

Abstract

Background of the study: Information literacy practices have been recognized as essential educational goals to judge and evaluate student's aptitude for critical thinking, decision making and problem-solving. Inculcating information literacy skills to students is not only significant to survival but also enables them to know when they need information, how to locate information and how to use information hence success in their studies. However, the state of information literacy practices in secondary schools in Kenya has not been adequately investigated to determine their degree of effectiveness.

Objective of the study: Consequently, this study aimed at investigating information literacy practices as a tool for accessing and utilizing information in secondary schools in Kenya.

Methodology: The study was based on a pragmatic paradigm where both quantitative and qualitative approaches were adopted. Data was collected from a targeted population which consisted of 288 teachers, 12 school/teacher librarians and 1785 students from 12 sampled schools. Questionnaires were administered to teachers and students while an interview schedule guide was used to gather data from school/teacher librarians. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, and presented in form of tables, charts and graphs and verbatim reports. The study was important as it elicited discussions that could be used for purposes of adoption of an information literacy programme in secondary schools.

Results and findings: The findings show that some information literacy practices were available in secondary schools but not effectively practiced resulting to students proceeding to institutions of higher learning without adequate information literacy skills.

Conclusions and recommendations: The study concludes that information literacy is a prerequisite tool for accessing and using information in secondary schools. Information literacy skills enables students to conduct independent information search, efficiently retrieve information using modern technologies, critically evaluate their findings and effectively apply relevant information into their day to day situations. Therefore, the incorporation of information literacy practices into secondary schools' curriculum would institutionalize information literacy in secondary schools.