Contribution ID: **4**   Type: **Paper Presentation**

Suitability of the current Kenyan LIS curriculum for the digital age

Thursday, 23 May 2024 08:35 (15 minutes)

There has been a profound change in the theory and practice of the library and information science (LIS) profession over the years. Now, the "custodian librarian" has grown into a "knowledge manager" and a "digital librarian." Therefore, there is a need to revamp the LIS curriculum according to the present needs and the changing roles of the LIS profession. The objective was to assess the suitability of the current Kenyan LIS curriculum for the digital age. A descriptive survey design was used. The study targeted six heads of LIS departments and fifty-eight university librarians. Semi-structured questionnaires were used to collect data. Graphs and pie charts were used to analyse quantitative data, while prose was used for qualitative data. The response rate was 53.13%. Universities had their LIS curricula reviewed within the last three years. Concerning satisfaction with the current LIS curriculum, its alignment with emerging technologies in the LIS field, and how prepared the LIS graduates were for the roles of librarianship, varying responses were given by respondents. ICT-related courses were suggested to be included in the LIS curriculum, and a mismatch between the skills required in the job market and the skills impacted by the LIS schools was noted. The LIS curriculum does not sufficiently address current job market requirements. Curriculum review and changing the learning objectives to take into account new emerging trends that translate into best practices are paramount. The study recommends collaborative reviewing, standardisation, and harmonising the LIS curriculum across institutions, ensuring they graduate with similar competencies. The paper calls for action for LIS educators to rethink their curriculum, ensuring it is responsive to the current market needs.

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Session Classification: KIC #2024.C

Track Classification: Digital Literacy and Lifelong Learning