

**ROLE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN ERADICATING ILLITERACY IN NAROK,
KENYA: A CASE OF KENYA NATIONAL LIBRARY SERVICES- NAROK BRANCH**

MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY



Research project

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IS01/043/2012

16th April 2016

School Of Science

And

Information Sciences

Course Title: Research Project

Course code: INS 416

A Research Project Submitted To The Head Of Department Of Computing And Information Sciences At Maasai Mara University In Partial Fulfilment Of The Award Of Degree In Bachelors Of Science In Information Sciences.

DECLARATION

This research project report is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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This research project report has been submitted for examination with my approval as University supervisor.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my fellow students and staff of public libraries where I shall undertake my research. All of you are appreciated for your support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my gratitude to God almighty for granting me gift of life. I wish also to express my appreciation to my supervisor Mrs. Nancy Kimile, a lecturer at Maasai Mara University for her tireless support through guidance and advice which enabled me to accomplish this work.

Finally, I want also to acknowledge my colleagues for their encouragement.

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ABSTRACT

In this paper it is argued that literacy is critical for socio-economic development. A literate nation makes positive contributions to the general development of a country. This paper also seek to establish the strategies that public libraries have employed to promote and sustain high literacy rates in the country. It was investigated the innovative strategies like story telling sessions and explain how they have helped Kenya achieve Africa's highest literacy level despite the socio-economic challenges. The public library services that are available for children, youth and adults and how they contribute towards higher literacy rates was also probed. The challenges that the Kenya public libraries face to eradicate illiteracy were also explored. The measures that the libraries have put in place to eradicate illiteracy was also discussed. The discussion was ended by making recommendations on how public libraries can contribute toward sustainable higher literacy rates.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Ramaiah et.al. (1997) notes that world development in the economic, scientific, technical, political and social spheres is a product of human development which is fuelled by education, and training, knowledge and literacy and information transfer. It is inconceivable to think of human development without literacy. According to the Kenya national literacy survey, Kenya's high literacy rate of above sixty five percent (65%) is attributed to a number of factors ranging from post independent government's policy on education, democratization of education, provision of public library services, support from non-governmental organisations and the need to break free from the vicious circle of intergenerational poverty. There is immense potential in human capital development but this can only be realized through promoting and sustaining high literacy rates to enable everyone irrespective of race, creed, gender or other factors to participate fully in the conventional economic activities of the country. Youngman (2000) notes that "...for the great majority of people, if life in modern society is to be lived to the full, they must be released from the bondage of illiteracy if they are to make their best contribution to their families, the communities and the nation"

Conceptions about what is literate behaviour have varied over time and place. However, the notion that literacy means working with written language and calculations has remained core to definitions of literacy. At its most basic, literacy is the ability to decode and encode written text and do arithmetic i.e. reading, writing and numeracy. Considerations of the use that literacy is put into, have introduced the concept of functionality in the definition of literacy. Functional literacy is seen to be the ability to use reading, writing and calculation skills to carry out everyday tasks in one's society that require possession of such skills. Situations in which literacy skills are required are multiple and change over time especially with changes in technology, which has led to the

concept of multiple 'literacies'. On the other hand, the Freirean concept of critical literacy is borne of the social political considerations of the purpose of literacy, which for Freire¹, it is a process and a tool for the self-liberation of the downtrodden of every society.

In this context a research shall be conducted to find out the role of public libraries in eradicating illiteracy in Kenya: The case of KNLS- Narok branch.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Despite the government's commitment of illiteracy eradication programme and recognition of its importance in national development, the programme is experiencing poor participation in most regions in Kenya. This is further supported by Kenya National Literacy Survey which revealed the literacy programme being inexistence for many years there is still a shortcoming in the eradication of illiteracy. Public libraries are having problems in promoting this programme to the fullest due to some reasons.

Narok County is one of the regions where the public library is situated and one of the mandate is to promote literacy. The problem to be addressed by this study is how public library i.e. The Kenya National Library Services will help eradicate illiteracy in Narok County. The study will establish determinants of illiteracy eradication by the public library and suggest measures to be taken to improve the move by the public library in Narok.

1.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to find out the role of libraries in eradicating literacy have helped in eradicating illiteracy in Kenya and to suggest measures that shall be taken to help eradicate illiteracy in Kenya.

1.3 Objectives

- To find out major reasons for the development of the public library in Narok, Kenya.

- To determine what measures the public library have put in place to promote literacy in Narok, Kenya.
- To assess the challenges the public library go through in promoting illiteracy in Narok, Kenya.
- To determine the registration and attendance rate of users to the library.

1.4 Research questions

- What demographic characteristics exist of users of narok public library?
- What objective guide establishment of Kns?
- How has the national library eradicated illiteracy?
- What are the factors that influence the role of public libraries in eradication of illiteracy in Narok?
- What measures are put in place to eradicate illiteracy in Kenya
- What challenges exist in eradicating illiteracy in public libraries?
- What solutions has the library put in place to challenges?

1.5 Significance of the study

Findings of the study may help all the stakeholders involved in eradication of illiteracy in Kenya to understand the challenges that hinder promotion of literacy in Kenya. It will also assist more people to do research elsewhere.

1.6 Limitations of the study

The study will be limited to Narok and therefore may not be representative of all other areas.

1.7 Basic assumptions of the study

- a. The research conducted within Narok to know how the public library has helped in illiteracy eradication will be accurate.
- b. Most of those who use the library are students from colleges around and the University, researchers and some wheat farmers.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature related to public libraries eradicating illiteracy in Kenya. It highlights the provision of public libraries, trend in eradicating illiteracy in Kenya, and how this can help build the Kenyan economy.

2.2 Provision of public libraries in Kenya

Kenya adopted the Hockey Report (1960) when it enacted the Kenya National Libraries' Services Board Act in 1965. The initial stock of 400,000 books was inherited from the East African Literature Bureau, which up to then was running public libraries through static, book box, postal and mobile library services. The first Kenya National Library Services Board commenced its functions in 1967, and the public library in Nairobi opened its doors to the public in 1969. The functions of the Board comprised of the establishment, equipment, management and maintenance of libraries in Kenya. The Board was particularly mandated to oversee the provision of public and school libraries in Kenya.

New Developments

Through the support and funding of the government of Kenya and donor agencies like the British Council, NORAD and UNESCO, KNLS has managed to put up a library in each of the forty seven counties in Kenya.

Currently, the services provided are managed from the KNLS headquarters – where the administration of the entire national library services is also based – and the KNLS-Buruburu branch. The Public Library Network now embraces a total of 23 libraries in all counties, districts and divisions. The total stock in all the services is up to 800.000 volumes. The total membership

in the libraries network is 400,000, which excludes the [close to] million people who visit the libraries annually. These figures exclude the total figures of membership and use of other libraries (e.g. academic, special, etc.) in Kenya.

KNLS also provides community based libraries. This is an alternative to public library provision and requires the local community to contribute basic infrastructure such as land, buildings, furniture and equipment while the Board avails initial stock, staff and recurrent expenditure.

KNLS also provides the Camel Library Service (CLS), targeted at villages and settlements outside a 5 Km radius but within 10 Km of the regional library. The

CLS works on the same basis as a mobile library service, except that the vehicles are camels. The advantage is that through the CLS, scattered populations are reached and served. In order to ensure the sustainability of libraries and to enhance the funding of public libraries, the KNLS has instituted reasonable membership fees. KNLS has also initiated innovative outreach approaches to public library provision. These involve the community in the administration of services that are appropriate to the community, and contribute towards service maintenance.

In the past those who wanted to establish public libraries anywhere in Kenya, were expected to provide a building. However, responding to the challenge of having a library building before public library services could be provided, today a book box service for farmers and children/students has been introduced by KNLS. The community contributes money to buy books, and KNLS processes and transports the books in boxes to the designated places. The set aim is for at least nine book boxes to be provided to each community, and for a student to have read at least 36 books a year. The book box service also includes the training of teacher librarians to manage the services. KNLS has also started two vital library services: the AIDS Awareness Service and Constitutional Information Services. Both services have played a role in educating

the public. Through the support of the British Council, KNLS has also set up the Braille Unit to meet the reading needs of the blind.

Reacting to the problem that centers on the library being a foreign concept, KNLS has started a sensitization program to teach the relevance and importance of the public library for personal and community development. A public relations office has been established that publishes the Kenal Newsletter, which propagates the messages to the users wherever they are through and during exhibitions, such as agricultural shows, and National Book week. The challenges that KNLS faces in the provision of public libraries will be discussed in a later section.

2.3 Trends in illiteracy eradication in Kenya

In the 1960s the focus of literacy programs in Kenya was on basic literacy. Getting the large numbers of illiterate people reading and writing was the goal of literacy campaigns. The 1967 government led National Literacy Campaign for example, was launched in a few pilot districts with the intention of national coverage by 1970. On the other hand, the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) sponsored Experimental World Literacy Program implemented in 1972 introduced the concept of functional literacy in Kenya. Within this program, functional literacy was perceived to be the acquisition of basic literacy and practical skills such as in agriculture, health and household management through income generation projects. However, in the 1980s and 1990s literacy provision efforts reverted back to basic literacy approach, which got the endorsement of the Kamunge report. Kenya became aware of the concept of critical literacy in the 1970s/1980s, but given the single party autocratic governments of the time, the literacy programme did not embrace it at that time. Freire's thinking eventually reached Kenya through international NGO intervention such as Action Aid's REFLECT programme.

2.4 How this can help build the economy

The role of a library is to educate the community it serves through the provision of information resources in all formats. Community in this respect include students, teaching and non-teaching staff in academic settings; researchers in academic environment and research organisations; employees in all organisation, business community, agriculturalist, farmers and children, and unemployed persons. All human beings are in search of information and knowledge that can help them achieve their desires and objectives. People need to be educated in many areas of their interest. Libraries and information centres are the only place that provides a variety of information that can help its user's to support education learning and other information needs. IFLA/UNESCO public library manifesto notes that "the public library is the local centre of information, making all kind of knowledge and information readily available to its users" (IFLA, 1994). Libraries in Kenya have been instrumental in the social economic development of the country. The socio-economic role of the public libraries can be categorised as follows:

National and public libraries

- Provide information in all formats to their community at all level to help them make informed economic decision.
- Provide mobile libraries services to the rural community
- Promote literacy and reading culture. National and public libraries have provided practical and cost-effective solutions for creating literate environments in Kenya even in poor communities where they share books and other information materials. A good example in the provision of mobile libraries using camels and bike in remote parts of Kenya.
- Support and sustain independent and lifelong learning. Libraries have helped develop a reading culture in children in Kenya through setting up tents that mix reading with other

enjoyable activities such as games, competitions and story-telling for children to encourage participation

- Supplement formal and informal education. Use of public libraries during school holidays has been encouraging with many school going children using their services
- Provide opportunity for people of all age to learn how to use information and associated technology
- Train people of all classes, age and sex in the use of information technology

For instance, a study by Macharia (2012) revealed that use of mobile libraries and telephony has transformed Kisumu town. For instance the study notes that farmers have been able to adopt new farming techniques which has improved their income among other economic benefits.

Currently, policy pronouncements continue to emphasize functional literacy. On paper, the meaning of functional literacy has not changed much since the 1970s. There is still talk of linking the teaching and learning of literacy to everyday activities of the learners and integrating literacy classes in income generation activities. However, operationalization of functional literacy has not been achieved and practice has continued to reflect a basic literacy approach.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This section describes research design, target population, sample selection, sampling procedure, research instruments and methods of data collection and analysis. It also specifies the location of study and research approach.

3.1 Research design

Descriptive survey research design was used in the study. Orodho (2002) defines research design as the scheme, outline or plan that is used to generate answers to research problem. The purpose of descriptive survey research is to study the relationships that exists, practices that prevail, beliefs and attitudes held, processes that are going on, effect being felt or trends that are developing (Best and Khan, 2001). It is suitable to use because it aims at collecting information from various respondents.

3.2 Target population

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), defines population as a complete set of individuals cases or objects with some common observable characteristics. The study targeted mainly Narok residents using the library.

3.3 Sampling size and procedures

Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals selected represent the large group from which they were selected. The researcher used both simple random sampling and purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling was used to

select principal librarian of the public library. Simple random technique was used to sample twelve library users.

3.6 Data collection instruments

The research instruments used in the study were questionnaires, interview schedules, items in the questionnaires and interview schedule are guided by the study objective and research questions.

3.7 Data collection procedure

Before administering the questionnaires, The KNLS Narok branch was contacted before the start of the study. The focus group interviews was conducted to the respondents.

3.8 Data analysis techniques

Data collected was coded and entered in the computer to permit qualitative and quantitative for analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Simple descriptive statistics was used to analyse the data, these include percentages and frequency counts. Bell (1993) maintains that when making the results known to a variety of readers, simple descriptive statistics such as percentage has considerable advantage over more complex statistics, Borg and Gall (1989) also holds that the most widely used standard proportion is the percentage. The result of the study was presented in summary, inform of tables.

3.9 Ethical considerations

As Punch (2000) asserts, “All social research involves consent, access and associated ethical issues, since it is based on data from people about people” . Interviews of participants will meet the general protocols and procedures for interviewing and oral history (Douglas, Roberts & Thompson (1988)). The proposed study will ensure that informed consent is obtained from participants. They may need full information about the research including the reasons they have been chosen to participate. Participants’ privacy, confidentiality and anonymity will be guaranteed. Consent forms and a covering letter will be provided.

Similarly, the library which was used for the case study was needed to give permission for access to archival material and documents useful to the study. The library was assured that findings were to be used appropriately, as would their reporting and dissemination.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

Chapter four presents findings from the study that was attained by use of the methodology described in the previous chapter. The findings were analyzed, presented and interpreted in connection to the role of public libraries eradicate illiteracy in Narok, Kenya.

The findings have been presented in six main sections that mainly answer the Research Questions:

- To find out major reasons for the introduction of the public library in Narok, Kenya.
- To investigate ways in which public library have tried eradicating illiteracy in Narok, Kenya.
- To determine what measures the public library have put in place to promote literacy in Narok, Kenya.
- To assess the challenges the public library go through in promoting illiteracy in Narok, Kenya.
- To determine the registration and attendance rate of users to the library.

The study sought information from users' registration, librarian and library users by using questionnaires, interview guides.

Finally, the result of the findings was discussed in light of the reviewed literature related to the role of public libraries in eradicating illiteracy in Narok, Kenya. Data analysis, presentation of results and interpretation of the findings were guided by the research questions.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section presents a demographic distribution of library users which sought information about gender, age, level of education, number of years of library attendance and frequency of visiting the library.

4.2.1 Gender Information of library users

The questionnaires utilized with users sought information about the gender of library users.

Information about of library users is presented in Table 4.1.

Responses	No.	%
Females	5	42
Males	7	58
total	12	100

Table 4.1 shows that from the users' sample population, there the males were visiting the library more than women, whereby the male formed 58 percent of the sample population of the users while the female formed 42 percent.

The disparity in men women attendance as explained by librarian during an informal interview could be as a result of the fact that mostly the people doing research and the students visit the library.

4.2.2 Age Information of users

Data regarding the age of the respondents was collected from the users by use of questionnaires.

It was analyzed and presented in Table 4.2.

Responses	No.	%
18-27 years	8	66.67
28-37 years	2	16.67
Above 37	2	16.67
Total	12	100

According to Table 4.2, majority of users (66.67%) in the sampled population were in the 18-27 years bracket. There was equal representation of the users in the age group 28-37 years and above 37 years. This may explain that the people living in Narok town are embracing the education as most youths visit the library as compared to the old. And also this may have resulted due to the existence of colleges and university around hence the higher number of youths visiting the library.

4.2.3 Level of education

Data regarding the users' level of education was collected, analysed and presented in Table 4.3.

Responses	No.	%
Primary	1	8.3
Secondary	1	8.3
College	7	58.3
University	3	25
Total	12	100

According to the data which was collected in March through the use of questionnaires, it was found that those attending colleges are the majority of users visiting the library which was represented by (58.3%), followed by university attendants which was (25%), as the primary and secondary students tied to (8.3%). The low turnout of secondary and primary as explained by the principal librarian was brought by the fact that the schools were not yet closed. But college students taking the lead only explains that in Narok there are many colleges than the universities. As we can see there is only one university Maasai Mara in the region.

4.2.4 Frequency of attendance by users

When the user were asked how frequent they visit the library in a week for the past three years, the following table shows how frequent they visit the library. The presentation is shown on table 4.4 below.

responses	No.	%
Once	4	33
2 or more	8	67
Total	12	100

Table 4.4 indicates that although users have been visiting the library in the last three years, majority (67%) indicated that they have visited the library more than twice. Only 33 % of users have visited the library once in a period of three years.

When asked why they were visiting the library, some of them were visiting to read newspapers, some to use the internet for research purposes, some visit the cyber within the library, some to

borrow reading materials, some to study within the library. Those who visit the library once a week are mainly those who come to borrow the reading materials for use elsewhere.

4.3 major reason for the introduction of the public library in Narok, Kenya.

The community have been experiencing challenges in accessing better education due to their long held traditional practices, pastoralism life and access to educational facilities. The construction of the library in Narok is mainly to address the challenges faced by the Maasai community and other communities living amongst them to promote literacy in the region.

4.4 Factors influencing the role of public library illiteracy eradication in Narok, Kenya.

The first research question sought for information on the attendance rate of library users who use the library.

The attendance rate for users has been a major concern to the public library for quite some time. The KNLS- Narok Branch Principal librarian during the interview lamented that attendance rate for users is very low when schools reopen and very high when exams are approaching. In addition, he added that when KASNEB exams are approaching the library is always packed with the students registered for the KASNEB exams.

4.5 Other ways done by the public library to help eradicate illiteracy in Narok, Kenya.

Other ways as explained by the principal librarian in an informal interview are as follows:

1. Story Telling Sessions

The Public library is also using story telling sessions to restore to life, folklore and oral communications of the past which are comparable to the electronic media that transcend time and place. They organize for story telling sessions every weekend whereby the community members

are invited and some students and pupils where they share stories about their community and other stories about the great leaders of this Nation Kenya.

2. Provision of Information and Referral services

The Public library also provides information and referral services to clients even though this service was affected by the economic challenges that characterized the period 2005 - 2008. However as the economy stabilizes there are efforts to provide current awareness services, for example, through Partnerships with Southern African Foundation for Acquired Immune Deficiency (SAFAIDS) to establish an HIV/AIDS corner with current reading information for users. Students from primary, secondary and higher and tertiary institutions do make use of the reference section which boasts of high quality educational materials covering a variety of subjects. Book famine in schools leaves students with no option other than to rely on the reference services of public libraries. The reference section consists of quality materials as opposed to the non-referral section, for example, fiction section.

3. Family reading

In Kenya the public library provides opportunities for family learning. Family learning generally refers to what people outside the family do to enable and facilitate the learning that goes on in the family. Spacey (2006) notes that through family learning adults and children learn together and this strengthen family cohesion and unity. Through family learning parents develop understanding as to how their children learn, improve parenting skills and knowledge of the educational system. Family learning is a product of adult literacy, community and life wide learning. The promotion of reading groups involving parents, children, teachers and librarians is an example of family learning. School homework also brings parents together with their children. Kenyans value education as a tool for socio-economic revolution and the family becomes the first

social space whereby parents and children discuss education. The concept of family reading is closely related to family literacy which refers to the process of fostering a culture of reading and literacy within the family. Eyre (2004) argues that “through family literacy programs, the home becomes an environment where young minds can grow to their fullest potential and where parents can play active roles in their children’s intellectual development.” During an informal interview to the librarian he said they also practise family reading by encouraging the community to help their children read. Also they do this by encouraging teachers to be giving homework to pupils which will let the parents also share with them.

4. Creating and strengthening reading habits in children from an early age.

The public library should attempt to meet the needs of all groups in the community regardless of age and physical, economic or social circumstances. However, it has a special responsibility to meet the needs of children and young people. If children can be inspired by the excitement of knowledge and by works of the imagination at an early age, they are likely to benefit from these vital elements of personal development throughout their lives, both enriching them and enhancing their contribution to society. Children can also encourage parents and other adults to make use of the library. It is also important that young people who experience difficulty in learning to read should have access to a library to provide them with appropriate material. In KNLS-Narok branch they have children’s section which help in creating and strengthening reading habits in children.

4.6 Measures to improve the illiteracy eradication by the public library in Narok, Kenya

According to the principal librarian in an informal interview, the following are the measures they have put in place to help eradicate illiteracy in Narok:

1. Encourage the pupils from primary schools and students from secondary schools to visit the library, as it's free for them to use the library services.
2. By holding debates in the library, the pupils or the students are able to improve on speaking or language skills.
3. They lend reading materials to users who are unable to read within the library hence helping in promoting literacy to the Maasai community.
4. By promoting the library services to users and teaching them on the importance of using library services.

4.7 problems faced by the public libraries in eradicating illiteracy in Narok, Kenya

As it is already known that one of the basic function of the libraries is to help eradicate illiteracy, and this they do by providing and/or giving the required information to the public who are in need and those who may not be in need. According to the principal librarian in an informal interview, he said that as they help eradicate illiteracy they always face some challenges.

Lack of Funds

Libraries have to be appropriately funded if they are to be effective and attractive. But many libraries worldwide are under-funded. According to the librarian of KNLS-Narok branch being one of the libraries is also facing financial constraints, this is due to the small allocation of funds by those allocating the money, and this is also affected by the wrong perception of the decision makers who see the library as an organization which wastes government resources. Budget allocation to libraries by the national government is minimal hence the financial problems to the libraries. But adequate funding is also needed for the building, for acquiring relevant materials, library furniture, for continuing education, for computers with Internet access and for running costs. Concrete support and guidelines for establishing a basic library service can be obtained

from the national or regional library or from international donation and support agencies. When the funds are minimal this makes it difficult to carry out the library roles easily hence a challenge.

Irrelevant Material

It is not unusual to find rows of outdated textbooks on American or British politics or history, and books in foreign, often former colonial languages in local public libraries. Apart from the fact that many such books are culturally irrelevant, their use poses the danger of fostering a euro-centric bias. This can be reinforced by comparing high-quality, glossy books from Europe and North America with low-cost local publications. As most libraries in poorer countries cannot afford to buy only appropriate books in the appropriate language, they rely on foreign book donations or simply do not have enough relevant titles in the local language. Despite criticism of imposing foreign books on developing countries. KNLS-Narok branch is not an exception on this as they receive donations from the western countries, here we find some books being irrelevant, that is the books are outdated in a way, but being that they are donations and donations are free the library has no option but to accept the materials.

Lack of Appropriate Training Opportunities

Appropriate training and continuing education is needed to address the rapid social and technological changes in modern libraries. Training must be made relevant to local conditions, outdated syllabi reflecting colonial values need to be replaced and training programs need to include knowledge of how to document and share indigenous knowledge in printed and non-printed formats. Modern library training must emphasize how to reach out to potential users and how to be at the centre of community development. Training should therefore include advocacy, public relations, and community mobilisation. KNLS- Narok branch has the same problem whereby the staff may not be well trained on some of the activities due to lack of funds to sponsor them for further studies or hire a professional to train them.

Lack of Needs Analysis

Many libraries are established without a professional needs analysis of the community, resulting in an information service based upon assumptions and not on actual needs. These libraries isolate themselves from the general public, often content to serve only a small, mainly urban-based, relatively well-off, educated elite. In Africa, a severe lack of professional librarians with research skills contributes to research being done by researchers and consultants rather than library practitioners (Mostert, 2001). Just as a needs analysis is necessary before establishing a service, continuing monitoring and evaluation with active community participation is also crucial to ensure that library services remain relevant.

ICT Challenges

Libraries are ideally placed to provide universal access to global information and to bridge the information gap between developed and developing countries. A survey of 22 public library services in ten English-speaking African countries showed that the majority of African libraries have yet to acquire computers (Mostert, 2001). Some libraries have computers, some even have Internet access for e-mail, but almost none provide access to information on the Internet. Most libraries will not have access to modern information technologies for various reasons, including a lack of the necessary infrastructure, such as telephone lines, electricity, software and hardware, and a lack of trained staff for maintenance and training in the use of computers. Furthermore, critical literacy skills are a prerequisite for using the Internet effectively and they have to be acquired through access to a wide range of reading materials. In relating this to KNLS- Narok branch, in my research I personally observed that they lack trained staff who can maintain all the computers within the organization.

Lack of Co-operation and a National Information Policy

Lack of co-operation among agencies involved in library-related work weakens the system and creates unnecessary duplication or even competition. If publicly available resources are scarce, co-operation and resource sharing become a solution. Cooperation is also necessary between various information providers in a country, including governmental and nongovernmental organisations, the media, corporate companies and the publishing sector. In a developing country with a weak publishing sector, unpublished material is of great value to the public, especially if the material supports national development. But due to the lack of training, many librarians do not know how to make such material accessible to the public.

Another problem is the lack of a national information policy, regulating the most efficient handling of materials. Against all odds, even in very poor countries, libraries provide practical and cost-effective solutions for creating literate environments. With innovative ideas they share books and supplementary reading materials with excluded communities, for example using donkeys in Zimbabwe and Columbia, using camels and motor bikes in Kenya, using elephants in India and boats in Benin and Argentina. Another innovative scheme for establishing a reading culture, opening up the perception that books can be fun and are not just associated with study for exams, are the East African children's reading tents. Library services and book development councils have introduced them in Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe to combine reading with enjoyable activities such as games, competitions and story-telling. Hence public libraries play a major role in eradicating illiteracy, not only in Kenya but also in other countries.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations drawn from the findings in connection to role of public libraries in eradication of illiteracy in Narok, Kenya.

5.2 Summary of the Research Findings

The study findings from analyzed data are presented below under themes derived from the demography and objectives of the study. To this end, the collected data was analyzed and then results interpreted as well as discussed whose major findings include: -

5.2.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study revealed that there were some gender disparities in representation. Majority of users (58%) included in the study were males. It was also noted that majority of users (66.67%) in the sampled population were in the 18-27 years bracket. The study revealed that majority of users included in the sample were students from colleges and universities. Majority of users (58.3%) who visit the library are college students. But the results do fluctuate when the schools are closed, that is according to the librarian who said that when schools are closed most of the users are primary and secondary schools students.

Data on users' professional qualifications indicated that only (25%) percent of the respondents were university attendants and secondary and primary school kids both had (8.3%).

This indicated that Narok residents are not as illiterate as most users were in colleges and universities.

Conclusion

Kenya has registered a phenomenal success in the battle against illiteracy. This is largely a result of the heavy investments in education by government, non-governmental organisations, provision of public library services, and are silent and disciplined citizenry whose quest for education is second to none in Africa. As Kenya stamps its mark on the knowledge economy its high time public libraries should start working on how to exploit multiliteracies and integration of local and formal scientific knowledge to sustain high literacy rate and overcome the complexities of the digital environment. The aggressive approach by the public library towards eradicating illiteracy should be enhanced through the design of indigenous grounded literacy programmes which will bring to the fore local languages and culture, help integrate culture and technology, sustain social cohesion tranquility and prosperity for all.

Fagerlind and Saha (1987) argue that a literate population is an asset and to stomach illiteracy and under- education is tantamount to tolerating wastage of human talent critical for the realisation of a nation's development goals. Despite socio-economic challenges, it is inspiring to note that as the United Nations Decade (2003-2012) of Literacy Development closes down, public libraries in Kenya have done extremely well to complement the efforts of the formal education sector in sustaining a high literacy rate in Africa through providing access to information and independent learning.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on Chisita (2011):

- Partnerships between public libraries and stakeholders in both private and public sectors should be encouraged to generate support for literacy programmes.
- Community engagement should be key priority for public library service planning.
- Amalgamation of Narok town and KNLS-Narok will create synergies that are critical for the sustenance of high literacy rates.
- Story telling should remain key programme for all public libraries.
- Public libraries should provide free access to their services.
- Mobile library services for the physical and visually disadvantaged and other vulnerable groups should be enhanced as a complement to conventional services.
- ICT's should be incorporated into the public library service's literacy programme.
- There is need for a public and school library consortium that will coordinate public libraries development and work with National Book Development Council.
- A government ministry dealing specifically with public libraries and related institutions should be set up.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PRINCIPAL LIBRARIAN

1. How would you rate the attendance of users to this library since the start in Narok region?
2. What is the major reason for the establishment of the KNLS in Narok?
3. What is the peak attendance of users?
4. What is the gender parity in attendance of the library?
5. What measures have you put in place to make sure that you perform your roles effectively to the users?
6. Apart from services offered within the library which makes users visit the library, what are other ways you use to reach the public and help eradicate illiteracy in Narok?
7. In your opinion, what factors do you think users the users' attendance to the library? If any then what measures have you put in place to counter the factors?
8. Do you charge the use of library services to the users? If yes, the why?

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LIBRARY USER

1. Name of the town where the library is located
2. Gender; Female Male
3. What is your age bracket? 18-27 years 28-37 years
Above 37 indicate

4. Indicate your highest academic level_____

Primary Secondary

Other specify _____

5. What is your professional qualification? Certificate Diploma Higher diploma

6. For how long have you been visiting the library indicate

7. Are you employed or unemployed? _____

8. How many times have you been visiting the library weekly? One time Two times Three or more times

9. How satisfactory do you find the services offered? Very satisfied Satisfied Good Poor

10. How long does it take the staff to respond to your problems? Less than 1 minute 2 minutes more than 10 minutes

11. How difficult do find it to get the right information you are looking for? Very difficult Difficult Not difficult