

# Awareness Levels of Kenya Library and Information Service Consortium's (KLISC) Services and Resources at University of Nairobi and Kenya National Library Services

Naomy Mwaurah<sup>1\*</sup> and Ben Wekalao Namande<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>St Paul's University, Limuru, Kenya. Email: nmwaurah@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Kisii University, Kisii, Kenya. Email: wekanamande@gmail.com, wekalao.namande@kisiiversity.ac.ke

\*Corresponding Author

**Abstract:** Kenya Library and Information Service Consortium (KLISC) has done outstanding activities such as shared acquisition and ICT trainings of librarians to support information service providers in Kenya. Kenya has over 600 institutions but only 123 are KLISC members, irrespective of their memberships, their subscribed information resources remain under-utilized. The study therefore tried to interrogate the awareness levels of the KLISC's information resources and services by the users of member institutions. The purpose of the study was therefore to establish awareness levels of KLISC services and resources by users of KLISC member libraries. The study was conducted in University of Nairobi, KLISC headquarters and Kenya National Library Services (KNLS), Nairobi headquarters. The study used descriptive survey. The target population was KLISC's member libraries in Nairobi County. Purposive sampling and stratified sampling techniques were used to obtain a representative sample size. Data were collected using interviews and questionnaires and analysed using Microsoft excel and narrative method. The study discovered that most respondents were only aware of the multi-disciplinary databases. Majority of them used the KLISC's resources and stated the need for training on the access, use and search within these databases. The study concluded that majority of the library users were aware of the KLISC's resources and consulted them alongside other sources. The study recommended that rigorous trainings on use and access to KLISC's resources should be done regularly. The study also recommended that libraries should create awareness of all the KLISC's information resources for full utilization of these resources.

**Keywords:** Awareness, Digital libraries, Electronic resources, Library consortium.

## I. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

It is not possible for a library to stock the collection of information resources, which may be required by its users. To solve this, library cooperation began many decades ago, for instance, inter-library borrowing, document delivery and library networking. Today, the more traditional arrangement of resource sharing is referred to as 'library consortia'. Consortium refers to, 'co-operation, co-ordination and collaboration between and amongst libraries for the purpose of sharing information resources'. Through this collaboration, it has become possible to acquire information resources at reasonable prices [1]. Consortia are designed to boost the purchasing ability of member institutions, develop the accessibility of information resources and offer computer services. Consortia may be formed at different levels, such as local, regional, national or international level, on a functional or formal basis, or on subject basis [2].

Academic library consortia have been there for many years in the United States, after gaining force in the 1970s courtesy of shared catalogues and then later in the 1990s transitioning into the shared acquisition of e-resources [3].

In India, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) formed the Indian National Digital Library in Science and Technology (INDEST) Consortium. It is through this consortium that the ministry contributes funds needed for the subscription to electronic information resources for 38 major institutions and other centrally funded government institutions. In addition, 60 government-aided engineering college and technical departments in universities have also joined the collaboration with financial support from the Indian Council for Technical Education. Institutions in the INDEST consortium have an arranged foundation of PCs accessible at their organizations [4].

In Nigeria, different categories of library collaborations are in place such as The National Virtual Library project, Nigerian University Network and Nigerian University Libraries Consortium. They were formed to bring together all academic institutions with the purpose of growing scholarly and research information centres in Nigeria. Due to the ICT developments, there has been a move that has prompted libraries to shift from holding specific physical information resources locally to offering access to various information resources regardless of format and location. This shift from proprietorship to access seems to be the influence that promotes consortia development amongst libraries and extends the quantity of researches on library collaborations in Nigeria. These realities are obvious in the continuous library trainings, courses and meetings planned by the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) and Librarian Registration Council of Nigeria with prominence on open access for library and information centres, information sharing, libraries and the public as cohorts in managing the information community [5].

University of Nairobi is located in Nairobi city that has a population of over 3.5 million. Nairobi has an area of over 700 square kilometres and stands at an altitude of 1,675 meters above sea level. It is the capital, commercial, administrative and cultural centre of Kenya.

The Library Department is a member and has been the host for KLISC since its inception to April 2019. Through this collaborative effort, the library has taken part in various workshops to elevate staff capabilities as well as boost membership. The school of Business was initiated in the academic year 1956/57. It has three departments, namely 'Business Administration, Finance and Accounting, and Management Science. It offers six postgraduate courses, that is, Master of Business Administration, Master of Science in Finance, Master of Science in Marketing, Master of Science in Human Resource Management, Master of Science in Entrepreneurship and Innovations management, and Doctor of Philosophy in Business Administration. It has over 13,000 students with two satellite campuses in Mombasa and Kisumu [6].

Kenya National Library Service (KNLS) 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 KNLS has a rich repository of information resources including electronic resources covering various fields. The dedicated scholars find these resources greatly helpful as they provide a wide range of information for reference and research.

## II. AWARENESS LEVELS OF CONSORTIA SERVICES AND RESOURCES BY MEMBER INSTITUTIONS

Library patrons lack understanding of the resources their libraries provide due to ineffective communication and inadequate interaction between patrons and the library. The library has also not been able to apply operational marketing

strategies to promote its resources [7]. Namugera [7] also adds that for awareness of information resources to be created, a library must be in continued communication with its patrons. The communication is influenced by factors directly related to the library, such as the management, the relevance of the information resources it provides and the communication channels it uses. Libraries spend a lot of money on yearly subscription to different library consortia and hence should make sure that the patrons are aware and know how to access the online resources that are available to them through the consortia. The usage of these resources is depend on the patrons' awareness, which eventually justifies the amount of money spent.

Namugera [7] also argues that libraries can employ various strategies to create awareness about their resources: an example is friends telling their friends or family about these resources or self-tuition. She supports this with findings from a study done in University of Ghana Business School, where majority of the students reported to have been aware of the library resources through friends, family or self-tuition.

According to a survey done by Namugera [7] on 'Users' awareness, perceptions and usage of Makerere library services', only 46.8% knew about the electronic information resources the library had subscribed to. This was because majority were not aware of information literacy programmes whose sessions coincided with their classes and hence not able to attend. Namugera, therefore, suggested that the library management should market their resources to the teaching faculty through organized public relations series, library weeks, study tours, user education programme, library award nights and constant communication with faculty staff [8]. Also reported that libraries in Ghana organized Information Literacy programmes for their patrons although the frequency and duration of the trainings were insufficient to cater for the information needs of these patrons. They therefore recommended frequent sessions and more time allocated [9]. Added that staff of Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization knew about the electronic resources but poor internet connectivity was a challenge in accessing the resources.

According to Fresnido and Yap, the following activities were used by the Philippine consortia as both marketing and awareness strategies – promotion of professional development, inter-library lending, joint acquisition, joint cataloguing, cooperative cataloguing and building online catalogues or virtual catalogues, sharing of expertise on library automation, networking, digitization, managing digital information resources, and collective promotion, marketing, and publicizing of library services [10]. INFLIBNET Centre extensively markets the UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium to the teaching staff and scholars through workshops, training sessions and seminars. A study conducted by Singh, Nazimand Singh on 'The awareness and use of e-resources of UGC-Infonet Consortium by faculty members, researchers and students'

revealed that 85.71% were aware of the subscribed online journals whereas 14.29% did not know about the existence of the subscribed journals. Another study by Veenapani, Singh and Devi found out that 55% knew of the availability of the online databases through the consortium while 45% did not know [11].

Amunga [13] argues that institutions give value to a library consortium based on their previous experiences and quality on the value and kind of services on offer. The nature of these experiences determines how the service is offered against institutions’ anticipations. This way, the consortium can do marketing through its members to improve awareness and also communicate about changes in physical facilities, materials and services offered by the consortium. As stated by Walmiki *et al.* [12], Indian universities have access to vast scholarly publications courtesy of the UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium without any financial obligations as the UGC pays for them. A good number of the supposed beneficiaries, however, do not enjoy these privileges for various reasons. For example, below 40% of the teaching staff in Karnataka state university knows about and uses the UGC-Infonet information services whereas over 60% does not use the resources. Amunga’s survey on ‘Accessibility and use of online databases: A case study of INASP/PERI initiative in Kenyan University libraries’ found out that 73% of faculty staff and 69% of postgraduate students knew about the availability of subscribed online information resources but preferred to use print information resources as they were more readily available [12].

### III. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The KLISC has done outstanding activities to support information service providers in Kenya. These activities involve shared acquisition of information resources and services, ICT trainings of librarians and preparation of scholars to improve their capacities in information retrieval. In spite of these activities and administrations that KLISC give, not all information providers and institutions of higher learning are its members. Kenya has over 600 institutions but only 123 are KLISC members. Even the members dedicate a certain amount every year to pay to KLISC but most of their users remain in the dark as far as the KLISC’s resources and services are concerned. The study therefore tried to identify the awareness levels of the KLISC services and resources to the users of member institutions.

### IV. RESEARCH AIM AND QUESTIONS

The study aimed to establish the awareness levels of KLISC services and resources by users of KLISC member libraries.

The primary research questions were:

- What information resources do users consult?
- Which subscribed databases are users aware of?
- How are the users made aware of the subscribed databases?

### V. RESEARCH METHOD

To accomplish the study’s objective, descriptive survey design was used. Descriptive survey is a technique of collecting data by interview or administering questionnaires to a sample of characters. The design uses both components of quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The study population was drawn from member institutions of KLISC in Nairobi County. The targeted population was two Library Directors (UoN and KNLS) and 1342 postgraduate students from UoN’s School of Business, totalling to 1344.

The librarians were purposively selected whereas the postgraduate students were selected using simple random sampling.

The study sample consisted of the Library Director of Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library, postgraduate students from School of Business at UoN and KNLS’s Director. Sample size was determined using a simplified formula for proportions [13]. The formula was used to get the sample size of the students. The Library Directors were purposively selected.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N * (e)^2}$$

$$(1 + N * (e)^2)$$

Where

n = Sample size

n = population size

e = level of precision or sampling error

95% Confidence level and Precision = .1

$$= 1342 / (1 + 1342 * (0.1)^2)$$

$$= 99.93 = 100$$

TABLE I: SAMPLE SIZE

Respondents	Population Size	Sample Size
JKML Librarian	1	1
KNLS Director	1	1
UoN Postgraduate Students	1342	100
Total	1344	102

Source (Researcher, 2018)

VI. RESULTS

A. Awareness Levels of KLISC Services and Resources

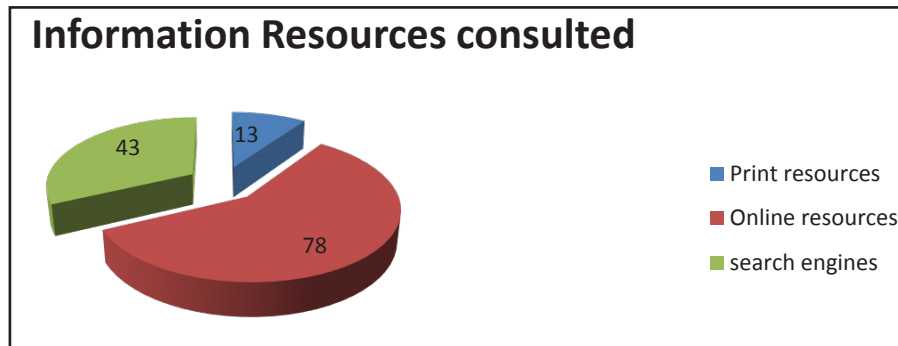
The main task of the study was to establish awareness levels of KLISC services and resources by users of KLISC member libraries. The study posed several questions to interrogate the respondents' awareness of the KLISC's resources.

1) Information Resources Consulted

Students were asked about which information resources they consulted first when doing their research or when given an assignment. The students' respondents were allowed to select multiple choices that applied to their case. According to Fig. 1, 78 out of the 90 questionnaires received back indicated that they consulted online resources first whenever they were doing research or given an assignment. This represented 86.7%

of the total respondents. 43 respondents or 47.8% of the total respondents consulted different search engines such as Google as their first stop. 13 preferred to use print resources, making up of 14.4% of the total respondents. The results indicate that majority of the students refer to online resources whenever they are doing research. However, a good number use Google and other search engines probably maybe because they do not get what they are looking for from the KLISC's databases or because they are not conversant with the databases. There are still a few who still use print resources certainly because they believe they can get additional information that might not be available online. These results are in support of the findings of a study done by Veenapani *et al.* [11]. The findings showed that postgraduate students used and were conscious of the electronic resources but also used print resources, as they were readily available.

The results are as shown in Fig. 1.



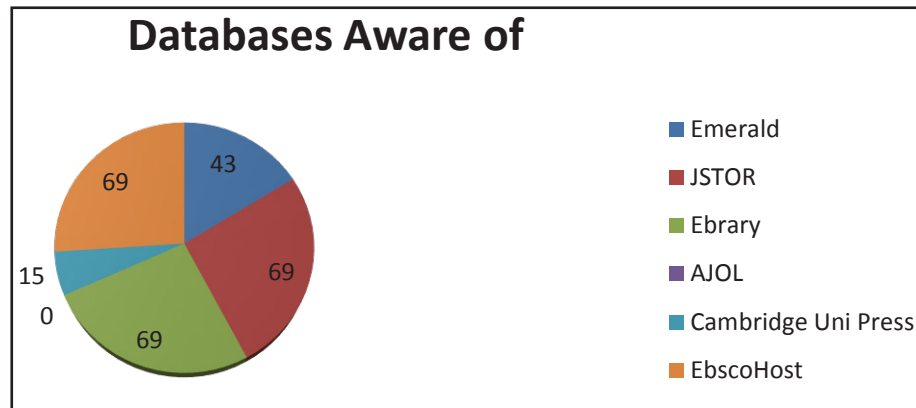
Source: Field Data (2019)

Fig. 1: Information Resources Consulted First

2) Awareness About Databases

Fig. 2 shows results for a question posed to identify the databases the respondents were aware of. The respondents were allowed to select multiple choices. Slightly more than three quarters of the questionnaires received indicated that they

were aware of Ebrary, JSTOR and EbscoHost. This represented 76.67% of the total respondents. 43 respondents were aware of Emerald, which also translated into 47.78% of the total respondents whereas 15 respondents (16.67%) were aware of Cambridge University Press. None was aware of AJOL. Also, none indicated awareness of other databases.



Source: Field Data (2019)

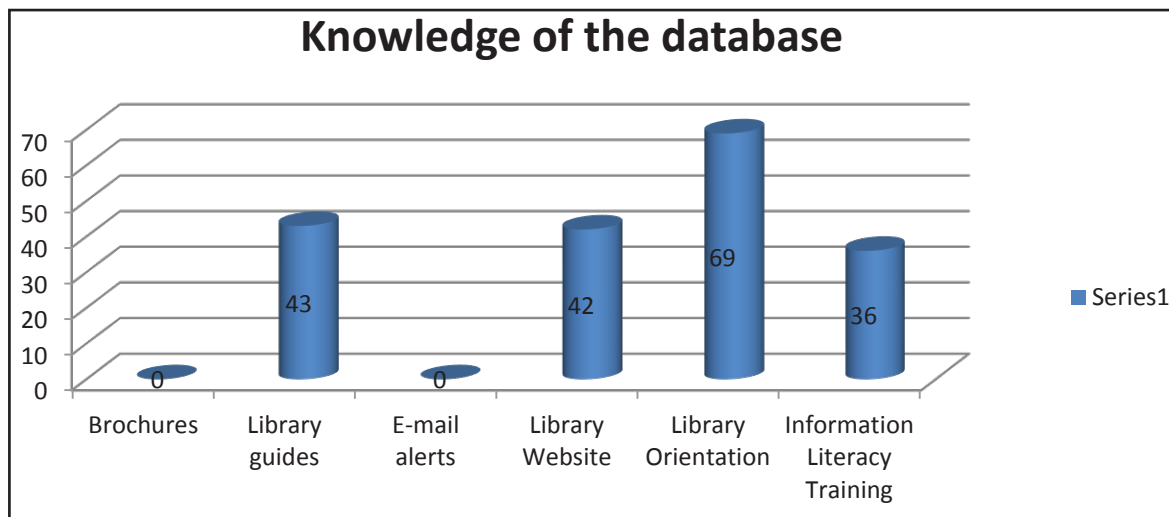
Fig. 2: Databases Aware of

AJOL has 47 journals on Economics and Development and 16 journals on Finance and Management. However, no respondent indicated to be aware of it, which could imply maybe the respondents trust these other databases more or during the sensitization of these databases, the sensitizers put more emphasis on Ebrary, JSTOR, EbscoHost and Emerald. This could also be the reason why the respondents did not provide any other database provided by KLISC, they could be aware of such as Annual Reviews, IMF, Sage, Wiley Online Library, etc., that also deal with business-related subjects. It could also mean that the postgraduates whose time is normally limited due to other work commitments they may have, may not find enough time to explore all the databases that may be dealing with their areas of study. This leads them to only use the core and multi-disciplinary ones such as JSTOR and Ebrary together with Google. The library directors also affirmed that the above-mentioned databases were highly used and had the highest usage statistics. A study by Kiilu *et al.* [15] also found out that multi-disciplinary databases such as Oxford, JSTOR, Cambridge and Emerald recorded the highest usage.

3) Knowledge of the Database

Fig. 3 shows results for a question asked about how the

respondents came to know about the KLISC’s databases. Multiple choices also applied to this question. 69 respondents representing 76.6% of the total respondents learnt of these resources during library orientations. 43 respondents became aware of the KLISC’s resources through library guides. This represented 47.8% of the total respondents. 42 respondents or 46.7% learnt about them through the library website whereas 36 respondents or 40% knew about these databases through information literacy trainings. None used the brochures nor got an e-mail alert about the KLISC’s resources. UoN’s Library Director also added that the library selects Knowledge Ambassadors (KAs) from the students. These KAs are thoroughly trained on how to access and use the subscribed resources; after the training, they are expected to train their fellow students. They are also the ones who run the library open days guided by the library staff. The students are considered to relate well with their peers when training them on the use of the e-resources. The KLISC respondents indicated that KLISC markets itself through member institutions and individuals. Most member libraries have a KLISC link on their websites, which not only increases the KLISC’s website visibility but also market their information services.



Source: Field Data (2019)

Fig. 3: Knowledge of the Database

From the results, library guides, library website, library orientation and information literacy trainings are the most popular methods through which KLISC’s information services are sensitized. A survey on ‘Monitoring and evaluation of e-resources’, conducted by Kiilu, Gathoni and Kabugu [15], also found out that users of the institutions that took part in the study knew about the e-resources from: colleagues, the library website, through orientation, library notices, seminars, word of mouth, and university open days and exhibitions.

VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study discovered that majority of the students refer to online resources whenever they are doing research. The study also found out that most respondents were only aware of the multi-disciplinary databases such as Ebrary, JSTOR, EbscoHost and Emerald. Majority use the KLISC’s resources though they felt that training on the access, use and searching within these databases is still needed to enable students be able to access these resources. Library guides, library website,

library orientation and information literacy trainings are the most popularly used ways in University of Nairobi to let their students know about the resources available to them through KLISC. The study therefore concluded that majority of the library users are aware of the KLISC's resources and usually consult them although they also use other search engines such as Google for additional information.

The study recommended that:

More and rigorous trainings on use and access to KLISC's resources should be done regularly to both students and staff on how to retrieve, evaluate and searching skills that will enable them yield relevant results from KLISC's various information resources. Through such programmes, visibility of KLISC resources and services will be guaranteed.

Libraries should create awareness of all the KLISC's information resources to the entire institution for full utilization of these resources, which have been paid for. Such an endeavour should entail purposeful and deliberate formal orientation and sensitization of institutional wide user communities about the availability and use of KLISC resources and services.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] M. A. Islam, and M. Mezbah-ul-Islam, "Concept, issues and importance of library consortium: Problems and prospects of university library consortium in Bangladesh," University Dhaka Bangladesh, 2000.
- [2] R. Chander, and A. Gupta, "Library consortia in India," *Knowledge Librarian*, vol. 2, no. 3, 2015.
- [3] F. A. Chadwell, "Assessing the value of academic library consortia," *Journal of Library Administration*, vol. 51, no. 7-8, pp. 645-661, Oct. 2011.
- [4] G. Galyani, and V. G. Talawar, "Library consortia in developing countries: An overview," *Program*, vol. 43, no. 1, pp. 94-104, Feb. 2009.
- [5] B. E. Posigha, V. Z. Godfrey, and F. D. Seimode, "The trend of academic libraries consortia in the north central and south east geo-political zones of Nigeria," *Library Review*, vol. 64, no. 4/5, pp. 305-320, Jul. 2015.
- [6] University of Nairobi, "UON Profile | University of Nairobi," University of Nairobi, 2017. [Online]. Available: <http://uonbi.ac.ke/about/profile> [Accessed Aug. 24, 2017].
- [7] L. Namugera, "Users' awareness, perceptions and usage of Makerere library services in the main and selected branch libraries," *Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Libraries*, vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 741-758, 2017.
- [8] M. S. Boateng, and R. B. Lamptey, "Assessing the training needs of academic and research libraries staff in Ghana," *Journal of Applied Information Science*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 1-7, 2018.
- [9] Z. Chepukaka, "Access and use of electronic information resources by technical staff at Kenya agricultural and livestock research organization in Nairobi county," *Journal of Applied Information Science*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 7-23, 2017.
- [10] A. M. B. Fresnido, and J. M. Yap, "Academic library consortia in the Philippines," *Library Management*, vol. 35, no. 1/2, pp. 15-36, 2014.
- [11] S. Veenapani, K. Singh, and R. Devi, "Use of E-resources and UGC-Infonet consortium by the teachers and research scholars in Manipur university," *International CALIBER*, p. 563, 2008.
- [12] R. H. Walmiki, K. C. Ramakrishnegowda, and K. R. Prithviraj, "Awareness and use of UGC-Infonet digital library consortium by the faculty members of Karnataka state universities," *Annals of Library and Information Studies*, vol. 57, no. 1, pp. 33-43, Mar. 2010.
- [13] A. H. Amunga, "Accessibility and use of online databases: A case study of INASP/PERI initiative in Kenyan university library," Thesis, 2011.
- [14] G. Israel, "Determining sample size." University of Florida, 2003.
- [15] N. Gathoni, J. Gikandi, F. Ratanya, E. M. Njoroge, E. Wasike, and D. Kiilu, "Monitoring and evaluation of electronic resources in academic and research institutions in Kenya," *INASP/KLISC*, 2011.