

# **EMPOWERING LIFELONG LEARNING: APPLICATION OF DIGITAL LITERACY SKILLS AMONG POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS TO USE ELECTRONIC RESOURCES AT MARGARET THATCHER LIBRARY, MOI UNIVERSITY**

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# Introduction

- The university is the birthplace of life-changing ideas aimed at benefiting society.
- Prominent university community members are postgraduate students with a heavy workload of coursework in their disciplines.
- The heavy workload makes the students search for information in electronic database resources in the university libraries.
- To benefit from their search, Postgraduate students require digital literacy skills.
- Consequently, every postgraduate student who intends to be an effective user of electronic resources must possess strong information literacy skills (Ugwulebo & Okuonghae, 2021).

# Background of the Study

- Moi University is one of the top ranked public universities in Kenya with a modern state-of-the-art library providing a print and electronic resources.
- It has made significant investments to support teaching, learning and research work through subscription to electronic resources
- It has a well-laid established information literacy education program, a digital literacy training programme
- It has invested in technology-based environment that ensures access to and use of electronic resources.
- Presently, MUL provides more than 28 databases with a good number of them through the Kenya Library and Information Services Consortium (KLISC).
- The library has been entrusted to provide Information resources as well as digital literacy training to users .

# Statement of the Problem

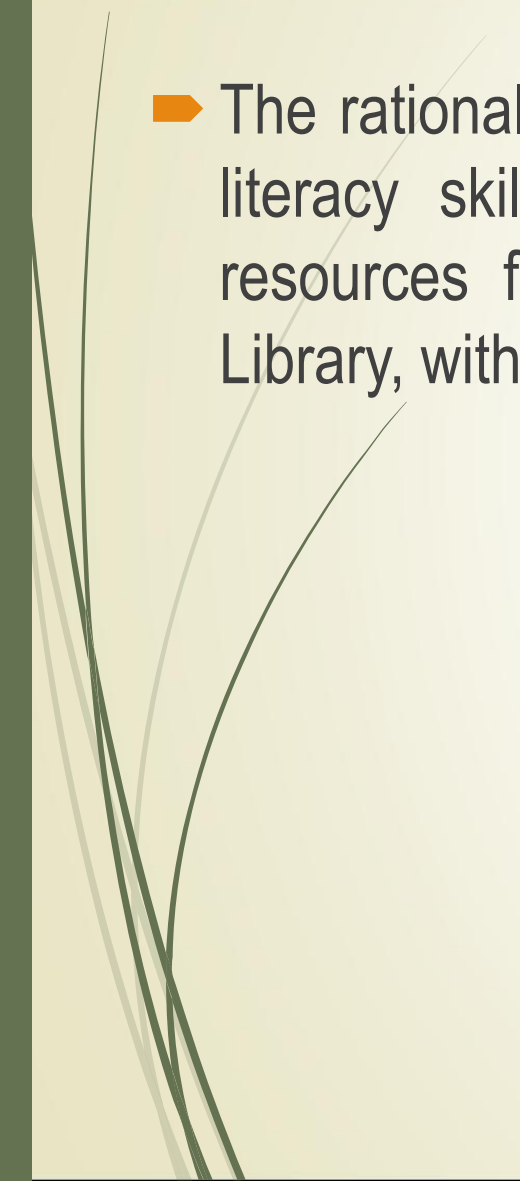
- ▶ With the advancement of technology, postgraduate students now have access to various online resources such as e-books, e-journals and online learning.
- ▶ Existing literature indicates that many users in Kenyan university libraries have limited usage of electronic resources due to inadequate skills (Wendo, 2014; Chibini, 2011).
- ▶ Evidence from Moi University Library electronic resources usage statistics, remote access off campus logins, usage statistics, reports, and statistics from the Kenya Library and Information Services Consortium (KLISC) indicates that usage of electronic resources is not up to the level expected and therefore suggests that electronic resources are not fully utilized as they are supposed to.

## Statement of the Problem cont...

- This diminishes the potential benefits and payback, considering the huge investment made in the subscription of electronic resources, training, and acquisition of computer-based technologies at MTL (Moi University Library Annual Report, 2023).
- This is further complicated by inadequate digital literacy skills, inadequate ICT infrastructure (Abubakar & Chollom, 2017).
- Thus, there is a need to equip postgraduate students with the necessary digital literacy skills through digital literacy training to successfully use electronic resources for academic success and lifelong learning.



## Aim of the Study

- The rationale of the study was to investigate the application of digital literacy skills among postgraduate students on use of electronic resources for lifelong learning and research at Margaret Thatcher Library, with a view to suggesting measures for improvement.
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## Objective of the Study

- To investigate the level of digital literacy skills of postgraduate students and application of ICTs in facilitating adequate usage of electronic resources for lifelong learning and research.

# Research Methodology

- A mixed-method approach was adopted taking on board survey design applied within a case study in line with concurrent parallel design.
- Quantitative data was collected from postgraduate students and qualitative data from library staff.
- The sample consisted of 118 postgraduate students randomly sampled from 150 postgraduate students.
- Five library staff were purposively sampled.



## Summary of the Findings

- The findings generally suggest that postgraduates students and library staff had different levels of digital literacy skills resulting in unequal access to and use of electronic resources.
- Majority of postgraduate students 88 (74.6%) and library staff rate their level of digital literacy skills as being intermediate/moderate.
- Even though the Technology Acceptance Model advocate for computing skills as a requirement in accessing and using electronic resources, having intermediate/Moderate digital literacy skills is no guarantee that postgraduate students and the staff will optimally make use of electronic resources.

## Summary of the Findings cont...

- ▶ This may imply that their ability to use ICTS to search, retrieve and use electronic resources may not be utilized as expected and supposed to be.
- ▶ This calls for postgraduates and library staff to be appropriately trained to improve on their digital literacy skills and competencies to use ICTs and utilize electronic resources effectively for learning, teaching and research.
- ▶ Most of the postgraduate students 60 (50.9%) and majority of library staff digital literacy skills were inadequate

## Summary of the Findings cont...

→ The findings revealed a gap in postgraduates and library staff skills and therefore could influence or limits usage of electronic resources.

→ Based on the finding it is clear that inadequacy in digital literacy skills robs postgraduate students maximum benefits derivable from emerging digital realities of learning environment for effective utilization of ICT and electronic resources.

→ Findings of the study revealed that ICT and digital literacy skills enhances online searching, retrieval and discovery of information, remote access to electronic resources and would assist them in carrying out their academic task with ease.

→ 54(45.8%) of the postgraduate students and majority of library staff stated that ICT facilities were inadequate.

# Conclusion

- The study concludes that the digital literacy skills of postgraduate students at Moi University library are inadequate and therefore limits the utilization of electronic resources.

➤ **Thank you.**