

Organization and Retrieval of Information Materials in Kenya National Library Services (Knls) Kisii, Kenya

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Abstract

Organization of information resources is the beginning of information retrieval process as it encourages access and utilization. In this study, researchers identify skills, training, knowledge and competence required for a successful information organization and retrieval. The study was carried out at Kisii District library. Cluster sampling was used to identify respondents and questionnaire employed in data collection. The study sample comprised eighty (88) library staff and users. The data to be collected will be analyzed using SPSS according to the research objectives and presented using tables, bar graphs and pie charts. The study showed among other findings, that training and employing qualified staff can improve organization and in turn increased access and use of library resources and services.

Keywords: Computer-Held Database resources and Bibliography, Information Retrieval, Information Materials, Indexing, Organization, Retrieval.

Introduction

Organization of information materials in a library is very important, it enable easier access to information materials and enables the library user to get what they want in the right time and in the right place without much strain in retrieving the information they need. (Ibrahim, 2001) Organization and retrieval of information materials in Kisii library is to bring about order and consistency in the library and is actually aimed at eradicating the problem of mixing up the information materials in the library.

According to Ranganathan (1964) the aim of library organization is to serve the users to the maximum and at the right time with the relevant materials and this is targeting at saving the user's time when materials are arranged in a systematic order. The user's time will be saved since they will directly go to the shelves and pick the materials of their choice since materials are catalogued users can find a book of which the author is known, the subject is known and the title is known (Cutter, 1876). Organization and retrieval of information materials in a library will minimize time of the users and maximize the use of materials.

Literature Review

Policy governing organization and retrieval of information materials: According to Hornoy, (2005) oxford advanced learners dictionary, a policy is a plan of action agreed or chosen by a political party, group or business etc. He continues asserting that a policy is a principle that one believe in, that influences how he/she behave away I which one usually behave. The library is vitally important source in all colleges existing, so some staff, students and college management a like to fulfill its role it must be adequately staffed and funded.

LA, (1982). According to cutter, (1876) a library needs a catalogue to:

Enable a person find a book of which:

- The author is known,
- The subject is known,
- The title is known.

Show what the library has:

- By a given author as entered in the library.
- On a given subject
- In a given literature.

To assist in the choice of a book as to it's:

- Edition
- Character (literary or topical)

Kumar, (2006) observes that catalogue rules entries are made according to a set of rules contained in a catalogue card. Thus a policy is a document that guides people in an organization on how to carry out their daily.

Records categories of personnel involved in organization and retrieval of information materials:

According to Chakrabarti, (1989) personnel termed as personnel administration function of library provides the framework in which the library staff and he continues "the management of the library should ensure efficiency in work and infrastructure of the library should be created to this effect." A personnel is a person specialized in a given area, he/ she should be highly skilled and trained to that field.

Librarian: A librarian is a person in-charge of information materials in a library, delivering services and any assistance to the needy (users). Harrods library glossary and reference book describe a librarian as one who has the care of library and materials which comprise its stock and providing information and loan services to meet the needs of the users. According to

LA, (1982) college libraries “library staff is all or any person employed in the library at whatever professionals, academic technician and/or administrative level.”

Kumar,(1986) compares personnel involved with staffing as a whole personnel function covering employment and training of employees and maintenance of favorable environmental for carrying out work.

Qualifications of staff involved in organization and retrieval of information materials: A fully qualified librarian should be able to organize and direct users to relevant materials using his/her knowledge acquired in cataloguing and classification, he /she should also be satisfied with the service delivered to users conveniently. LA, (1982) defines professional librarians as a chartered librarian or one fully qualified academically in librarianship and in a route to attaining chartered status including licentiates of the library Association. He assert that the terms includes such titles as tutor librarian, senior librarian, assistant librarian etc.

According to Narayana, (1991) skills required for senior positions in libraries are:- Professional knowledge in library services, Subject knowledge, Managing ability, Ocholla and Ojiambo, (1993) defines information scientist as an information officer who has a science degree and may be qualified in the administration of a library or information department in anticipation of demand. This is done by preparing and circulating news sheets, literature surveys, reading lists, abstracts, particulars of articles in current periodicals which its anticipation will be of interest to potential users of the service.

According to Penna, (1970) the library staff must be highly qualified and if the library is to serve as the center of country’s public and school libraries the numbers of professional; auxiliary, secretarial and general service staff depending on the size of the library and the extend of services.

Type of information materials organized in the library

- State Records (2004) has identified skills required as: ability to register records using the TRIM records management software product, ability to identify activities documented by records and apply classification schemes, ability to record metadata in the TRIM records management software product accurately, ability to apply disposal information to records in the TRIM records management software product, ability to handle fragile and deteriorating paper records and Knowledge required as : understand the process of assessing records to identify disposal status, understanding of the processes of capture classification registration and tracking the location of records.

- Reading Comprehension - Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
- Active Listening - Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
- Speaking - Talking to others to convey information effectively.
- Critical Thinking - Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems. Among others.
- The skills required for a staff managing student records can also be determined by the type of records managed.

Training and qualifications staff managing student records

Staff training is very important key to ensure competencies and business profitability in any institution. It has been observed that good regular trainings are able to reduce staff turnover, increase productivity and improve the quality of service.

According to the University of Toronto (2013) only education that is part of a recognized diploma or degree program will be credited towards a requirement of five years combined post-secondary education and skilled wage-earning experience related to one’s Technological Education Area. Certificate studies and stand-alone courses will not be credited to this requirement. Government of Alberta (2004) observes that this series of courses provides foundational training on managing records; Records Management Orientation (AC0290)-Records Management Orientation will give staff managing student records an overview of the records and information management program in the college and introduce him/her to basic records management concepts and terminology.

Managing Active Records-Managing Active Records builds on the principles of the Records Management Orientation course and teaches records staff how to use records management tools to effectively manage active hardcopy records systems. Records Disposition (AC0292)-Records Disposition covers the processes and practices involved in the inactive and final disposition phases of the records life cycle. Records Disposition-IRIS-(AC0730). The 1 day course provides new users instruction and hands-on practice searching, entering, and submitting boxes of inactive records for transfer in IRIS.

According to ARMA (2000) providing adequate training for users of electronic recordkeeping systems in the operation, care, and handling of the equipment, software, and media used in the system and in the

management of electronic records is the responsibility of the agency records manager and the college's Records Management Program.

According to ARMA, (2000) training for individuals who create, edit, store, retrieve or dispose of records is an important aspect of records management. Training enables agency personnel to identify records, and to understand how records are filed in a recordkeeping system, how records are safeguarded, what procedures are used to edit records, and how records should be disposed of according to legal requirements.

Methods of providing training for the management of records include the following

Formal classroom training is presented several times a year on a recurring basis or as needed for special situations. A self-learning center within the agency, where operators can teach themselves at their own rate of learning through interactive programs. As a rule, commercial tutorial programs do not include records management information.

Telephone "hotlines" or "help desk" staffed by knowledgeable computer support professionals, who can answer technical questions and provide "quick fix" solutions. This process may not be an adequate learning tool for good records management unless the computer support professionals have received specialized records management training.

Attend specialized training offered and other professional organizations. Training offered by a manufacturer or supplier. This usually covers the operations of the equipment, but does not normally include the principles of records management (ARMA, 2000). These trainings results in greater staff satisfaction through enhanced confidence, personal development and career enhancement in records management.

State Records (2004) notes that it may be suitable to offer a records management traineeship. A traineeship is a job that combines work and learning. It involves a formal agreement between the employer and the trainee; a training program delivered by a Registered Training Organization; and a nationally recognized qualification for the trainee on completion. In the case of records management this means that over a 12 month period a trainee will undertake a range of work activities in a records management environment while they complete a Certificate III in Business (Records and Archives).

Training/development options for bridging skill gaps generally fall into the following categories:

a) On the job coaching involves instruction of one or two members of staff on organizational practices and procedures. Rather than being a structured training course, coaching goes on throughout the working day when it is required.

- b) In house training may either be developed by staff or by an external provider. Some records management consultancy firms will prepare and provide tailored courses for individual organizations. Consultants may be able to instruct records management staff and also train general staff members in their recordkeeping responsibilities.
- c) External training and development.
- d) There are a number of different options for external training and development in records management. For example scholarships, some colleges offer one off payments to assist study in the field of student records management.

Qualifications of staff managing student records

According to State records (2004) 'A qualification is the recognition-accepted nationally or internationally-that a person has attained a certain standard of education, knowledge and skill in a particular field. Qualifications include degrees, diplomas, certificates, grades of membership in a professional association or institution, or enrolment or licensing by legally recognized registration bodies such as courts or registration boards.' They go ahead indicating that: tertiary qualifications in records management such as Certificate III or above or post graduate qualifications, extensive experience in the management of records, understanding of and ability to implement the requirements of the State Records Act 1998 and associated records management standards .According to oxford dictionary (2013) qualification is a pass of an examination or an official completion of a course, especially one conferring status as a recognized practitioner of a profession or activity.

A college registrar should be able to work with a variety of people and have exceptional communication skills, including when collaborating with multiple college departments. He or she should be highly organized and be able to quickly adapt to change. An attention to detail is also necessary. A college registrar serves as the administrator responsible for student records and class enrollment. A high degree of technological proficiency is often required for this position, and a graduate-level education is typically a prerequisite to employment. Education portal, (2012).The staff managing student records should also have electronic records management knowledge so as to maintain and manage online records.

Experience of staff managing student records

According to University of Toronto (2013) In order for one's work experience to be considered skilled he/she must provide documentation showing completion of a program of formal education and skills-acquisition prior to the beginning of skilled employment.

Education portal (2012) observes that a college registrar must be familiar and comfortable with changing technology. A bachelor's degree is usually required. A master's degree may also be required, and knowledge of computer science might be preferred. Registrar positions generally require 3-5 years of experience in a related area, including a background in supervising other employees.

Smith (2000) observes that Work experience is offered by colleges as an opportunity for students to engage themselves in a work situation. Heads of institutions do this for a range of reasons, but fundamental amongst these is the direct benefit which they see to their college, and it is this benefit which governs their view that work experience itself is important. For institutions which are seeking to build an involvement in the offering of work experience, the benefits which can sell the concept internally need careful articulation. For one to be perfect and an expert in his/her work, he /she should have worked in an organization for a period of time. As the saying states that "experience is the best teacher". Therefore a college can have confidence in someone's operations since he/ she has been doing the same for a period of time.

According to State records (2004) records officer working under a qualified records manager should have experience in the management of records, demonstrated ability to control records using records/document management software, understanding of the rules and procedures for records disposal in Government/Local Government/the public health sector etc., ability to use a controlled vocabulary tool (such as a thesaurus/name of thesaurus) for records titling. A records management trainee should have successful completion of Year 12 HSC or equivalent, willingness to undertake a Business (Records & Archives) Traineeship, ability to undertake general clerical duties, ability to maintain strict confidentiality & use discretion, experience working with computers. (State Records, 2004)

Recommendations on student records management

According to OSU (2013) Active Records Systems that have continuing utility and value must be actively maintained by the creating unit. Maintaining these systems will entail routine system backup and may involve periodic or scheduled recopying data from old to fresh storage media. OAR 166-020-0045(2) also directs state agencies to "store security copies of essential electronic records systems off the premises where the system is used, along with any system documentation necessary to enable recovery of the system in the event of an emergency."

OSU (2013) observes that continued maintenance of electronic systems may require the records management officer to migrate records and data to new systems that can take advantage of the most current

systems hardware and software. Prudent management requires that offices and units committing long-term records to electronic records systems provide a system and data migration plan to the agency records officer (College Archivist). The plan should specify a schedule for data back-ups and recopying as well as require backwards compatibility of a new electronic records system. Backwards compatibility means that, to perform continuing functions, new systems must be able to access and read previously created electronic records and data. (OSU, 2013).

Backup Recommendations-In order to protect valuable college data from accidental erasure, disaster, or system malfunctions, a backup procedure should be in place for every office. The frequency of data backups should be determined by registrar based on the frequency of data changes and the volume of records affected by the periodic changes. Some offices may need daily backups to protect vital records; others may require only weekly or monthly backups.

Standard procedure dictates that the "three generations" backup rule be followed for all units. The three-generation procedure requires that the three most recent backup tapes or disks be kept at all times and that the oldest backup copy be used for making a new backup copy. Similarly, it is recommended that some type of off-site storage of backup tapes or disks be arranged. At a minimum this means that backups should be stored in a building on department separate from the facility housing the electronic records system. (OSU, 2013)

Destruction of Confidential Records-More and more records maintained by the College contain confidential and personal privacy information, particularly records maintained in electronic form. It is equally important that electronic records containing confidential or personal privacy information be destroyed in a careful and confidential manner. (OSU, 2013)

When record data on removable electronic media, such as diskettes and CD-ROM, contain protected information and the data for reasons of obsolescence are no longer needed, it is important to destroy the actual magnetic storage unit. It is not wise to send diskettes out of the office for use by others, even if the diskettes have been reformatted. The nature of magnetic media makes it easy to recover files that have been recorded even if they have been erased or the media reformatted.

The same cautions must be exercised when surplus computer equipment containing hard disk drives. Hard disk drives must at least be reformatted before they leave the office for another department or surplus property. If the hard drive contains confidential information it is advisable to delete the contents of the drive using one of the commercially available erasing and data blanking programs. The most desirable solution to the potential loss of control over confidential

or personal privacy information is to remove and retain the hard disk drive in the office or destroy it.

Managing Electronic Records of Long-term Value-If an inactive record system must be retained for a period exceeding one year, special measures must be taken to keep the information accessible. This requirement is due to the instability of magnetic media and to some accessibility considerations unique to electronic records. Records that will ultimately go to the college Archives for permanent retention must be printed out on good quality white paper. The Archives cannot accession or provide reference services to records in electronic format at this time.

Methodology

The target population consisted of three (3) departments in KTTC College. The study targeted the staff in-charge of student records. The sample size for the study comprised of four (4) staff in-charge of student records, four (4) heads of department (HODs) twenty two (22) staff managing student records in KTTC registry totaling to 30 respondents. The study sample size as calculated using 30% is shown in table 3.1 below

Table 1: sample size of the respondents in KTTC College.

Respondents	Total Population	Sample size at 30 Percentage (%)
Staff managing student records	22	07
Human resource personnel	04	01
HODs	04	04
Total	30	12

The study employed purposive sampling technique to select the sample. In purposive sampling technique, the researcher decided which respondent to include in the sample based on their typicality and it was used to collect focused information (Oso and Onen, 2009). Purposive sampling was also used to sample key information like the Human resource personnel and HODs of the college. Simple random sampling was also used to select the staff in the registry and the researcher considered this to be representative sample because the sample size was large enough to contain all the variations in the population and equal and independent chances were given to each individual in the population to be selected. Purposive sampling was deemed appropriate in this study because it makes it possible for

the selection of subjects on the basis of their expertise in the subject investigated (Uma, 2010) while Simple random sampling was preferred because it ensured that all members of the target population had an equal and independent chance of being included in the sample.

Questionnaires were used to collect data complemented by observation. The questionnaires were distributed to the action staffs/officers. The questionnaires were intended to enable the researcher to understand the framework of skills and competencies of staff managing student records at the Kenya technical teachers College (KTTC); skills, types and format of student records, qualifications, training, and experience of the staff managing student records. The administration of the questionnaires was followed by physical observation of records units and registry in the college.

Data Analysis

According to Kombo and Tromp, (2006) data analysis refers to the examination of the coded data critically and making inferences. In this study data was organized, represented, analyzed and interpreted using descriptive statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics according to Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003) include the statistical procedure that produce indices and summarize data and describe the sample. Descriptive statistics that was used to summarize the data include frequencies, percentages, tables and pie-charts for visual impression. Data was analyzed using Microsoft excel.

The mass data collected was presented using tables and pie charts. It was analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Where qualitative data analysis was a process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of information collected (Mugenda and Mugenda, (2000). On the other hand quantitative data analysis was the process of presenting and interpreting numerical data. Microsoft excel software was used in analyzing data.

To ensure reliability of instruments a number of a pilot study was carried out in Kisii University which was outside the sample population. This university was used for piloting because the nature of staff functions of the student records management in the college was similar. The research instruments were administered to the same pilot group twice after a given interval and results were compared. The reliability coefficient alpha 0.871 was obtained. This implied that the research instruments were reliable and thus were adopted for the study.

Results and Discussions

The analysis of the data that related to the background information of the registry staff and students is as follows:

Table 2: The scheme for variables used

Variable	Variable code	Response Category	Response category code	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Total
Gender	G	Male	1	12	44%	100%
		Female	2	15	56%	
Highest level of education	H	Secondary	1	4	15%	100%
		Certificate	2	8	29%	
		Diploma	3	10	37%	
		Masters	5	1	4%	
Users category	U	Staff	1	15	55%	100%
		Human resource personnel	2	5	19%	
		HODs	3	4	15%	
		Non-staff members	4	3	11%	

The analysis on gender indicated that 44% of the respondents were men and about 56% of them were women. This was because the total number of women in KTTC was higher than that of men. Even from the 2009 census statistics shows that the total population of women was high than men i.e. 19.4 million for women and 19.2 million for men totalizing to 38.6 million. From the table it was revealed that most of KTTC registry staff they make 55%, followed by HODs whose percentage was 19%, the third category was other staff members whose percentage was 15% and finally the Non staff members whose percentage was 11%. The percentage of staff was high because they were the frequent in-charge of the registry in searching for information and getting academic reports. The percentage of HODs and non-staff members was 19% and 15% respectively because a good number of HODs obtain their curriculum materials from the registry. For non-staff members of the staff for instance registry staff members they used the registry to access records and also doing their routine records management tasks. The percentage of non-staff members was 11% this variable constitute the children of the staff members who resided within the college compound, they used the registry for enquiry because most of them were students in various colleges and universities. In the analysis of the variables (high level of education) most registry staff of KTTC had Diploma level i.e. 37% where those with KCSE, Certificate, Degree and masters had 15%, 29%, 15%, 4% respectively. Most staff i.e. 37% had Diploma this was because KTTC admits the students who already have a Diploma to specialize in one year technical teacher education. Secondary (KCSE), Certificate, Degree and masters had 15%, 29%, 15%, and 4% respectively because the college admits the

KCSE students and students who had certificate to enroll on certificate and Diploma respectively so the percentage of secondary (KCSE) was 15% because they were not familiar with the importance of registry roles, While that of certificate was 29% because most of certificate holders know roles of the college registry in records management. The staff with masters and degree constitutes the percentage of 4% and 15% respectively this was because most of teaching staff that used the registry were degree holders' while few had masters i.e. 4%.

The table below shows the skills of staff managing student records at KTTC registry as per the data collected from the staff of the registry.

Table 3: skills of staff managing student records in KTTC registry.

Types of skills	No. of staff who use the skills	Usage
Strategic Planning	20	74%
Disposal	3	12%
Classification	2	7%
Recording	2	7%
Total	27	100%

Strategic planning is the one which is used frequently by the registry staff. Its usage percentage is 74% this because there is new admissions every day, where disposal has the percentage of 12% because most staff apply skills without consulting anybody while classification and recording has the percentage of 7% respectively that means that it's not frequently used.

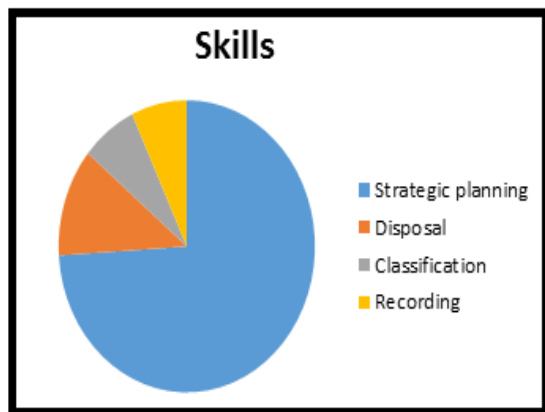


Fig. 3.1: Pie chart showing skills of staff managing student records in KTTC registry.

The respondents raised the trainings they normally receive during the management of student records at KTTC registry. Some of them are on- job training, Professional training, Sharing knowledge through discussion. KTTC registry staff members have all the relevant qualifications to manage student records as all of them have qualifications from certificate to masters in records management. This enables them to offer quality services.

The registry is well equipped with competent and experienced staff to serve the users; in this regard electronic records management is of great significance in the provision of the services. These are the benefits of experienced staff at KTTC registry; Provide speedy and easy access to information. Ensures efficiency and economy of resources, Provide round the clock access to users, Provide access to unlimited information from different sources, Provide information flexibility to be used by any individual according to his/her requirements, Provides increased flexibility, Facilitates the reformatting and combining of data from different sources. KTTC registry staffs are paid according to experience and trainings received.

Conclusion and Recommendation

When properly employed, electronic recordkeeping is an efficient tool for managing the entire record, across many media, because of the unique characteristics (i.e., volatility, metadata, etc.) of electronic records and the complexity of their use. An even more thoughtful application of sound records management principles needs to be given electronic record creation, maintenance, and final disposition.

To have an effective electronic records management program, the college Records Management Analyst and/or Manager-in cooperation with administrative, professional, technical, and administrative support staff must:

a) Establish the necessary program elements to manage all records using electronic recordkeeping.

- b) Use the electronic recordkeeping systems to provide an up-to-date records inventory.
- c) Make the decisions necessary for developing the college records retention schedule.
- d) Organize electronic files to maximize their usefulness.
- e) Implement security measures to protect electronic information.
- f) Cooperate with the National Archives to preserve the college's historical heritage.
- g) Apply the approved retention schedule and college procedures to dispose of obsolete electronic records.
- h) Skills and competencies are the pillars in integrated records management arenas where it supports service delivery and management; it has been employed by many organizations to increase accuracy, efficiency and save time, provide security of records, eliminate duplication of work and share information.
- i) Despite the fact that framework of Skills and competencies is advantageous in registry operation, it can also bring some draw backs which needs to be addressed thus enabling it to play a vital role in registry development and operation.

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