



# Assessment of library use by undergraduate students enrolled outside degree program in College of Nairobi, Kenya

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Abstract

With the increasing popularity of distance education, focus has turned to the role of libraries in distance learning process. It is widely agreed that like their campus – based counterparts, distance education learners need adequate library services if they are to gain quality education. This study sought to examine library utilization by students enrolled in the external degree programme of the University of Nairobi. The unit of analysis consisted of students from the school continuing education and distance studies enrolled in Bachelor of Education Arts (B. Ed Arts) Bachelor of Education (Bed - Science) and Bachelor of Commerce (B. com) which is basically offered through distance learning. The sample population comprised of 278 students out of 1000 that formed the target population of students and all the 14 librarians spread across the university branch libraries. Self-administered questionnaires and structured interview schedule were used as the main tools of data collection. The finding of the study indicated that effective utilization of library service is influenced by a number of factors. These include enhanced usage of the library facility like making good use of book loan service, frequent access to the library facility, adequate support from the library staff and proper induction by librarians. As a result of the research finding, some conclusions were drawn. The majority of the students were not satisfied with most of the library services offered by the central library. This was attributed to factors such as restrictive library hours, distance, lack of services at the regional centers and inadequate reading materials. The study also revealed that the University of Nairobi was still at the infancy stage of establishing internet-based service thus a hindrance to effective utilization of the library service. The library staff-recruitment and training in distance education was still wanting. Finally this study had the following recommendations: Firstly there is need to promote access to library services to distance learning student population by strengthening computer based and information service delivery, instituting library user instruction to instill effective information literacy skills and ensuring reliable, rapid access to institutional networks and the internet. There is also the need to come up with special collection targeting the distance learning community. Effective learning in the University is a collaborate effort between curriculum planners, implementers, administrators and thus in order to provide library support services to distance learners, there is need for policy guidelines to identify types and availability of the library services as well as funding service providers and targeted users.

**Keywords:** Evaluation, external degree programme, utilization, library, library services, library users, user's needs.

## INTRODUCTION

Higher education in Africa is facing a critical challenge to meet new demands for the 21st century increasing population growth. This means that those seeking access to education at all levels, primary, secondary and tertiary

will increase (KAEA, 2007). In spite of this fact educational institutions in Africa are not enough to accommodate the increasing number of students who will be seeking access to higher education. Africa needs an

educational environment that would make it more responsive to the tremendous growth and demand for higher education. In response to this challenge many countries in Africa have sought new alternative ways of providing access to higher education via distance education (KAEA, 2007).

Distance education particularly in higher education has continued to grow and evolve in a tremendous manner over the last few decades in Africa. It has become an intrinsic part of many educational systems and an academic discipline in its own right (Holmberg, 1994). Earlier distance education was dominated by correspondence courses but today, institutions at all levels are providing instruction to remote and local users through the use of computers and the web which has made it possible for teachers to provide their instruction to mass audiences at the same time (Lorenzen, 1998).

Kenya is no exception in this situation over the few decades. Kenya has faced greater demand for higher education. The number of students seeking meaningful University education has become increasing day by day. Makau (1993) observes that the development of distance education in Kenya is an attempt to resolve the conflict between the aspirations for more education by an ever-increasing number of Kenyans and resource constraints (both human and financial) on the quantitative growth in enrolments in conventional higher education institutions.

Muema (2004) reiterates that distance learning in Kenya hence has the objective to provide learning opportunities for qualified Kenyans who cannot secure places in the existing internal faculties of national universities, provide an alternative and innovative method of learning which is not limited to a particular time and space and an opportunity for people to learn at their own pace. It also helps at maximizing the use of educational resources both human and material by making university education available beyond lecture halls.

Lately, there has been proliferation of what has been invariably referred to as parallel programmes, alternative courses, module two courses or simply evening courses. This has been due to demand for university education especially among the employed (Muema, 2004).

Many institutions of higher learning in Kenya are now delivering their programs through distance learning. This is based on the belief that distance education offers many opportunities for the expansion and access to tertiary education in Africa and Kenya in particular (Mbwesa in KAEA 2007). However as distance delivery modes become instituted in universities and as the distance education continue to create new possibilities for innovative instructional delivery systems, issues regarding the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of these systems as delivery modes of educational programmes continue to be of concern to educational practitioners.

One of the greatest challenges of distance education today relates to library support services for distance

learners. Distance education implies that a significant proportion of teaching is conducted by someone removed in space from the learner. In practice, distance teaching usually involves a combination of the media. While teachers may be in direct contact with their students through telephone and audio and video – conferencing, the physical separation means that the teacher must teach using some media of some kind. In addition to the separation from the teacher, the learners are also physically separated from the learning institutions. More often, the learners are located in remote settings where access to library resources and services are limited (Ibid).

The library has the primary responsibility for identifying, developing, coordinating, providing and assessing the value and effectiveness of resources and services designed to meet both the standard and unique informational skills, developmental needs of distance learning community. Effective and appropriate services for distance learning communities may differ from, but must be equivalent to those services offered on a traditional campus (Swaine, 1998).

Concerns for ensuring the delivery of equivalent library services to college and university faculty students and other personnel in the remote setting was the basis of this investigation. This stems from the increasingly critical factors such as non-traditional study having rapidly become a major element in higher education, an increase in diversity of educational opportunities, an increase in the number of unique environments where educational opportunities are offered; an increased recognition of the need for library resources and services at locations other than main campuses; an increased demand for equitable services for all students in higher education no matter where the classroom is located, may be a greater demand for library resources and services by faculty and staff at distance learning sites and an increase in technological innovations in the transmittal of information and the delivery of courses (Associations of college and research libraries, 2000). This study therefore, was an attempt to analyze library utilization by students enrolled in the external degree programme of the University of Nairobi.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study was to examine library utilization by students enrolled in the external degree programme of the University of Nairobi.

### **Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study were:

1. To establish how far the library support services have been used by external degree students of the University

**Table 1.** Gender distribution for the students.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	168	60.4
Female	110	39.6
Total (N)	278	100.0

**Table 2.** Students age distribution.

Age –bracket	Frequently	Percent
26 to 31	81	29.1
32 to 38	101	36.3
39 to 45	53	19.1
45 to 51	16	5.8
Total (N)	278	100.0

of Nairobi,

2. To establish the availability of media facilities offered to distant learners at the University of Nairobi,
3. To examine distance students extent of satisfaction of library services provision at the University of Nairobi,
4. To establish challenges that hinder distance learners from the effective uses of library services and propose effective strategies that can be adopted to enhance the effective library services for distance learners.

## METHODOLOGY

This paper is based on a case study carried out between March and May 2011 to assess in a general way the status of library services for external degree students of the University of Nairobi, Kenya. The target population in this study comprised of students enrolled for a Bachelors degree programme of the University of Nairobi and who were in their third year. The study targeted students enrolled B. Ed (Arts), B. Ed (Science) and B. Com of the school of continuing and distance education of the University of Nairobi. Those students that were in their third year were selected for this study. The group level was considered experienced enough to provide the kind of information required. Current records from the three departments reveal that B. Ed (Arts) has a total of 700 students out of which 443 were male and 257 were female. The department of B. Ed (Science) had a total of 260 students out of which 160 were male and 100 were female. In Bachelor of Commerce department a total of 40 students had registered for their course out of which 27 were male while 13 were female.

Apart from the main focus on students, the study also targeted university librarians in the administrative positions. The University of Nairobi library system comprises the main library Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library (JKML) at the main campus and 11 branch libraries serving different faculties, institutes and schools. The main library is under the chief University librarian and two deputies while the branch libraries are headed by senior librarians. The study therefore targeted all the fourteen library administrators out of which 9 were male while 5 were female and 1000 students, out of this number, 630 were male and 370 were female.

This study applied a combination of stratified random and purposive sampling to obtain a sample of respondents. Random sampling according to Borg and Gall (1996) refers to selecting a

number of subjects or sample from the whole population in such a way that the characteristics of each of the units of the sample approximate the broad characteristics inherent in the total population. Therefore, in this study, the researcher used stratified random technique to arrive at the number of students used in this study. Stratified random sampling is a probability procedure where a sampling procedure is divided into two or more segments called strata and each element in each stratum is given an equal chance of selection into the intended sample.

The main advantage of stratified random sampling technique is that it ensures inclusion in the sample of sub-groups, which would otherwise be omitted entirely by other sampling methods because of their small numbers in population. To achieve this, the students were first stratified into three categories, that is, B. Ed (Arts), B. Ed (Science) and B. Com. Stratified sampling was applied in order to select samples which were proportional to the number of students in each category. From each sampling frame, simple random procedure was applied to obtain the desired sample size. All the fourteen library administrators participated in the study.

Purposive sampling is also a non probability technique which allows a researcher to use cases that have the required information with respect to objectives of the study at hand. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999). In this regard from the sampled students, the justification of purposive sampling process was applied to select students and librarians to provide the requisite information through self – administered questionnaires and in-depth interviews.

Two instruments were used to collect data: One set of questionnaire for students was developed by the researcher as research instrument. The researcher found the questionnaire adequate for the study because it minimizes bias on the side of the researcher and the respondents (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). The questionnaire was divided into sections A and B. Section A collected data on gender, age, occupation, department and experience. Section B collected information on the use of library services, reasons for non use of library services, library visit by students, availability of media facilities to distant learners and challenges to effective utilization of library services by external degree students. Interview schedule was used to gather information from librarians concerning students' usage of the library services offered to them at the University of Nairobi.

## Data analysis and interpretation

### Demographic characteristics of the respondents

The students were requested to give information concerning age and gender, professional qualification, working experience, department and regional centre. Table 1 shows gender of students in the programme.

A personal attribute of the student analysed in this study was gender. Results of the analysis indicated that 168 (60.4%) of those participating in the study were male while 110 (39.6%) were female. These results indicate a gender disparity amongst the students. These results concur with the previous studies, which have indicated that there is fewer women enrolment in our Public universities. For example, a study conducted by Otigo on factors influencing demand for Bachelor of Education (Arts) eternal degree programme at the University of Nairobi revealed that only 42.6% of the students enrolled in the programme were female while 57.4% were male (Otigo, 2006). This low participation of female in University Education could be attributed to many

**Table 3.** Students' profession.

Profession	Frequency	Percent
Teaching	249	89.6
Business	21	7.6
Clerical	1	0.4
Student	5	1.8
Research	2	0.7
Total (N)	278	100

**Table 4.** Working experience.

Working experience	Frequency	Percent
Less than 5 years	67	24.1
6 to 10 years	86	30.9
11 to 15 years	78	28.1
Over 16 years	47	16.9
Total (N)	278	100

**Table 5.** Department of students.

Department	Frequency	Percent
B. Ed (Arts)	176	63.3
B. Ed (Science)	87	31.3
B. Com	15	5.4
Total (N)	278	100

**Table 6.** Showing student population per regional centre.

Regional Centre	Frequency	Percent
Kisumu	62	22.3
Kisii	56	20.1
Nairobi	46	16.5
Mombasa/Coast	27	9.7
Kakamega	26	9.4
Meru	20	7.2
Nakuru	14	5.0
Kapenguria	12	4.3
Nyeri	11	4.0
Kitui	4	1.4
Total (N)	278	100.00

social – cultural factors not dealt with in this study.

Results of the analysis indicated that majority of the students enrolled in the programme were mature adults with a majority 101 (36.3%) falling in the age bracket between 32 to 38 years and a large number 53 (19.1%) of between 39 to 45 years of age while only 16 (5.8%) are between 45 to 51 years of age. This is attributed to

the fact that most of the students in this program are already working (Table 2).

Almost all 249 (89.6%) of the students enrolled in this programme are practicing teachers although we have others from different careers. This is because when the degree was started in 1986, the main goal was to train particularly secondary school teachers most of whom then did not have any Professional training (Table 3). Results also indicated that majority of the students had along working experience which is typical of any distance learning programme. The results showing the work experience of students is contained in Table 4.

The data on work experience of students revealed that 78 (28.1%) had along working experience (in teaching) of between 11 to 15 years and few of them 67 (24.1%) had working experience of less than 5 years while 86 (30.9%) have working experience between 6 - 10 years and 47 (16.9%) have worked for over 16 years (Table 4). Again this can be attributed to the nature of the programme which initially had targeted the working teachers as a measure of upgrading and updating their teaching skills.

Results of the analysis indicated that 176 (63.3%) of the students participating in the research were enrolled in the department of B. Ed (Arts) while 87 (31.3%) were from B. Ed (Science) and a few 15 (5.4%) enrolled in B. Com. Majority of the students belonged to B. Ed (Arts). This can be attributed to the nature of the programme which initially targeted Arts – based students (Table 5).

The data in Table 6 presents students distribution along the Regional Centers. The data collected reveals that majority of students came from Kisumu 62 (22.3%) because these students were readily available. Nairobi recorded 46 (16.5%), coast 27 (9.4%) Kaka mega 26 (9.7%), Meru 20 (7.2%) Nakuru 14(5.0%) Kapenguria 12(4.3%), Nyeri 11(4.0), and Kitui 4 (1.4%).

### Students' use of library services

The study sought to examine the extent students' utilized the library services provided at the University of Nairobi. Presented in this area is the data on intensity of library use frequency, reason for non use, time for visit of university library (Tables 7, 8 and 9).

### Use of university library

When asked whether they used the university library facility, surprisingly majority 148 (53.2%) of the students indicated that they had never used the library facility and only 130 (46.8%) indicated that they had. The non use of the library facility can be attributed to many difficulties that the distant learners experienced in accessing the facility possibly because the tradition library has no established structures to meet the unique and special needs of distance learners.

Even those who indicated that they do use the library

**Table 7.** Library use by students.

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	130	46.8
No	148	53.2
Total (N)	278	100.0

**Table 8.** Showing reasons for non-use of the library services.

<b>Reasons given</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Restrictive library hours	6	2.2
Lack of student identification cards	50	18.0
Library is too far from my home area	135	48.6
No services at the regional study centres	65	24
Books are not available	20	7.2
Total (N)	278	100.00

**Table 9.** Library visits by students.

<b>Occasion</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Residential session	77	27.7
Special visits	56	20.1
End term	7	2.5
Beginning of term	2	0.7
Don't visit	136	48.9
Total (N)	278	100.0

facility, results of the study revealed the usage of really limited. For example 77 (27.7%) of those who indicated that they used the facility noted that they only visited the library once in a period of three months which really is quite a minimal use of the resource for any meaningful benefit. These results concur with previous studies. For example a study by Mbwesa (2006), on library support services for distant learners at the University of Nairobi indicated minimal usage of the facility.

When asked to indicate some of the reasons for non-use of the library facility, majority 135 (24.1%) also cited lack of library materials of the regional centres. Other factors included lack of identification cards which is a requirement for students to access the facility 50 (18.00%) and restrictive library hours 6 (2.2%). Table 7 has the results.

### **Library visit**

For those who visit the university library, results indicate most of the visits are made during residential sessions 77 (27.7%) other students visit the library during special visit 56 (20.1%), those who visit during end of term were 7 (2.5%) and beginning of term 2 (0.7%). It is also

important to note that 136 (48.9%) of the students have never visited the host university library. This category of students may be squarely depending on the study materials dispatched to them or rely on materials from other libraries. This concurs with the earlier research by Muema (2004) which revealed that distance students' visit to the University library was inhibited by cost and time involved in visiting the University library.

### **Availability of media facilities to distance learners**

It was important in this study to establish the extent of availability and nature of media facilities available for distance learners. Table 10 has the results.

Results of the study indicated that almost all the students lacked access to facilities such as Telephone, Fax smile, e-mail, internet services, computer services, postal or courier services and vouchers. For instance 269 (96.8%) of those who participated in the study noted that they lacked Fax smile, 232 (83.5%) had no courier services, 218 (78.4%) had no access to telephone services while 256 (92.1%) indicated they had never used vouchers. The only communication facilities that seemed available at least for a majority of the students

**Table 10.** Showing media facilities at the University library.

Media facility	Responses					
	Yes		No		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Telephone	60	21.6	218	78.4	278	100
Fax smile	9	3.2	269	96.8	278	100
E-mail	109	39.2	169	60.8	278	100
Internet services	111	39.9	167	60.1	278	100
Computer services	119	42.8	159	57.2	278	100
Postal or courier services	46	16.5	232	83.5	278	100
Vouchers	22	7.9	256	92.1	278	100

**Table 11.** Student's extent of satisfaction of the library services.

Library services	Satisfied		Not satisfied		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Book loan services	44	15.9	234	84.1	278	100
Access to library	62	22.3	216	77.7	278	100
Staff support	82	29.5	196	70.5	278	100
Reading space	119	42.8	159	57.2	278	100
Orientation services	40	14.4	238	85.6	278	100

were e-mail services 109 (39.2%), internet 111 (39.9%) and computer services 119(42.8%). However what these results imply is that lack of media access is a major barrier for the distance learning students and this was a concern that needed to be understood and addressed as a measure of improving information support for the learner.

The results of this study concurs with earlier study conducted by Bowa (2008) which revealed that low rate of communication with tutors on telephone among the external degree students at the University of Nairobi could lower learning because learners in the external degree programme study out of University campus most of the time and could only have adequate time for interaction during the time of home study. The study also pointed out that the use of internet for studying was extremely low among the external degree students of the University of Nairobi. For instance only 6 (25%) visited the internet weekly to access study materials. The others visited the internet once a month 7 (29%) once in four months 4 (17%) and once in 8 months 7(29%).

### Student's satisfaction with the library services

Objective three of this study was to find out the extent to which students were satisfied with the library support services at the University of Nairobi. To achieve this, students were provided with a list of the services generally provided in any given library resource and required to indicate the extent of their satisfaction to each

of the services. Results of the analysis generally indicated that the majority of the students were not at all satisfied with most of the services provided by the central library. For instance when asked about the extent to which they were satisfied with the book loan services, access to the library, support from the library staff and even other basic services such as library orientation service and availability of reading space, majority of the students indicated they were not satisfied. Details of the findings are contained in Table 11.

Result of the analysis generally indicated that majority of the students were not at all satisfied with most of the library service provided by the central library. For instance when asked the extent to which they were satisfied with book loan services, 44 (15.9%) indicated they were satisfied while a majority 234 (84.1%) said they were not satisfied. Access to library services showed 62 (22.3%) satisfied while 216 (77.7%) indicated they were not satisfied. About 82 (29.5%) indicated they were satisfied with library staff support while a majority 196(70.5%) said they were not satisfied. The only library service that seemed satisfying was reading space which showed about 119 (42.8%) of the students satisfied while 159 (57.2%) were not satisfied. On orientation service only 40 (14.4%) of the students were satisfied while a majority 238 (85.6%) were not satisfied.

These results indicate a major disparity in the extent of library services for distance learners. Again these could be attributed to the failure by the conventional library structures to integrate and understand the unique needs of distant learning student which are essentially quite

different from the campus student who has probably unlimited access to the facility. These findings concur with an earlier research done by Muema (2004) which indicated inadequacy among the Kenyan public Universities' libraries. Such challenges include: unavailability of required texts, inadequate copies of core course texts, restrictive access to resources and special collections, incomplete public catalogue and absence of indexes and indexing journals, lack of hybrid services, outdated materials, lack of internet based materials, limited hours of access and inability to access information in other libraries due to lack of library co-operation. Similarly a study by Bowa (2008) on the influence of learner support services on academic performance of the distance learners cited the scarcity of learning materials and complimentary learner support services in the programme that seemed to hamper full rehabilitation of the benefits of visits to regional centres.

### **Challenges to library utilization by external students**

Objective five of this study was to find out some of the barriers or obstacles that students perceived as most limiting them to the effective use of the library facility. To achieve this, the barriers they have encountered in the use of library facility during their study. Table 12 has the results.

Results of the study revealed that distance from the library was a major challenge to the student's utilization of the facility with the majority of the students 254 (91.4%) indicating that they were unable to use the library facility because of distance from the library facility because of distance from the library which also has time and cost implications. This concern with the study by Mbweza (2007) and Muema (2004), who also cited distance as a major challenge to distance learners.

Another main barrier perceived by the students was lack of online services 179 (64.4) of those who participated in the study considered this as a very strong barrier. This could be attributed to the fact that provision of online services at the University of Nairobi is still at its infancy stage hence distant learners are still disadvantaged in terms of accessibility.

Other obstacles perceived by students as very strong constraints to their utilization of the library facility are poor library orientation services 163 (58.6%), limited library resources 155 (55.8%) lack of support from library literacy staff 152 (54.9%) competition for materials 145 (52.2%), restricted library hours 143 (51.4%) lack of library charges 123 (44.4%) and lack of adequate reading space 121 (43.7%).

### **CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

The goal of this study was to examine library utilization by

external degree students of the University of Nairobi. An analysis as discussed indicated that the utilization of library services is influenced by a myriad of factors. This range from effective use of library facilities in terms of making good use of book loan services, frequent access to the library facility, availability of media facilities, adequate support from the library staff, expanding the library to cater for the ever increasing number of students in our public universities and offering independent induction or orientation services on library use for the distance learners.

Finally, it was the intention of this study to find out some of the challenges to effective use of the library services and possible remedies that could be adopted to enhance effective provision of library services to distance learners.

Here, therefore, a number of conclusions are made. These are discussed on the basis of the following themes.

1. Effective use of the library facility,
2. Challenges to effective use of library services.

### **Effective use of the library facility**

One of the issues that emerged in this study is the use of the library facility by distant learners. Results indicated that the majority of the students were not satisfied with the services offered by the central library. The non use of the library facility was attributed to factors such as restrictive library hours, distance, lack of services at the regional centres, lack of reading materials. Again lack of satisfaction could be attributed to the fact that the university of Nairobi has failed to put up library structures that integrate and understand the unique needs of the distant learning students which are essentially quite different from the campus students who have probably unlimited access to the facility. However it is important to point out here that meaningful distance education can only be achieved if the needs of this category of learners are identified and structures put in place to cater for such needs.

### **Challenges to effective use of library services**

It was important for this study to establish barriers that influence the provision of the effective library services distance learners. Results of the study indicated that distance and lack of online services was major barrier to effective utilization of the library services. Other barriers included poor orientation, services, limited library resources, lack of support from library staff competition for material for library materials restrictive library hours, higher library charges and inadequate reading space.

**Table 12.** Challenges to library utilization.

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Distance from the library	254	91.4
Lack of online services	179	64.4
Poor library orientation services	163	58.6
Limited library resources	155	55.8
Lack of support from the library staff	152	54.9
Competition for materials	145	52.2
Restrictive library hours	143	51.4
Lack of current services	135	48.6
Lack of adequate reading space	123	44.4
High cost of library charges	121	43.7

## RECOMMENDATIONS

From this study it is clear that although effort have been made to satisfy the library and information needs of the distance education students at the University of Nairobi, these efforts have been hampered by various factors which include poor planning of distance education programs that do not onset address the information and literature needs of the students , inadequate physical facilities and professional staff, lack of adequate funding and poorly and developed internet in fracture in the country. At the same time it is important that any institutions providing distance education provide library services for the category of learners just like those in the campus based regular programs. It is partially attributed to lack of viable library services where learners are expected to purchase reading materials or make trips to the University library for further reading.

The following recommendations are made on the basis of the results obtained from this study.

### Service provision

The overriding goal of the library is to provide services to the University community and is therefore a crucial area of investment and development of the University library. Library services at the University of Nairobi is characterized by increasing number of users, shortage of information materials outdated reading materials, inadequate staffing levels, low information technology and lack of training in information technology. The forgoing conclusion is that the University is facing many challenges that make it difficult to provide adequate services as expected to distant learners.

From this research it is clear that although efforts have been made to satisfy the library and information needs of distance education students, these efforts have been hampered by various factors such as poor planning of distance education programmes that do not from the outset address the information and literature needs of students, inadequate physical facilities and professional

staff, lack of adequate funding and poorly developed internet infrastructure in the country. It is especially noted that the high dropout rate in distance education in Kenya has been partially attributed to lack of viable library services whereby learners are expected to purchase reading materials or make trips to the University library to do the extended reading.

Improvement in library services at the University of Nairobi can be achieved through focus on user needs, appropriate use of information technology, resource sharing, enhancement of user information literacy and constant performance assessment and evaluation of the service. Library staff plays a critical role in enhancing quality and therefore should be given the responsibility for quality and be made accountable for the quality of individual output. In order to perform effectively, staff should be aware of products and services offered by the library and its parent organization as well as understand user needs. All this requires that staff be given training and skills in quality management in distance education and more so measurement of customer satisfaction. It therefore calls for the development of services and strategies that keep the customer from defecting to competing services or ceasing to use the service through adding of quality and value to the standard products and services. In distance education, University of Nairobi can achieve this by first, implementing online public access systems and installation of internet service and tailoring services to meet the unique requirement of distant learners. The relationship between the library service and the clientele is very important and therefore librarians should be receptive to feedback from customers who in this case are the distant learners.

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