

**THE ROLE OF KENYA NATIONAL LIBRARY IN THE PROVISION
OF INFORMATION FOR YOUTH EMPOWERMENT IN NAIROBI
COUNTY, KENYA**

BY

BETTY KALUGHO


**A Thesis Submitted to the School of Information Sciences in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Master of Science in Library and
Information Studies in the Department of Library, Records Management and
Information Studies**

**MOI UNIVERSITY
ELDORET**

OCTOBER, 2014

DECLARATION**DECLARATION****DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE**

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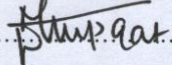
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my husband, Nicodemus and our children Joan, Billy and Elsie for all the support and encouragement they gave me.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank all those who have directly and indirectly contributed to the writing of this work.

My sincere thanks go to my supervisors Professor Joseph Kiplang'at and Mr. Duncan Amoth who guided me in writing this work.

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May God truly bless you all.

ABSTRACT

The whole world is beginning to appreciate the place of youth empowerment in the development of nations, regions and people groups. Empowerment programmes organized at national and international level are increasingly targeting the youth. In a nation where young people are not empowered with positive and virtuous skills and attitudes, they will engage in more anti-social behavior. Libraries need to provide information services that are relevant to the needs of the youth and which can be used to enable them fulfill their aspirations. The aim of this study was to investigate the role of the Kenya National Library Service in provision of information to empower the youth towards holistic development, and propose a framework to improve information provision for youth empowerment. The objectives of the study were: to analyze the role KNLS is playing in providing information for youth empowerment; to determine information needs of youth in Nairobi County and examine how these needs are met by KNLS; to determine sources of information and channels used by youth to access information; to establish the mechanisms, programmes and activities put in place by the government towards youth empowerment; to establish the challenges youth face in accessing relevant information that can empower them and propose ways of improving information provision for youth empowerment. The study was informed by the Uses and Gratification theory which focuses on what people do with the media and also Wilson's general model of information seeking behaviour. Case study research method has been used. The study population was the library users of Buruburu Knls library in Nairobi County aged between 15-30 years. Non-probability sampling method through quota sampling was used to get the required sample. The study population was categorized into three that is youth in secondary school, youth in colleges and youth who are non-students and the samples picked purposively. The main data collection method was face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions. Data collected was analyzed using various qualitative techniques and presented in descriptive and narrative forms. The study established that the public library played a significant role in empowering the youth through the information it availed to them. The information the youth accessed had tangible impact on their lives and thus it empowered them. The youth, however, face various challenges in accessing information in the library which showed that there were gaps that public libraries needed to fill to enhance their information services to youth. This study recommends that public libraries aim for youth-friendly programs/services, provides information literacy, strengthens online information service provision, non-book materials and provides space for group discussions. It proposes a framework where the library first conducts a needs assessment of targeted users to establish their needs and expectations, then selects resources and media that matches those needs, followed by awareness creation as well as information literacy and finally assesses the impact of the services provided through monitoring and evaluation in order to know if the users' needs have been gratified. It is hoped that the study will be of theoretical and practical significance to information professionals, researchers and policy-makers in the country.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CD	-	Compact Disc
CSA	-	Centre for the Study of Adolescence
CYEL	-	Centre for Youth Empowerment & Leadership
DVD	-	Digital Video Disc
GOK	-	Government of Kenya
HIV	-	Human acquired Immune Virus
ICT	-	Information Communication Technology
ILO	-	International Labour Organization
ISBN	-	International Standard Book Number
Knls	-	Kenya national library service
KYEEI	-	Kenya Youth Empowerment & Employment Initiative
KYEP	-	Kenya Youth Empowerment Project
MYSA	-	Mathare Youth Sports Association
MFI's	-	Micro-finance Institutions
NGO's	-	Non-Governmental Organizations
PWD's	-	Persons with Disabilities
SACCO's	-	Savings and credit cooperative organizations
STI's	-	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's Fund
UNPF	-	United Nations Population Fund
VCT	-	Voluntary Counseling & Testing
YEDF	-	Youth Enterprise Development Fund
YEP	-	Youth Empowerment Programme

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The future of any society lies in its youth and so is the future of any organization including libraries and information centres. Libraries need to provide information services that are relevant to the needs of the youth and which can be used to enable them fulfill their aspirations.

Youth is the time of life between childhood and adulthood or maturity. Around the world, the terms “youth”, “adolescent”, “young person” are used interchangeably and often mean the same thing. According to United Nations (2009), youth are those persons between ages 15-24 years. The Commonwealth Youth Programme (2011) works with young people aged between 15-29 years. The World Health Organization (WHO, 1989) defines youth as those aged between 15-24 years. The Kenya National Youth Policy(2007) defines a Kenyan youth as one aged between 15-30 years. This accounts for about 32% of the population which translates to 9.1 million of the total Kenyan population. A more recent description of the youth is the term “Generation Y”. Hassanali (2012) describes Generation Y as individuals born between 1981 and 2000.

The youth of any society form a large proportion of the population and it is important to develop them to achieve their full physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual potentials as individuals and responsible citizens as members of society. Advocates of

youth mainstreaming like United Nations, Commonwealth of Nations and United Nations Educational and Scientific Cultural Organization (UNESCO) point out that young people represent a disadvantaged and marginalized social group being over-represented among the global poor and unemployed. As such it is argued that strategies to alleviate challenges like poverty, unemployment and others must be pro-youth and that any development intervention seeking sustainable impact must address the youth. Empowerment is one of the strategies being employed to improve human conditions. Empowerment can be understood varyingly according to the discipline it is covering. It cuts across communication development, psychology, education, economics, studies of social movements and organizations, philosophy, self-help industry, motivational sciences among others. Empowerment is multidimensional and it can be exercised on many different levels and domains (Alsop, Bertelsen and Holand, 2006).

Blanchard, 1996 describes empowerment as a process that helps people gain control over their own lives. It enables individuals / groups to fully access personal / collective power, authority and influence and to employ that strength when engaging with other people, institutions or society. Empowerment is not giving people power but letting this power out (Blanchard, 1996). People already have power in the wealth of their knowledge and motivation. Empowerment encourages people to gain skills and knowledge that will allow them to overcome obstacles in life or work environment and ultimately help them develop within themselves or in the society.

The process of empowerment fosters power in people for use in their own lives, communities and society by acting on issues they define as important. It challenges our assumptions about the way things are and can be, our assumptions about power, helping, achieving and succeeding.

Empowerment therefore involves change. Wilson (1996) points out that more researchers, organizers, politicians and employers recognize that individual change is a prerequisite for community and social change and empowerment. Individual change is a bridge to community connectedness and social change. To create change we must change individually to enable us become partners in solving complex issues facing us. This is the empowering process. The empowered develop confidence in their own capacities.

Empowerment can be viewed in terms of sociology, economics, politics and culture (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990) Sociological empowerment is related to one's power within the dynamics of everyday life. It entails participating in community associations and groups, in social occasions, events and networking. It involves being able to make key decisions about one's own life and body for example women's right over their fertility and access to societal resources and rights like healthcare or education. It addresses members of groups that social discrimination processes have excluded from decision-making processes for example discrimination based on disability, race, ethnicity, religion or gender.

Economic empowerment is related to one's capacity to generate and sustain livelihood. It focuses on mobilizing self-help efforts of the poor rather than providing them with social welfare, opportunities for employment and use and ownership of productive resources; achieving more equal ownership and use of property for the poor and disenfranchised, access to financial and technical support from government to improve productive capacity.

Political empowerment is related to one's willingness and capacity to influence and participate in decision-making processes through involvement in councils, lobbying government agencies, voting, being active in unions, political parties or other organizations that attempt to influence policy and politics, being able to make one's voice and proposal heard and visible to society as a whole and becoming members of governmental bodies.

Cultural empowerment is related to one's potential to review, challenge and work to transform traditional values, beliefs and attitudes. It involves questioning and working to change how cultural traditions and practices are promoting and reinforcing the denial of rights and processes of impoverishment.

1.2 EMPOWERING THE YOUTH

Empowering the youth means giving the youth ability to understand the changes they are going through, what to expect as they grow older and the opportunity to develop into

intelligent and sensible human beings. It gives youth ability to express their emotions, thoughts or opinions.

Youth is a transitional period with increased involvement in productive activities and growing independence in making life choices and choosing personal direction. Empowered youth learn to make their own decisions and take responsibility for their actions. United Nations Population Fund reported that more than 1.2 billion adolescents are coming of age (UNFPA Report, 2003). Their success and happiness depend on the support, example, education, opportunities and resources they are provided with. They must be empowered to make informed choices and provided with information and services. Investing in the well-being and ensuring participation of the young generation will yield benefits for generations to come. Youth empowerment is widely accepted as an important strategy to improve human conditions.

Most published evaluations of youth empowerment programmes conducted in western countries and settings affirmed that empowerment had a positive effect on some aspects of the well-being of vulnerable youth (Mohajer and Earnest, 2009). Programmes centered on youth empowerment have activities focusing on youth-led media, youth rights, youth councils, youth activism, youth involvement in community decision-making, capacity building among others.

Empowering young people means creating and supporting the enabling conditions under which they can act on their own behalf and their own terms rather than at the direction of others. According to the Commonwealth Secretariat (Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment 2007-2015), these enabling conditions are an economic and social base, political will, adequate resource allocation, supportive legal and administrative frameworks, a stable environment of equality, peace and democracy, access to knowledge, information and skills and a positive value system.

It is a proven fact that general empowerment of the youth reduces risk factors and promotes positive factors. The bottom line for any programme is the provision of information that is access to the right kind of information and dissemination of the right information in a timely manner.

1.3 PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

One of the main reasons for the existence of the public library is to promote knowledge; to help people experience cultural expressions of high quality, provide access to knowledge and culture that elevates people and institutions. The public library covers gaps in literacy and skills, provides learning opportunities, support educational and career development of young people during non-school hours, encourages self-improvement through learning and discovery and informal learning opportunities. Libraries are popular gathering places for youth out of school hours supplying answers to reference questions, meeting research needs, self-direction of life-long learning, a research for information on career opportunities and job training as well as different types of personal interests and

pursuits. Public libraries worldwide provide information services to the general public and youth are part of their clientele.

Today's globalised society is characterized by the growth of the so-called information or knowledge society which has fundamental effects on libraries. These developments redefine the traditional role of the public library as a meeting place in the community (Audunson, 2005). The public library helps people experience literature and other cultural expression of high quality. The role of the library is to promote self-realization by giving people access to a diversity of expressions not to make judgments and selections (Audunson, 2005). Librarians help people find whatever information they require in a world of information and cultural expressions. Libraries also create arenas where people belonging to different cultural groups can meet and communicate. The library is thus important as a physical space. Libraries act as bridges between the virtual and physical. They are engaged in today's digital and virtual world as well as the physical space and enables people to meet physically. Public libraries are partners in youth development by supporting educational and career development of young people (De Witt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, 1998).

1.4 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The whole world is beginning to appreciate the place of youth empowerment in the development of nations, regions and people groups. Empowerment programmes organized at national and international level are increasingly targeting the youth. In a nation where young people are not empowered with positive and virtuous skills and

attitudes, they will engage in more anti-social behavior. Young people are also beginning to understand that they must begin to take action now if they want to experience a stable and enjoyable tomorrow.

According to World Bank, 2000/2001 one of the key elements of empowerment that must underlie institutional reform is access to information, a role that falls under the domain of libraries and information centres (web.worldbank.org). The World Bank advances the logic of self-empowerment of civil society and it is widely accepted and adopted among African civil society organizations. It views empowerment as a process of enhancing the capacity of individuals / groups to make choices into desired actions and outcomes. It is viewed as a process of increasing the assets and capabilities of individuals or groups to make purposive choices. This led to the publication of an empowerment sourcebook in 2002 to act as a guide for operationalizing empowerment in the bank's work.

Empowering young people is a Commonwealth objective under the "Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment" working closely with ministers of youth and young people themselves that covers the period 2007-2015. It is a framework document for governmental, inter-governmental and civil society action for and with young people (15-29 years). Its indicators are integrated with the millennium development goals. It stimulates an assets-based approach to youth development in that it recognizes young people as assets to their societies and stresses on building on young people's capacities and agency to overcome poverty. It also advocates for engaging young people in decision-making as partners in democracy and development. The action plan encourages

youth mainstreaming and contains 13 action points for governments (Commonwealth Secretariat / Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment 2007-2015).

The United Nations has a world youth forum as a springboard for exchange between young people and UNESCO that meets and comes up with strategies to propel youth empowerment. In 2001 the meeting was held in Dakar, Senegal and it came up with the Dakar Strategy. The strategies identified included education, information and communication technologies, employment, health and population, capacity building, advocacy among others.

Efforts to support youths' healthy development and integration into the community have experienced shifts in focus over the past few decades (Small and Memmo, 2004). Historically, a primary function of youth programmes was rehabilitation or containment (for example keeping youths off the streets). An initial shift from these risk-based preventive approaches was in the direction of fostering healthy youth development and capacity building through active community participation (Kim et al, 1998; Small and Memmo, 2004). More recently, positive youth development approaches have been expanded to incorporate a focus on youth empowerment. Empowerment is a multi-level construct consisting of practical approaches and applications, social action processes and individual and collective outcomes.

1.5 THE KENYA GOVERNMENT AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Youth empowerment initiatives in the Government of Kenya fall under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. The Ministry bases its operations on a number of policies. These are the African Youth Charter, 2006, the Kenya National Youth Policy, 2007, the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment, 2007-2015, the Commonwealth Youth Programme Strategic Plan, Kenya Vision 2030 and the Millennium Development Goals. The Ministry has established / instituted the following programmes to address youth concerns in Kenya. It has initiated Kazi Kwa Vijana (KKV) programme as an economic stimulus programme in 2008. This initiative aims at spurring economic growth through engaging young people in productive activities for pay. It aims at creating short term employment for up to 200,000 youth. The activities include planting and nurturing tree seedlings.

The Kenya National Youth Service (NYS) was established back in 1964 to train young people for nation building and provide a reserve force for the Kenya armed forces. The servicemen and women are also trained on various technical and vocational courses at artisan, craft and diploma levels including entrepreneurship. The NYS has successfully implemented development projects that include construction of roads, airstrips, dams, water canals, disaster management and other relief operations through their trainees. The government realized that long term solution to unemployment lies in the equipping of young people with technical and vocational skills. The Ministry is currently reviving and equipping youth polytechnics to train the youth. 210 model youth polytechnics are being constructed in 210 constituencies. Entrepreneurship and ICT are mandatory in the

polytechnic curriculum. Instructors have been recruited for the polytechnics. The Youth Enterprise Development Fund, a revolving kitty was created in 2006 to finance youth business activities. Since inception, the Fund has created thousands of jobs through individual enterprises and group ventures. The Fund has facilitated entrepreneurship training for youth, marketing of youth enterprises' products and services, provision of commercial infrastructure and facilitating youth employment in the international labour market.

The government is building Youth Empowerment Centres in every constituency for youth to access ICT infrastructure, recreation, fighting drug abuse, providing counseling and health services, training in music, entrepreneurship and performing arts, providing basic literacy and continuing education for school leavers. So far, 106 youth empowerment centres have been completed and 20 more are under construction.

An internship facility called Kenya Youth Empowerment Programme was launched in June 2010. It is a 4year project financed by the World Bank and undertaken together with the government of Kenya and the Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA). Under this programme, unemployed youth are being given a chance to gain skills in their preferred sectors of employment including Energy, Finance, ICT, Tourism, Manufacturing and the informal Micro and Small Enterprises sectors. The youth are enabled access to economic empowerment through provision of industrial internship to gain work/job experience so as to make them marketable in the job field. The first phase is underway in Nairobi as a pilot programme to be replicated in other towns.

A project called Youth Employment Scheme-Jobs for unemployed and marginalized young people (YES-JUMP) was initiated in 2009 by the government and International Labour Organization. This is an entrepreneurship facility that aims to facilitate and support skills training, updating and enhancing apprenticeship programmes, technical and financial support to local job creation schemes, sustainable livelihood and strengthening small enterprises and youth cooperatives. Through this project, local level MSE Fund has been set up for lending to youth enterprises. The Fund has so far benefitted 1000 youth businesses and provided institutional capacity building for selected grass root partners.

In recognition of the great potential that the youth have in exploring their talents and creating job opportunities, the Ministry has established a National Youth Talent Academy with 13 satellite campuses countrywide with over 800 students. The overall goal is to identify talented young people and nurture them through specialized training on the basis of their talents and later they are able to earn an income from it.

But how does the Ministry fund all these programmes it is undertaking? The Ministry, besides the government budget allocations, partners with other line Ministries and international agencies who are providing substantial funding. The most prominent include World Bank, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Development Fund and United Nations Children's Fund.

1.6 THE PUBLIC LIBRARY IN KENYA

In Kenya, one of the many institutions that provide public library services is the Kenya national library service (KNLS). Kenya national library service Board is a statutory body

of the Government of Kenya established by an Act of Parliament Cap 225 of the Laws of Kenya in April 1965. The Board's mandate is to develop, promote, establish and equip libraries in Kenya. It would be prudent to carry out a study to find out whether the information provided by the library is empowering the youth. Knls plays a dual role that is a National Library as well as a Public library.

Under the National Library the services offered include

- Preserving the national imprint through the collection and safe custody of legal deposits on Kenyan publications
- Producing the Kenya National Bibliography, which is a list of the books published in Kenya or about Kenya in any given year.
- Issuing the International Standard Book Number(ISBN) to Kenyan publishers
- Providing reference and referral services
- Providing online databases to researchers and other interested parties
- Providing depository materials of World Bank, United Nations and ILO.
- Providing specialized collections as well as government publications such as:
 - The constitution review materials.
 - Laws of Kenya.
 - Kenya Gazettes.
 - Bound periodicals e.g. copies of past newspapers, magazines and journals.

Under the Public Library, services offered include:

- Adult and Junior lending
- Advisory library services

- Bulk lending of books to learning institutions
- Technical assistance on library development to both public and private institutions
- Internet services in some branch libraries
- Services to the visually impaired
- User education
- Field practicum opportunities to those studying library and information science.

It can be noted that at the time of the study, KNLS had 1 national library located in Nairobi and 60 public library branches located in 34 counties of Kenya. Within Nairobi county, there were 3 public libraries located in Kibera, Community area and Buruburu.

KNLS Core Functions

The core functions as stipulated in the Act are to:

- Acquire books and information sources produced in and outside Kenya and such other materials for a comprehensive National Library
- Preserve and conserve the national imprint for reference and research and maintain the National Bibliographic Control through issuance of the ISBN, publication of the Kenya National Bibliography and Kenya Periodicals Directory.
- Promote, establish, equip, manage and maintain Libraries in Kenya as a National Library Service;

- Plan and Coordinate library, documentation and related services in Kenya
- Advise the Government, local authorities and other public bodies on all matters relating to library, documentation and related services.
- Provide facilities for the study of, and for training in the principles, procedures, and techniques of librarianship and such other related subjects as the Board may determine
- Sponsor, arrange or provide facilities for conferences and seminars for discussion on matters in connection with library and related services
- Carry out and encourage research in the development of library and related services
- Stimulate Public interest in books and promote information literacy for knowledge, information and leisure;

KNLS Customers

They cover the entire public and they include individuals, students, researchers, government agencies, private institutions, pensioners, prisons, hospices and hospitals, schools, orphanages and physically challenged persons among others.

KNLS Vision

The hub of information and knowledge for empowerment

KNLS Mission

To enable access to information for knowledge and transformation of livelihoods

1.7 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Youth is a critical period of life when relationships are formed, rules and cultural norms are tested, means for financial support are found and risk behaviours are experimented with (Ruland, 2005). It is believed that majority of premature deaths in adult years are due to behaviours learnt in youth such as substance abuse, smoking, violence and unsafe sexual behavior (Zwicker and Ringheim, 2004). This is a vulnerable population that is at great risk.

According to the National Youth Policy, the youth in Kenya account for three quarters of the population under 30 years. The government realized that she may not achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals without adequately dealing with the many socio-economic challenges facing Kenyan youth. The government has thus initiated several initiatives towards this for example formation of the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Kenya Youth Empowerment Project (KYEP), Kazi Kwa Vijana, Youth Enterprise Development Fund besides the old time National Youth Service. Others doing the same include Non Governmental Organizations, Community Based Organizations who initiate youth development programmes and activities to improve efficiency, resource allocation, improve quality of life of young people create opportunities for youth development and consequently empower the youth economically, socially and politically.

The question this study wishes to address is “where is Kenya national library service in this equation?” What role does the library play to contribute to these efforts of promoting holistic development of youth to make them self-reliant, fully integrated and productive

to the society? What role can the library play in youth empowerment? Does the library provide the right kind of information that empowers young people? The study therefore sought to find out needs of youth which according to the Uses and Gratification theory generate expectations and if the public library is gratifying those needs and propose a model that can be used to improve information provision that leads to youth empowerment.

1.8 AIM

To investigate the role of KNLS in provision of information to empower the youth and propose a framework to improve information provision for youth empowerment

1.9 OBJECTIVES

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To determine information needs of youth in Nairobi County and find out how these needs are met by KNLS.
2. To analyze the role KNLS is playing in providing information for youth empowerment.
3. To determine the information sources, services and channels used by youth to access information.
4. To establish the mechanisms, programmes and activities put in place by the government towards youth empowerment in relation to what the public library is doing.

5. To establish the challenges youth face in accessing relevant information that can empower them.
6. To recommend a framework to improve information provision for youth empowerment at KNLS.

1.10 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The above objectives were addressed through the following questions:

1. What are the information needs of youth in Nairobi County and how are they addressed by KNLS?
2. What information services does KNLS offer young people and are these services meeting expectations of the youth?
3. How does the KNLS determine needs of youth and what strategic plans have been put in place to address those needs?
4. How do youth access information? From what sources? For what purposes? What kind of information? Does it bring any change to their lives?
5. Which government initiatives are in place towards youth empowerment? What channels of communication do they use to communicate to the youth?
6. What challenges do the youth face in accessing relevant information that can empower them?
7. How can KNLS improve information provision to empower the youth and what framework can be proposed?

1.11 ASSUMPTIONS

1. The youth in Kenya are not sufficiently empowered because of lack of adequate, relevant and timely information.
2. It is also assumed that youth can be assisted if public libraries provided relevant and adequate information and services geared towards specific needs of the youth.

1.12 SIGNIFICANCE

1.12.1 Practical significance

Findings of the study will assist KNLS to improve its information provision to youth clientele so that they can be empowered. The library will have tangible results to show as their contribution towards youth empowerment efforts in the country. The library will be moving towards providing services to meet customer needs. It will be able to have measurable impact of its services and thus attract better funding. The library can become more responsive to the specific information needs of the youth and as they aim at meeting them they will attract more youth customers and retain already existing customers.

1.12.2 Policy formulation

Findings of this study can be useful when formulating collection development policies which govern the acquisition of library materials and resources to meet user needs so that the policies address youth needs. Recommendations based on the results of the study can enlighten planners/librarians on what they could consider when structuring the services they provide including the infrastructure to ensure youth clientele are well catered-for.

1.12.3 Theoretical significance

There are not many studies done locally on youth information needs, their information-seeking behavior and whether the information services provided by public libraries result in youth empowerment or the impact they have in the lives of the youth who are served. This study will therefore contribute to this missing link.

Most studies done have been on customer satisfaction and do not relate it to impact on the groups under study. The results of this study will add to scholarly research and literature in this field with a focus in the area of youth empowerment or the impact of information provision by public libraries.

1.13 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The study is confined to the Kenya national library service, Buruburu branch library in Nairobi County. Buruburu library is located in an area that is populated by the middle class and the low class as well as one slum (Kyambio) and this type of catchment area would provide high chances of the library users being representative of most residents of Nairobi. The sample is however drawn from a library in an urban setting and may not necessarily represent views from a rural setting that may have a different socio-economic setting.

The sample is from only youth who use the library. Youth, for purposes of this study means those persons aged 15-30 years. The role of the Government of Kenya is confined

to the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the relation between the services of a public library with government programmes on youth empowerment.

1.14 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Libraries as institutions that provide services are part of the government system used to reach citizens with development programmes. The government efforts of empowering youth in Kenya can be strengthened through libraries if they provide relevant information towards youth empowerment. Libraries need to be driven not by what they have to offer but by the perceptions, needs and wants of their current and potential youth clientele or any other clientele.

Today resource allocation is based on the value of the services the library provides and that value is determined by the effectiveness of the services in the lives of information users. The determination of that value is established by the information users themselves not the librarian or resource allocation authority. Librarians in the past decided what the user needed. Now it is recognized that the reason the library exists is to provide the customers with the information they need. It is important therefore to understand and know the information needs of each category of users in order to offer relevant services.

1.15 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS IN THE STUDY

Empower – To give official authority or legal power to someone (Merriam-Webster dictionary). Enable; Give ability to (Collins English dictionary)

Information services – agency or department responsible for providing processed or published information on specific topics to an organization’s internal users, its customers or the general public (business dictionary).

Public Library –Non-profit library maintained for public use and usually supported by whole or in part by local taxation (Merriam-Webster dictionary). An entity that is established under state enabling laws or regulators to serve a community, district or region and that provides at least an organized collection of printed or other library materials or a combination thereof, paid staff, an established schedule in which services of the staff are available to the public, the facilities necessary to support such a collection, staff and schedule and is supported in part or whole with public funds (Certification Review Committee).

Youth – The time of life between childhood and adulthood or maturity (Oxford dictionary). Those persons between ages 15-30 years (Kenya National Youth Policy, 2007).

Youth mainstreaming – The process of assessing implications for youth of any planned action (legislation, policies, programmes) in all areas of any planned action. It is a strategy for making youths concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that youth benefit equally and inequity is not perpetuated (Economic and Social Council, 1997).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter identifies and reviews literature related to the study and also discusses the theoretical framework on which the study is based. Literature review is a critical evaluation, analysis and synthesis of existing knowledge relevant to a research problem (Hart, 2005). It provides a framework for establishing the importance of the study as well as benchmark for comparing results of a study with other findings (Cresswell, 2003).

The literature reviewed in the study covers the areas of information needs and seeking behaviour of youth, the public library service to the youth, information sources and channels used by youth, the role of the government of Kenya and challenges youth face in accessing information.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theory is an organized body of interrelated concepts, assumptions and generalizations that systematically explain regularities in behavior (Lunenburg and Irby, 2008). Theories are formulated to explain, predict and understand phenomenon and to challenge and extend existing knowledge within the limits of the critical bounding assumptions (University of Southern California, 2013).

A theoretical framework consists of concepts together with their definitions and existing theories that are used for a particular study. It is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study. It introduces and describes the theory which explains why the research problem under study exists. It gives an explicit statement of theoretical assumptions that permits a reader to evaluate them critically. It connects a researcher to existing knowledge and guides them to move from simply describing a phenomenon observed to generalizing about various aspects of that phenomenon. It helps one identify the limits of generalizations as well as specifying which key variables influence a phenomenon of interest. A theoretical framework helps a researcher determine problem areas, content considerations, research questions that need to be addressed and the methodology which the researcher plans to go about finding an answer to research questions (University of Southern California, 2013).

Generally, information behavior models which present a certain section or full sequence of activities which lead to obtaining information may be applicable to this study and they include Uses and Gratification theory, Wilson's general model of information seeking behavior and Dervin's sense-making theory. This study is informed by the first two (2) namely Uses and Gratification theory and Wilson's general model of information seeking behaviour.

The Uses and Gratification theory is a popular approach to understanding mass communication and is audience-centered. The theory places more focus on the consumer/audience instead of the actual message itself. It assumes that members of the

audience are not passive but take an active role in interpreting and integrating media into their own lives. The theory holds that audiences are responsible for choosing media to meet their needs. The approach suggests that people use the media to fulfill specific gratification. The needs of people serve as motivation for using media. Instead of studying what media does with people, it studies what people do with the media. It focuses on the uses of media content for obtaining gratifications or need fulfillment.

Research into the reasons why individuals use mass media dates back more than 50 years. Early forms of gratifications research attempted to understand why people used certain media content. In the process, it explored the functions of the media and the role of the audience's needs and expectations (Herzog 1940, Lazarsfeld & Stanton 1944, 1949). These studies were later followed by those proposed by Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch (1974) and Rosengren (1974) who formally conceptualized the theory. Instead of asking what effects the media have on individuals and collective audience behavior, the questions were what are people seeking and what do they believe they are deriving from mass media?

Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch (1974) outlined the basic goals of Uses and Gratifications as follows:

- a) To explain how people use media to gratify their needs
- b) To understand motives for media behaviour
- c) To identify functions or consequences that follow from needs, motives and behavior

Accordingly, the initial tenets of Uses and Gratifications were:

- 1) The social and psychological origins of
- 2) Needs which generate
- 3) Expectations of
- 4) The mass media or other media which lead to
- 5) Differential patterns of media exposure (or engagement in other activities)
resulting in
- 6) Need gratifications and
- 7) Other consequences perhaps unintended ones

The following is a basic model of the Uses and Gratification theory

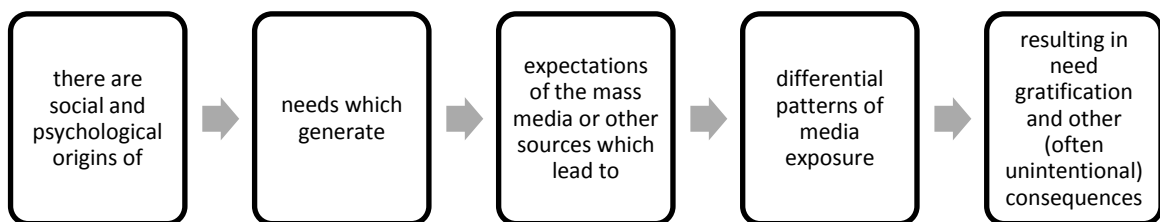


Figure 2.1: The elements of a Uses and Gratifications research model

Source: Communication models for the study of mass communication by D. McQuail & S. Windahl, 1981

These tenets of the Uses and Gratification model have been revised since their initial formulation to reflect subsequent discoveries regarding media use by such scholars as Palmgreen (1984), Palmgreen, Wenner and Rosengren (1985), Rubin (1986), Wenner (1985).

An updated version of the basic tenets was identified by Zillman and Bryant (1994) in media effects: advocacy in theory and research which stated:

- a) Communication behavior including media selection and use is goal-directed, purposive and motivated. People are relatively active communication participants who choose media or content. The behavior is functional and has consequences for people and societies.
- b) People take the initiative in selecting and using communication vehicles to satisfy felt needs or desires. Instead of being used by the media, people use and select media to gratify their needs or wants. Media use may be a response to basic needs but also satisfies wants or interest for example seeking information to solve a personal dilemma.
- c) A host of social and psychological factors mediate people's communication behavior. Predispositions, interaction and environment mold expectations about the media.
- d) Media competes with other forms of communication that is functional alternatives for selection, attention and use to gratify our needs or wants. How well media satisfy our motives or desires varies among individuals based on the social and psychological circumstances.

- e) People are typically more influential than the media in the relationship but not always.

The Uses and Gratification theory however does not address the context of a system but behaviour of persons yet this study addresses the youth who are the information seekers and the library system that is the source of information resources where the youth obtain information. Wilson's model is therefore useful in bringing in the aspect of a library system. The uses and gratification theory on one hand goes beyond obtaining information to gratification of the information seeker. Wilson's general model of information seeking behavior charts the behavior of an individual faced with the need to find information. It locates the concepts of information need, information seeking, information exchange and information use (Wilson and Walsh, 1996). It stops at use of information whereas this study would like to find out the impact of the information or the empowerment brought about by use of information found in public libraries.

Wilson developed various models of information behaviour over time (Wilson, 2005). The 1981 model suggests a three-fold view of information seeking: the context of the seeker, the system employed and the information resources that might be drawn upon. All this is shown to exist within a universe of knowledge as shown in Fig. 2.2

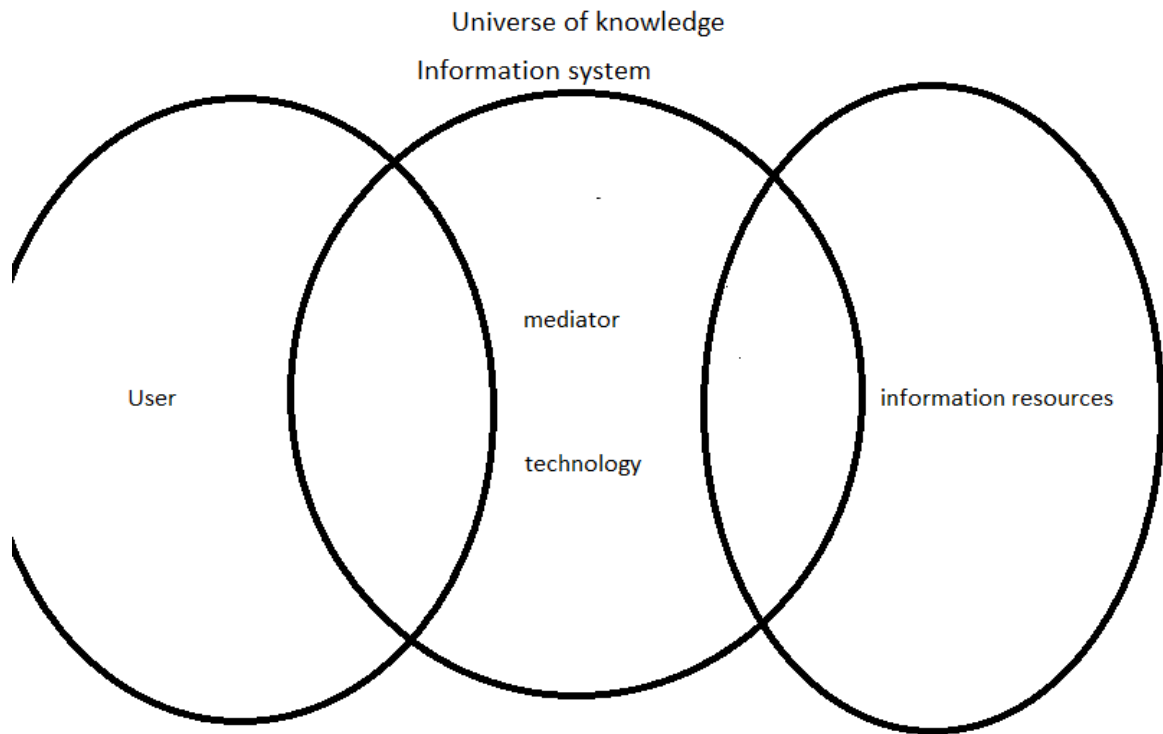


Figure. 2.2: The Information User and the universe of knowledge

Source: Evolution in information behaviour modeling by Wilson, T.D., 2005

2.2.1 Application to the Study

The Uses and Gratification theory being a mass communication model implies that the study focuses on communication to a large audience. The mass media in this case would refer to the library as a disseminator of information to many people. The audience here is the youth users of the public libraries who seek information in the library, driven or motivated by certain needs that require fulfillment.

The study wishes to establish if it is the needs that motivate youth to use the libraries and if their expectations are met by the libraries and whether the needs have social and psychological origins that need to be identified and addressed by the libraries.

The study wishes to establish if the libraries (the mass media) identifies the needs of their youth clientele (the audience) and how they are meeting these needs. In The Uses and Gratification theory, media competes with other forms of communication for selection, attention and use to gratify needs or wants. The study wishes to find out which other sources of information are accessed by youth to meet their needs apart from libraries. The differential patterns of media exposure that lead to need gratification would be the various channels and sources that youth consult whether within the library or elsewhere to acquire needed information.

The Uses and Gratification theory studies what people do with the media. This study wishes to establish what youth do with the information they derive from the library. This will in turn show the impact of the information in their lives and determine whether it empowers them or not. In other words, the consequences of the mass media accessed can be identified both intended or otherwise.

Wilson's general model of information seeking behaviour links the information seeker with a system employed and information resources which in this case will apply to the library as the system that links the youth who are the information seekers to the information resources found in the library. Information is not sought in a vacuum. A

system needs to be in place. Wilson's model also charts the behaviour of an individual faced with the need to find information. It locates the concepts of information need, information seeking, information exchange and information use. The study likewise seeks to chart the behaviour of youth faced with the need to find information in public libraries and the use of the information found.

2.3 INFORMATION NEEDS AND SEEKING BEHAVIOR OF YOUTH

According to Chelton & Cool (2004), young peoples' information needs remain little understood and poorly catered for by information providers, deficits which stem from the complex and chaotic nature of young peoples' information seeking behaviour. The researcher however feels that this may be due to the fact that information providers have not taken time to study the nature of young people and thereafter find ways that are suitable in serving them.

There have been warnings over the last twenty years of the limited nature of research into young peoples' information seeking (Shenton 2004) yet there continues to be little sustained investigation of young people and information seeking; leaving it an issue which has attracted piecemeal coverage within the empirical academic literature (Madden, Ford & Miller, 2007).

Melissa Gross (2009) states that information needs and behavior of youth is a research area that is still ripe with opportunities. It involves understanding theories of child development as well as theories and models of information behavior. More is known

about youth information seeking in electronic spaces than in libraries and most studies have taken place in schools. However, there is a trend toward including youth as participants rather than subjects in research and system design. This movement is expanding our understanding of how youth see their own information behavior and their preferences for resource choice and use.

In order to establish information needs of the youth, it is important to find out their unique characteristics. Hassanali (2012) describes the youth as a generation that exhibits traits of confidence, embracing diversity and proficiency of technology, preferring to share their views on social media platforms that they use for discussion of varying topics. They are energetic, vibrant and enthusiastic, frequently in search of new beginnings or better solutions towards life. Mucheru (2012) says that they have no geographical boundaries and interact with their friends across the world. He further states that they have an unstructured nature just like the internet and are innovative. They question processes and love opportunities for growth. Mwangi (2011) describes them as people who are not stereotyped and who want to understand why they do things not just doing things. They feel that they require freedom to do what they want, how they want, wanting an environment that is conducive to innovation. He also describes them as ICT natives who hate manual labour and paperwork.

With the development of an information-based economy, the study of information needs and behavior is of prime importance. One of the newer priorities in information management is the idea of the right to access and attention is being given to

accommodate all sub-groups of the population for example those with special needs, children, youth etc (Hepworth, 2007). The information needs of today's generation of young people are seen to be influenced significantly by the development of ICT's for example computers, internet and mobile telephony (Selwyn, 2007). These digital media form an integral part of the information spaces of young people. Though use of new digital media is not prerequisite to a young person surviving in the 21st century, it is an integral element of thriving in the 21st century. ICT is seen by many as a ready means of empowering 21st century youth. Digital media are a ready "technical fix" to young peoples' information needs across all domains of their lives. Young people however are more likely to benefit from digital information when they are responding to self-directed rather than imposed information needs. Use of digital information resources is also dependent upon the nature of information being sought, with young people more likely to seek online information about sports, entertainment, leisure and humorous content but less likely to look for information pertaining to health, medical care or travel. Agosto & Hughes-Hasell (2006) note that there is growing recognition of young people as autonomous consumers of information with distinct needs in relation to those of adults. The divergent nature of the information needs of young people derives from the specific demand of childhood, adolescence and early adulthood as they strive to make sense of themselves and social and physical worlds in which they live through these life stages. As such young people have a wide range of information needs which encompass a number of domains of the self including social self (social activities, fashion), emotional self (relationships, religious practice), reflective self (heritage, career), physical self (safety,

health, finance) creative self (creative performance), cognitive self and sexual self (sexual identity).

Several typologies of children's information needs have been developed. Shenton and Dixon (2003) divided children's needs into 2 major groups: that of general, universal questions involving the physical world, relationships and self; and that of specific needs involving questions related to health, emotional well-being, security etc. Dervin and Nilan (1986) identified need types as either objective (involving concrete information) or subjective (involving attitude or judgment). Agosto and Hughes-Hassell (2006) dealt with urban teens. They identified seven areas of teen development (social self; emotional self; reflective self; physical self; creative self; cognitive self; sexual self) then aligned them with 28 information needs, creating what they termed an empirical model of urban teen' information needs.

According to Havighurst (1951), developmental tasks of young people include establishing new peer relationships with both sexes, achieving emotional independence from parents, selecting and preparing for an occupation, developing intellectual skills and concepts necessary for civic competence, achieving assurance of economic independence, acquiring social responsible behavior patterns and preparing for marriage and family life.

Young people need information at different stages and times in their lives in response to different situations. They have different roles as individuals (facing everyday challenges of growing up, forming values, beliefs and characters), learners (at school, college, in a job), members of a family, peer groups and local communities.

2.4 PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE TO THE YOUTH

Public libraries play an important role in supporting the information, educational and literacy needs of young people in the community. Historically, however, public libraries have done a better job of serving children than youth/teens. Young people need libraries in navigating their way through the information age. The information age has made production, management and consumption of information and knowledge important and is at the core of much economic productivity and societal development (Selwyn, 2007). This has resulted in a knowledge economy and it has considerable bearing on lives of young people. In the world of work, a young person's employability rests on their ability to adapt to different demands and circumstances. Employees are expected to be flexible in their working practices drawing a range of skills such as team-working, creativity and adaptability. In terms of education and training, young people are now expected to learn different skills and acquired knowledge as their situation dictates. Individuals are required to cast themselves as lifelong learners. This can involve learning through formal educational institutions, remote learning or learning from others in non-formal and informal settings (Selwyn, 2007). All the new practices imply a revised set of expected competencies and abilities which are required of today's generation of young people if they are to be successful members of society. Alongside the basic skills of numeracy and

literacy, young people are required to develop different forms of information and technological literacies (Bawden, 2001). Negotiating successfully the fast-changing opportunities and choices on offer requires the development of a capacity for constant self-evaluation and self-awareness (Beck-Gernsheim, 1996). The successful young person is required to be reflective and reflexive building upon past experiences and reaching to new opportunities and circumstances as they navigate their way into adulthood.

One of the main reasons for the existence of the public library is to promote acquisition of knowledge, to help people experience cultural expressions of high quality, provide access to knowledge and culture that elevates people and institutions (Audunson, 2005). The public library is meant to cover gaps in literacy and skills, provide learning opportunities, support educational and career development of young people during non-school hours, encourage self-improvement through learning and discovery and informal learning opportunities (Chelton and Cool, 2004). Libraries are popular gathering places for youth out of school hours supplying answers to reference questions, meeting research needs, self-direction of life-long learning, a research for information on career opportunities and job training as well as different types of personal interests and pursuits. However, librarians are not exploiting these opportunities to the maximum. Libraries have not fully grasped their role in career development where youth need help in choosing careers for example exposing them to adults who can show them the options available to them. Public libraries can create innovative ways for youth to explore and sort out career options.

Many libraries unfortunately may not be in step with the needs of youth. Historically, public libraries have not known what to do with youth. According to Rogers of Urban Libraries Council in US, libraries are architecturally set up as if all the users are well-behaved, intellectual, independent users. Youth travel and work in groups. They are boisterous and may appear in attention-getting ways or behavior which typical librarians abhor. Public libraries therefore need to find ways to accommodate youth.

A survey was conducted among adolescents (11-19years) about services offered in Italian public libraries in December 2003- April 2004 (Corradini, 2006) to know their expressed and hidden information needs and their level of satisfaction with the library services offered. The following were the findings:

- The youth were interested in materials in all formats including books, comics, periodicals, internet, CD's, DVD's. The librarians should care for maintaining and developing updated multi-support collections in accordance with users' needs.
- Satisfaction of needs is not only buying, cataloguing and shelving the desired resources but also providing a connection between resources and users (access to information resources).
- The library is not only a place to study and find up-to-date information but also a place to meet people, make new friends, assist and participate in interesting events. This is what is important to youth.
- A library is a place where books can be borrowed, an information point where many activities and services are offered, a place to develop personal interests.

- A library is a place where information literacy can be learnt, how to do homework/research alone with all resources available; how to do research/searches on the internet
- The internet should be availed as a medium increasing global communication, a vital instrument for education skills to accomplish future studying, working and social requirements like social networking.
- The ideal library should provide besides information resources, rooms for study group meetings, music playing, literary salons (for discussions) etc
- Libraries need to create connections with young adults to make the library more visible outside its walls through direct involvement of groups of peers.
- Libraries must find appropriate ways to inform young adults about materials, services and activities so that they can pass the information to their peers. (most users who frequent the libraries are unaware of all materials the library can offer them)

To find out the range of activities and programs offered to youth in public libraries in U.S., the De Witt Wallace-Readers' Digest Fund in 1998 commissioned a nationwide survey. The survey indicated that most of the libraries offered the following programs to the youth:

- Reading and cultural activities (book discussions, presentations by authors, musical/drama, creative writing workshops, competitions)
- Computer classes and workshops
- Homework assistance

- Career development programs (information on careers, career fairs, presentations about different jobs)
- Community service & leadership programs (volunteers working in the libraries)

Libraries reported that the role of youth in planning and implementing programs is minimal. Libraries need to improve on this. They need to involve young people in planning, designing and helping in implementing activities. There is also need to develop staff in relation to youth work. Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), a division of the American Library Association offered guidance and developed strategies for youth participation programs which primarily aimed at acquiring information from youths about the books, music and programs they wanted at their libraries (Walter, 2002). The outcome was better collections and more relevant programs and services. Librarians are gradually understanding that youth who are active participants as planners and advisors also receive desired developmental outcomes.

According to Chelton and Cool (2004), because of budgetary constraints, many libraries have made children's librarians responsible for young adult services. These librarians are stretched to breaking point. She also points out that more adolescents use the library when there is a young adult specialist on staff. There is generally shortage of library staff who know about adolescent development and are experienced in working with youth. Library schools need to be encouraged to devote more time training professionals for public service in general and youth services in particular. Public libraries need to provide more opportunities for their staff to enhance their skills in working with youth.

The KNLS Strategic Plan of July 2012/2013 to June 2016/2017 outlines the strategic plans that have been put in place to address youth concerns. The plan enumerates five objectives namely:

- i) To improve the reading culture among the Kenyan people through informed and targeted intervention programs
- ii) To increase access to information through development, equipping and maintenance of libraries
- iii) To enhance availability of information resources through utilization of modern technologies and strategic partnerships
- iv) To enhance collection and preservation of national bibliographic information through legal deposit copies and other sources
- v) To strengthen institutional capacity by upholding responsible corporate governance, resource mobilization and human capital development.

2.5 INFORMATION SOURCES AND CHANNELS USED BY YOUTH

Young people draw upon a wide range of sources to meet their information needs for example intimate personal networks, wide networks of friends, family and community contacts, mass media and institutional sources (Wells & Dudash, 2007). Across all these personal contexts, talk and discussion is often integral to young peoples' information gathering, although news media, school and other formal sources of information continue to play an important role. Where young people fulfill their information needs is seen to

vary according to the nature of the information and the individual they are internally or externally motivated to seek information.

A survey was conducted by Canadian Mennonite University (Tennant, 2009) on a group of young people attending high school and post secondary schools in Canada to understand how they used technology and traditional forms of communication. It focused on the places young men and women obtain their information. The findings indicated that most young people are online. Social networking is the favourite for teens. They are on facebook and twitter while google and youtube is well visited. Teens are however less savvy than young adults (20-29 years) in their knowledge and exploration of the internet. The primary activities of teens on the internet are social and research. Young adults are more active on the internet and use it to keep in touch with people, chatting and browsing social networking sites. Teens use the internet as entertainment to download music, watch videos and play games. The survey found that majority of Canadian youth respondents look for information on the web. Only 34% go to the library if they needed information. Canadian youth also sourced information from friends, parents and teachers. It was noted that relationships are important for young people and they prefer to hang out and talk person to person but they integrate their communication tactics. Their phones and facebook are their second communication choices if they cannot get together personally. The youth read magazines, novels on one hand while television, drama and comedy captures their attention on the other hand. Radio talk shows are held as important by youth. The youth also found information from cultural events, sports community

participation, workshops, trade fairs, exhibitions, apprenticeship & internship programmes, youth clubs, youth organizations and peer groups.

Crosson (2005) carried out a study to identify the most effective strategies of information distribution to youth aged between 15-30 years in Kibera, Nairobi and identify information networks used in Kibera, besides identifying which of these information sources engender the greatest trust among youth and distribute the most accurate information on HIV/AIDS, community issues and available services. The findings showed that information sources most widely accessed were the radio (84%), religious institutions (80%), neighbours (76%), community members (65%), posters (60%), newspapers and television (57%).

2.6 ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF KENYA

Specialized services for youth developed later than those designed for children and are not very well-institutionalized in public libraries in the U.S. (Walter, 2002). Very few libraries have a specialist for youth on their staff establishment. Many public libraries have no separate services for youth and expect them to move from children to adult sections as their needs dictate. Other libraries maintain small collections of materials for teens. This is a typical description of the situation in Kenyan public libraries as well. In Kenya, the public libraries hardly offer separate / specialized services for the youth. They are mostly served like any other adult library user. The libraries have no specialists for youth on their staff establishment. There has been very little survey/research on the

information needs of the youth and the user satisfaction surveys carried out investigate two categories of users only i.e. junior readers (aged 1-15years) and adult users (aged above 15 years). Services offered are also tailored to the two categories (junior and adult).

The Ministry of Health in Kenya developed guidelines in 2005 for provision of adolescent youth-friendly services in Kenya and some aspects of this can be borrowed by public libraries and other information providers as they serve the youth. The guidelines advocate for youth-friendly services. They are defined as services provided to young people to meet their individual needs in a manner and environment to attract interest and sustain their motivation to utilize such services. The World Health Organization (WHO, 1989) defines youth-friendly services as services that are accessible, acceptable and appropriate for youth. They are in the right place at the right price and delivered in the right style to be acceptable to young people. The WHO further states that services that target young people will not work if the attitude of providers is hostile, judgmental or insensitive. Providers must be sensitized to understand the needs of young people and be able to offer a comprehensive range of services. The Centre for the study of adolescence (CSA) in 2003 stated that “services for young people must be of high quality, affordable, safe and comprehensive, provided by people who have the skills to respond to young peoples’ needs and be in an environment that protects their dignity and confidentiality.

According to the Ministry's guidelines, for services to be youth friendly, they need to

- have convenient hours of opening
- have acceptable/affordable costs
- have adequate space, sufficient privacy
- have facilities that are comfortable, have adequate sitting arrangements with some level of informality, have relevant displays
- have staff who are understanding and sensitive to youth concerns, have appropriate skills, be able to listen and take note of body language in order to understand unexpressed feelings and experiences. The staff should have good interpersonal communication skills and be able to interact freely with young people, put them at ease and encourage them to share their needs and concerns freely
- have respect for young people because many service providers have pre-judged the youth seeking information and they are biased against their behavior. Negative providers' attitude makes young people reluctant to seek needed services or express their needs. People who cannot relate respectfully to youth should not be assigned duties in service points for the same. Age is an important factor in dealing with attitudes. Younger staff/adults at heart are ideal for youth-friendly services though attitudes of all staff (security personnel, receptionists, customer care etc) is also important towards the youth as they give first impression of the libraries to the youth.

The guidelines also identify areas where youth need information as follows:

- sexuality, pregnancy, abstinence, abortion, contraception

- reproductive health, STI's HIV, VCT
- growing up
- relationships
- drug and substance abuse
- careers
- sexual violence, rape, prevention, post care, handling
- nutrition
- life skills (goal setting, decision-making, negotiation, self-esteem, moral values, assertiveness, communication skills)
- recreation activities e.g. indoor and outdoor games, sports
- personal hygiene

Creating, maintaining and developing user friendly library services is a matter of knowing the real and potential stakeholders

2.7 CHALLENGES YOUTH FACE IN ACCESSING INFORMATION

Public libraries along with others like schools, youth-serving agencies, religious organizations and other community-based organizations represent a source of space, access, staff, materials, knowledge and connections that can improve the well-being of youth and support their development (Chapin Hall Center for Children, 2004). Public libraries can provide an important developmental support to youth especially those from low-income communities because they provide free access to information, technology and safe places. However, working with youth requires time, financial resources, dedicated and trained staff, consistent leadership and integration of youth programming

with the library's core mission and goals. The question to ask is "do public libraries have the capacity for youth programs and services?" The role of public libraries in meeting the developmental needs of youth depends largely on its capacity and resources and the strength of other community resources like schools, youth-serving organizations.

Questions have long been raised by those concerned with the information needs of young people over the limited ability of young people to locate and use information effectively (Selwyn, 2007). It is argued that key decisions like career or health are made on the basis of restricted information, often lacking in rationale or intuition (Julien, 2004). Young people are felt to lack the information literacy and critical awareness which may allow them to assess the credibility of information sources (Wells and Dudash, 2007). Even if young people have the functional expertise required to locate and acquire information, they may lack the "critical literacy" that is required to interpret, understand, critique and manage that information.

Various researchers admit that youth in their information literacy skills need help evaluating information and its sources. Selwyn (2007), states that "although the majority of young people report being confident online information finders, many find information searching problematic and can be characterized as unsystematic and ineffective users of information tools like search engines". Information literacy of young people has not improved with the widening to new technology according to Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in the UK. Chelton and Cool, 2004 point out that most kids do not have any critical skills so helping young people develop those skills is

one of the most important things librarians have to offer today. Internet research shows that the speed of young people's web searching means little time spent in evaluating information in relevance, accuracy or authority despite their proficiency at using the internet. There is need for intervention of information literacy skills if they are to be equipped to maximize their use of information resources. Libraries ought to embrace information technology to reinforce reading and help youth become information literate. Youth need to be taught how to find information from reliable sources and critically analyze what they get from the internet (help them develop critical skills). To convince youth of the value of public libraries, they need to be asked what they want and need to make services relevant to them. Service providers have to learn about them before they can design effective services e.g. by talking to them, asking their opinions and getting them involved in planning programs.

Accessing information from the web has its own set of challenges. This is made worse by the myth that the web provides all needed information and all that someone has to do is to search (Hawkins, 2001). Though a vast amount of information is available on the web, it is not a coherent collection of information. It is not catalogued so no one has an idea of what exactly is there or how this information fits into a large taxonomy of knowledge. Search engines are not very efficient or effective in the retrieval of information. More valuable information is generally covered by copyright and thus not available on the web. The amount of scholarly, intellectual and aesthetic information available on the web is minimal. Print copies of such materials may not be readily available in the public libraries.

Shenton (2007) noted some paradoxes of youth information behavior. Systems and procedures at the library which are designed to ease use (such as classification, fines), have the opposite effect. Young people have described them as confusing, don't understand their purpose and have criticized their organization. Another paradox is that in order for a user to find what he/she needs, they must know something about something which he does not know about. Many youth may not know a search term for a concept. The behavior of teens and children seldom adheres to logic. For example, young people continue to habitually use resources they are critical of and frustrated with such as the Internet because of habit and convenience. Young people are also cautioned to verify accuracy of information yet they do not have the skills to do so.

Crosson (2005) asserts that access to information has always been synonymous with ability to choose. Lack of information inhibits choice. When people do not know about rights, available services, plans for the area or options for tackling certain problems, it exacerbates their vulnerability. But does information always lead to ability to make good choices? Good choices can only be made when one has the right, consistent, complete, relevant and timely information. In reality, information does not always translate into change. It is its correct application. Are the youth able to correctly apply the information they access or is this another challenge?

2.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

It is evident from the reviewed literature that not much study has been done on the impact of the information the youth access from libraries in their lives and that is what this study

seeks to address. Most libraries generally have not developed specialized services for youth or institutionalized them. Most libraries may not be in step with the needs of youth yet the numerous development programmes being carried out by governments and non-governmental organizations are focusing on youth and their empowerment since they make up a large proportion of the world population. Public libraries being sources of information need to do much more in providing relevant, timely information and in youth-friendly ways that can result in their empowerment. They need to train adequate staff who can handle the youth. This is especially so in Africa and Kenya in particular.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the methodology employed by the study. This includes the research design, target population, sampling methods, techniques and procedures, instrumentation and data collection.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study took the qualitative approach. Qualitative approaches in research are a type of interpretative mode of inquiry commonly used in social sciences to address social and economic problems. It is concerned with qualitative phenomenon relating to or involving quality or kind (Kothari, 2004). It aims at discovering the underlying motives and desires using depth interviews for the purpose. Qualitative approach is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behavior as opposed to quantitative approach which involves the generation of data in quantitative form which can be subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis (Kothari, 2004). In other words, this study took an interpretive research paradigm which does not accept the idea that there exists a single objective reality or truth which can be discovered by scientific investigation or measurement. According to this paradigm, “truth” is a much more elusive concept and the social world consists of multiple, subjective realities. Individuals and groups construct their own versions of reality. This research paradigm enabled data on opinions, attitudes and perceptions in the form of words to be collected to establish the role of information provided by KNLS to the youth.

The study employed a case study approach. Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information for example observations, interviews, audiovisual material, documents and reports, then reports a case description and case-based themes (Creswell, 2007). The purpose of the case study is to determine factors and relationships among the factors that have resulted in the behavior under study. The case studies are based on the premise that a case can be located that is typical of many other cases. In the case of KNLS, the public library system has a network of 60 libraries all over the country and these libraries offer more or less similar services therefore selecting one of them for study was seen as the prudent way to go. The case study is viewed as an example of a class of events or a group of individuals (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). A focus on a single case (person, group, setting etc) allows investigation of the details including contextual matters of a phenomenon (Hart, 2005). Case studies are used to explore processes, activities and events.

This study sought to collect data that explained or explored if information services provided by public libraries result in youth empowerment. The case is used to study youth perceptions, attitudes, beliefs and opinions on the information services provided by KNLS. The study is concerned with psychological variables related to their views, opinions and attitudes.

3.3 STUDY POPULATION

Population refers to an entire group of individuals, events or objects having a common observable characteristic (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). According to the Buruburu library attendance statistics of April 2011(a peak period), 26,282 adults and 24,948 children used the library. In February 2012(an off peak period) 11,282 adults and 4906 children used the library. In this study the population was the youth users of Kenya national library service libraries in Nairobi County aged between 15 and 30 years. These are mainly found in the adult section of the library with a few exceptions in the children's section. These youth include youth in secondary school, youth in tertiary institutions and youth who are non-students. The study also gathered views of library staff who provide information services to these youth as well as two (2) key informants namely a staff of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and the Director of KNLS.

3.4 SAMPLING FRAME

A sample is a smaller group obtained from the accessible population. 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. A sampling frame is a list, directory or index of cases from which a sample can be selected (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Ideally, it provides a list of the population under study. A sampling frame is the reference source one can use to identify individuals from the accessible population.

Kenya national library service provides services to both registered and unregistered members of the public. This study sought to capture the views of both types of users. The sampling frame was the attendance statistics the library maintains and users were sampled as they entered the library during peak periods like school holiday months of August or weekends. According to the library attendance statistics of April 2011(a peak period), 26,282 adults used the library while 11,282 adults used it in February 2012(an off peak period). About half of the adult users are youth therefore about 13,141 youth used the library in April 2011 and 5642 in February 2012. The sampling frame for library staff is the staff establishment which stood at 21 for the library .

3.5 SAMPLING METHODS

They are methods used to get a sample from a population. They enable one to appropriately describe a sample. No sample can include everything and everyone in the study population. A sample is selected and it enables results to be generalized to the population because of its representativeness.

There are two main sampling methods, that is probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling, also referred to as random sampling method selects a reasonable number of subjects, objects or cases that represent the target population by giving every item an equal chance of inclusion in the sample. It allows generalizability to a large population with a margin of error that is statistically determinable thus it is common in quantitative research.

Non-probability sampling also referred to as non-random sampling focuses on in-depth information and not making inferences or generalizations (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Non-probability sampling is that procedure which does not afford any basis for estimating the probability that each item in the population has of being included in the sample. Items for the sample are selected deliberately by the researcher. Particular items are chosen for constituting a sample on the basis that the small mass that they so select out of a huge one will be typical or representative of the whole.

This study used the non-probability method because it is qualitative in nature and focused on in-depth information. The method allows use of various techniques such as purposive sampling, maximum variation sampling, homogeneous sampling, snowball sampling, quota sampling and convenience or accidental sampling.

3.6 SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

The quota sampling technique was used in the study. In this type of sampling, the population is divided into various sub-groups and samples are drawn to have the same percentage in each. Each sub-group is generally represented in the sample in the same proportion as in the entire population. Its objective is to include various groups or quotas of the population in the study based on some criteria. The researcher purposively selects subjects to fit quotas identified. The selection of actual participants is not random since subjects are picked as they fit into identified quotas (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The method consists of finding the appropriate number of persons with the requisite characteristics (Kathuri and Pals, 1993).

This sampling technique was selected because the target population is composed of 3 sub-groups i.e. youth in secondary school, youth in tertiary institutions and youth who are out of school. It allowed the researcher to gather views of the different categories of youth whose needs vary slightly from each other.

3.7 SAMPLING PROCEDURES

The researcher sampled the library users who use the library during peak seasons (school holiday month of August and weekends in July to September). They were sampled with the assistance of library staff who could point out which users were regular or registered. The researcher sampled twenty (20) subjects of secondary students, twenty (20) college students and fifteen (15) non-student youth to interview. This brought to a total of fifty-five (55) subjects. The researcher also targeted ten (10) subjects of the teenage category (15-19years) and ten (10) subjects of youth between 20-30 years and held focus group discussions with them that is 2 focus group discussions. This brought the targeted population to a grand total of 75 youth respondents' altogether. Focus group discussions were to enhance validity of the instruments where answers from individuals could be compared to those given in group setting. In qualitative research no set formula is rigidly applied to determine the sample size as is the case with quantitative research (Morse, 2000; Patton, 2002). The sampling process is flexible and participants can be added or reduced when data saturation is reached that is when few or no new data is being generated (Padgett, 2008). The researcher felt that the above numbers would provide the required data to address the emerging themes.

Seven (7) library staff were sampled by checking the duty allocation roster that shows which staff work in which section of the library. They included 1 senior librarian, 3 librarians and 3 library assistants. Appointments were made to interview them. Appointments were also made to interview one (1) staff in the Ministry of Youth Affairs who is the Principal Youth Development Officer and the Director of KNLS.

3.8 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The main data collecting method was interviewing.

Hart (2005) defines interviews as “talking to selected respondents on a specific topic to find answers to research questions”. It is an obtrusive method which can generate substantial in-depth qualitative information usually from a small number of respondents. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) on page 83 define interviews as “oral administration of a questionnaire or an interview schedule”. Kathuri and Pals (1993) define interviews as “an oral exchange between interviewer and interviewee”. Interviewing is one of the methods or approaches used in research for collecting data. It seeks to obtain information that describes existing phenomena by asking individuals about their perceptions, attitudes, behavior and values. This method served as a useful data gathering tool for the research to collect information on factors such as perception, attitudes and feelings of the respondents about the information they access from the libraries. It was preferred because it elicits more complete answers to questions since it gives respondents a chance to elaborate on certain issues and the researcher can clarify or elaborate on questions posed.

3.8.1 Data Collection Techniques

Interviewing takes various forms. There are face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, group interviews and teleconferencing.

The interviews used in this study were face-to-face interviews and group interviews.

i. Face-to-face interviews (personal interviews)

Interaction on a personal level with respondents gave them opportunity to express their views on the issue of whether the information services provided by KNLS have led to their empowerment in any form. The researcher was able to probe to get more information especially for open-ended questions or when prompted by certain responses. The researcher could also elaborate on questions that a respondent did not understand properly. Busha and Harter (1980) state that “verbal responses of the interviewee are often valuable, original evidence or research data”.

ii. Group interviews (focus group discussions)

This is a discussion-based interview that produces a particular type of qualitative data generated via group interaction. It was suitable for youth who generally like operating as groups and they were able to bring out their thoughts and feelings more freely. They also like socializing with their peers.

3.8.2 Data Collection Instruments

These are tools used to collect required data. The basis for obtaining useful research results is adequate, objective and reliable data collected by appropriate, well-defined tools (Kathuri and Pals, 1993).

An interview schedule was used to collect data for this study (see appendix I, II III and IV). An interview schedule is an outline of questions that form a basis for and guide the interviewing process. The schedule provided a structure that aided in obtaining the necessary information efficiently and in a business-like atmosphere. It ensured that the interviewing was done systematically, consistently and as objectively as possible. Interview schedules are used to standardize the interview situation so that the interviewers can ask the same questions in the same manner (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Unstructured interview schedules were used to guide the researcher while interviewing the youth library users, library staff and Ministry staff. They consisted of open-ended questions which made them flexible yet systematic. Open-ended questions allow for further probing, clarification and elaboration on issues. The interview schedules were used for both personal interviews and group interviews though the latter with slight variation eliminating questions that require a personalized answer.

3.8.3 Pilot Study

A pilot study was undertaken in the Nairobi community area library to test the interview schedules on samples from the library (7 youth and 2 staff). This location was purely because of the convenience on the part of the researcher. It was also to ensure that respondents of the pilot study did not form part of the respondents for the study. The responses they elicited helped to determine whether they were yielding the required data. Based on the findings, questions were adjusted accordingly.

3.8.3.1 Reliability and Validity

The quality of a research study depends to a large extent on the accuracy of the data collection procedures. The instruments used to collect the data must yield the type of data the researcher can use to accurately answer his/her questions. The data must be pertinent to the research hypothesis. For reliability and validity to exist in the data, the data collection techniques must yield information that is relevant to the research hypothesis and correct. Reliability and validity are measures of this “relevance” and “correctness” (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials. Reliability is influenced by random error so that increase in random error decreases reliability. To address this, the researcher watched out for

- inaccurate coding
- ambiguous instructions to subjects by piloting the interview schedule
- bias on her part
- an adequate sample by reaching data saturation level

Validity is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences which are based on the research results. It is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represent the phenomenon under study. Validity has to do with how accurately the data obtained in the study represents the variables in a study. Validity of data is affected by presence of non-random error. The researcher chose samples from the three

categories of youth to ensure they are all represented to enhance generalization among all youth. The researcher made the purpose of the study as clear as possible to the respondents to solicit accuracy and honesty in their responses and also assured them of confidentiality.

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of information collected (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Qualitative data analysis seeks to make general statements on how categories or themes of data are related.

After data had been collected it was presented in descriptive and narrative form because in qualitative research, data is in the form of text, phrases, written words, phrases and symbols. During interviewing, the researcher recorded responses as field notes on paper. The researcher then edited the field notes from interviews by first reading through all the data collected to familiarize with it. Various categories were detected in the data that is distinct from each other and then relationships were established among the categories. Once the themes, categories and patterns were identified, the researcher evaluated and analyzed the data to determine the adequacy of information and the credibility, usefulness, consistency and validation of assumptions. This was done by looking at the usefulness of the information in answering the research questions. Analysis was going on as data was collected.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher obtained consent for data collection from participants by asking them whether they were willing to participate or not. The participants were also given information concerning the study's mission and objectives. The researcher considered all the participants equal. The identity of individuals from whom information is obtained in the course of the study has been kept strictly confidential and no names were recorded. Information from other authors that is used has been acknowledged. The researcher has made efforts to be impartial in research and presentation of findings.

3.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter defined how the study was conducted. It covered two main areas. First was the selection of participants which dealt with who the participants were, how they were selected, how many participated and from where they were identified.

Secondly, it covered the instrumentation which dealt with data collection methods, techniques, instruments and pre-testing of the instruments as well as their reliability and validity.

To wind up, the chapter looked at the ethical considerations or safeguards the researcher took throughout the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results and analysis of the study undertaken. The data was obtained from respondents through interviews. The data is presented in descriptive and narrative form. The researcher detected various categories in the data that is distinct from each other and then established the relationships among the categories. Once the themes, categories and patterns were identified, they were coded. The researcher then evaluated and analyzed the data to determine the adequacy of information and the credibility, usefulness, consistency and validation of assumptions. This was done by looking at the usefulness of the information in answering the research questions. Analysis was going on as data was collected.

The following seven (7) themes emerged and they form the basis of the analysis:

- Youth profile/characteristics
- Expectations and needs of youth library users
- Role of Kenya national library service
- Role of the Government Of Kenya
- Perceived impact of accessed information on youth lives
- Challenges youth face in accessing information in public libraries
- Suggestions for improvement

4.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

The study set out to investigate the role of KNLS in provision of information to empower the youth and propose improvement of information provision. The youth comprised of library users between 15-30 years. Library staff who serve the youth were also formed part of the respondents as well as two key informants namely a staff in the Ministry of Youth Affairs and the Director of KNLS.

Table 4.1 illustrates the characteristics of the respondents in terms of their age groups, distribution and their response rate.

Table 4.1: Characteristics of respondents

Category of respondents	Sample targeted	No. of respondents	Percentage
15-19yrs Youth	20	13	65%
20-24yrs Youth	20	14	70%
25-30yrs Youth	15	9	60%
15-19yrs focus group	10	8	80%
20-30yrs focus group	10	9	90%
TOTAL	75	53	70.6%

Source: Analysis of collected data by the researcher

The table shows the youth between 20-24 years are a bigger percentage of youth who use the library services. The youth between 20-24 years and 25-30 years had fairly similar interests as opposed to the teens aged between 15-19 years. The focus group of the former two was thus combined.

4.2 FINDINGS

4.2.1 Youth Profile / Characteristics

Youth aged 15-19 years were mainly secondary school students and none of those interviewed indicated to be out of school. This may mean that school leavers or drop-outs do not usually use library services and that library services are mostly used when youth are pursuing some form of academic / educational programme. They also used the library as a meeting point to interact with their friends.

Youth aged 20-30 years included college students, professionals pursuing further studies both employed and unemployed and a few who are not pursuing any studies. Majority however use the library when they are having some academic pursuits. Their areas of study included information science, accounts, medicine and education. This shows that the library is usually used when these youth are having some academic pursuits. A few however were getting information for their personal professional development.

Of the youth interviewed, 28 were male while 23 were female. This suggests that the difference between the number of males and females who use the library is not significant. Both genders use public libraries. This can be seen in the following pie chart where the females stand at 45% and males stand at 55%.

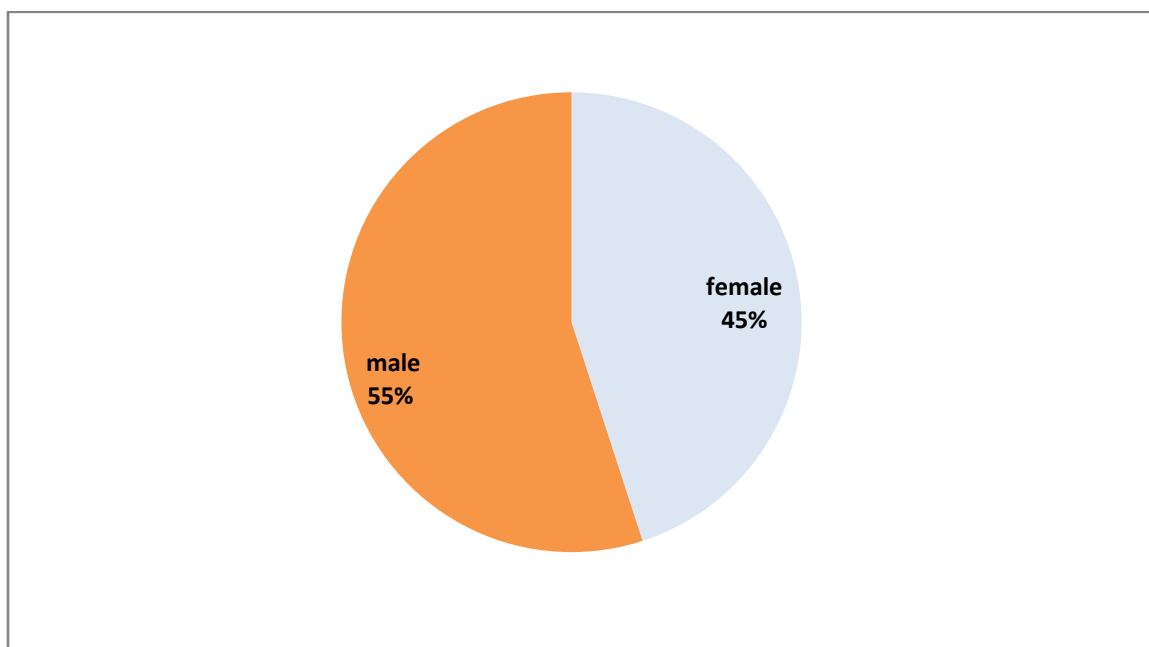


Figure 4.1: Ratio of youth female to youth male respondents who use the library

Source: Analysis of data collected by the researcher

Library staff were asked to rate the approximate percentage of library membership of youth aged 15-30 years in relation to the total library membership and 4 of them said approximately 50% while 3 of them said 75%. When the staff were asked to describe the youth, they described them as people who liked socializing or interacting a lot with their peers even within the library, particularly the 15-19 years category. This made them sometimes noisy and disturbing to other library users. The youth aged between 15-19 years also prefer to operate in groups even sitting in groups within the library to do their work or studies. Another thing that library staff noted about this category of youth is that they are keen on other activities within the library that do not involve books for example video shows, talks, discussion forums and debates. This fits in with the description given by Mwangi (2011) of the Generation Y being ICT natives and hating paperwork. During

the interviews it was noted that very few read for leisure and more females than males indicated that they read novels. Many of them were interested mainly in doing their homework, research assignments and reading for exams. Some indicated that they used the library as a place to meet friends or a recreation joint.

Library staff pointed out that the youth generally have short concentration spans, getting easily bored thus walking in and out of the library frequently to the chagrin of serious readers. The staff also regard the youth as people who do not feel very free to communicate with adults so they do not express their needs easily to library staff. Some shy off while others are fearful so they have to be prodded to extract information from them. It is worth noting here that the library hardly has staff below 35 years and they may not really be in touch with the needs of the youth because it may not be easy for them to identify with the youth.

4.2.2 Expectations and Needs of Youth Library Users

Respondents were asked what library services they used. Their responses showed that 44% borrowed books, 30% used the reading area for their private studies, 41% used reference and other library materials, 44% used the internet and 2% used periodicals. Of these, 44% said the services were adequate, 33% said they were fairly adequate and 2% found them inadequate. 21% were undecided and did not rate the services used.

When asked what their expectations were of the library, the youth said that they expected up-to-date, relevant and adequate information materials covering all subject fields. These materials ought to be in various formats like print materials, e-resources and a well-stocked multi-media section. They also stated that they expected to have access to internet, e-mail and all sites availed. They expected the computers to be well-maintained and with high speeds. One respondent reckoned *“It would be nice if we can be able to access the library materials online without having to come to the library physically.”* This shows that library automation is an expectation for modern libraries.

On the environment of the library, youth expect a clean, conducive reading environment with adequate sitting space, adequate furniture and specific areas for different categories of users as one respondent said, *“When I visit the library, I expect to find a section allocated for youth with relevant materials in all formats and good guidance around the premises to show me the location of materials as well as the services offered.”* Ambience seems to be a need for many youth and according to the KNLS Director, the KNLS Board is determined to improve ambience of all its libraries.

On the library services offered, a number of youth expressed that they expected a public library to offer free services especially due to the fact that many of them have limited cash. They expect simple and easy registration process, longer opening hours and availability of some services like bindery, sale of stationery and to be handled in a professional way by staff. They would also like to borrow more than two books at a time.

The youth were asked why they use the Kenya National Library Service and they said that the library had a conducive reading environment because it gave an atmosphere for reading unlike back in their homes. They said that the stock had a variety of materials many of which were relevant, up-to-date especially the revision books though the numbers were inadequate. They also find supplementary and reference materials in the library. One respondent stated *“I use KNLS because it is easily accessible to my home and the services offered are affordable, corruption-free beside the lovely study environment”*. Others were pleased with the cleanliness, order, available materials and staff handling/customer care. Some privately registered students said that with no school or college facilities for studying, the public library was their savior.

To establish what the needs of the youth are, they were asked what type of information interests them. They talked of information on social lifestyles of other countries, geography and wildlife, social networking, leadership, careers, human biology, relationships, outdoor activities like sports, developments in information technology, music, drama, dance, personal identity, communication, current affairs, universities, drugs, inspirational or motivational materials, current affairs and new trends in different fields, spiritual materials, universities abroad, drugs, sex and abstinence, choice of friends, e-resources, texts recommended for educational courses and syllabus texts among others. They were asked the reason for the above mentioned interests and they said it was for their career development, to enhance their studies, to keep updated about happenings around, for spiritual nourishment/ encouragement, to increase their knowledge, to enlighten themselves to make the right choices and to supplement the texts they have.

These interests and the reasons for the interests shows that they sought information that eventually contributes to change in their lives therefore empowers them. The Director of KNLS noted that needs of the youth revolve around self worth, sense of belonging and need for love. He also acknowledges that the needs of the youth are ever changing and it is a challenge the organization tries to keep up with by continually trying to find out what is needed at any time.

When the youth were asked where they sought for any information they needed apart from the public library, they said that they sought this information from institutional libraries (school, college), other information centres like the National Archives, Memorial Museum, Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA), on the internet in cyber cafes, face book, from the T.V. and from teachers, lecturers, friends, colleagues, parents, siblings and professionals like counselors,

4.2.3 Role of Kenya National Library Service

The library handles not less than 500 users on each average day but as many as 2000 and above during peak periods like school holiday months and weekends. At least half of this number is composed of youth. The services offered that are geared towards the youth include Book clubs (where youth read particular titles then discuss them or generate activities around given themes in a book they have read), Video shows on literature set books or topical issues, Motivational talks on various issues organized by the library with invited speakers / professionals in given fields. The library has a teenage reading area stocked with teenage-related materials as well as school texts. It also stocks professional / academic materials, reference materials, periodicals which can be accessed by all readers

though lending is restricted to registered members only. An Online Public Access Catalogue is available for retrieval purposes. The library offers photocopying and Internet services. For many years, the library has been offering field attachment for students / interns to do their practicals. They include students studying information science, human resource management, accounting, supplies management, information technology and public relations.

The youth indicated that they use most of the above mentioned services majority of them rating them as either fairly adequate or adequate. Only one rated them as inadequate citing poor internet service. This particular respondent said *“the internet is slow and there are viruses in the computers which destroy someone’s documents.”* Overall, however, many of them appreciated the services and commended them saying they found them helpful and that the materials are fairly current. One of the respondents said *“I find a variety of books that enable me to easily make comparisons. The materials cater for all units across a number of fields of my interest.”*

Another respondent said, *“The materials are numerous, accessible and informative and I usually find all that I need as well as what I like.”*

According to the KNLS Director, the KNLS Board has determined as a policy issue that any new library coming up henceforth would have to incorporate key sections such as a teenage section, multimedia section and a multipurpose hall. KNLS has also purposed to get into partnerships and collaborations with other institutions as development partners to help bridge some of the gaps that exist in her service provision and enable her realize the

objectives she has set out to achieve. Partners include Pearson Foundation involved in a project of boosting early childhood development information materials, Elsevier Foundation involved in a health project that entails developing local resources to reach health workers. KNLS is also collaborating with Public Library Innovation Program (PLIP) to run e-health units in selected KNLS libraries to provide information services to healthcare providers. A partnership with USAID has resulted in setting up of a G-Youth career resource centre in the Garissa library which provides a place for youth to access critical knowledge and resources about educational, career and life choices. The centre is also meant to be a meeting space for youth to interact, exchange ideas and socialize in a safe, comfortable environment. Partnership with Digital Opportunity Trust (DOT) is enabling youth and other community members to be trained on acquiring basic ICT skills or knowledge with the help of computers supplied by Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) under yet another partnership that seeks to set up public access centres in rural communities to facilitate increased access to public communication by providing affordable access and enhancing ICT capacity. KNLS has thus identified partnerships as the strategy to develop her services in the face of limited funding to address the needs of library users.

Library staff determined the needs of the youth by administering questionnaires periodically, interviewing users as they served them on daily basis, interacting with the youth, talking to them and they had conducted a customer satisfaction survey the previous year (2011). The library maintains a customer requirements register referenced KNL/PL/256 where any library user is free to record their requirements. Information

gathered from this register is used to inform the selection of library materials for procurement. Another register that the library maintains is the customer complaints/compliments register (Ref KNL/PL/107) where users record any complaints or compliments. Library staff gather the feelings of their users when they analyze this register on quarterly basis. According to the librarian-in-charge, a number of issues have reportedly been addressed by the library management whenever they are raised here. The library has a facebook page and twitter address where library users can interact and staff can answer questions or issues raised. The youth are the most active on these sites.

According to staff, the rate of borrowing / usage of library materials by youth is impressive. Staff assist users to meet their needs by various means. They direct users to the relevant shelves, search for requested information in books or online, refer users to alternative sources, borrow materials from other libraries (Inter Library Loan) and collaborate with other organizations to tap other services like VCT, drama, facilitators for talks among others.

4.2.4 Role of the Government of Kenya

Government programmes for youth empowerment involve equipping them with technical and vocational skills, nurturing talents, providing resources like funding and engaging the youth in productive activities for pay. According to the Principal Youth Development Officer interviewed, many youths and youth groups have benefitted from the government programmes for youth empowerment. Some have become economically independent,

running their own businesses, others are now skilled and employed in various enterprises yet others have nurtured their talents and are now able to earn an income from it.

What about the information needs of youth undertaking these programmes? Youth in various programmes require information on entrepreneurship, ICT, technical and vocational subjects, drug abuse, health, performing arts, visual arts, fashion, sports, culinary skills, survival skills, administration of young groups, youth clubs, SACCOSs, environment, leisure, recreational activities, cultural activities and community service. The Ministry communicates to the youth via workshops and their field staff based in the ministry offices at the district level as well as the Youth Empowerment Centres being established which have an information centre or library within their set-up. These centres are however not fully equipped therefore the information available in them is limited. This is where the public libraries come in significantly to complement government efforts towards youth empowerment by filling in the gap of relevant information.

4.2.5 Perceived Impact of Accessed Information on the Lives of the Youth

It is expected that any person accessing library resources gets information that they either use or do not use depending on if it is helpful or not. When the youth access information in the library, how do they use it and does it bring any change in their lives?

One of the respondents said *“using the library has changed my outlook. I am more informed, educated and knowledgeable. The different books I read give me a variety of ideas and this enhances my understanding of various issues. When we sit in discussion forums with my friends, I am able to contribute constructively”*. These words illustrate

that use of information provided by the library brings change in the life of the user. They get the ideas to tackle issues in different aspects of life. They get to know what is expected of them and their views are widened making them better citizens. They are able to provide information to others after being informed thus becoming agents of change.

Some respondents said that motivational materials gave them encouragement, motivated them personally and inspired them to aim higher when they read the achievements of others. They also said they have been challenged to work smarter not just harder. Materials on “how-to-do” or “do-it-yourself” gave them instructions that enabled them to undertake practical projects on their own. Religious-based materials gave them spiritual nourishment, counseled them and one respondent reckoned that after following the warning, they were spared trouble and pitfalls. The materials have helped them in building of character. They are more careful in their actions and have learnt how to choose friends, gained discipline and self-esteem and are able to correct wrong things. After getting the right information some have been morally encouraged in the right direction.

A number of respondents said that library visits have enabled them to spend time pursuing wholesome, gainful entertainment. Each trip to the library or the hours spent there was never regretted. They used the readily available opportunities and developed solutions to problems. Respondents who are professionals or pursuing careers said they had improved their skills and efficiency in service provision. They had learnt and grown in their fields of practice. Some said they had gained knowledge on how to deal with people in the community. Respondents who are pursuing academic programmes said that

in using the library, they were able to complete their assignments, improve their grades, post better academic performance and pass exams. One of the said “*after using the library, I have been able to do well in my studies and I am able to complete my assignments satisfactorily*”. Respondents noted that they have been able to build language skills. One of them can now write Arabic after using instructional materials found in the library. A number of youth said they had found guidance on career choice through materials accessed in the library.

These responses underscore the role played by information that has been accessed in the library which is having far reaching effects for the youth whether for their educational needs, emotional needs or entertainment. It shows that when they accessed and used the information, it changed their state of knowledge, values, beliefs, attitudes and behavior. The value and impact of information made youth improve their grades in school / college, satisfactorily complete their assignments, be aware of current affairs etc thus it empowered them.

4.2.6 Challenges Youth Face in Accessing Information in Public Libraries

The study established that there are several challenges youth face in accessing information materials in public libraries. Though the library provides a wide variety of materials, the texts provided are not enough to serve all the users who greatly outnumber the number of copies available. A title in the library normally has a maximum of three copies only which means that demand outstrips supply. Titles in some fields like information technology are very few. The library has tried to acquire current materials

but there are still some old, outdated materials covering old syllabuses on the shelves. The other problem is that some books were shelved in the wrong places either because of improper shelving or lack of shelving therefore it is not easy to trace such books. Some youth are unable to get to the right shelves even when given directions by staff for lack of orientation. Some find the shelf arrangement and labeling confusing.

The internet connection is irregular (going on and off from time to time) and the speeds are low. The computers are few compared to the number of readers who use the library so accessing them is difficult. They are also not well maintained as some break down, hung or have viruses. Some sites on the internet are blocked. Some youth are not conversant with online searching and so cannot make use of available resources online. Staff are supposed to assist such users but many times they are unavailable because of shortage of staff while some of them are not helpful because they lack good customer care skills. Sitting space is limited during peak periods like school holiday months and weekends. When the library is full, some users are unable to use it. A few youth decried the entrance or membership fee charged which they find high. They sometimes cannot access the library when they do not have that money.

When staff were asked what they viewed as challenges facing the youth in accessing information, one said *“a number of youth have little knowledge on searching techniques whether online or print materials and they are not expressive so they do not inquire much but try to make their way round by themselves”*. Another staff reckoned that *“some youth concentrate on specific titles and do not want to give room for alternative sources of*

information". However, staff agree that the age gap between many of them and the youth does not help matters because some of the staff do not relate well with youth due to the generational gap that sometimes causes conflict in how different generations handle each other, some with suspicion, superiority/inferiority complexes, disrespect or disdain. These challenges highlight the gaps that exist in service provision of KNLS to the youth and this is where intervention is required.

4.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The study was able to establish the following:

- Youth form a sizable percentage of library users and should not be underestimated, assumed or ignored. Any efforts to improve service provision to them would result in significant rise in satisfaction levels for library services offered in general.
- The public library provides a number of services to address youth needs and though the youth appreciate these services, they feel that they are not fully adequate to meet their needs and expectations.
- The information the youth accessed in the libraries actually has a tangible impact on their lives and thus it can be concluded that it empowered them.
- The youth however faced various challenges in accessing information in the library which showed that there are still gaps that public libraries need to fill to enhance their services and further empower the youth.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the findings in relation to the theoretical framework, literature reviewed and objectives of the study.

5.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In line with the Uses and Gratification theory, the audience here who are the youth chose the library (as the media) to meet their information needs (fulfilling a specific gratification). Needs (which the youth enumerated) motivate them to use the library (media). Their needs generated certain expectations of the library and the library has tried to address these expectations by the services they offer. The impact of the information they accessed and used shows what people do with the information obtained. The youth had applied it to their education pursuits, emotional needs and it had affected their state of knowledge, values, beliefs, attitudes and behavior.

Wilson's general model of information seeking behaviour suggests a three-fold view of information seeking that is the seeker, the system employed and the information resources drawn upon. The youth who are the seekers are linked to the various information resources by the public library which is the system employed. Without the existence of the public library the youth may have to seek for information elsewhere.

5.2 LITERATURE REVIEWED

The study was based on studies that showed that not much study has been done in young peoples' information needs, their information seeking behavior and that most libraries have not developed specialized services for youth, neither are they in step with the needs of youth and need to do much more in providing services in youth-friendly ways. Chelton & Cool (2004) state that young peoples' needs remain little understood and poorly catered for by information providers. Shenton (2004) says that there have been warnings over the last twenty years of the limited nature of research into young peoples' information seeking yet there continues to be little sustained investigation of young people and information seeking. Madden and Miller (2007) add that it is an issue which has attracted piecemeal coverage within the empirical academic literature. It however emerges that a number of studies have been done for example the Ministry of Health in Kenya has carried out studies on youth services and has come up with a comprehensive list of the areas of information need for the youth. The Ministry underscores the provision of service to the youth in youth-friendly ways. The public library in Kenya has recognized the importance of providing specialized services for this category of users and is offering some specialized services for youth albeit on a limited scale. The library is providing a special collection & section for teenagers, book clubs, motivational talks, multimedia, e-resources, and internet though in all these services the youth noted that they are still far from being adequate so there is still a lot of room for improvement. The library is however on the right path. The findings also show that library staff are aware of the needs of their youth clientele which they identify by administering questionnaires periodically, interviewing users as they serve them on daily basis, interacting with the

youth face-to-face or via twitter or facebook and they had conducted a customer satisfaction survey the previous year. They are also able to give a description of the characteristics and mannerisms of the youth clientele when they describe them as people who liked socializing or interacting a lot with their peers, particularly the 15-19 years category, prefer to operate in groups even sitting in groups within the library to do their work or studies, keen on other activities within the library that do not involve books e.g. video shows, talks, discussion forums and debates.

5.3 INFORMATION NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE YOUTH

The youth outlined their areas of interest which included social networking, leadership, careers, relationships, outdoor activities, information technology, music, drama, dance, universities among others. This correlates to Agosto & Hughes-Hasell (2006) description of the domains that encompass the information needs of young people. These areas covered social self (social activities, fashion), emotional self (relationships, religious practice), reflective self (performance), Cognitive self and sexual self (sexual identity).

The youth have high expectations of the library and enumerated a number of things that they expected but the library came short of them, like adequate information materials, adequate reading space, easily accessible online information, longer opening hours, free services, room for group discussions and an information literacy programme. In spite of these shortcomings, the youth after utilizing the resources that were available, gained mileage in various ways including improvement in their academics, professions and careers, behavior, attitudes, values and beliefs. This shows that in spite of her

shortcomings, the public library is playing a role in empowering the youth and if the shortcomings were adequately addressed, the public library would no doubt contribute immensely to youth empowerment. The impact of accessed information on the youth who accessed it is the proof of their empowerment. The youth cited various ways this information had changed their lives including better academic performance, improved professional skills, providing the guidance needed to make choices of courses to undertake, career path to follow, university to study in among others.

5.4 INFORMATION SOURCES, SERVICES & CHANNELS ACCESSED BY YOUTH

The study established that youth sought for information from institutional libraries (school, college), other information centres like the National Archives, Memorial Museum, Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA), on the internet in cyber cafes, face book, from the T.V. and from teachers, lecturers, friends, colleagues, parents, siblings and professionals like counselors. This matches with what Wells & Dudash (2007) say. They state that young people draw upon a wide range of sources to meet their information needs that include personal networks, wide networks of friends, family, community contacts, mass media and institutional sources. It also agrees with the findings of the Canadian Mennonite University on a group of young people which cited social networking on the web, magazines, television, drama, radio, cultural events, youth clubs and peer groups as places where young people obtain their information.

5.5 THE ROLE OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

The library attendance statistics in both peak and off-peak periods in the public library show that at least half of the public library users in Kenya are the youth. They are an important demographic within the library system of society. Library staff as well as their Director acknowledge and take cognizance of the fact that the youth make up a significant percentage of their clientele. It is imperative for the public library to ensure that it plays its role in providing information that meets their needs and to compliment the government role in empowering youth.

Public libraries are places visited by young people to study, find information and a meeting place to participate in interesting events. The public library in Kenya has been trying to offer a conducive environment for studying, information resources of various types and events for youth to take part in but the youth feel that there is still much more the library can offer like rooms for group discussions, information literacy, more reading space and automation at a higher level. The Italian survey undertaken on public library services to adolescents (Dec 2003-April 2004) established that libraries need to provide a connection between resources and users (access to information resources). This matches the Kenyan situation where youth said they found it a problem to locate materials either on shelves or online due to lack of orientation or know-how. The library ought to take up the challenge of information literacy on its programs to users.

The role of public libraries in meeting developmental needs of youth depends largely on its capacity and resources which comes out clearly in the findings of this study both by the government programmes and the public library operations that are limited because of limited funding. Crosson, C. (2005) asserted that access to information is synonymous with ability to choose and information that leads to good choices had to be right, consistent, complete, relevant and timely. Correct application of that information leads to change. But how does one apply information that is not even available in the first place?

5.6 THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF KENYA

The study started out with the assumption that although the government of Kenya has many programmes in place for youth empowerment, the youth are not sufficiently empowered because of lack of adequate, relevant information. It also assumed that youth can be assisted when libraries expand their role and serve their specific needs. The study established that there is indeed limited access to relevant information because youth empowerment centres established by the government are not all operational and many are not fully equipped with necessary tools like computers and information materials in the small libraries that are housed in these centres. A number of youth are however equipped with information on entrepreneurship through the workshops conducted by the government, trainings conducted in youth polytechnics, National Youth Service, internships availed in various organizations and support services provided by youth development officers.

With regard to the role played by the Government of Kenya, the study established that the government is playing a crucial role in providing opportunities for empowering youth through the programmes and activities offered and not necessarily through information materials for example through workshops, internships, trainings and by word of mouth from its youth development officers.

5.7 CHALLENGES YOUTH FACE IN ACCESSING INFORMATION

The challenges enumerated by youth bring out the gaps that exist in provision of services by the public library. Libraries worldwide are seen as gathering places for youth especially out of school hours and this seems to be case in Kenya too. However, the libraries in Kenya are not providing adequate physical space for youth. They have not even made provision for spaces/ rooms/ corners for group discussion. Wells & Dudash (2007) say that talk and discussion is often an integral part to young peoples' information gathering. Library staff interviewed concurred with this. The staff also agree that involvement of youth in planning and implementing youth programs is minimal and this matches with the findings of the survey conducted in 1998 by the De Wallace-Readers' digest fund to find out the range of activities and programs offered to youth in public libraries in the U.S. The other survey conducted in Italy established that youth are interested in materials in all formats especially the non-book materials. The public library in Kenya has not fully developed this aspect and the youth raised it as an area of inadequacy. However it is commendable that the library has noted this aspect and has

begun to move in this direction by providing internet and multimedia services though they still have plenty of teething problems.

Various studies including that of Hawkins (2001), Shenton (2007), Julien (2004), Wells & Dudash (2007) raise the issue of limited ability of young people to locate and use information effectively. The findings in this study also identified this issue among young people who raised it as one of the challenges they face in accessing information in the public library. Library staff also pointed it out as an area of concern that needs to be looked into and catered for. Shenton (2007) mentions one of the paradoxes of youth information behavior as systems and procedures at the library which are designed to ease use (such as classification) having the opposite effect. Some young people in this study also said that they found the shelf arrangement and labeling confusing.

5.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The youth are a special group of people in society who have their own unique information needs and information seeking behavior that needs to be taken into account when offering information services to them. Their expectations must be addressed in order to satisfy their needs. The public library has been providing the youth with several information services that have resulted in change in their lives. The youth however face a number of challenges while accessing the information and these gaps if filled by the library can lead to higher output and satisfaction levels for the library users and therefore a higher degree of empowerment.

The government also has several good programmes that empower the youth though they do not reach all corners of the country. Information is still limited because the youth empowerment centres supposed to be located in each constituency are not all functional or equipped. The following chapter proposes a framework for the library to improve information provision for youth empowerment.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a summary of the major findings of the study based on the research objectives that guided it. It presents conclusions drawn from the findings and recommendations which if implemented would improve the provision of information to the youth and empower them to an even higher level. A framework for the library to improve information provision for youth empowerment is given. It concludes with suggestions for further research.

6.1 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

This study set out to investigate the role Knls plays in provision of information to empower youth, establish existing gaps and propose a framework for improving the same. The objectives that guided the study were:

1. To determine information needs of youth in Nairobi County and find out how these needs are met by KNLS.
2. To analyze the role KNLS is playing in providing information for youth empowerment.
3. To determine the information sources, services and channels used by youth to access information.

4. To establish the mechanisms, programmes and activities put in place by the government towards youth empowerment.
5. To establish the challenges youth face in accessing relevant information that can empower them.
6. To recommend a framework to improve information provision for youth empowerment at KNLS.

Based on these objectives the following were the findings:

1. Information needs and expectations of the youth

The youth said that the type of information that interests them includes information on social lifestyles of other countries, geography and wildlife, social networking, leadership, careers, human biology, relationships, outdoor activities like sports, music, dance, drama, developments in information technology, inspirational or motivational materials, current affairs and new trends in different fields, spiritual materials, universities abroad, drugs, sex and abstinence, choice of friends, e-resources and texts recommended for educational courses. These areas of interests can be viewed as areas of information need for the youth.

When the youth were asked what their expectations were of the library, they said that they expected up-to-date, relevant, adequate information materials covering all subject fields. These materials ought to be in various formats like print, e-resources and a well-stocked multimedia section. They also expect to have access to the internet, e-mail and all sites availed including access to the library materials online without coming the library physically. They expect the computers to be

well-maintained, and with high speeds. The youth expect a clean, conducive reading environment, adequate sitting space, adequate furniture and specific areas of the library layout designated for different categories of users like children, youth and adults. Some expect the public library to offer free services, a simple and easy registration process, longer opening hours, services like bindery, a stationary canteen, and to be handled in a professional way by library staff.

2. KNLS role in providing information for youth empowerment and perceived impact

KNLS addresses the needs of young people by offering certain services that are geared towards them. These include book clubs, video shows on literature set books and topical issues, motivational talks on various issues, professional/academic materials, reference materials, periodicals, a teenage area stocked with teenage-related materials and school texts, photocopying services, internet services and lending of books. The library offers information materials in various fields though not to the level expected. The number of copies per title stocked is little compared to the large population it serves. There are attempts to offer e-resources in the form of internet services, an online public access catalogue, video shows on topical issues as well as a multi-media section stocked with CDs and DVDs. However, the library has not yet reached the level of lending her materials online in form of e-book or e-journals. The youth however praised the library environment that they described as clean and conducive for reading. Ambience seems to be a need for many youth and according to the

KNLS Director, the KNLS Board is determined to improve ambience of all its libraries.

The information accessed enabled the youth to get ideas to tackle issues in different aspects of life. Their views are widened and they are able to provide information to others after being informed thus becoming agents of change. Materials on “how-to-do” and “do-it-yourself” gave them instructions that enabled them to undertake practical projects on their own. Religious materials have helped them in building their character. They have learnt how to choose good friends, gained discipline, self esteem and are able to correct wrong things. Library visits have enabled them to spend time pursuing helpful activities as well as wholesome / gainful entertainment. Professionals had improved their skills and efficiency in service provision. Students using the library were able to complete their assignments, improve their grades, post better academic performance and pass their exams. Some have been able to build language skills while others have found guidance on career choice. The information accessed changed the state of knowledge, values, beliefs, attitudes and behavior of youth thus it changed their lives enabling them to have more control of their lives.

3. Information sources, services and channels used by youth to access information

Apart from libraries, youth seek for information from other institutional libraries like school or college libraries, other information centres like the National Archives, Memorial Museum and Mathare Youth Sports Association. They also

look for information from the internet in cyber cafes, on their mobile phones, on face book, twitter and the television. Another source identified was from people that include teachers, lecturers, friends, colleagues, parents, siblings and professionals like counselors. They sought information to enhance their studies, for their career development, to keep updated about happenings around them, for spiritual nourishment/encouragement, to increase their knowledge, to enlighten themselves to make the right decisions and to supplement the texts they have.

4. Government programmes for youth empowerment

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has established several programmes to address youth concerns in Kenya. These include Kazi Kwa Vijana, an economic stimulus programme aimed at spurring economic growth through engaging young people in productive activities for pay, the Kenya National Youth Service to train young people on various technical and vocational courses and provide a reserve force for the Kenya Armed Forces. The Ministry is also reviving and equipping youth polytechnics to train youth and has created a revolving kitty (The Youth Enterprise Development Fund) to finance youth business activities to create jobs, facilitate entrepreneurship training for youth, marketing of youth enterprises' products and services. Youth Empowerment Centres are being built in every constituency for youth to access ICT infrastructure, recreation, fighting drug abuse, providing counseling and health services, training in music, entrepreneurship and performing arts, providing basic literacy and continuing education for school leavers. These centres are however not fully equipped

therefore the information available in them is limited. The public library therefore has an opportunity to fill this gap.

5. Challenges the youth face in accessing relevant information that can empower them

Though the youth commended the services provided by the library like the kind of materials available in the library, they decried their numbers. Most titles have only three copies of each book yet the users are so many the catchment areas being heavily populated. The volumes provided per title are not realistic. Some fields like information technology do not have many titles. A few materials belonging to old syllabuses and are still in circulation therefore outdated. Another challenge was the location of some materials. A number of them were shelved in the wrong places making it difficult to trace them. This could be due to lack of proper shelving or no shelving done on the part of the staff.

Information technology is a major area of challenge for the youth. The computers in the library are too few to serve all users who need them. Accessing them is therefore difficult. They are generally not well maintained as some keep breaking down, hung and have viruses. Some sites on the internet are blocked and internet connection is irregular as well as the speed being very slow. Some youth face the challenge of not being too conversant with online searching therefore cannot reap the benefits of online information.

The sitting capacity of the library cannot support the huge population that is in need of its services therefore some youth end up not accessing the library when it is fully occupied.

Some youth do not find it easy to locate books or shelves because they were not orientated on the library layout or other necessary information on library use when they were first registered. Others find the shelf arrangement and labeling confusing.

Some youth face the challenge of inability to raise the required fee for registration as library members or entry fee for non-members. Finally, youth face the challenge of sometimes not finding help or assistance from library staff who may be unavailable at service points or uncooperative.

6.2 CONCLUSION

This study set out to investigate the role of KNLS in provision of information to empower youth, establish the gaps and propose a framework for improving the same. It can be concluded that KNLS is playing a significant role in empowering youth through the information it avails to them. The information impacts their lives when it changes their state of knowledge, values, beliefs, attitudes and behavior. To improve information provision, the public library needs to address the challenges put forth by the youth and close those gaps. They need to go about it by first establishing the needs of the youth, then acquiring information materials that match those needs, followed by creating

awareness to the youth about these materials and educating them on how to extract information from them through planned information literacy programmes. The library should then wind up by assessing the impact of services provided through regular evaluation and monitoring in order to adjust services accordingly.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the findings of this study, the following recommendations can be made:

1. Youth-friendly services

The study established that some youth faced the challenge of not finding help or assistance from library staff who may be unavailable at service points or uncooperative. Some had difficulty in raising the required fee for registration as library members or entry fee for non-members. It is therefore recommended that any programmes aimed at benefitting the youth must be planned by ensuring they are youth-friendly. Planners and policy-makers need to take into account all elements of youth-friendly services such as accessibility, acceptability, appropriateness, affordability and attitude of staff as they design youth programs, employ and deploy library staff. KNLS needs to consider setting their library charges as low as possible in order to cater for users from all socio-economic status. Library staff need to be trained periodically have refresher courses in customer care. The library needs to ensure that there is at least one staff on every floor or section at any given time. Staff deployment needs to be done considering the different skills, talents and personalities so that those who are deployed to

serve young people are suited to that and are also as close in age as possible to their clientele.

2. Provision of information literacy

The study established that some youth do not find it easy to locate books or shelves because they were not oriented on the library layout or other necessary information on library use when they were first registered. Others find the shelf arrangement and labeling confusing. Some youth face the challenge of not being conversant with online searching therefore cannot reap the benefits of online information. An information literacy program put in place would empower the youth to seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively to achieve their personal, social, occupational and educational goals. This will also assist in maximizing the use of available resources in the libraries. The program ought to be steered by specific staff who show competence though all staff need to be trained in this area. There must be a laid down policy that provides for funding of the program and training of staff. Tools and documents/guides can be developed by library staff for self-education to users to boost what they receive from library staff like web-based tutorials. Schedules or time-tables can be drawn for specific days or times in a month when education is carried out and this must be widely publicized for all library users to be aware. Instructions need to be presented in different formats like audio-visual, talks, discussions, exercises and games so that it becomes interesting for the young people.

3. Online information service provision and e-resources

The study established that information technology was a major area of challenge for the youth. The computers in the library are too few to serve all users who need them. Accessing them is therefore difficult. The computers are generally not well maintained as some keep breaking down, hung and have viruses. Some sites on the internet are blocked and internet connection is irregular besides the speed being very slow. This shows that public libraries are still lagging behind in this aspect yet the world is turning digital in all ways. Users naturally expect library service to keep in step with what is happening around them. Libraries need to concentrate their efforts and funds allocation to automating their services and ensuring they are running efficiently. Acquisition of these materials can be through forming partnerships with others, working in consortia or central purchasing groups.

4. Provision of space for group discussions

Youth are social beings and need to talk, interact, discuss amongst themselves and therefore require space for this kind of interaction without disturbing other readers. The study established that this is lacking. It is therefore recommended that public libraries provide such spaces especially now that they are taking on a role of gathering places for exchange of information and ideas. The library can improvise by utilizing spaces outside the building if available by putting up tents, sheds or make-shift stalls for this purpose.

5. Increase activities that attract youth

The study established that youth are attracted to activities such as motivational talks, video shows, discussion forums, competitions and debates. Youth have a short concentration span and they like variety. Besides reading materials they appreciate other related activities. The public library is already involved in such activities on a small scale and these could be up scaled and funded more to attract and retain youth clientele in public libraries. Library staff ought to be encouraged and motivated towards running activities that attract the youth. Prizes can be given to library staff who innovate and actively drive such activities.

In the light of this, the following framework is proposed for the library to improve her provision of information to empower the youth:

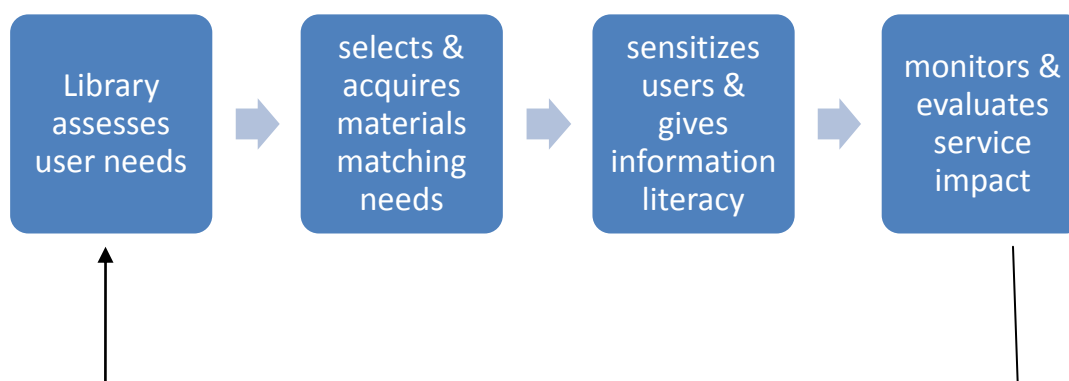


Figure 6.1: Model Diagram Of Proposed Framework

Source: Researcher's own interpretation based on Uses and gratification theory and Wilson's general model of information seeking behaviour

In this framework, the library first conducts a needs assessment of targeted users to establish their needs and expectations, then selects resources and media that match the identified needs followed by awareness creation as well as information literacy and finally assesses the impact of the services provided through monitoring and evaluation in order to know if users' needs have been gratified. This in turn informs the library where shortcomings exist and need to be rectified as well as where user needs are not addressed so that they can be addressed. As a result the information system can be developed to mirror the needs of the youth users.

6.4 SUGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study focused on provision of information to empower youth. As a result, some researchable aspects were noticed and are recommended for further research.

- i) Youth information-seeking behavior
- ii) Information literacy programme for the youth
- iii) Specialized information services for youth

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR YOUTH LIBRARY USERS

A. Personal data

1. Is the respondent:
a student in secondary school [] a student in college [] non-student []
2. Occupation (if out of school).....
3. Area of study (if a student).....
4. Gender: Male [] Female []
5. Age: 15-19 [] 20-25 [] 26-30 []

B. Library information services

1. What library services do you make use of?
.....
.....
2. How adequate are they? Please explain.....
.....
3. Why do you use the KNLS?
.....
.....
.....
4. What are your expectations concerning information services from KNLS?
.....
.....
.....

C. Youth information needs

1. What types of information are you interested in and in which format?
.....
.....
2. Why?.....
3. Where do you look for such information?
.....
.....

- 4. Do you find any of this information in KNLS?
Explain.....
- 5. How does the information contribute to any improvement in your life?
.....
.....

D. Challenges

- 1. What problems / challenges do you encounter when trying to access the information you need?
.....
.....
.....
- 2. Do you consult the library staff for assistance?
Explain.....
.....
.....
- 3. What suggestions would you propose for KNLS to do to improve the services provided to you
.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR LIBRARY STAFF

A. Personal data

1. Years of service:
2. Job title:
3.

B. Library services

1. Do you have any specialized services for the youth?
Explain.....
.....
.....
2. In your opinion do the services you provide to the youth satisfy them?
Explain.....
.....
.....
3. What problems do they face in accessing information?
.....
.....
.....
4. How do you assist them?
.....
.....
5. What would you suggest to improve services to the youth?
.....
.....
6. Do you have any collaboration with organizations that provide services to the youth e.g. Ministry of youth affairs, youth groups, non-governmental organizations etc
What type?
.....
.....
.....

C. Youth users

1. How do you rate the percentage of your membership of youth aged 15-30 years in comparison with the total library membership?
25% [] 33% [] 50% [] 75% []
Any other

2. Do you know their information needs and what are they?

.....
.....
.....

3. What are their preferences?

.....
.....

4. How do you determine their needs?

.....
.....

5. How do you go about meeting their needs?

.....
.....

6. Do the youth have any characteristics that are different from other library users?

Which ones?

.....
.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS

A. Personal data

1. Name:.....
2. Position held:.....
3. Number of years in service:.....
4.

B. Youth activities and programmes

1. What does youth empowerment mean to your ministry?
.....
.....
2. Which policies do you have towards youth empowerment?
.....
.....
.....
3. What programmes and activities have you put in place for youth empowerment?
.....
.....
4. What is your budget allocation towards youth empowerment programmes and activities?
.....
.....
.....
5. In your opinion, do the youth have access to all the information they require?
Explain
.....
.....
6. What information requirements go hand-in-hand with your programmes?
.....
.....
7. How do you communicate to the youth?
.....
.....

8. How do you rate the success of the programmes and activities?

.....

9. What challenges do you face in empowering the youth?

.....

.....

10. What suggestions can you give to improve access to information needed to empower the youth?

.....

.....

.....

.....

APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR KNLS MANAGEMENT**A. Youth**

1. What is the place of youth library users in your organization's service provision?

2. In your opinion do the youth library users have access to all the information they require?

B. Youth empowerment

1. What does youth empowerment mean to the public library service?

2. What role does the public library play in youth empowerment?

3. What challenges is the public library facing in empowering the youth?

4. What suggestions can you give to improve access to information needed to empower the youth?

C. Youth-friendly services

1. What is knls' view of 'youth-friendly services'?

2. What effort is KNLS making towards providing/having youth-friendly services?

D. Policies

1. What strategies have you put in place to effectively serve the youth users of the public library?

2. Please explain any collaborations or partnerships you may be having with other organizations towards providing services to the youth

APPENDIX V: INTRODUCTION LETTER



MOI UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY, RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION STUDIES

Tel: (053) 43251
 Fax No. (053) 43292
 Telex NO: 35047 MOI/UNIVERSITY
 E-Mail: hodlis@mu.ac.ke OR deanis@mu.ac.ke

P. O. Box 2900
 Eldoret
 Kenya

REF: IS/MPHIL/012/010

26th April, 2012

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: BETTY KALUGHO (IS/MPHIL/012/010)

The above named is a postgraduate student in the Department of Library, Records Management and Information Studies, School of Information Sciences, Moi University Nairobi Campus pursuing a Master of Philosophy degree in Library and Information Studies. She is carrying out a research thesis entitled "*Provision of Information for Youth Empowerment in Nairobi County*". A case study of KNLS.

The purpose of writing is to request you kindly to allow Ms. Kalugho conduct the research and request your staff to assist her collect the necessary data. The information given will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used only for the purpose of writing the research thesis. We look forward to continued support and co-operation.

Any assistance accorded to her will be most appreciated.


Yours sincerely,




DR. DAMARIS ODERO.....
 SENIOR LECTURER AND HEAD
 DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY, RECORDS MANAGEMENT & INFORMATION STUDIES

APPENDIX VI: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telephone: 254-020-2213471, 2241349
254-020-310571, 2213125, 2219420
Fax: 254-020-318245, 318249
When replying please quote
secretary@ncst.go.ke

P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA
Website: www.ncst.go.ke

22nd June 2012

Our Ref: **NCST/RCD/13/012/40**


Betty Kalugho
Moi University
P.O Box 3900
Eldoret

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Provision of information for youth empowerment in Nairobi County: A case of KNLS*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Nairobi County for a period ending **31st December , 2012.**

You are advised to report to **the Provincial Director of Education and the Provincial Commissioner, Nairobi Province** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.



DR. M. K. RUGUTT, PhD, HSC.
DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY

Copy to:

Provincial Director of Education
Provincial Commissioner
Nairobi Province.

"The National Council for Science and Technology is Committed to the Promotion of Science and Technology for National Development."

APPENDIX VII: RESEARCH PERMIT

PAGE 2 PAGE 3

Research Permit No. NCST/RCD/13/012/40


Date of issue 22nd June, 2012

Fee received KSH. 1,000


THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss/Institution
Betty Kalugho
of (Address) Moi University
P.O.Box 3900-30100, Eldoret
has been permitted to conduct research in
Location
District
Nairobi **County**

on the topic: Provision of information for
youth empowerment in Nairobi County. A
case of KNLS.

for a period ending: 31st December, 2012.



Applicant's
Signature



Secretary
National Council for
Science & Technology