditation initiatives and assumes multiple methods and purposes for assessment or evaluation. According to Hunt and Birks (2004), there is need for administrative support to ensure that IL activities are incorporated into the curriculum. This point is well stated in category 4 of the ACRL's best practices.

## Literature Review

### Information Literacy Activities

Library-use orientation is an essential activity done to equip the new learners with skills they require to effectively utilize the library's resources. According to Kavulya (2003), library orientation is mandatory and takes place in the first and second weeks when new students report to the university. Library orientation aims to make students aware of the library facilities, information resources and services available to them. It includes: distribution of informational material; introductory lectures; tours and, demonstrations on information retrieval using catalogues, or journal indexes. The length of orientation session differs from one university to another. Modes of delivery for IL activities includes: course integrated instruction; non-integrated instruction; online tutorials, and handbooks.

### IL Effectiveness

#### *Library Orientation Exercise*

The effectiveness of library orientation is hampered by failure to come up with realistic and achievable objectives. Kavulya (2003) points out that the effectiveness of library orientation conducted in Kenyan university libraries is hampered by failure to come up with realistic and achievable objectives. For example, the limited time allocated to the lecture, demonstration and tour is inadequate to impart useful skills to new university

students. Salisbury (2003) comments that time constraints force librarians to tackle many foreign complex topics in one sitting. Students, in most cases, are not presented with opportunities for subsequent strengthening. Salisbury (2003) comments that time constraints force librarians to tackle many foreign, complex topics in one sitting. Students in most cases are not presented with opportunities for subsequent strengthening. Parang (2000) observes that, during the summer of 1997, instruction librarians at Pepperdine University's Payson Library began restructuring Freshman Seminar library instruction sessions because they observed that students were not acquiring the needed library and information literacy skills.

### *ICT Skills*

It has been observed that the lack of computer literacy skills amongst students hinders the delivery of IL activities in university libraries especially in this era where most learning resources are available in digital formats. Kinengyere (2007) noted that limited knowledge in ICT greatly influences IL programs. It has been observed that the lack of students and staff competencies in the use of available ICT structures hinders the optimization of IL programs at UEAB, especially in this era where most learning resources are available electronically. Kavulya (2003) reported that some new students lack basic computer operation skills and therefore cannot be able to optimally utilize the available IT infrastructure.

### *Collaborative Assessment of IL*

The evaluation of IL activities in order to ascertain its effectiveness is very important. Oakleaf and Leah (2011) noted that four levels exist to assess the outcomes of IL: within the library; in the classroom; on campus and beyond the campus. It is observed that the librarians, working alone, can only perform the first of these. Faculty participation is, therefore, a valuable asset in evaluating the lasting impact of IL instruction on students' knowledge, skills and abilities outside the library. Feedback from the faculty and students is needed to enable librarians refine IL instructions and meet stakeholder needs and expectations. Results from collaborative assessment can be used to reiterate the importance of IL instructions to faculty and encourage new faculty members and departments to become involved with IL creativities.

### *IL Skills*

Although it cannot be stated downright that one particular IL aspect is more important than the others, it is important to provide balanced training that would enable students acquire skills in all aspects so that they can link one particular skill to another because skills are interrelated and interdependent. For instance, for students, the benefit of being information literate will be limited if they are able to search for information from the Internet, but are not

able to critically evaluate the information they access. What needs to be stressed at this point is that, in order to provide students with adequate IL knowledge and skills, the coverage for IL teaching should be as wide and in depth as possible. IL courses that can be offered include: information searching skills; use of library facilities; information evaluation; use of information sources, and citation and references.

Most first year students in Kenyan Universities have been found to lack the sophisticated skills that are needed to exploit the library's research potential. Most students are stunned by the complexity and size of a large library, are reluctant to ask for assistance in the use of library and little awareness of the resources available in the university library. Dike and Amucheazi (2003) report that most libraries in Nigeria, and many other African countries, are poorly stocked with learning facilities and resources. The problem of insufficient information and knowledge skills is worsened by the fact that many African universities lack significant programmes geared to improve the level of information skills education (Mgobozi&Ocholla, 2002).

There is an increasing global recognition of the importance IL skills, both personally and professionally, particularly in the learning environment (University of Sydney, 2011). Tilvawala and Andrade (2009) indicate that there are a growing number of information and communications technology (ICT) initiatives in developing countries. They also add that international and regional leaders have declared information literacy (IL) a basic human right that empowers people in all walks of life to seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively to achieve their personal, social, occupation and educational goals. The success of the Twenty first century University largely depends on how much quality, timely and relevant information its academic community is able to access and utilize and how much the same community is able to generate and give back to the global information and knowledge basket (Amunga, 2011). The level of competitiveness in modern society requires increased information literacy skills for daily decision making (Gitonga, 2011).

Librarians, in collaboration with teaching faculty and IT professionals, can and must develop information literate students by teaching research and evaluation skills that go beyond the mechanical skills necessary to use computers and online databases (Pask& Saunders, 2004).

## Methodology

### Research Design

This study applied qualitative and quantitative research strategies. These strategies helped the researcher to collect data from a large population and obtain in-depth information. A case study approach, using a descriptive research design, was employed in this study. "A descriptive research is a type of study which mainly uses

questionnaires and interviews in order to determine the opinions, attitudes, references and perceptions of persons of interests to the researcher" (Gay, Mill & Airasian, 2006, pp. 10).

According to Oso and Onen (2005), a case study is an intensive, descriptive and holistic analysis of a single entity. Yin (1994) also states that case studies are preferred when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real life context. In this context the nature of the phenomena studied and the researcher who is currently attached to an academic library justified the case study as one of the most suitable way by which the research was conducted.

This design was chosen because it helped the researcher establish which Information Literacy activities are currently being conducted at the UEAB library, and assess the effectiveness of IL activities at the UEAB library. A questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data while face-to-face interviews and focus group interviews were used to collect qualitative data. The use of the questionnaire helped the researcher collect data from a large population by exposing them to a set of standard questions within a relatively short period of time.

### Study Population

This study was conducted at the University of Eastern Africa, Baraton, in Nandi North District, Nandi County, Kenya. It is near Kapsabet Town, the County's headquarters, commercial and administrative centre. The institution was purposively chosen because it has a modern and well facilitated library. This study's population was comprised of all one thousand, four hundred and forty five (1,445) undergraduate students and one hundred and fifty (150) members of staff.

### Sampling and Sample Size

Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals (a sample) from a population, preferably in such a way that the individuals selected represent the larger group from which they were selected (Gay, Mill and Airasian, 2006). This study used both stratified random sampling and purposive sampling techniques.

The stratified random sampling method was used to select 188 respondents who participated in the study. Stratified sampling is a variant on simple random and systematic methods and is used when there are a number of distinct subgroups within each of which it is required that there is full representation (Birchall, 2009). The 13% sample was arrived at because many authors such as Kasomo (2006) states that a 10% sample is a minimum for descriptive studies and is considered a manageable sample within time and expense constraints as well as the easy proximity of the target population.

The researcher also used purposive sampling to select the key informants (i.e. UEAB administrators, heads of departments and library staff) this specific sample was best suited to provide the information. Purposive sampling was used for validation of a test or instrument with a known population, collection of exploratory data from an unusual population and it is used in qualitative studies to study the lived experience of a specific population (Zina, 2004).

The key informants were purposively sampled since they were few in numbers and were all directly or indirectly involved in offering IL courses. Creswell (2008) asserted that the information usually given by the key informants gives the study the right focus.

### **Validity of the Instruments**

Validity in data collection means that the findings truly represent the phenomenon measured. It is the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure (Mugenda&Mugenda, 2003). The questionnaire designed to gather information from the respondents was content validated by research experts in the department of Library, Records Management and Information Studies, Moi University. The suitability of items and appropriateness of language was also determined.

### **Reliability**

Reliability is concerned the credibility of the findings (Welman, 2005). It is the extent to which an instrument produces a consistent result every time it is used. For an instrument to be reliable it must have a correlation coefficient of at least 0.5 (Mugenda&Mugenda, 2003). The researcher conducted a pilot study at the University of Eastern Africa, Baraton, on a different sample from the study population.

To ensure the consistence of the result every time the research instrument was used, the first set of questionnaires was administered to ten respondents and collected then, after two weeks; a second set was administered to the same population. The data from the pilot study was analyzed and used to determine the reliability of the instruments. A minimum Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of 0.6 and above was found to be acceptable for the study.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

The researcher obtained an introduction letter from the Department of Library, Records Management and Information Studies, Moi University, then a research permit from the NCSTI. The researcher, with the help of two research assistants, personally administered the questionnaires to the sampled population of undergraduate students. After one week, the research assistants collected the instruments to be analyzed.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The informed consent of the University of Eastern Africa, Baraton, was sought before the commencement of this study. Informed consent of all respondents selected in the sample was also sought at the time they were approached to participate in the study. All data was treated in a way that protects the confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents involved in the study.

### **Findings**

#### **Demographic Information**

The majority (99, 52%) of the respondents were aged between eighteen and twenty two years of age. Thirty nine percent (73) were aged between twenty three and twenty seven years. Nine percent (16) were aged between twenty eight and thirty two years, zero point five percent (1) was aged between thirty three and thirty seven years while another zero point five percent (2) were aged between thirty eight and forty-two years. The remaining zero point five percent (1) were aged between forty three and forty seven years. The majority (101, 54%) of the respondents of the students were female while the remaining forty-seven percent (87, 46%) were males.

The majority of the respondents (143, 76%) were university students; eighteen percent (35, 18%) had attained secondary school education and the remaining five percent (10) had attained tertiary education. The majority (188, 97%) of the respondents were students, two percent (4) were support staff and the remaining one percent (2) was administrators.

#### **IL Activities Currently Running at the UEAB Library**

Many of students (37%) stated distribution of library handbooks, 11 students (6%) mentioned library guided tours, 24 students (13%) stated short introductory lectures, 25 of them (13%) stated work programme in the library section, 34 students (18%) stated cyber and internet services, 11 of them (6%) stated online database research while 4 (2%) mention demonstrations on how to use OPAC and card catalogue and, lastly, 9 of them (5%) said that writing of online CVs demanded online research. Twenty three of the undergraduate respondents interviewed said that the distribution of brochures showing online databases the UEAB library subscribes to, library guided tours and library handbooks have helped them access information. The responses from the respondents emphasized the statement that handbooks could be used by students to find resources, services and other vital places within a library building.

#### **Effectiveness of IL Activities at the UEAB Library**

The students were asked whether they were aware of the information literacy courses offered in the university library. 110 of them (59%) were not aware of these

courses while 78 (41%) were aware. The students were asked if they have enrolled in literacy courses offered by the UEAB library: many (98, 52%) of the students had not enrolled while 90 students (48%) had enrolled in literacy courses offered by the UEAB Library. The students were asked if they completed information literacy courses: the majority (110, 59%) did not complete the course while 78 (43%) completed it.

The students were asked whether they are granted permission by the lecturers to attend information literacy courses. 141 (75%) said that they were allowed to attend information them while 47 (25%) said that they were not allowed. The students were asked whether they were given leaflets when they attend literary training and 126 students (67%) agreed that they are given leaflets while 62 (33%) stated that they are not given leaflets during literacy trainings. The students were also asked if they are given hands-on practice in the On-line Research Centre: 147 students (78%) agreed that they were given hands-on practice while 41 (22%) stated that they were not.

The students were asked to respond to questions by indicating the extent to which they agree or disagree to statements relating to delivery of information literacy activities offered in UEAB library. When asked if library orientation was adequately communicated to all students, 120 (63%) disagreed while 22 (12%) agreed. When asked if the objectives of library orientation were clearly stated, 120 (63%) disagreed and 22 (12%) agreed.

When asked if they were aware of the IL courses offered by the UEAB library, 95 (50%) disagreed while 36 (19%) agreed. When asked if the orientation offered during the first week to new students by the UEAB library was enough to enable students use the library's e-resources, 38 (20%) agreed while 66 (35%) disagreed.

When asked if they enjoy library orientation, 96 (51%) disagreed and 41 (32%) agreed and when asked whether the library provides opportunities for further learning and utilization of library resources, 34 (71%) disagreed while 26 (14%) agreed. When asked if the library provided enough time for orientation, 75 (40%) disagreed while 32 (17%) agreed.

Asked if the orientation offered by the library meets the needs of the users, 78 (41%) disagreed while 33 (17%) agreed. Asked whether the instruction methods used during orientation is understandable and appropriate, 98 (52%) disagreed and 39 (20%) agreed.

Asked whether the library conducts seminars and workshops, 63 (34%) disagreed while 55 (29%) agreed. The students were also asked if the library orientation equips students with information they can use in class, 105 (56%) disagreed while 43 (23%) agreed. The students who failed to complete the UEAB IL training gave varied reasons ranging from boring courses, poor timing of

course offerings (they were offered during the middle of the semester hence making it difficult to balance between attending real classes and attending library's IL trainings) to insufficient time allocated for such trainings. Seven undergraduate students respondents interviewed during focus group discussions mentioned that they had taken part in the IL courses offered by the UEAB library. They claimed they were not aware of the existence of such courses. With the exception of four of the key informants, two answered that they were not aware of information literacy courses offered at the UEAB library. On whether there is enough library staff to handle orientation exercise,

85 (45%) disagreed and 42 (22%) agreed. When asked to rate the frequency of application to class work of what was learnt in the IL training, two of the key informants who directly deal with the undergraduate students stated that the application was fairly often, an indication of ineffectiveness. All the key informants responded that the library orientation for the new students do not equip the undergraduate students with enough knowledge to understand the library.

The key informants said that the UEAB library IL instructions were not being enhanced by the addition of web-based tutorials. According to Eisenberg, Lowe and Spitzer (2004), web-based tutorials focus on vital issues such as online-searching, evaluating web sites, referencing, ethics relating to information use and IL topics. All the interviewed key informants reported that the UEAB library has not been conducting user needs' surveys. User needs' surveys ensure that IL is evaluated as a way of determining its success and facilitating its sustained effectiveness. One of the most important reasons for conducting user needs surveys is to establish the usefulness of IL activities on student IL skills and academic success (Cameron, 2004).

The key informants stated that the methods used by the library to teach literacy skills included lectures and guided library tours. There is need to combine several approaches to assist students perfect their research skills, library skills and/or information literacy skills. Thompson (2003) posits that there is need to evaluate the extent to which those approaches are applied so as to create the desired impact to learners in the process of them acquiring the IL skills.

## Discussion

The respondents pointed out some activities the librarians needed to enhance to ensure that the information literacy skills of the students were improved. Activities ranging from the introduction of additional IL courses 120 (63%), regular IL workshops 19 (10%), improvement of wireless networks 12 (6%), strategic placement of usernames and passwords 28 (15%) for online databases, to increasing the number of computers in the undergraduate online research centre were mentioned.

Among the above-listed activities, most respondents mentioned that there was need for additional IL courses to be taught. Some respondents from the focus group discussion stated that there was a need for ICT infrastructure to be enhanced. This study found that activities such as the distribution of library handbooks with information on how to use the library effectively, library's guided tours, introductory lectures, work program, use of ORC, demonstrations on how to use OPAC and the card catalogue, cyber and internet use, online database research and writing of online CVs positively impact users in accessing and, eventually, utilizing the library's resources.

The activities noted above forms an important component in information access. UEAB's library needs to ensure that all its patrons benefit from high quality information access-related activities. The majority of the undergraduate respondents who participated in the focus group discussion said that the distribution of brochures showing online databases the UEAB library subscribes to helped them access information. The library handbooks and the guided library tours also played an important role and, therefore, should be enhanced. All the interviewed key informants pointed out that activities used by the library to teach literacy skills included lectures and guided library tours. This agrees with what was collected through questionnaires as well as responses from the focus group discussion.

The effectiveness of any activity is measured by the level of its impact on its beneficiaries. If the beneficiaries are not aware of the existence of an activity, the possible and obvious conclusion is that the activity is not effective. Many (122, 64%) of the respondents stated that they were not aware of the IL activities being run by the UEAB library. Very few respondents (90, 47%) have enrolled into UEAB's library IL activities. The few (52, 58%) who enrolled into such courses unfortunately failed to complete the courses.

The positive thing is that most respondents (143, 75%) stated that they were granted permission by the lecturers to attend the IL courses. The conclusion here, therefore, is that it is possible the respondents have some laxity towards the said IL courses. This assertion is further supported by the fact that the respondents admitted that they were given leaflets during the IL training to support what they have learnt.

Most of the students in the focus group discussion said that they had not taken part in IL courses offered by the UEAB library because they were not aware of the existence of such courses. This partly explains the ineffectiveness of UEAB library IL activities, especially the publicity aspect of it. Those students among the focus groups who failed to complete the UEAB IL training gave varied reasons, ranging from boring courses, poor timing of course offerings in that they were offered during the middle of the semester hence making it difficult to balance

between attending real classes and attending library's IL trainings, to insufficient time allocated for such trainings.

All the key informants interviewed responded that the UEAB library has not been conducting user needs surveys. Users needs surveys are supposed to be conducted to enable the library staff offering the IL training communicate effectively with the users. Library users are given an opportunity to evaluate the services given to them. If the services offered to them do not meet their expectations, they are allowed to give feedback to the concerned people by stating areas that need to be improved.

User needs surveys are very critical to any organization that needs to offer the best to its users. With the exception of four respondents interviewed under the category of the key informants, the other two key informants answered that they were not aware of information literacy courses offered at the UEAB library. This is a clear indication that only those closer to the library, in this case, the two librarians and the two lecturers who normally bring the students to the library for English 112 course were aware of what was being offered at the library. This indicates that there is publicity of course offerings at the UEAB library and therefore IL related activities were effective.

When asked to rate the frequency of application to class work of what was learnt in the IL training, two of the key informants who directly deal with the undergraduate mentioned that the application was fairly often. This means that the IL trainings are relevant and should be continued. All the key informants affirmed that the library orientation for the new students did not equip the undergraduate students with enough knowledge to understand the library. It is, therefore, very important to revise the way the library orientation is structured so as to impart enough knowledge to students. All the key informants stated that the UEAB library IL instructions were not being enhanced by the addition of web-based tutorials. The implication here is that learning was not reinforced and this goes a long way to explain why some of the undergraduate respondents labelled library's IL trainings "boring".

Undergraduate students struggled when confronted with ICT, research and presentation-related tasks. Studies done in Kenya have shown that most of the universities have low ICT skills as most of them were trained in the absence of an ICT environment. A similar situation applies to many universities in developing countries, Tanzania included. This calls for ICT training for staff, structured through grouped short courses in order not to interfere with their daily activities (Lwoga, Sife&Busagala, 2005).

Undergraduate students do not have adequate basic and advanced research skills. This is backed up by the data obtained by the researcher from those interviewed during focus group discussions that revealed that most of those interviewed do not have adequate ICT, research and presentation skills. For example, 20 students out of 24

interviewed pointed out that they accessed print format of information an indication that they lacked competent skills in computer operation. Therefore, the introductory lectures serve to minimize the already existing gap of insufficient computer skills.

The key informants' questionnaire had an open-ended question on the skills required by the library staff to improve the delivery of IL courses. They commended that some library staff do not have sufficient ICT skills, inadequate basic and advanced research skills, and lacked adequate training. Finally, they stated that leadership and teaching skills among them were noticeable.

Fowler (2003) emphasized that the contributions raised by the key informants by commenting that, in order to implement IL activities, there must be ways for librarians to learn teaching, management and leadership skills. The skills can be acquired while the librarians are earning their professional degree. All the above skills are pivotal to the successful development and delivery of IL program. At UEAB, there is need for librarians to prepare themselves well. More important is the fact that power will largely rest with librarians that poses multiple skills based on technology applications. Librarians will be expected to provide leadership in computer application, internet capabilities and CD-ROM applications among others. This, therefore, means that the librarians in the new digital era should be more knowledgeable, forward looking, creative, productive, more focused and competitive.

Librarians should tactfully engage in activities that will raise their status and profile within the university. They must strategically showcase their skills and knowledge through activities such as presenting papers at conferences, co-authoring articles with faculty members or by organizing a library week on campus where they can share their knowledge and library facilities. Such activities may help improve their low profile and help change the university's low perception of librarians. The librarians need to market themselves, as well as their library. Ultimately, librarians have to bear in mind that "real change comes from within."

This study's findings confirmed that respondents faced difficulties in accessing information from the internet and this can be attributed to the poor computer literacy skills. Most of the respondents only accessed print versions of learning resources at the high school level. The findings from the focus group discussion showed that the undergraduate students were not given enough time to grasp what they were supposed to learn during orientation in that topics were rushed over and in most cases those offering the library guided tours were incompetent student workers employed by the library department under student work program.

All the interviewed key informants stated that the lack of competent library staff as the major impediment in the implementation of information literacy activities in the library. They also mentioned that the time allocated for

the library orientation was not sufficient to cover all that was needed to be covered. This is true because, in most cases, the library is allocated only about one to two hours during the first one week when new students join the university. This is the time the new students are expected to know almost everything about the library.

The key informants said that there were no information literacy policy guidelines in the UEAB. The respondents, however, registered a very strong indication that policies must be drawn by the University of Eastern Africa, Baraton, to enable streamline the UEAB's library IL activities.

It emerged from all the key informants that the UEAB library IL courses are not embedded in the UEAB curriculum hence they are not examined. If these courses are to be given the seriousness they deserve, then they must be embedded in the university's curriculum and be examined to avoid students giving such courses a casual treatment though they are very important. Deborah (2009) supported this idea by indicating that the faculty should lead by example by embedding IL elements in classes for which they have primary responsibility.

It was also noted from the responses of all the key informants that there is no proper collaboration between UEAB teaching staff and the library staff offering library IL courses. The key informants emphasized the idea that there is need for a proper collaboration and such collaborations can be easily achieved by inviting the librarians to actively participate in the process of designing of the university bulletin where they will have an opportunity to suggest IL courses to be included in the university bulletin.

Through the key informants, it was also made clear that there was no official time within the university time table allocated for IL activities. This shows that the UEAB's administration appears not to value IL activities. It was also found that the UEAB does not provide funds to run IL activities. This is a big challenge since there is need to fund IL activities to ensure that its impact is felt. Proper marketing has to be done and this can be achieved by providing funds to make posters, brochures and any other activity related to publicity.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

### Conclusions

#### This study concluded that:

- The UEAB library lacks adequate and skilled library staff to deliver quality IL activities.
- Limited time was allocated for the library orientation exercise.
- There was unavailability of IL policy guidelines to govern the delivery of IL activities.

- There was failure to embed IL courses into the formal university curriculum.
- There was limited enhanced collaboration between faculty members and librarians.
- There were inadequate IL user surveys as well as funding to facilitate IL related activities such as running frequent workshops.

## Recommendations

### *IL Curriculum to be Developed*

The library's staff, alongside the faculty's members, should seek to increase and embed the IL courses into the curriculum. The IL courses need to be embedded in the university's curriculum to give them the seriousness it deserves. All IL activities need to be offered in a structured way and the faculty should co-operate with librarians in designing IL courses. The curriculum should also be designed in such a way that enough time is allocated for library orientation which is usually scheduled at the beginning of every semester. Follow up sessions should also be included into the curriculum, making sure that the content of what to be taught is appropriate. Different teaching methods if possible need to be used to capture the attention of the users who stated that they failed to complete the available IL courses because they get bored. The IL courses should be designed in such a way that the users are able to apply what they learn in the library to their class work and/or assignments.

### *Aggressive Marketing*

The marketing standards of the UEAB library's IL activities have to be developed by the library staff and promoted and administrators requested to support the standards. Marketing can be done through the publication of current awareness bulletins and the use of social media, e.g. Facebook and Moodle. Regular workshops and seminars should also be done to provide users with the opportunities to be taught new topics related to information literacy. Leisner (1995) supports the spirit of marketing by observing that present-day management practices propose, very strongly, that advertising is a vital constituent of any institutional business plan.

### *Establishment of Feedback Mechanisms*

Conducting user surveys is the only way of ascertaining the library's users' satisfaction or dissatisfaction of IL activities. The library staff should undertake regular user surveys on the library's users as a way of soliciting for their feedback, especially in ways of improving IL activities. The purpose of the evaluations of various IL activities is to establish a base line for students' skills around which IL might be built, assess the effectiveness of particular library instruction sessions or approaches to instruction, and determine the impact of library instruction programmes on student IL skills and academic success and to generate data with which to communicate with faculty.

### *Library Staff Employment and Continuous Training*

There is need to employ additional library staff to assist, especially during the library's orientation time. The library's staff's development should be given a priority to enable them sharpen their skills. Findings revealed that some users doubted the competencies of the library staff offering guided tours during library orientation.

### *ICT Infrastructure and Skills*

There should be sufficient investment in ICT infrastructure to support IL delivery. Wireless hotspots should also be given a priority to enable students with laptops use them in hotspots areas hence reducing congestion in the ORC. Research findings showed that the library's users struggle while handling ICT related tasks and this can be attributed to the poor ICT background during their High school training. It is, therefore, advisable that basic computer operation skills should be imparted to the users to assist them get the most out of the electronic databases that the UEAB library subscribes to. This will eventually improve the quality of research carried by the library users by avoiding overreliance on the librarians to assist them do research. Presentation skills will also be improved if basic computer skills are to be taught. The number of desktop computers, if possible, should be increased to enable the users who may not be able to purchase laptops equally benefit from the library's e-resources.

### *Budgetary Allocations for IL Activities*

The UEAB should provide funds to run IL activities at all times. Currently, IL activities are not funded and this has a negative implication when it comes to raising money to market the IL activities by printing literature, inviting key experts, holding workshops and printing of the IL related literature for advertisement purposes.

### *Policy Formulation*

Sound policy guidelines governing the delivery of IL activities need to be developed. The policy will streamline IL activities. The UEAB's administrators, faculty and library staff should sit together and formulate the appropriate IL policy.

### *Administrative Support*

For IL to succeed, the UEAB's administrators as well as other stakeholders must accord it the same commitment. Such commitment should be visible through university IL-related activities where the administrators are invited to participate in them and even contribute to the discussions. Workshops targeting administrators should be arranged regularly and during such workshops, they are explained in depth why there is need to run IL activities in a more professional way more than before.

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