AN EVALUATION OF CHILDREN'S LIBRARY SERVICES: A KENYA NATIONAL LIBRARY SERVICE CASE STUDY

BY

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Declaration

This my original work. It has not been presented for a degree award in any other University in part or whole.

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With my Approval as the University Supervisor.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated with great affection to my family.

My husband Ngovi;
Children: Kiema, Nyakairo and Andrew.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to appreciate and thank the following people for the support, patience and encouragement that they gave to me without which this research project would not have been accomplished.

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Abstract

The meaning of the word evaluation is defined as to “examine and judge” concerning the worth or quality of. Evaluation has to do with establishing a benchmark or standard. This study was undertaken to examine and judge the quality of service provision and delivery for the children at Kenya National Library Service.

The function of this public library is to promote, establish, equip, manage, maintain and develop libraries and information services in Kenya. The consumers of this service, must be allowed to say what they feel about the quality of service. Evaluation helps the user appraise the goodness of a service.

The study clearly indicated that the goodness of the service at Kenya National Library needed sprucing up. The areas of interest for most consumers (children and parents) was on the collection, or the information resources available at the library. The whole spectrum of service was appraised and put under scrutiny. These were, the staff, space, furniture, interior décor and even the reference service. Through the questionnaires, interviews and observations, the researcher tried to establish the quality of service.

This study also sought the librarian’s feelings about the service he/she provided. Evaluation is undertaken for various reasons. Some of them are:
• To check the current status of the service
• To discover methods for immediate and long-range improvement
• To determine the need for modification of goals and philosophy of service

These are just a few among many reasons why evaluation is carried out. This study sought to establish all these by subjecting the librarian and the system to an evaluation. From the findings, the library staff also indicated that there is need for improvement in all areas of interest to the users. By conducting an evaluation, the library staff were able to examine the standards for quality and see how far to go in improvement.

The demand for greater accountability is growing in most organizations and institutions. The library will not be left in this effort to evaluate and measure the performance of the service it provides.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1. SPSS – Statistical Package for social scientists

2. UNESCO - United Nation Education, Science and Cultural Organization

3. IFLA – International Federation of Library Association

4. KNLS – Kenya National Library Service

5. ALA – American Library Association.

CHAPTER ONE.

1.0 INTRODUCTION.

1.1 Background Information

The children's library is the department or section reserved for the exclusive use of children. It usually contains lending, reference sections and periodicals. The children's library services are closely linked to public libraries as well as schools. The term ‘children’ in this case refers to children aged from birth to seventeen years. The services offered will of course be targeted to each age group to suit their needs. The children's library services have several functions some among which include the following:

- Creating and strengthening reading habits in children from an early age.
- Contributing to the intellectual, emotional, psychological and social development of children.
- To encourage the pleasure of reading
- Provide children's information needs, including support for both formal and continuing education. IFLA (1995) UNESCO public library manifesto.

1.2 Historical development of children's Library services

The history of library services to children differs in each country of the world. The need to provide books to support a rising rate of literacy, the desire to enhance the social and intellectual welfare of the children, and the demands of the children themselves have broad universal basis in the history of Library service to children ALA (1980:131). A look at the U.S.A and Europe for instance will show that library services to children are a little more than 100 years. Philanthropic, educational and religious efforts in the 19th Century resulted in the establishment of social libraries, mercantile and apprentice libraries and Sunday school libraries. Those libraries provided reading materials to adults and were not necessarily a library service for children. However, the establishment of such libraries alerted the children's activists who were concerned for the social welfare of the child, ALA (1980:131). In the U.S.A children were served by placing collections in schools.
These collections were borrowed from the main public libraries through a special card that enabled the teacher to borrow many books for a school. The books were kept in individual classrooms or a centrally located place.

The Far East and the Arabian Gulf saw children’s library services evolve slowly but with definite results. Restrictions imposed through sharia law hindered rapid development as regards the children’s library services. Japan however on the other hand by the 1950’s had made tremendous strides in making available books for children by starting a small collection of books housed in a private home for the use by neighborhood children. ALA (1986:184). Children’s Rights Activists however didn’t stop the crusade to have children served and provided for.

In East Africa and Africa in general, the scenario was quite different. The colonial powers practised discrimination particularly in provision of services for the African. Libraries like other social services were developed separately for the needs of different communities, e.g. Europeans, Asians and Africans. The segregational policy of the colonialists forced the African to contend with the worst. A number of libraries, which were designed for use by these communities, have been in existence for a long time but limited funds ensured that a good relevant collection lacked. This scenario of lack of well-established public libraries for Africans meant those children’s library services also lacked. Hockey, (1969:21)

In Kenya, the earliest public library was established in 1903 in Mombasa by a group of Asians who provided funds for the Mombasa Public Library and Free Reading Room – (later the Self Bin Salim Public library and Free Reading Room) Nganga (1996:2). Lack of funds slowed down rapid expansion. There was no indication whether any children’s Library services were offered. In 1928, Lady Macmillan funded the establishment of Macmillan Library in memory of her husband. This library was established for European use only and the main purpose was to establish a reading room a “meeting place for her friends” Kemp (1959:159). The Macmillan library was opened on 15/6/1931 and remained exclusively for European use until it was taken over by the Nairobi City Council. The most notable feature in this library was the existence of a children’s library service.
The Hockey report of 1960, in the East African region is seen as a blueprint of library development for these countries. Serious consideration on establishing and developing libraries had been given momentum through the Ibadan, Unesco’s seminar on development of public libraries. Closer home, the passing of the Kenya National Board Act in 1965 gave greater impetus to a definite plan to have public libraries established through which, children would be served either through their schools or from within a set area in the main public library. Hockey (1964:35)

By the 1970’s in most parts of the world, children’s library services became the rule not the exception. For instance, in 1973, The Task Force on children’s services in America stated in a working paper to the ALA.

“Libraries together with other community agencies should provide and ensure access by all children to information services that include a diversity of media, both print and non-print; stimulate interest in reading and the use of media…”

ALA (1986:185)

In Kenya, the opening of the Kenya National Libraries in early 1970’s coincided with this development in U.S.A. The Kenya National Library Service Board has wide functions, which are:

To Promote, establish, equip, manage maintain and develop libraries and information services in Kenya (Kenya Laws Chapter 225).

The start of operations by the board also saw the opening of several libraries with the support of the British Government. With about 26 branches to date, Kenya National Library Service in all its branches countrywide offers children’s library services Nganga (1979:6)

The main question to answer here is: Whether Kenya National Library services, offers children’s library services that meet the expected standards. And whether if evaluated, the service would pass the test. Many libraries generally shun evaluation of library services. Many theories are advanced as to
whether this is possible or not. In my research, I attempted to subject the children’s library service to an evaluation and in the process came up with recommendations that would help Kenya National Library Service serve the children better in line with the clarion call for children’s rights.

1.3 Statement of the problem.

The meaning of the word evaluation is defined as “to examine and judge” concerning the worth, quality, significance, amount, condition and degree. Evaluation is also defined as a system of establishing a “benchmark” to show at which level of performance a service is operating Lancaster. (1993:8).

In my research, I attempted to show if evaluation of children library service was done. This means that there are certain standards or a benchmark against which evaluation should take place. Children services mostly offered at public libraries should endeavour to satisfy the needs of the users, in this case children. Knowing that children between the ages of 1-17 make more than 50% of the population in Kenya, provision of information services is a must.

Evaluation is generally carried out for various purposes. Some of them are:

1. To check the current status of the service
2. To discover methods for immediate and long-range improvement.
4. To identify possible sources of failure or inefficiency in the service with a view to raising the level of performance at some future date. Lancaster (1993:8)

The children services are mainly established to handle this group of users and the library should be subjected to an evaluation to see if it fulfils the role of provision of information and whether the programs developed serve users in this category whose needs are volatile. Children’s information needs are transitional and this goes with their mental and physical development.
1.4 Objectives of the study

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the children’s library service at Kenya National Library Service. The following specific objectives guided the study.

1. To identify whether children’s library services are offered at the Kenya National Library Service as stipulated in the Act of Parliament that established the board.
2. To identify to what extent the collection and programmes are suited for the children and young adults ranging from age zero to seventeen years.
3. To find out whether the librarian in-charge is professionally trained for children services or not.
4. To establish to what extent users of the children’s library are satisfied with the service provided and determine any shortcoming of the service by interrogating the users.
5. To make recommendations for the improvement of the children’s library services at Kenya National Library Services.

1.5 Significance of the study

".... Libraries are still the most wonderful places. I use the word advisedly: they are full of wonders and delightful surprises. The best present you can give any child is a library card. It is a key to everything there is.......... make your local library a second home. Geras, (1993:23)

This opening statement will perhaps show the great value placed on children’s library services. My study intended to evaluate and appraise the various factors that affect the children’s library services at KNLS.
An evaluation of the service would provide an opportunity for the board to either redefine the philosophy of the service or improve on areas that could be lacking. Children's library services should just be able to create wonder, excitement for reading and gaining knowledge. The principles for children's services are that the information needs for this user group should be fulfilled despite the fast transitional nature.

In my study, I sought to establish through an evaluation whether the stated principles and goals governing the provision of children's library services in KNLS are followed. Since evaluation deals with judging and placing value or quality of, the children's library services would be judged in all the components. The collection, staff and physical facilities would be evaluated to see if what is provided or not provided, has a bearing on the users.

1.6 Limitations of the study.

Kenya National Library Service today, has about 26 branches countrywide. All these branches are supposed to provide children's Library Services. The headquarters is at Nairobi. It was not possible to carry out an evaluation in all of them because of time limit and the financial implications. However the selected branches formed a good basis from which I carried out my study.
REFERENCES


8. The Kenya National Library Service Board Act of 1965 (Kenya Laws Chapter 225)


CHAPTER TWO.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The world of the child is complex and understanding it, is fundamental to any service provision. Having understood the child, the second most important fact is an understanding and belief in the role the library can play in the life of a child. A children's service is just meant to fulfill this growing interest and curiosity that is very natural. Children's library service is meant for the exclusive use by children. The International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) guidelines for children's service clearly states what a children’s library is:

The children’s library always reflects its own society, its own educational and cultural goals. The international declaration of the children’s rights in 1979, included ten claims, which are connected to their security and the universal balanced growth of the child........

Elkin, (1994:67)

2.1.1 The child and its development

An understanding of child development is immensely valuable to parents and all those working with children and vital for the children’s librarian who is so closely involved with the child’s emotional and intellectual development. The physical growth of a child is matched by a developing mind that is intensely curious. The needs of a child change with growth, and social needs for relationships grow. Some of these socializing agents are home, school, peer culture, the media and the library.

Every child is unique and has his/her own special needs. There are however common strands of interests, which the children’s librarian seeks to satisfy. Childhood reflects curiosity and wonder and this makes the world of a child more complex.
The development of a child is affected by internal and external influences and the effects of such influences are seen through the environment surrounding the child as he or she grows. For the very young child, a pre-schooler, it is the family that determines the environment and the accompanying results. For the school going child, his/her world is larger and bigger with a lot of external influence through friends, school and the library.

2.1.2 The role of books in child development.

The growth of a child opens a wider world for this person. To help a child reach its full potential, books become a crucial source. Reading and literacy become a stimulus to helping this child reach its full potential. Research shows that children need access to a wide range of meaningful and stimulating reading materials to move beyond curiosity and enjoy reading. Early access to books for a child remains vital. Books help children to understand the pleasure and excitement gained from reading. Reading books transports the reader to different continents, experiences, life and adventure. For a child, a book is a place where children can try on all the lives they haven’t got. Elkin (1996:11).

Books can help children to a deeper understanding of themselves and others and at the same time help them understand other cultures. Books foster social and cultural understanding and through this a positive attitude emerges.

2.1.3 The Role of the children’s library

A public library must define its roles and mission as an institution within its community. Each selected role describes.

1. What the library is trying to do
2. Who the librarian is trying to serve
3. What resources the librarian needs to achieve these ends.

From these selected roles, a mission statement evolves which serves as a guide and basis for the philosophy. A mission statement can be described as,
A concise expression of the library’s purposes. It specifies the fundamental reasons for the library’s existence. In this sense, it builds on, but is not limited to the roles chosen by the library. In one sense, the mission is like a job description: it gives direction to the library’s daily activities. Benne, (1991: 5)

After defining the mission statement, the needs of the individual child form the basis of the philosophy. The promotion of service begins and this provision and promotion of services, presupposes a knowledge and understanding of the world within which the child lives, globally, nationally and communally.

The question to ask here is, whether a library is important to the positive development of a child? The importance of library services to children cannot be argued about. The provision of information for knowledge and leisure is a child’s right. The UNESCO public library manifesto states;

Freedom, prosperity and the development of society and of individuals are fundamental human values. They will only be attained through the ability of well-informed citizens to exercise their democratic rights and to play an active role in society. Constructive participation as well as a free and unlimited access to knowledge, thought, culture and information. The public library, the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition of lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social group-----IFLA, (1995).

Children are encompassed by the principles stated in the manifesto. That it is their inalienable right to have access to knowledge and information that helps them grow into informed citizens. What the manifesto states very clearly is the very important role the public library plays in provision of information. The public library is seen as a gateway for the accessibility to the right information that every individual requires either for education, cultural or leisure needs.
The public library worldwide is closely associated with children's library services. Traditionally, the public library has been seen as a major contribution to the development of literacy, which remains a primary aim of the service. The philosophy for children's library services provided through the public library is that of supporting children's needs for information, intellectual, emotional, social, educational and language development. Corbelt, (1966:211) states and confirms the stated position this way.

Library provision for children is one of the most important activities of libraries especially academic and public libraries. It serves as a means of introducing children to books, making them library conscious and educating them to standards of library efficiency.

In addition to gaining knowledge from books, a child can gain self-knowledge through relating to situations, events and characters. The resources of a library may also foster knowledge of the wider world and an understanding of other people as regards behaviour, culture and situations.

Kinnell (1992:5) sums up the above assertion when he clearly stipulates the role of libraries for children;

Good libraries empower. Using their resources can unfetter our imaginations; disclose hitherto unrealized worlds; promote knowledge; induce pleasure; make us laugh; inflame our sensibilities and provide professional refreshment. What we learn from good books and other resources becomes part of us.

Today, the public library through which most children's library services are provided fulfils a complementary social function through its programmes of activities, promoting social interaction among young people, between children and other groups. The library not only empowers, it gives pleasure and creates harmony. The library also creates a neutral ground for many minds to meet and indulge in the pleasure of reading.
Infact the UNESCO manifesto proclaims the belief in the public library as a living force for education, culture and information and as an essential agent for fostering peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women. IFLA, (1995). This can only be possible if the resources made available for children will enhance the main agenda of the manifesto—that information empowers, and that access to information for a child is a right not a privilege. Bakewell, (1990:3) actually emphasises the right to information when he states,

Information is a basic resource that should exist only for the satisfaction of users.

The provision of information resources for the children will only prevail and expand if the user is satisfied by the service. The library here is seen as a neutral ground on which an individual child may grow through independent and unhindered discovery. The key word here is every child, regardless of his social status, physical stature or education. Children’s library services are for all the children.

The public library service as stated in the UNESCO public library manifesto also states;

The public library is the principal means whereby the records of man’s thought and ideas, and the expression of his creative imagination, are made freely available to all. IFLA, (1990:11)

The public library is concerned with the refreshment of man’s spirit, the provision of books for relaxation and pleasure. A Public library service is wholly maintained from public funds. No charge is made for its service. To fulfill its purposes, the public library must be readily accessible and its doors open for free and equal use by all members of community regardless of race, colour, nationality, age, sex, religion etc. The word here to note is all members of a community.
2.1.4 The role of library services for visually and hearing impaired children

This brings me to the role of the public library and its provision of services to visually impaired children. The deaf and hearing-impaired children also spring to my mind when service provision is mentioned. The philosophy of library service is based on the concept that the library is an information agency serving a total community. This philosophy just underlines very clearly what the UNESCO public library manifesto states that information should be made readily available to all members of a community.

Basu, defines blindness as, the absence of vision. Vision is the sense of sight, which perceives the form, colour, size, movement and distance of objects. (1991:1)

The National Centre for Health statistics classifies as blind all persons who are unable to read ordinary newspaper print, even with glasses. (McGraw - Hill Encyclopedia, vol. 2, 618). Visual impairment implies a defect of the visual systems either anatomically or physiologically, while visual disability implies a visual-dependent performance. Despite this disability, every blind person has social rights and academic possibilities that must be realized and fulfilled.

A brief history on efforts to improve blind persons access to printed materials, dates back to more than 200yrs. With the introduction of the Braille system invented by Louis Braille, the printed word became more available for the blind people. Library services for the blind took longer to provide than were schools for blind. The first public library to offer services for the blind was the Boston Public library in 1886, followed by the Library of Congress in 1897, which began a daily reading program for the blind in a special pavilion for the blind. By 1904, in the U.S.A, 18 public libraries in large cities were serving blind readers. Elsewhere in the world, services for the blind took longer to provide. Africa was the last to start provision of services for the blind much later in the late 1970’s. UNESCO/ IFLA (1980:10)

Visually disabled children have the same need for library services and access to library materials for education, information and recreation as their sighted peers.
The public library however, does not have a long tradition of service to disabled children. The role of the public library even to this special group of users should be provision of equal service to all the members of a community regardless of their physical shortcomings. The role of the library is to provide materials and resources in special format and some social equipment for use by this group of users. Basu, (1991:37) argues that,

The public library is expected to serve potential users of all age, groups, adults and children alike, other types of libraries may restrict their clientele.

The argument put forward is that the visually impaired child has the same inalienable right for services, materials and resources provided to the sighted child. The public library has to fulfill this function. This is despite the fact that a library service to visually handicapped or impaired children assumes an additional responsibility because of its selection and production of the special format materials used by this class of users.

I mentioned earlier, the other special class of users who require special format to use a public library. These groups of users are the deaf and hearing-impaired children. Dalton, (1985:34) writing on library service to the deaf says,

The philosophy of service to the deaf and hearing-impaired persons, builds on this general approach to library service. The goal encompasses the concept that all library services are available and usable by people who are deaf or hearing impaired. For the public library to fulfill this role, it requires both an administrative and staff commitment. The deaf and hearing-impaired population of users is diverse and it is only through a concerted effort by the library that this group will be reached.

It has been established that deaf people don’t have a pattern of library use. They will not in most cases make the first move to instigate a programme. Due to the feeling of isolation, common to people with a hearing loss, this becomes an
impediment to their being assertive about their library needs. The onus of making an impact for the deaf and hearing-impaired falls to the library especially as it strives to offer equal opportunities to every person.

2.1.5 Goals and Objectives for Children’s Services

Goals and objectives define children’s library services based on the role and mission statement and the long-range goals of the overall library. They reflect the philosophy of service; provide a direction for all children’s services, from selection of materials to the content of programs. Benne (1991:48) says that there are several guidelines for developing objectives and goals. Some of them are:

- Library standards adopted by children’s divisions of national and state library associations
- The library’s roles and mission statement
- Long-range goals of the library
- Goals of other child serving organizations in the community.

The international Federation of Library Association (IFLA) has set and proposed various objectives, which can be used for children’s library services. Brown quotes some of them as,

- To promote and encourage reading as a means of self development and to encourage an awareness of the pleasure of reading
- To assist language development and improve reading standards.
- To promote and encourage the acceptance of books and related materials as fundamental means in meeting information needs
- To provide the means of extending and deepening cultural awareness
- To encourage children of all ages and background to use libraries.

To provide a wide range of books under other materials and present them in a manner and surrounding attractive to children.
To hold book-related activities thus helping children to make the connection between daily needs and information sources.

- Identify consumers to be served and involve them in planning the programs
- Achieve an acceptable level of service usage in terms of quality as well as quantity. Brown, (1979:382)
- Making a wide range of resources available in suitable formats and reading levels for the deaf, hearing and visually impaired children.
- Making a wide range of services available to attract users to the library for use as an information and recreational source. Dalton (1985:79)

The objectives for children’s library services are geared towards the provision of information resources for all and also creating an enabling environment were all the users (children) will become well informed citizens and hopefully grow into responsible adults who will participate in the development of their communities.

2.1.6 Target Groups

When discussing children library services, a question as to who are considered to be children must be answered. In our Kenyan context, a child is that person who has not yet attained a national identity card at eighteen years. For others, the term ‘children’ refers to children aged from birth to twelve years inclusive. From thirteen years, the term ‘young adult’ is used and this includes those that are seventeen as well.

For the sake of this proposal, I will restrict my target groups from birth to seventeen years. From infancy to form four in our Kenyan context, constitute what library services for children are. Benne (1991:7) says,

> A librarian may determine library divisions, but library users ignore them when they do not support their intellectual or psychological needs.

This assertion just points to the fact that library use is not confined to age, but to the needs of a user. For instance, a seventeen year old will comfortably fit in an
adult section if his needs are fulfilled there or perfectly fit in a well-stocked children section. So the target groups mostly are to guide the librarian especially when it comes to collection development and the organization of programmes and activities.

a) The pre-scholars: this group encompasses those from birth to 5 yrs. This phase in a child’s life is characterized by rapid development; socially, emotionally, physically and also in cognitive abilities. By the time they are ready to join formal schooling, class one, they are independent, able to form concepts and use language fluently. They can only visit the library with the parent. The parent is the intermediary.

b) The School-age child. This group falls between ages 5 to 6 yrs. The child has moved from the pre-operational stage into concrete operations stage. Children here are able to deal with “a little bit of” complex ideas and materials. They are already in school, very active and very inquisitive. But still preoccupied with the self. Library visits are with parent or older sibling. Materials selection is by self or with help from librarian.

c) Age six – Eight years. This group is characterized by great changes in emotional, social and intellectual life. Children here learn to relate to the adult, teacher in school or librarian. Peer influence is seen. They are more conscious of time and their surroundings. They can visit a library alone if nearby and knows what he/she wants to read especially simple storybooks.

d) Ages Nine through Twelve. Children in this group value their independence and may have wide ranging interests. Rules became challenged and adult authority is challenged. They can select what is relevant to their needs and ignore what is irrelevant. They learn skills to “acquire, understand and use information”, Benne (1991:12). The child in this age bracket can visit the library alone and fit comfortably.

e) Twelve years and up. This is what is called the teen-age. They are able to think. They are able to make logical decisions. They are intensely inquisitive. They are adolescents with myriad questions about their physical development
and emotional needs. They are curious about different life styles and values. The children under this age bracket are also faced with a lot of pressure from school i.e. exams for promotion to next grade or class. This is also a transitional stage where the young adult, at 14-17 yrs may drift to the adult section in search of literature to ensure some query about his/her new personality. Visits to the library are by self or accompanied by peers. Library use is also affected by other new interests. Benne (1991:9-14).

2.1.7 Collection Development.

The term ‘collection’ has undergone changes in meaning during the last 20 years. There has been a move from the narrow interpretation of the term ‘collection’ simply embracing resources held within the confines of the public library. The new concept according to Elkin (1996:3) is,

A collection now encompasses human and material resources available within the community as well as information and material held in other library and information systems.

This is the definition I would like to adopt in my proposal. What about collection development in children’s library services? Evans (1987:65) remarks on the nature and significance of collection development as,

The process of making certain that the information needs of the people are met in a timely and economic manner, using information resources produced inside and outside the organization.

Collection development is also defined as the process of planning a stock acquisition programme not simply to cater for immediate needs but to build a coherent and reliable collection over a number of years to meet the objectives of the service.
The most important responsibility of the librarian is that of planning, building, maintaining and promoting a dynamic and pertinent collection. To do this, a librarian is guided by policies, which govern acquisition. A policy document used for collection development serves as a benchmark for the service. For example, meeting users' needs and expectations and cultivating the collection's strengths are facilitated through a policy. There are many others and here are some elements included in some policy documents for children's collections:

- Evaluation and selection of new materials for purchase
- Evaluation of the existing collection
- Weeding, repair and replacement of items already in stock
- Preservation and conservation.
- Guidelines on gifts and donations Elkin (1996: 135)

A policy has several components and some of them are:

1) The introduction: this gives reason for developing a policy, a list specifying the audience, a definition of the scope of policy and indication of revision.
2) The basic philosophy: These are the goals of the institution and the collection. The objectives of the collection have to support the parent body's goals.
3) The communities to be served: The community to be served through the collection i.e. school children, the deaf, the visually impaired etc.
4) Scope of the collection: what literature has to be included or excluded. For instance, will the children have a collection on computers, multimedia, will literature on sex, religion and politics be included or not. Perkins (1979: 61)

Policies however, should be seen as guidelines rather than mechanically applied directives. Policies also change because the users for whom they are formulated also change in interests.

For the children's collection, the question to ask is, what constitutes a library collection? The same policy that governs collection development for the main library is what encompasses the children's collection. The needs and interests of the children are however a big determinant in what is stocked.
Ray, (1979:37) argues that in the selection of materials, children’s reading needs and interests must be taken into account. She says that it is the responsibility of the librarian to reconcile as far as possible children’s tastes with standards, which are felt to be desired. That as much as the librarian will use her/his professional training, it is good to be sensitive to the standards set in a particular community. A collection development policy also, may contain detailed statements about essential procedures such as selection and acquisition, evaluation, review and promotion.

Children read for a variety of reasons but for most of their leisure time, voluntary reading is for relaxation and enjoyment. This is why a children’s collection is geared towards emphasizing the reading experience of literature. Because of these, the librarian must be aware of the range of children’s interests and their reading development and try to provide literature, which has something of interest to every child who used it. For instance, the pre-scholars who visit the library in the company of their parents or guardian would probably require; realistic picture books, board book, toys that reflect a real object (realia) and storybooks with simple plots that can easily be identified with the day-to-day experiences of a child. The choosing or selection of what to read or borrow will be done by the parent or the guardian.

The school age child’s collection will have to suit his/her new independence. Books with a story whose plot is developed but explained in simple words, picture books with details accompanying them. In the modern world computers can be easily introduced.

The other stage of six to eight years, where reading is fairly well developed, easy non-fiction books are preferred. If picture books are presented, they must fully explain a concept. The children in this age bracket will want to select their own reading materials but the teacher or parents are advised to continue selecting.

For the teenage, ages nine to thirteen, this group value their independence, and will only read books that are relevant to their information needs. History, fantasy and science fiction are favorites. The use of multimedia like, film, video, tape will receive a hearty welcome. This group selects their own materials.
For the young adult, thirteen to seventeen years, the need for literature or information resources is more complex. The collection should suit the need to know their bodies. Computers and the multi-media will be heavily used. The selection of what to read or borrow is done by the user. The librarian will rarely be consulted. Benne (1991:8-13).

For the visually handicapped child what kind of collection should a public library make available? Braille and talking books, scratch and sniff books, large print books, cassette players, magnifying glasses and other highly specialized equipment for use by the visually impaired. Basu (1991:59). The hearing impaired or the hard of hearing use the resources for the normal child. The only difference would be that they had to be made aware of this fact. The hard of hearing also use some hearing aids, which the library can provide.

From the discussion several characteristics of a children's collection can be noted:

- Children's interests are usually brief in duration and this is reflected through the physical and psychological development.
- That children's demands play a big role in collection development.
- Children are not governed by the best seller-syndrome and will value titles that give them pleasure to read regardless of copyright date, Berne (1991:119)
- Ray, (1979:37) comments on some of the pertinent issues that a librarian must consider on collection development. Some of them are:
  - The durability of the stock. The stock of a children's library has to stand up to a fair amount of wear and tear. It is advisable to buy reinforced editions.
  - That the librarian must consider the potential library user i.e. pre-school and school age.
  - The librarian should buy books, which have a justifiable place in the collection.
  - And that the public library is the one institution, which can afford to take seriously the objective of ensuring that all children have an opportunity to access to the best books.

For collection development Fleet, (1973:1) sums it well by saying,
I like books, namely those that offer to children an intuitive and direct way of knowledge and a simple beauty capable of being perceived immediately, arousing in their souls a vibration that will endure all their lives... a children’s book is a book that a child will read, enjoy and return to the library.

2.1.8 Staffing In Children Libraries

In discussing staffing in children’s libraries, a clear understanding about who a children’s librarian is, is crucial. A children’s library as we all know, is neither a nursery or crèche group nor even a substitute on a rainy day for a playground. A children’s library is far from this and “the whole success of a library for children depends ultimately upon the staff who administer it”. McColvin (1961:95)

The children’s librarian must be part of a community in which he/she works. The librarian must also be able to work in close liaison with other organizations, which cater for children and young people. Apart from the professionalism that a children’s librarian must exhibit, this person plays a multi-faceted role. Children librarians are expected to operate in an environment that requires flexibility as they serve in this many roles. At one time a children’s librarian will be expected to answer questions on child development and childcare thus serving the role of a child psychologist, at another time, a manager who has to manage resources personnel and materials.

For the librarian to be able to serve the children well, the public library system must ensure that one member of staff has a special responsibility for service to children and young people. It is an established fact that many children go through life without even seeing a specialist librarian during their visit to the library. Ray (1979:31). This means that people who are capable of making this sort of contribution must be trained first as librarian and knowledgeable about all aspects of librarianship in the field of children’s librarianship.
Elkin (1991:74) stresses this point by quoting the library Association guidelines on children's library services and states very categorically that whichever staffing structure is chosen within any librarian authority, two main principles are crucial.

i. Children's needs are important enough to require specialists posts

ii. Children's needs are too important to be left to specialist posts.

If these guidelines are followed and effected, this would ensure that children's needs are not overlooked nor are they delegated to less qualified staff. According to Benne, (1991:45).

"More often than not, the children's librarian is called to serve adults who are more aggressive in their requests for assistance".

The point raised by Elkin on specialist posts is a big pointer to how children's needs in as far as staffing is concerned are ignored. The arguments raised is that the child specialist librarian will be backed by enough resources i.e. budget allocation, other staff members for service delivery and the full involvement of the whole library administration.

So one can draw a conclusion here on the above points that by virtue of assuming a professional position, children's librarian accepts at the very least, the responsibility for carrying out administrative policies

and decisions. The children's librarian also serves as an advocate for children's services. So what role does the children's librarian play in the library for the benefit of the child? Some of the following roles are stipulated by Benne (1991:2):

- Selecting and maintaining a collection for appropriate audiences i.e. all the different target groups
- Providing information and reading guidance (advisory) services.
• Planning and presenting programs designed to attract children to other library services or provide experiences not possible through library materials alone e.g. storytelling

• The children’s librarian is responsible for seeing that young people get their fair share of the library’s available resources (budget allocation)

From the above points, the next question to ask is, what kind of a person is this? Or what qualities would a children’s librarian be required to have? These qualities are not the professional qualification one attains. The children’s librarian is set apart from the librarian who serves the adult. If one of the functions of a public library is to encourage children to visit the library and to read, the children’s librarian must form a relationship with the child.

The children’s librarian, Fleet (1977:81) says on this relationship,

The relationship between a child and a librarian should be intimate and the child should be aware the librarian is always willing to help. Help must be given tactfully and children must be allowed to have the pleasure of browsing, if they wish.

• Some of the qualities of a children’s librarian are;
  • Patience
  • Good listener
  • Approachable and alert
  • A good organizer
  • Good tempered
  • Pleasant personality

Children are not impressed by academic credentials of a person who is cold but are ready to respect competence and very readily respond to adults who demonstrate interest in them as individuals.
The children’s librarian must be someone who the children can confide in without fear of disclosure of their secrets and it must be somebody they can laugh with and somebody who can sympathize with them and try to understand their world. Benne (1991:238) describes title Rufus perception of a librarian in this way:

Rufus stared at her in silence. The library lady was eating. Rufus had never see her do anything before but play cards, punch books and carry great piles of them around. Now she was eating. Mama said not to stare at anybody while they were eating. Still Rufus didn’t know the library lady ate, so it was hard for him not to look at her.

Young Rufus could not relate to this lady librarian. She was out of his normal world of people who eat, laugh and talk. Such a librarian is not what Fleet (1973:83) had in mind when she stated,

A children’s librarian’s duty is to stimulate and satisfy a desire for knowledge and enjoyment through books and all other media at our disposal.

2.1.9 Programmes and Activities

When children librarians refer to a program of services, they usually mean the entire pattern of planned activities (programmes) and services that promote the users interaction with resources in ways that support the library’s objectives. Broderick, (1977:97) says that programs are a carefully thought out plan and they serve a number of purposes.

- They enrich the background and stimulate the interest of the children who are already library patrons.
- They can bring into the library children who do not ordinarily use its services.
- They provide librarians with direct feedback as to the interest of the children.
Libraries provide for children's, leisure, educational, emotional and intellectual needs and the planned programmes and services aimed to enhance this function. Some of these are: film programs, which will include video, slides etc, story telling, reading skills and orientation tours. I'll highlight a few of these:

1) Story telling: this activity is rewarding to many library users and has various objectives. Some of them are:
   - Introducing audience members to their literary or ethnic heritage.
   - Provision of a valuable aesthetic experience
   - Improving listening skills and increase of vocabulary

Story hours were very popular in the early part of the last century. However, other new areas of service delivery like the television and the radio have changed this. This program is still offered in many libraries to date but the audience attendance is low.

Story telling sessions especially in developing countries are still popular because of the low rate of high technological development e.g. it is not every household that can afford a computer or television or radio. The IFLA seminar on library work for children and young adults, Leipzig, (1981: 13) states that, story-telling sessions in Zimbabwe were popular with both adults and children.

In Sri-lanka, village libraries organized in a network by the Servodaya movement, organizes story-telling sessions for the very young children. The range for this activity is from pre-scholars to ages twelve.

2) Films, radio or audio-visual materials:

Depending on the availability of this equipment in a library, film programmes serve the same purposes like those of stories. In keeping up the latest advances in information technology, computers can also be suitably used by the children. Children from age twelve to seventeen years would be interested in video programs on history, fantasy, science fiction and sexuality.
Benne, (1991:131) argues that for a children’s library to match the expected provision of audio-visual materials, the children’s materials budget also covers the cost of non-book items used in programming.

For the visually impaired and the deaf or hard of hearing, special programs and services will have to be provided by the library. For, instance.

- Personal help in using the library catalog—where there are no talking computers for the blind
- Selection and retrieval of materials from the stocks
- Reading or describing illustrations from reference sources.

Basu, (1991: 35) argues that visually impaired children can also benefit from programs and activities organized for the sighted children. For example, use of realia i.e. actual objects such as artifacts, specimens, puppet and other tangible objects can be used for their understanding.

2.2 Library Signs

The term signage refers to that part of library graphics related to the internal environment of the building. It involves those signs, labels and symbols that assist the users and staff in using library resources. Signs may be placed on walls, freestanding surfaces or easels floors or hang from the ceilings. Types of signs include:

1. Directional: needed whenever an area is not visible or obvious to the user.
2. Identification: Helps user locate materials, services and facilities such as checkout counters, non-fiction sections, shelve numbers etc.
3. Regulation: describes special conditions
4. Informational: assists users on how to operate equipment, use the catalog etc.

Benne (1991:187)

A well-designed and effectively signed library sets a welcoming tone and conveys the impression that users are important. Signage anticipates the users directional questions and attempts to answer them. Signage for children may also serve an
educational function in the same way that labeling objects of furniture helps deaf children learn words and terms.

When implementing library signage, there are some outstanding standards that have to apply. Some of them are:

1. Each sign should be uniform in colour, size, and type of lettering
2. The terminology should be simple and understandable
3. The sign system should be coordinated throughout the library
4. The sign system should be dynamic. Pollet (1979:135).

In the children library, library signage plays an important role. In trying to use the recommended standards for library sign, special consideration should be given to children. For example, terminology should be scrutinized for its effectiveness with children. For instance, terms like ‘Reference’ and ‘Circulation’ are library terms that may mean little to children. Suitable substitutes would have to be used like “checkout” for circulation or ‘Ask here’ for reference etc. The goal is to attain maximum use of the library signs put in place for the target group. The signs should be at a height easily read by children.

2.3 Evaluation

The term ‘evaluation’ especially in the field of librarianship has been known to cause jitters. This is because libraries are known to continue doing things traditionally. Evaluation however, forces one to take a long hard look to determine whether a particular activity, programme or service should be discontinued or not and whether new activities should be added.

Evaluation has been defined as “assessing the value” of some activity, object or program; or to appraise and determine the quality of something, Lancaster (1993:1). According to Lancaster, the theory of evaluation is quite simple. All an evaluator needs is to have specific and clear objectives and measurement tools, which are easy to apply and are adequate for the purpose Lancaster (1977:vii).
Is it the services, programmes, collection and all the other components of a library that are subjected to evaluation? An answer to this would require perhaps one more time to look at the function of a library and why evaluation has been emphasized on.

Lancaster states that the function of a library is,

To acquire bibliographic materials related to the interests of a particular user population, actual or potential, organize and display these materials in various ways and to make them available to users. Lancaster (1977: 3).

The existence of a library is seen as an interface between the universe of bibliographic resources and a particular user population. Lancaster (1977:5). The provision of service to the users is what gives a library purpose to exist. The service given of course must be qualitative. A prerequisite to service is quality. Totterdell (1978:33) asserts that,

It is this quality of service that will ultimately determine the patronage of a given library. It is on the basis of quality of service, that satisfaction is measured… qualitative library service will also attract non-users to the library.

Lancaster, a reknowned authority on library evaluation argues that the major criterion, by which one can evaluate the effectiveness of a library, is the degree to which it maximizes accessibility, exposure or both. (1977:13). The assertion is that the public service of a library must be measured ultimately in terms of user satisfaction. So any evaluation applied to the library should be concerned with determining to what extent it successfully plays this interface role. Lancaster (1993:2)

The World Encyclopedia of Library and Information Services in an article on measurement and Evaluation in libraries defines evaluation in this way,
Evaluation is the process of identifying and collecting data about specific services or activities, establishing criteria to assess their success, and determining the degree to which the service or activity accomplishes stated goals and objectives (1993:547).

In this definition on evaluation, what comes out clearly is the degree to which a user is satisfied by the service rendered. Bawden, on user-oriented evaluation states that,

Evaluation is a key concept underlying the development of information services, the justification of the value of these systems, the appreciation by both operators and users of the potential and limitations of their systems and services. Bawden (1990:3)

There are several reasons advanced as to why evaluation is important. Some of them are:

1. Provision of better products and services: without formal or semi formal evaluation, there could never be any clear understanding of the deficiencies of existing products and services and means of their improvement.

2. Justification of existing services – some form of evaluation is used in establishing that existing products and services meet a genuine need adequately. At the most pessimistic level, such evaluation may be necessary in order to stave off, cut in or even closure of services; on the other hand, effectiveness of existing services may justify expansion or diversification.

3. Improved understanding of systems – library and Information systems are inherently complex. Evaluation by operators and users is the only means of ensuring reliable and the in-depth knowledge of what the system actually does, and how best it is used. Bawden (1990:4)
4. Simply to establish a “benchmark”; to show at what level of performance the service is now operating – a standard of measure.

5. For comparison purposes i.e. the performance of several libraries or services. A valid comparison of this type implies the use of an identical evaluation standard. Lancaster (1993: 8)

Since evaluation must have a purpose the manager / librarian has responsibilities in carrying out evaluation. Some of these are:

- To define the goals of the organization
- To obtain the resources needed to reach these goals
- To identify the programs and services required to achieve the goals and optimize the allocation of resources over these programs and services.
- To see that the resources allocated to a particular activity are used as wisely as possible.

These responsibilities according to Orr (1973:351-332) are seen as an integral part of the information managers’ job.

What method of evaluation should a manager use? There are several methods of evaluation suggested by many authors. Lancaster (1977:1-3) gives various levels:

1. Effectiveness: must be measured in terms of how well a service satisfies the demands placed upon it by its users. Such an evaluation can be subjective (e.g. it is conducted by gathering opinions via questionnaires or interviews) this level of evaluation can also be done objectively (e.g. the measurement of success in quantative terms or a combination of the two.

2. A cost-benefit evaluation: is usually the most difficult to conduct. It is concerned with whether the value (worth) of the service is more or less than the cost of providing it. A cost-benefit study attempts to determine, whether the expense of providing a service is justified by the cost derived from it.

For my research I would like to evaluate the effectiveness of the children's library services offered at Kenya National Library Service

Bawden, (1990:75) sees evaluation as a form of self-audit and should be seen as an integral part of the information manager's job. It is also agreed that evaluation is part of decision-making and encourages organizational change. What all this debate points to is the kind of service that is delivered to the user – quality of service as well as its extent and variety. Totterdell (1978:60) says,

Libraries exist to service, to give without question, favour or limitation

Bakewell supports this by saying that users needs can be satisfied only if the service meets the following requirements. These requirements also apply to the children.

1. Usefulness: accomplish a given role
2. Comprehensiveness: satisfy the users whole purpose not just part of it.
3. Currency: to be most up-to-date and therefore correct or accurate
4. Speed: be provided as soon as it is needed.
5. Validity: be the right kind if information for that user.
6. Practically: be such that use can be made of it.
7. Effectiveness: provide a solution or satisfaction to the particular need or needs.

Bakewell's assertion is that it is all the components of the library service, which have to be subjected to an evaluative process i.e the staff collection, service, space, activities and programmes. For instance, on collection, questions about adequacy and currency of children's collection in various bodies as quoted by fleet (1973:52) are,

- IFLA, suggests 1/5 of the total book stock be for children.
- The library Association figure is given as 190 children's books for every thousand population.
Ray, (1979:39) also quotes a suggested standard for collection by IFLA 1973

According to the IFLA standards, 1973, in the smallest administrative units at least three volumes per inhabitant are required.

The above concerns on currency and adequacy of a collection are very well summed up by Elkin (1991:144) she says

It is important that there should be systematic and continuous feedback on the use and effectiveness of the collection we have provided. The overriding concern when monitoring provision is, does the collection reflect the library and information needs of the community to be served, both in terms of what is available and what is not?

To support collection evaluation, the library may establish a policy designed to inform staff of the methods employed to evaluate stock and offer guidance on how to implement these methods. User-oriented evaluation is suitable for collection evaluation since it will analyse the use made of the collection by young people, parents, children and other adults concerned with children.

On the staff in the children’s library. Is the librarian professionally trained?

Does he/she have an understanding of child development, including intellectual, emotional, physical behaviour, language and social development? The children’s librarian should also be conversant with contemporary child cultures, story telling, performance, public speaking, teaching and promotional skills. How is the librarian evaluated? Since it is the users who feel quality of service given by the librarian, then a user evaluation would details the kind of librarian handling the children.
For programmes and activities for story telling: is it still viable in this day and age when television and the computer dominate a child's entertainment needs? For the library to know if some of these activities should continue to be provided, then evaluation has to be carried out.

Since evaluation must have a purpose and this process arises out of a need to set a value on a system, it becomes a condition and not a choice. Gathinji (1994: 60) says,

A library that does not offer service is condemned to have outlived it's usefulness and has no reason for being

The kind of library described is static whose growth stagnates at some point. Evaluation would ensure that death does not happen.
REFERENCES.


CHAPTER THREE

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study is an evaluation on the services offered to children at the Kenya National Library Services. The study was confined to Kenya National Library Service.

3.1.1 Design and location of the study

The study comprised of three case studies. These were Nairobi Provincial Library, Nakuru Library and Thika Library. These branches were purposely chosen as a representative sample of the other branches spread throughout the republic. The research also considered the distances and ease of communication towards Nakuru and Thika.

3.1.2 Sample Selection

The target populations for this study were Librarians, Library users (children) and their guardians (parents). These were randomly selected from amongst the target population as follows:

- 6 librarians
- 60 library users (children)
- 60 parents / guardians.

Altogether the sample selected was composed of 126 subjects. The sample for library users and their parents / guardians were randomly selected through the assistance of the staff in charge who knew frequent users of the library and their guardians. This was to guard against having newly registered users whose use of the library service was limited to only a few days or weeks. The library staff were specifically librarians and the questionnaire was to be filled by the librarian in charge and the librarian in charge of the children’s section / library.
3.1.3 Research Instruments

To achieve the objectives of the study, the following data collection techniques were used:

1) Questionnaires
2) Observations
3) Interviews
4) Secondary sources e.g. daily issues, monthly reports and annual reports.

3.1.4 Questionnaires

Three types of questionnaires were used; one for library staff, another for library users and the third one for parents or guardians. The design for the three questionnaires included both open and closed – ended questions. The nature of the study was explained to the respondents through a covering letter that was attached to the questionnaires. The researcher personally distributed the questionnaires to the respondents. In cases where the respondents were too busy to respond at the time of the researcher’s visit or where the respondent was absent, the questionnaire was left behind to be collected later. The questionnaires sought to establish the quality of service offered to the children through the Kenya National Library Service Board.

3.1.4.1 Questionnaire for Library Staff

These aimed at evaluating the quality of service offered to children through a professionally trained staff. The collection activities and programmes were to be evaluated. It also sought to evaluate whether Kenya National Library Service is an equal provider of services for ALL children regardless of their physical inabilities or otherwise. Factors hindering offering of quality service were also evaluated.
3.1.4.2 Questionnaire for Library users i.e. children

This questionnaire solicited for information on the children’s awareness of and use of the various programmes and activities i.e. the information resources. Views of library users based on their experiences as they used the collection i.e. print and non-print, the programmes such as story tellings, puppets shows etc. The views of the users were also to test their needs and how they would like the service to be improved.

3.1.4.3 Questionnaire for parents / guardians

This questionnaire mainly targeted the parents / guardians of the library users as interested parties of the services provided. This was necessitated by the structure of children library service which targets users from birth to seventeen years. This means that parents are users per se especially when it comes to actually deciding what their children will read and the kind of programmes they would like their children to enjoy. Their views on what kind of service is offered, the collection and programmes were evaluated to test their understanding of the library service. As interested parties their views on the future development of the children’s service were sought

3.2 Personal Observation

In this case, the researcher observed the facilities and services available in these libraries. Through observation, the researcher was able to verify some of the responses given and their accuracy. For instance, if a library user said he /she used computers, the researcher had the opportunity to see the computers and the programmes available for children. Personal observation also allowed the researcher to see the staff – user interaction. All these observations were recorded in a notebook. Through personal observation, the researcher was able to see how the books are arranged on the shelves and the ease with which the users use them.
3.2.1 Interviews

The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with the staff, children and parents / guardians. Interviews helped the researcher give clarification on some issues. The responses given by the respondents were written down. The interviews also availed an opportunity for the researcher to get personal views on some responses which the respondent had hesitated to put down on paper. Issues especially on staff-user interaction came out strongly through the interviews than through the questionnaires. There was some hesitation from the children who thought that there would be some serious repercussions if they truly recorded their views.

3.2.2 Secondary sources

Some of these are: issues, book reservations, monthly reports and annual reports. These are necessary especially in areas of enrollment, budget and collection development policies. Through secondary sources, like issues, the researcher was able to know areas which are heavily used. Through secondary sources the researcher was able to ascertain the number of registered users from the register. The researcher was also able to see the issues raised by the users through the monthly reports and the recommendations of the librarian.

3.3 Data Interpretation and analysis

The data was analysed using SPSS(Statistical Package for Social Scientists) The researcher grouped the collected data in accordance with the objectives of the study as follows.

- Implementation of the Act of Parliament that stipulates offering of children’s services.
- Suitability of the collection and programmes.
- Professionalism of staff.
- User satisfaction.
The responses gathered were coded by assigning a number to each response. For some data, frequency counts and percentages were used to facilitate the interpretation of the collected data. In others, descriptive statements were used.

3.4 Field Administration problems

The researcher encountered some problems in the course of data collection for this study.

3.4.1 Incomplete responses

Some respondents gave incomplete responses. This made the researcher go back to have more questionnaires filled that had not been filled fully.

3.4.2 Incomplete sample responses.

At the time of data collection, some parents / guardians were not able to return the questionnaires. Because of this, the parent / guardian was 86%. (52 filled the questionnaire instead of 60)
CHAPTER 4

4.0 Data Interpretation and Presentation

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with presentation and analysis of data collected from the users i.e. children, parents, and the library staff in the Kenya National Library Service. The data was collected through questionnaires, personal interviews and observations. Secondary sources were also used. This data was analysed using (SPSS) i.e. Statistical Programme for Social Scientists. The analysis was presented in frequency tables, graphs, pie charts, multiple response counts and by descriptive analysis. Percentages have also been used to present the data in a clear and more understandable way. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the children’s library services offered at Kenya National Library Service Board. Some of the issues that the researcher addressed include:

- Collection development policy
- User satisfaction
- Programmes and activities for children
- Staffing.

4.1.1 Presentation of data collected from library staff

This section will deal with presentation of data collected from the library staff at the Kenya National Library. This data was collected through questionnaires, personal interviews and follow up discussions. The questionnaires were mainly for librarians.
Table one shows the three branches that were sampled and the response rate.

**Table 1: Branches**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library Name</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAIROBI</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAKURU</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THIKA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The response rate was 100%. The following table shows the qualification of the library staff.

**Table 2: Qualification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CERTIFICATE</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEGREE</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIPLOMA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASTERS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All these were trained in librarianship and have long experience working for the board. 2 of the respondents have university level of education while the other 4 have secondary level of education giving a corresponding (33.4%) and (66.6%). From the researchers interviews all the staff handling the children were not specialist child librarians. This could be interpreted to mean that children services are not treated with the importance they deserve and anybody with general librarianship training is good enough.

**4.1.2 Children’s library services**

The Kenya National Library was established by an Act of Parliament in 1965 and charged with the functions of promoting, establishing, equipping, managing,
maintaining and developing information services in Kenya (Kenya Laws Chapter 225). The researcher had sought to establish if the Parliamentary Act was enforced within all the branches and the response rate was 100% for all the sampled branches.

4.1.3 Weekdays Opening and closing Hours

The official opening hours for the library were 8.00am to 6.30pm from Monday to Friday. This was confirmed by the respondents as the official hours. The variation indicated through the following tables is explained as the time the library allows the users in for services.

Table 3: Weekdays Opening and closing hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.00 A.M. TO 6.30 P.M.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.00 A.M. TO 6.00 P.M.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nairobi library opened at 8a.m and closed at 6.30 pm while Thika and Nakuru opened at 9a.m and closed at 6p.m

The opening and closing hours in the three branches on Saturdays also varied. This was explained by the location of the library and internal organization of the work schedule of each library. Nairobi library had a system of arranging the material continuously i.e. arranging shelving as the readers used the resources while in the other two libraries, shelving was done before admitting the users.

Table 4: Saturdays Opening and Closing Hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.00 A.M. TO 5.00 P.M.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.30 A.M. TO 5.00 P.M.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.00 A.M. TO 5.00 P.M.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On Fridays the library opens at 8 a.m for Nairobi library. In Thika and Nakuru the library opens at 8.30a.m and 9am. All the branches close the library at 4pm. The reason given is that the staff would be working on Saturday hence the early closure.

4.1.4 Open Days

The 6 respondents give a response rate of (100%) for the number of days the library is open. The library officially opens for 6 days in a week and remains closed on public holidays and Sundays.

4.1.5 Age of the users

The minimum age of the users was sought by the researcher to establish if the library adhered to the library guidelines given worldwide. Those guidelines state that library services for children start from infancy to seventeen years of age.

Table 5 Age of users

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 YEARS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-14 YEARS (primary)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 YEARS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 YEARS</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 YEARS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The minimum age that the library serves comfortably is 4 years. Meaning that services for children below 4 years are not available in the whole organization. This means that any child below four years is discriminated when service provision at KNLS is considered. The library does not have the facilities to provide service for this group.
4.1.6 Registered Users

All the three branches had different numbers for the registered users. The researcher was able to confirm the actual number indicated by the respondents by perusing the register. The table below shows the numbers given by each branch.

Table 6: Registered Users

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Branch</th>
<th>Registered users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thika</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>6380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nairobi</td>
<td>5544</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thika registered the least number of users overall. The registration of users is a process used by the library to make the applicants bonafide members who can borrow books and use all the other facilities. The numbers are considerably low compared to the school going numbers of children per province. This means that the library still has to make an impact especially in encouraging literacy in the country. Thika library explained the low registration by stating that the 500 were the active members. This number was arrived at through a process of vigorous pruning. Nakuru and Nairobi branches indicated that 85% of the registered users were active users of the children’s library.

4.1.7 Collection Development, Objectives and Evaluation

Regarding the existence of a written policy on collection, the following responses were received as indicated in the table below.

Table 7: Collection development policy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2 respondents stated they were not aware that the library had a written policy on collection development while the other 4 indicated they knew of its existence.

For the objectives of the policy and the response rate of respondents, the following table, shows the responses and the objectives of a collection development.

**Table 8: objectives of policy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a reading culture; Create an information driven society</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To meet the user's needs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To avoid duplication of information resources</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The respondents who indicated they knew about the policy were 4 (66.7%) and the objectives are given in the table. The two respondents who indicated they were not aware of the policy and the objectives were 2 (33.3%) and gave the following reasons.

- The policy existed only at the headquarters where all acquisition were centralised
- There was no consultation when the collection was being updated.
- The policy and objectives were outdated because of what was represented on the ground.

**4.1.8 Policy on Evaluation**

Such a policy will involve issues like selection, acquisition, discarding and weeding of the collection. The librarians at Kenya National Library Service was asked to state the criteria used for updating the collection and when this was done, or how evaluation of the library resources takes place. On being asked if the library evaluated
its resources, the response rate was (100%). The following table shows the frequency of evaluation.

**Table 9: Frequency of evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It has no time limit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>83.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When needed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(50%) 3 respondents, indicated that evaluation of the collection was carried out annually. The other three respondents indicated that evaluation was done at a quarterly interval, when needed and at no specified time. Weeding and discarding are used to remove obsolete and torn old materials from the shelves and in the process make the librarian aware of the need to replenish. On whether the library had a policy on weeding and discarding, 4 library staff said there was one, (66.7%) whereas 2 indicated there was none (33.3%). The following are reasons for the respondents who said there was such a policy.

1. For purposes of replenishing stock
2. To create more space
3. For neatness of the shelves

For the respondents who said there was none, these are the reason given

1. There was no written policy for discarding and weeding
2. Discarding and weeding is a routine library activity – therefore no need for policy

The reasons given showed that the library staff understood the purpose of discarding and weeding.

Table 10 shows the responses on the period of discarding and weeding.
Table 10: Weeding / Discarding frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every 2 yrs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every 5 yrs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every 8 yrs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every 10 yrs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (monthly)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(50%) represented 3 respondents who understood how discarding and weeding is done and for what purpose. The other (50%) was represented by respondents who did not respond or show any understanding of what the policy of discarding and weeding does in a library. Such results from the library staff reflected some ignorance especially because they are professionals who should know the importance of discarding and weeding.

4.1.9 Collection Size

The size of the collection for every branch was indicated. Table 11, shows the size of collection.

Table 11: Collection Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 5000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5001 - 10,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>83.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,000 and over</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>83.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (13,000)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4 respondents indicated that their branches had a children’s collection of between 5000 – 10000 books (66.7%) 1 respondent (16.7%) indicated their branch had over 10000 i.e. 13000 books while 1 respondent indicated books stock between 0 – 5000.

On the criteria used for selection of the collection, the following multiple responses were indicated.

**Table: 12 Group and criteria for selection**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dichotomy label</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent of Responses</th>
<th>Percent of cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12a Relevance</td>
<td>RELEVANCE</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12b UP-TO-DATENESS</td>
<td>UP TO DATE</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12c USER’S NEEDS</td>
<td>USERS NEEDS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12d AVAILABILITY AND PRICE</td>
<td>PRICE</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21e LIBRARIAN’S DISCRETION</td>
<td>DISCRETION</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Responses</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>240</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 missing case 5 valid cases

In the multiple count response giving the number of counts per variable, relevance and user needs had the most counts both representing (25%) each. Up-to-dateness, availability, price and librarians discretions had a response count of 2 each representing (16.7%). The number of counts per variable is what determines the highest percentage. This analysis shows that the library was sensitive to the user needs and wished to satisfy them. For relevance and up-to-dateness, the library also strived to offer quality service by providing what is relevant and current information resources.

**4.2.0 Composition of collection**

From the secondary sources, the researcher was able to find out exactly what was available in the children’s library. An analysis of the shelf and the accession lists showed the actual composition of the children’s collection.
Table 13: Composition of collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition of collection</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General works</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story books</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encyclopedia</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlases</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journals</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBM</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braille</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science collection</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictionaries</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total concentration of the collection was on textbooks mainly 8-4-4. The Kenya National Library though a public library, supports the educational curriculum heavily. General books constituted (25%) story books (25%) and textbooks (30%). Reference materials, journals, periodicals, science collection etc took the other (20%). The high cost of textbooks impacted negatively on literacy improvement. Kenya National Library Service stepped in to alleviate this heavy burden from parents and added textbooks to its collection.

4.2.1 Special Materials for the visually impaired, deaf and hard of hearing Users

On special materials for the visually impaired, all the 6 respondents returned a (100%) response rate. The library staff indicated that the library stocked braille books and other materials for the visually impaired. The other special users, the deaf and hard of hearing children were not catered for in the public library system.
Table 14 shows the representation of the materials for the visually impaired.

### Table 14: Special Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid percent</th>
<th>Cumulative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brailler</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braille books</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large print</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking tapes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the three branches indicated that there were braille books for the blind. Nairobi library had a brailler and talking books while the other two just stocked braille books. There was lack of adequate sensitivity to the needs of the blind and deaf users from the results presented.

#### 4.2.2 Programmes and Activities

Programmes and activities are normally used by librarians in the children’s library for various reasons. Some of them are, to create interest in users, break monotony for the young users and use the programmes and activities to improve reading. The table below shows the rating of each programme and why it is popular or not popular.

### Table 15: Programmes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Programme</th>
<th>Popular</th>
<th>Not popular</th>
<th>Very popular</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Story hours / i.e. story telling</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film/video programme</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puppet shows</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading clubs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer programmes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (traditional dances, essay Competitions)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On story telling, 3 respondents reported that this activity was very popular representing (50%) response rate. 2 respondents reported that story telling was popular representing (33.3%) while 1 respondent reported that story telling was not popular representing (16.7) response rate.

Video / film programmes had a varied response rate too. 2 respondents (33.3%) reported that video / films programmes were popular. Two respondents (33.3%) reported that this programme was not popular and 2 respondents (33.3%) very popular. 1 respondent (16.7%) reported that reading clubs were popular while 4 other respondents (66.6%) reported that reading clubs were not popular. 1 respondent (16.7%) did not report back.

On computer programmes, 5 respondents representing (83.3%) response rate reported that computer programmes were not popular. 1 respondent (16.7%) did not report back. On others, one respondent (16.7%) reported that traditional dances, essay competition took place in some libraries.

4.2.3 Why programmes are popular or unpopular.

The following reasons were given for popularity of programmes.

1. Interesting and entertaining
2. Presenter popular with children
3. Good presentation
4. Visual impact is better for children
5. Monotony breaker
6. Users can participate actively.

The programmes were also unpopular because of the following reasons

1. Boring presenter e.g. a dull story teller
2. Repetition of the same programme
3. Unavailable facilities e.g. Computers and Television.

The library staff indicated that lack of facilities denied users the opportunity to enjoy the offered programmes and activities. The tight school curriculum was also
blamed for the low turn out of users even when the library offered the programmes. The unpredictability of the schedules of the programmes also contributed to the unpopularity of the programmes.

4.2.4 Staffing

The library staff were required to answer a question on staffing. On whether there was a librarian wholly assigned to children library services, 4 respondents (66.6%) indicated that there was. 2 respondents (33.3%) indicated that there was no librarian wholly assigned for children services only. This shows that other staff served the children as well. The reasons given for this response was that the librarian was not specially trained to handle a child i.e. not a children’s librarian and that library clerks also served in the children’s section. The fact the library did not see the need to attach a librarian in charge of children services, reflected on the priority given to the children as library users.

On whether the children sought the assistance of the librarian, the response rate was 100% - all 6 respondents answered. Tables 16 a-d show the kind of assistance the users sought.

Table 16a: Book selection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16b: Reference services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the percentages given through the tables, the library staff gave some sort of assistance. The library staff shows an active participative interaction with the users as presented in the tables. The librarians showed interest in assisting the users as a way of improving on service delivery and ensuring the users utilized the available resources.

### 4.2.5 User Education

5 Respondents (83.3%) indicated that user – education was offered to the users on registration and on a continuous basis. 1 respondent (16.7%) indicated there was no user education was given to the users. The methods used for user education in the library are:

1. Lecture method
2. Orientation
3. Publicity talks
4.2.6 Library Signs

Library signs are used in libraries for various reasons. The table below shows the types and the number of respondents indicating the library signs most favoured by the libraries.

Table 17: library signs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signs</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Directional</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informational</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most favoured signs in these libraries were directional signs – those that indicate direction where to get items like book, charts etc. this was followed by informational signs – those that give information. The least used were the regulatory signs – those that indicate what to do or not to do. Use of library signs eases the pressure of work for the librarian who would otherwise have to answer all the questions from users. Library signs that are well illustrated and properly positioned serve the role of a guide.

4.2.7 Recommendations

The following were some of the recommendations given by the library staff for future improvement in the children’s library at the Kenya National Library Service.

A. Library Resources

i) The acquisition policy to be revised and the branch libraries to be consulted before any purchases are made

ii) Acquisition of current and relevant information resources tailored to the users needs

iii) Discarding old books

iv) Introduction of computer (I.T) in all libraries
B. Library Programmes

i) Provision of facilities for use in some programmes e.g. Television, film screens and cassette players.

ii) Hiring the services of qualified service providers like professional storytellers, comedians and puppeteers.

iii) Provision of space where some activities and programmes can take place

C. Services

On services and service provision, all the respondents recommended the following:

i) Trained child librarians to handle children. That means that there should be retraining

ii) Introduction of reading tents in all areas – these are popular with children.

iii) Reduce the percentage of school textbooks in the public library system.

4.2.8 Parent / Guardian data Presentation

The researcher subjected this user group to an evaluation because the parents / guardian are also users of the children services. This is because they are actively involved due to the of the age of their children or when carrying out their parental responsibilities of wanting to know what their children read or the programmes they participate in. There were 52(86.6%) respondents from this user group.

The respondents gave the name of the library and indicated the age of the user.

Table 18: Library Name

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library Name</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KNLS NAIROBI</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNLS NAKURU</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNLS THIKA</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>52</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The average age of the users was given as 4 years by 52 respondents (86.6%) response rate. Twenty 29 (51.9%) indicated they accompanied their children to the library i.e. (51.9%) this may be interpreted to mean that the users were either too young to be on their own or their parents wanted to be involved in their children’s use of the library. The other 25 (48.0%) respondents indicated they did not accompany their children because the user was able to go to the library alone or with friends.

On how the child got to the library. Table 19 shows the responses given by many respondents.

Table 19: Who accompanies child?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By public transport</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parent drops them</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>80.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On their own</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>86.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They go with teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They go with other children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.9 Opening and closing hours of the library

The parents were asked to give their hours of preference about the opening and closing time of the library on weekdays, Saturday, Sunday and public holidays. There were various responses from all the three branches with different suggestions on both the opening and closing times.
Table 20a: weekdays opening and closing hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6am to 6pm.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7am to 6.30pm</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8am to 4pm</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8am to 5pm</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>38.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8am to 7pm</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>76.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9am to 4pm</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>86.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9am to 5pm</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>92.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9am to 6pm</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9am to 6pm</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The twenty respondents (38.4%) favoured the library to open at 8am and close at 7pm. This opening and closing hours were to run throughout the 5 days from Monday to Friday. On Saturdays, Table 20b shows the opening and closing hours.
Table 20b: Saturday opening and closing hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid percent</th>
<th>Cummulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6am to 6pm</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7am to 6.30pm.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8am to 4pm</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28am to 6pm</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>24.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8am to 6.30pm</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.30am to 5pm</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9am to 4pm</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9am to 5pm</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>45.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9am to 6.30</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>61.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>80.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10am to 5pm</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>101.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>101.5</td>
<td>101.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On Saturday, the highest number of respondents was 10(19.2%) for those who wanted the library to close on Saturdays and those who wanted it to remain open from 10am to 5pm. The reasons suggested for closing on Saturdays was that few offices operated on Saturdays in Kenya and it was only fair that librarians also rested on Saturdays. 14 respondents, (26%) response rate, reported that they wanted the library to remain open on Saturday with the opening time being 8am and the closing time varying from 4pm to 6.30pm. 12 respondents representing (23%) response rate, reported that they wanted the library to open at 9am on Saturdays and to close from between 4pm and 6.30pm. 3 respondents (5.8%) wanted the library to open at 6am and close at 6pm, another 4 respondents (7.6%) reported opening at 7am and closing at 6.30pm. The 8.30am opening hour was given by one respondent (1.9%) response rate to close at 5pm.
40 respondents favoured that the library remained closed on Sunday i.e. 76.9% since this was a religious day for most Kenyans while other 12, (13.4%) and 5(9.6) favoured that it opened but just for about 6 to 7 hours. This was to allow users who were unable to use the services from Monday to Saturdays do so on Sundays.

On public holidays, there was a sharp diversion from the norm, where offices remained closed. The parents gave a favoured response of the library remaining open on such days but for a limited period. The open hours on public holidays was preferred to be 4 hours to allow users access to the library and still allow the librarians rest. The logic behind it was that libraries all over the world provide services throughout the week and for longer hours than the usual 8 hours.

Table 20d: Public Holidays open and closing hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11AM TO 3PM</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11AM TO 2PM</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3.0 Programmes and activities

The respondents were asked if they were aware of the programmes and library activities that the Kenya National Library Service offered for the children. 27 respondents representing (51.9%) response rate indicated they were not aware of any such programmes or activities. The other 25 representing (48%) indicated they were aware of such programmes and activities but how actively the children participated on them was questionable. They said they only heard of them during school holidays but not on a large scale. These shows that the library did not publicize the programmes offered or the schedules were not well organized resulting into unawareness or low attendance.

4.3.1 Composition of children’s collection

The respondents rated the composition of the collection as print (for books) and non print (for non-book media) materials using a multiple response rate the following were the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid percent</th>
<th>Cumulative percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5a Adequate</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5b Fairly adequate</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5c Inadequate</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total response</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The multiple response count rate indicated that there was a bigger percentage for “fairly adequate” for the print material. For the non-print materials (NBM) there was no response as the respondents indicated they had never seen any. On being asked to give the reasons for adequacy or inadequacy, the respondents gave the following reasons for adequacy:
1) Though the editions were old, there are some books children could borrow to use.

2) There are too many English books especially foreign fiction – good for our children to learn about the other cultures.

3) There are many textbooks which are good for parents who cannot afford to buy their own.

For inadequacy for print the following reasons were given

1) Collection is old and needs replenishing.

2) There are no non-print materials like computers, videos, cassettes.

3) There is a general disorganization of the books in the shelves so getting what one wants is difficult

4) The handicapped are not catered for.

4.3.2 Special materials

The respondents were asked to indicate if any of their children used special materials like, braille books, large print books, hearing aids etc offered at the Kenya National Library Service. For the users of the special materials, the table below shows the response rate.

Table 22: Users of special material

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>94.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

49 respondents (94.2%) indicated their children were not users of special materials and only 3(5.8%) indicated that they had children who used the special materials provided by the library. This shows that even when the library stocks braille books, utilization is minimal. There was no response indicating use of materials by
the deaf or hard of hearing children. This result can be interpreted to mean that either the parents were shy in admitting they had a blind child, which is still a stigma in our country, or the parents were not aware that the library stocked braille books and that their blind child could benefit from such materials.

### 4.3.3 Library services

The respondents were asked to rate the library service to show if the library actually met or satisfied the needs of the users. The frequency table below shows how the respondents reacted.

#### Table 23: Library service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly well</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poorly</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>74.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very well</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The highest percentage was represented by 32(61.5%) respondents who said the library services served the users fairly well while 13 others (25%) indicated a satisfactorily service. 7 respondents (13.4%) indicated the service offered was poor. This high response rate shows that the parents were satisfied with the service provision at KNLS. This result indicates that the collection, the staff etc were fairly adequate and fulfilled the users needs.
The suggestions given for further improvement of the service are summarized in table 24.

**Table 24: On improvements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Add many more books</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stock African writer</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stock more kiswahili books</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add more newer editions</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>42.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expansion of the sitting area</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>46.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduce computers</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>61.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involve the visually impaired</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>65.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publish the services offered</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>80.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve programmes &amp; activities</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>88.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop duplicates (quality first)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>90.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update library materials and acquire non-print materials</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Most of the respondents wanted more books but with a difference. That is books that were newer 6 respondents (11.5%) and of quality. Emphasis was also placed on books that reflected the local content. Introduction of I.T. also featured greatly as a sign of modernity and access to faster and better packaged information.**

### 4.3.4 Staffing

49 respondents (94.2%) indicated that the staff were very helpful with 3 (5.7%) respondents indicating the staff were unhelpful and hostile. The reasons given for the staff being helpful were:
1) They were always available
2) They were ready to help the parents
3) They tried to answer all the users questions
4) They were approachable

The reasons for the staff being hostile were:
1) Uncooperative when a user inquired something
2) Some were rude
3) Some were ignorant about the information requested by the user.

4.3.5 Changes or improvements in the library.

The respondents were asked to indicate the kind of improvement they would like to see on the furniture. 16 respondents (30.8%) said the furniture should be improved and increased in number and quality so that it is attractive to the young users. 17 respondents (32.6%) said the furniture was alright. 19 respondents (21.9%) did not give any comment on furniture.

a) Library signs

20 respondents (38.4%) indicated that more library signs should be added especially for the benefit of newly registered users who did not have to keep inquiring from the librarian if signs on shelves were adequate. 13 respondents (25%) indicated that the signs should be made bigger and brighter in colour so that they can be easily read from far. 20 respondents (38.4%) indicated that the present locations of the signs be changed to other areas like the walls and ceiling to enable the users notice them.

b) Lighting

25 respondents (48%) indicated the present lighting was adequate. 10 respondents (19%) wanted the lighting improved especially for the benefit of the ones with poor eyesight. 17 respondents (32%) suggested that bulbs be replaced with brilliant fluorescent tubes that were recommended as the best for lighting offices.
c) Floor

16 respondents (i.e. 30.8%) did not give any suggestions about the improvement on the floor. 10(19.2%) indicated that the floor was fine the way it was, tiles in Thika and Nairobi, and coloured concrete in Nakuru. 15(28.8%) suggested carpeting the floor to reduce the noise caused by users as they walked. 11 respondents (21.1%) suggested that the floor could be improved by thorough cleaning to reduce dust and bad smell.

d) Colour

49 respondents (94.2%) wanted an improvement on the colour on the walls. The children’s section they suggested should be painted with bright colours; green, yellow, red, blues i.e. the colours of the rainbow and beautiful wall murals drawn. 3 respondents (5.7%) suggested that the present colours were alright the walls only needed repainting.

e) Other suggestions on improvement were:

1) Games for children i.e. educational and physical
2) A recreational room or facility for the children
3) Provision of wall charts
4) Provision of ramps for wheelchairs

4.3.6 Presentation of data collected from children

Data presentation and analysis for the children will be in frequency tables, percentages, piecharts, graphs and multiple response counts. The children are the main consumers of the children’s library services in the Kenya National Library Service. Without the output of the children, it would be difficult to evaluate the quality of service offered at KNLS. The respondents were 60 and there was a response rate of 100%.

The respondents gave the name of the library they used.
Table 25: Library name

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAIROBI</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAKURU</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>66.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THIKA</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The age given by the 60 respondents was between 6 –14 years. This group is what is normally in primary schools from class 1 to Std 8.

When asked about how the respondent learnt or knew about the library service 22 respondents (36.7%) said they had been introduced to the library by their parents. Another 22 respondents (36.7%) indicated their friends brought them to the library. 6 respondents (11.5%) said their teachers, while 2 respondents (3.8%) knew about the library during the book week which is held annually by KNLS. The level of awareness of the existence of a children’s library at KNLS was impressive. Children knew about the library and they utilized it.

On how the child went to the library, 33 respondents (63.4%) were always accompanied by a parent, friend, sibling or teacher. This could mean that some were too young to go alone, or the parent wanted to take part in child’s library use or it was a school organized activity. The other 27 respondents (45%) went alone. This group indicated that they were in their teenage years and could comfortably go to the library alone.

4.3.7 Library staff

On whether the user, was able to use the services of a librarian while at the library 42 respondents (80%) answered in the affirmative. 10 respondents (20%) indicated they did not find a librarian to attend to them.
The respondents who said they were not attended by a librarian gave the following reasons.

1) The librarians were always busy
2) The librarians have never told us to go for assistance from them
3) I don’t ask them for assistance
4) I came to read and do my own work so I don’t need them. These respondents were saying they just use the library as a reading room and did not use the resources provided.

The respondents were asked to describe how the librarian was. 50 respondents (96%) indicated that the library staffs were very friendly and helpful. 2 respondents (3.8%) rated the librarians as harsh and indifferent while 1 respondent (1.6%) said the librarians were never there. The following pie chart shows the responses.

**Pie chart 26: Librarian’s Attitude**

From the interviews conducted by the researcher, the users reported having been warned about saying anything negative about the staff. The ones the researcher interviewed said that some staff members were hostile. This shows that the users wanted to do as they were instructed without revealing the true presentation on the staff.
4.3.8 Space and furniture

The respondents were also asked to state whether they used separate reading rooms or they shared the same with adults from the three branches, there was a 100% response rate from the 60 respondents. The three branches offered separate reading areas for the children. The response indicated that the Kenya National Library tried to follow the guidelines and standards used in other libraries worldwide. Children library services are normally provided for in separate rooms. The issue of size of space was contentious. In Nairobi and Nakuru the space was small and needed expansion. Asked about the availability of a chair and table for use, the following responses were captured.

Table 27: Furniture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reasons given for lack of a chair or table by the 6 respondents (10%) were the following;

1) The library is always full
2) The chairs are fewer than the number of users (children)
3) The rooms are small and only a few chairs fit. Nairobi and Nakuru branches were the two branches faced with this problem of lack of adequate furniture.

These results can be interpreted to mean that the furniture was too few and the library could not afford to buy more or the users were using the library only at peak seasons like holidays which made it difficult for the library to really forecast on the actual number of users. Such an unpredictable library attendance poses problems for the librarian who at one time has scores of empty chairs and tables and another time a houseful congestion.
4.3.9 Collection development

The researcher wanted to find out from the users whether the library consults them when buying material for the library and whether they would have liked to be consulted. 52 respondents (86.7%) answered affirmatively while (13.3%) answered negatively.

The following reasons were given for those who said they were consulted

- We are the ones using the books and should be given a chance to tell the librarian what we want
- We want variety like video programmes and we know the best
- When librarians buy they buy for their own taste.

These results show that the users were aware of their needs and felt that it was only fair that they be consulted since they were the consumers of the products. This kind of awareness also indicates that a library that wants to be effective must be sensitive to the users' needs for information.

The respondents who did not want to be consulted had the following reasons

1) The librarian know better since they are trained so they make better choices
2) Librarian is able to buy books that are durable i.e. hardcover books that withstand rough handling.

For the respondents who wanted the librarians to select the materials for them, they adopted the traditional attitude – that a doctor understands the diagnosis better and the librarian is better placed to acquire the best materials for them.

4.4.0 Preferred Books

The respondents were asked to rank the books they enjoyed reading most. The pie chart below shows the percentages.

Simple storybooks that covered both Kiswahili and English storybooks had the highest percentage of respondents (42%). This means that fiction was highly favoured followed by books on science fiction with 15 respondents (25%). This can be interpreted to mean that the users are fluent readers aged between 9-13 years.

Textbooks had 15 respondents (25%). This can be explained through the inability of parents to buy textbooks for their children. This shows that there are library users who...
depend on the library for textbooks. Fiction would constitute a big percentage of leisure reading among all users hence the high preference.

**Pie chart 28: Preferred Books**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42%</td>
<td>Text books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Science fiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Simple story books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Picture books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Horror stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03%</td>
<td>Magazines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.1 Rating Types of Books

On rating the various types of books in the children’s collection us the following percentage were entered for each type of class.

**Pie chart 29: on Science fiction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>59%</td>
<td>Non-existent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>Fairly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2%</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
36 respondents (60%) indicated that the science fiction collection was good. 12 respondents representing 20% did not indicate any preference. For magazines and computer programmes all 60 respondents indicated that they were non-existent. This covered all the three branches sampled.

For 39 respondents representing (65%) indicated that textbooks were good. Only 1 indicated that textbooks were unavailable. The high preference for textbooks can be interpreted to mean that many parents are unable to buy textbooks for their children and so they send them to the library to borrow textbooks.

Graph 30: Textbooks

Reference books were indicated to be almost non-existent (96.7%) with only 2 respondents (3.3%) saying this particular collection was poor. The non-existence of reference materials in the children's library just reflects on the quality of the collection.

4.4.2 Finding the books / materials

The respondents were asked to state whether they were able to get materials once in the library or to state the obstacles that hindered them from getting the books
or other materials. A multiple response count was used and the number of counts per variable given.

**Table 31: Finding books / materials**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dichotomy label</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage of cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know</td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No one to help</td>
<td>No help</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books not there</td>
<td>No Bks</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books not in position</td>
<td>Bks position</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total responses</td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>101.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were 7 missing cases and 53 valid cases out of 54 counts. Those who did not know how to find the items were 20 giving a response percentage of (37%) while those that found books not in position were 16 or (29.6%). The 7 missing cases are the ones who did not give any response. The results generally show the level of organization of the library materials. The ones who did not know how to get the books could be attributed to lack of user education for the users or inadequate library signs to show where the books were located.

**4.4.3 Programmes and activities**

The responses were done through a multiple response count and the following results received. The respondents were to indicate whether they were aware of the programmes / activities offered by the library.
There were 13 missing cases and 47 valid cases. Out of a total of 55 counts, 24 respondents indicated that they were aware of story hours. Films and videos scored second with a count of 11 respondents showing awareness. The high percentage on story hours showed the popularity of the programme hence the awareness. This also showed that the respondents participated in the programme. Though video/film programmes attracted a count of 11 with (20%), it was established that though the users were aware of the programme, they rarely watched films or videos because of lack of facilities. If and when they watched, it was only during holidays.

### 4.4.4 Special materials

The respondents were asked to state whether they used any special materials. 55 respondents (91.7%) indicated that they did not use such materials while 5 respondents (8.3%) indicated use of special materials like braille, large print books. Most of the users filling the questionnaires were sighted. The (8.3%) are visually impaired users who are in an integrated programme. They use the library though organized school trips.

### 4.4.5 Opening hours

The respondents were asked to give their suggestions on their preference for the opening and closing hours of the library.

On weekdays, from all three branches, the most favoured opening time was 8am with the closing time remaining 6.30pm. These group of respondents were 50
(83.3%) response rate. 5 respondents wanted the library to close at 7.30pm but retain the normal opening hours of 8am. 5 respondents did not respond to any of the suggestions.

The respondents wanted the library to open on Saturdays from 9am in the morning and close at 4pm. There were 45 respondents (75%) for these opening and closing hours while 15 (25%) favoured 9am to 5pm.

Sundays and public holidays had 100% response rate with all the respondents indicating that the library should stay closed.

4.4.6 Improvements / recommendations

On improvement in the children’s section using a multiple response count for this question, there was a total of 143 responses achieved from the various responses given. The table in page 78 shows the response
Table 33: Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category Label</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>percent of responses</th>
<th>Percent of cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More books</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>57.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More furniture</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More space</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce noise</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polite librarians</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved organization / arrangement</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean floors, toilets, furniture</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve lighting</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bring computers</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create awareness for service</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separate class 8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrade library</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paint walls</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video/films programmes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extend open hours</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speedy registration</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total responses</strong></td>
<td>143</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was 1 missing case and 59 valid cases. From the multiple response count 34 counts (57.6%) indicated that they wanted more book. 24 counts (40.7%) suggested more furniture. The other count worth noting is that of 18 counts (30.5%) on computers and 12 counts (20.3%) on programmes. 13 counts representing (22%) wanted more space provided for the children. The result indicated that the users needed more information resources i.e. more books and facilities to enable them to use the resources. The recommendations on introduction and use of I.T is in line with what is happening all over – computers are highways to access of information. Children already know that computers are useful channels of information dissemination.
CHAPTER 5

5.0 Discussions, Summary of Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion.

The librarian, especially today, would like to know how the users respond to the services given so that improvement is made. Libraries today are faced with the danger of being relegated to the periphery especially if the traditional role of a custodian of books persists. The evaluation subjected to the children library service through the three branches was to test the worthiness of service offered at the Kenya National Library Service.

This chapter summarises and makes recommendations based on the findings of the study as analysed in the preceding chapter. The views of the researcher from the literature review will also be incorporated. The following sub topics will be used in discussing this chapter.

- Service provision under the Act of Parliament
- Suitability of children’s collection and programmes for the users
- User satisfaction
- Recommendations

5.1 Implementation of the Act of Parliament

The Kenya National Library Service Board was established under an Act of Parliament in 1965, and charged with the following functions. To promote, establish, equip, manage, maintain and develop libraries and Information services in Kenya (Kenya Laws Chapter 225). From the three branches sampled, the response rate to the question whether the board offered children services was (100%). This means that in all the branches of the Kenya National Library Service, children’s library services are provided. Provision of services by the board means provision of services for children aged between 0 – 17 years as recommended by the IFLA Library guidelines.
5.2 Service Provision

The study revealed that KNLS provided services for children but with different variations. Sighted children are provided for very well. Low vision and blind children in the three branches sampled are provided for but minimally. In Nairobi branch, there are only 31 registered blind users. Nairobi branch operates a school programme with the integrated programmes within Nairobi. This programme has the library drop books for the visually impaired children or the school organizes to come and collect the braille books. Nairobi boasted a collection of 5000 braille books, talking books and 1 Perkins brailler and 1650 large print editions for the low vision users, mostly fiction. This unit also has magazines like Imfarma and Blindbar from South Africa. These are monthly publications from South Africa.

In Thika branch, the Braille collection was less than 50 braille books. There were no registered blind users in this branch. The presence of the Thika School For The Blind in Thika perhaps contributed to the low enrolment of visually impaired users since such users used the school library, which was stocked with special materials for the visually impaired.

In Nakuru, the study showed that there were no registered blind users. The braille collection was less than 30 books, which were rarely used. The Menengai integrated programme in Nakuru did not seem to utilize the braille collection at the library. The study showed that only 5.8%, Table 24, indicated that they had children who used special materials i.e braille books while another 8.3% indicated that they used braille books. These respondents are the registered blind users at Nairobi branch.

The problems attributed to low provision of braille books for the visually impaired is the cost of transcribing ordinary print into braille. The collections of braille materials are donations from the Royal Blind Society in Britain. The donations comprise mostly of fiction. The large print editions for use by low vision users are also donations that come through Book Aid International.

The other problem that also hindered full utilization of the available services was mobility. Many blind children are not fully orientated to move from their houses
or schools on their own to the library. So unless accompanied by a teacher or a parent, such a user cannot go to the library. Despite all the analysed problems, Kenya National Library Service did not start providing services for the blind when it started operating in 1967. The delay in provision of services for the visually impaired has caused delays in putting in place facilities for them. Kenya National Library Service history of service provision for the blind is less than 5 years old. This means that the collection and other facilities are yet to be developed and put in place.

5.2.1 Service for the deaf and hard of hearing.

The study revealed that the Kenya National Library Service does not have a history of provision of library services for the deaf. The deaf child normally uses the same materials used by the sighted. For such a user to utilize such resources, the librarian must know how to assist this user through sign language or through use of clearly written library signs. From the study, there was no respondent who indicated use of materials by the deaf or hard of hearing children. Special materials for use like hearing aids were non-existent. Librarians indicated that they did not have any deaf or hard of hearing users.

5.2.2 Services for the Physically Handicapped.

Though from the study, the researcher could not tell who was a physically handicapped user or not, it was possible to verify the facilities in place for this group of users. In Thika and Nakuru libraries, there was no indication that the library had facilities like ramps used for wheel chairs. In Nairobi library, there is a ramp provided for any user on a wheel chair. This branch then shows it can cater for such a user. Other facilities like toilets for the physically handicapped are not there in the three branches and this discourages users who would want to visit the library. The library staff don’t seem sensitized to providing equal services for all. This was reflected through the discussions with the researcher. The library staff was not keen on knowing whether among the registered users there were some who would require special facilities. If the library staff had such information it would create awareness and force the library provide for specialized materials.
5.3 Staffing

Provision of quality service must be provided through a trained children’s librarian. The study showed that from the three branches, library staff that was not professionally qualified librarians headed the children’s sections. There were two certificate holders, i.e. library assistants, two diploma holders i.e. senior library assistants, one graduate and masters one holder who were in charge of the branches. All these personnel were trained in librarianship as shown in Table 2. None of them had any special training as children librarians. In these three branches, library clerks were assigned duties in the children’s section implying that untrained staff could handle children and this could be considered acceptable. Elkin (1991) asserts that children’s needs are important enough to require specialist posts. This can only be attained through training. Specialized training will improve the service provided, thus making it qualitative. The library over years has been known to entrust the provision and dissemination of information to professionals and children should benefit from this professionalism. However this is not the case at KNLS. Para-Professionals are entrusted with the important role of disseminating information for this user group. Among the staff working in the children section, 3 out of 5 were library clerks placed to work with children. Effective service delivery, demands professional dissemination of information.

5.4 Hours of Service

The findings of the study showed that the opening and closing hours in the three branches had slight variations. Nairobi branch library opened for users at 8 am and closed at 6:30 pm on 4 days of the week. Thika and Nakuru opened for the users at 9 am and closed at 6 pm in the evening. The official office hours were 8am but shelving and material organization necessitated the delay in the two branches. This shows that there was no continuous shelving. In Nairobi, shelving and the organization of materials was continuously carried out even as the users used the materials. This saved time for the librarian and the users because the library opened on time.

On Fridays, all the branches closed at 4pm. The opening time in the respective library branches remained 8am and 9am. The early closure on Friday was a sort of compensation for the librarians who opened the library at 8am or 9am and closed at
5pm or 5:30pm. On Saturdays and Sundays and public holidays, were rest days for the librarians with the library remaining closed.

The users through the research findings indicated that an extension of opening hours in the library was welcome. The research findings also revealed that many users wanted the library to operate on Sundays and public holidays as well. (Table 22c) 23% and (Table 22d) 96% shows the suggested hours on public holidays and Sundays. These findings show that users want the library to offer more hours of service even on Sundays and public holidays. The logic behind this is that the library is an essential service and access should be availed as much as possible.

On weekdays, the study established that users wanted the opening hours of the library to be increased. 34.4% (Table 24) wanted an extension of about 2 hours. That the library closes at 7pm instead of 6pm and 6.30pm respectively. With the library open up to 7pm or 8pm, parents would be able to visit and return, select or borrow books for their children. The other possibility would be to make a detour to the library as the traffic jam eased

The increase of opening hours for the children's library was seen to be a way of increase in quality of service. Parents and children who would wish to visit the library would confidently go knowing that the library would be open. The increase of hours would lead to an increase in children's library visits per child. Walter (1992:29). Modification of opening and closing hours would better meet needs of children and their families in the community served by the library. For the library to make an impact especially in promoting reading, making provisions for the parents and their children in the hours the library remained open was important. A library that will survive the onslaught of information explosion is the one that will be sensitized to the needs of the users. For instance, if parents leaving their offices at 5pm wanted to pass through the library with their children, then the library had a responsibility of ensuring that the library remained open till 7pm or 8pm.

5.5 Age of Users

The average minimum age of users established through the research findings was 4 years. The standards for children’s services in public libraries, gave guidelines
or standard statements for children service as from infancy to 17 years Benne
(1991:7). The research findings revealed that the Kenya National Library Service does
not offer services to children below 4 yrs. (Table 6) on Age of users states the
minimum age to be 4 years. The maximum age for children services is 14 years. The
library caters for children that are already in the school system i.e. primary level.
After 14 years, the user is automatically deregistered as a child and membership is
sought from the adult section.

Users who are preschoolers, those that need library materials to help develop
their verbal skills are not catered for. This group is between ages 0-3 years and their
needs for information are expressed through symbols, toys and simple storybooks that
mirror the child’s day-to-day experiences. These users are cut off in service provision
at KNLS.

The bulk of the registered users lie within the age stipulated in the primary
school system. The process of registration for users demands that a user has to be
validated by a school. The head of his/her school has to acknowledge that such a child
is a member of that school. The library also uses the parents/guardians consent to
register such a child. This rigid mode of registration seems to cut off any user who
could not be in the formal school system.

From the findings, users over 14 years are supposed to shift to the adult section
where their needs are supposed to be met. Service divisions in many libraries are
normally determined by librarians to ease service provision. However, in the Kenya
National Library, it is not the user who determines that their informational and
psychological needs are satisfied or not satisfied at the children's library, it is the
librarian. Users over 14 years are in the secondary school system. The library
divisions are that these are young adults and so they are automatically catered for in
the adult section. The users who are over 15 years move to the adult section just
because the textbooks for form 1 to 4 are in the adult section. The assumption that this
user is now ready to be thrust into the adult world lies with the library staff. The
assertion is that a child over 14 or 15 years would not fit in the children section. This
is an anomaly because if proper guidelines were followed and adhered to, then the
users, 14 - 17 years old would be accommodated comfortably in the children’s
library.
5.6 Space and Furniture

The study revealed that in the three branches, the children had separate rooms for use from the adults. (Table 29), 90% of respondents said they used a separate room and had their own furniture. From the secondary sources the researcher used, the issue of space was contentious in Nairobi and Nakuru branches, it was recommended that space for the children should be improved and expanded. In Nairobi branch the sitting capacity was for 100 children and extreme congestion was experienced with 250 children during peak seasons like holidays and Saturdays. Nakuru had a sitting capacity of 50 users comfortably accommodated but congested at 100. Thika library has a big space and could comfortably fit a sitting capacity of 250 users.

The furniture was not adequate because most of it was suitable for children from ages 4-7 years. 8-14 year users were uncomfortable using the low tables and the small chairs. For quality provision of service, every librarian must at one time or another evaluate existing space and furniture as it impedes or advances efforts to meet the service objectives. The furniture in use in the three libraries was not suitable for children on wheelchairs. The tables are very low to allow a child on a wheelchair to use it. The spaces between the tables and the chairs would also impede easy movement for a user on a wheelchair. Evaluation of space and furniture was not normally done to cater for the physical changes of the users. Users were seen crouching on very low tables as they read. The seats were fit for nursery children because of their small size.

5.7 Collection and Programmes

A children’s collection serves a number of functions. It can be developed to support the objectives and goals of the parent organization among many other functions. In addition to this, the overriding goal in children’s services is helping children become perceptive readers. Such a collection requires materials that would lead children from one level of reading to another. The research findings show that the Kenya National Library Service has a policy on collection development. Developing a reading culture in children is one of the objectives. The evaluative aspect on the collection is, does it develop reading or will the books be classified as such,
The library is full of dust. ... In the library are three kinds of books. Books people like to read. Books people do not like to read, and books people never will read. Benne (1991:112).

Is the quality of the collection at Kenya National Library Service summarized as above or do the people (children) read all the books?

KNLS supports the school curriculum very heavily. This has definitely affected the quality of the collection because the public library was taking the shape of a school library. Table 26 and Table 32c, show that textbooks actually constituted a big percentage of the collection. The composition of the collection was mainly on print with Non-book media barely present.

The books were rated as old, worn out and out-dated. The out-datedness was attributed to the over reliance of the library on donations from Book Aid International. Most of these books were irrelevant and that is why they were being donated. The librarian at Thika indicated that 70% of the collection was outdated with some editions dating back to 1960. The 30% of what was relevant were heavily used because they were African in context. Though children are known not to rely on the "bestseller syndrome" in their reading habits, provision of current books was an added advantage.

On acquisitions for the children's library, the library had a centralized system. In such a system, there are bound to be shortcomings especially because of miscommunication from the branch libraries. Branch libraries wanted to be involved in selection and acquisition of the books and other materials because they understood their users better. The issue of acquisition also touches on budget allocations for the children's library. This was the standard practice worldwide but due to lack of funds KNLS was not able to have separate budgets for the childrens libraries.

The reference sections did not have any journals, periodicals or magazines. The libraries had old sets of encyclopedia Britannica, which were rarely used. From the daily issues, there was an over concentration of borrowings from fiction which
comprised both Kiswahili and English books. There were also some books in vernacular languages like Kikuyu, Dholuo, Kalenjin, Luhia etc.

The added value in such a collection lay in the textbooks which were heavily used. Though a public library should not be turned into a glorified school library, promotion of reading was evident from the utilization of the textbooks.

5.7.1 Programmes

Most public libraries plans include some provision for programmes. A programme is defined as any planned event that introduces library services, provides entertainment or promoted the library. Some of the programmes that are popular in public libraries are puppet shows, story telling, film and video programmes, reading clubs, skits and drama etc. At the Kenya National Library Service the research findings indicated that the following programmes were offered.

- Story telling
- Film/video shows
- Traditional dances
- Essay competition

Story telling was popular, 100% response, meaning that children enjoyed participating. Film/video shows 33% response, shows that though listed as some of the programmes offered, they were not readily available. This is because many libraries lacked the facilities i.e. T.V. and video deck. Traditional dances and essay competition 16.7% in (table 16), were used as monotony breakers for the users who got bored with reading.

In Nairobi library, where the facilities for video/film programmes were available these were only shown on school holidays. This is interpreted to mean that it is not a well planned programme and was also faced with financial handicaps for purchasing the video cassettes. No parent would then plan to bring in a child to watch a video/film show because of this unpredictability.
Computer programmes, very popular with the urban children, were not offered in any of the libraries. An 83% response rate established that they were not popular because they were non-existent, Table 16. The availability of the necessary infrastructure, electricity and telephone lines, has not ensured availability of these services. Computers though decreasing in cost are still unaffordable to the Kenya National Library which relies wholly on government funding.

The easily available programmes like story telling are characterized by low attendance because of the quality of the method of delivery and also repetition of the same boring stories. Lack of publicity has also contributed to low attendance as showed in the table through the respondents response rate. 51.9% of those parents not aware that such programmes existed and 43.6% of children saying that they were aware. The researcher established through interviews with the users, that it was the librarians or library staff who converted into story tellers. The users indicated that they found the storytellers boring inconsistent and repetitive.

5.8 User Satisfaction

The researcher through the study sought to establish or determine the effectiveness of the children’s library service at KNLS. This method when used for evaluation more often than not becomes subjective. It is conducted by gathering opinions via questionnaires or interviews, such qualitative findings helps the researcher understand more subjective phenomena such as thoughts, attitude or feelings. This is why the researcher sought to find out the attitude, thoughts and feelings of users towards the staff, collection and the whole spectrum of services offered. The findings of the study indicated that the staff were friendly, helpful and approachable, 94.2% response rate. This shows a high level of satisfaction on staff with suggestions to improve on a few who were harsh and hostile to the users.

On library resources and information needs, a response of 57.6% response rate showed that there should be more books, quality books, newer editions and introduction of Information Technology through computers to improve quality of service delivery.
On space and furniture, users, especially the parents wanted a big change. Better furniture for the users, better sitting arrangements, not classroom type format, differently painted walls, 94.2% showed that there should be change. It is such feelings expressed e.g. “use the colours of the rainbow” for the walls, that are interpreted to mean, the users need change. The feeling, attitudes of the library staff, parents and children came through the findings already established.

5.9 CONCLUSION

From the study, it was established through evaluation, that there was a lot to be done to achieve optimal service provision. The effectiveness of the service was put to test and it was found wanting. The goodness of the service was not fully enjoyed by the users.

Librarians have tried to appraise quality by asking users whether they were satisfied with an act of use. However, clients are known to express satisfaction in spite of how they really feel. This study sought to bring out the true representation of the service and the findings are hopefully truthful. If this is the case, then the Kenya National Service Board, has to work hard to improve on all the areas found wanting.

Encouraging clients to take a fresh look at a service seems to be a useful approach to finding evidence for improving its quality. The evaluation carried out in the children’s library attempted to do this. These findings are a reflection of what the users want for their library. This is a library that exists to provide service. Without constant evaluation, a library would cease to exist. For the Kenya National Library Service to continue to offer quality service it must evaluate its performance often.
6.0 General Recommendations

From the findings and interpretations of the study, the following recommendations were made.

1. That the government should avail more funding for the Kenya National Library which doubles as a public and National library. An increase in funding would improve the buildings and ensure a current collection. The present holdings at the Kenya National Library Services are 80% donations from International Book Aid, while 20% is bought using the little fundings given by the Government.

2. That the collection and acquisition policy at the Kenya National Library Services be decentralized and budget allocation for each branch given. This would enable the librarian build a collection of books and materials suitable for a particular user community.

3. Old books should be discarded and weeded from the shelves. The library recommended that it was better to have few books which were neat and not torn than shelves full of obsolete torn books. Emphasis on African Authors was given. Currency of the books was also emphasized.

5. The establishment of standards for libraries in Kenya. Though the public library, KNLS, follows the standards and guidelines of IFLA, local standards would be most welcome. The KLA (Kenya Library Association) was challenged to establish standards, i.e. realistic ones taking into account all the prevailing situations of developing countries. Tailor made standards for Kenyan libraries would be more realistic to establish than those borrowed from libraries that are well established. Home grown standards developed by the local professional body were bounded to be more down to earth and easier to establish and follow.
6. On services for all. Recommendations were that this public library should reach out to the total community of users. ALL children should be provided for without discrimination.

6. For programmes – have more variety, publicize them more effectively, offer programmes that can be attended by larger groups at specified time. The recommendation to the librarians for this was to get co-sponsors like media houses who would provide coverage and perhaps a professional storyteller.

7. Reduce the percentage of school textbooks. The support given to the school curriculum by Kenya National Library Service was welcome. Users however felt that the public library was being turned into a school library. To develop a reading culture, which will translate into a reading nation, the public library would have to cut a different image. It will have to be a reservoir of information not necessarily connected to school and passing of exam. It would have to be a place to elicit excitement and wonder for reading.

8. Recommendations for expansion of space for the children. The current space provided in many branches was small and congestion occurred. Purpose built libraries would solve such problems.

9. Changing the interior décor for the children’s library was suggested. That walls should be decorated with beautiful wall murals or rainbow colours, different design of furniture to remove the classroom feeling. The idea is to create a totally different outlook from that of a placid classroom so that children feel different to want to discover reading. Lighting should be improved by having fluorescent bulbs or fancy lightings suitable for reading and geared to improving on the interior décor of the children’s library. For the floor, it was suggested and recommended that it be kept clean.

10. Recommendations on improving the toilets were given. Many children gave this recommendation saying they used toilets used by adults and they suggested having their own facilities. Such would be kept clean because of the
tender age of the users. Separate toilets for children was a standard norm that Kenya National Library Service seemed to ignore.

11. Though the librarians are trained, that is, they have professional qualifications as librarians, children librarians should be especially trained to equip them with skills for handling children.

12. Introduction of I.T. in the children's library would create interest especially now with computers becoming common place in many schools. Provision of I.T. would modernize the library and readers would be attracted to use the library resources.

13. The role of publicity plays in creating awareness was also emphasized on. That publicity would create awareness and even bring other agencies that deal with children together with librarians to work for the benefit of the children.

From the evaluation carried out, the users and the library staff felt that there was a lot to be done to achieve optimal service provision. The effectiveness of the service was put to test, and it was found wanting. It was upon the board to critically look at the areas, where the evaluative process singled out as lacking and needing improvement.
REFERENCES


Bibliography


The Kenya National Library Service Board Act of 1965
(Kenya Laws Chapter 225).


The Director,
Kenya National Library Service,
P.O. Box 30573,
NAIROBI
Dear Sir,

RE: Evaluation of Children's Library Services: A KNLS Case Study

I am a Masters student at Kenyatta University. I am undertaking research on the stated topic.

The intended aim of the research is to use the findings and the recommendations to improve the Children's Library Services at KNLS.

I am seeking for permission to enable me to carry research at three branches – i.e. Nairobi Provincial Library, Thika and Nakuru. I will use various research instruments such as questionnaires, interviews, observation and secondary sources.

The information gathered is purely for academic research purposes and will be treated confidentially.

I'll appreciate all the assistance extended. Thank you for your Co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

Wangari M. Ngovi
APPENDIX 2

Questionnaire for Librarians

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help collect information concerning the children’s library services in Kenya National Library Service. The information you provide will greatly assist the Board improve on children’s library services. This information will solely be for the stated purpose and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Please answer the questions by use of a tick (✓) where options are provided. Write your answers in the spaces provided for questions without options.

1. Name of Library __________________________ Branch __________________________

2. Position ________________________________

Children Library Services

3. Do you offer children’s library services?
   Yes □
   No □
   a) If your answer to question 3 is no, give reasons
      __________________________________________________________

4. What is the opening and closing time for the library?

   Morning __________________________ Evening __________________________
   Weekdays __________________________ and __________________________
Saturdays__________________________and__________________________

Sundays__________________________and__________________________

Public Holidays______________and__________________________

Others (specify)______________________________________________

a) How many days in a week is the library open?_____________________

5. What is the minimum age of the children who use the children’s section ____________________

6. How many children in your community are registered users?
   a) 200 or less □
   b) 500 □
   c) 2,000 □
   d) 5,000 and over □

7. Is user education offered to the children?
   Yes □
   No □
a) If your response to number 7 is yes, list the preferred methods used in your library for user education

i)

ii)

iii)

iv)

v)

vi)

8. The use of signs in a library is common practice. Indicate the types of signs commonly used in the children’s section in your library

a) Directional

b) Identification

c) Informational

d) Regulatory

e) Other (specify)
9. Do you have a written policy regarding collection development?

- Yes [ ]
- No [ ]

a) If yes, what is its objective as regards the children’s collection?

a) __________________________
b) __________________________
c) __________________________
d) __________________________

10. If your answer for question 9 is no, what are the reasons for not having a written Policy?

---------------------------------------------------------------------

---------------------------------------------------------------------

11. How large is the children’s collection?

- 5,000 or below [ ]
- 5,001 – 10,000 [ ]
- 50,000 and over [ ]
- Other (specify) __________________________
12. What is the composition of material for the children’s collection?

A. Print material (books, magazines, journals etc) 
B. Non-print material (audio tapes, video tapes, educational games) 
C. Both print and non-print 
D. Others (specify) 

13. What criteria do you use for selection?

a) Relevance 
b) Up-to-dateness (currency) 
c) User’s needs 
d) Availability and price 
e) Librarian’s discretion 
f) Others (specify) 

a) Do you evaluate your library resources?

Yes 
No 

b) If yes, how often do you evaluate?
c) If no to number 13a, what are the reasons for not evaluating?

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

14. Does the library have a policy on weeding and discarding of unused, unwanted, torn and obsolete material

Yes

No

15. Give reasons for your response in No. 14

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

b) After how long does the library discard and weed materials?

Every 2 years

Every 5 years

Every 8 years

Every 10 years

Other specify ________________________________
16. In the table provided, rate the programmes by using 1,2,3 for; 1=very popular, 2=popular 3=Not popular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of programme</th>
<th>Very popular</th>
<th>Popular</th>
<th>Not popular</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Story hours i.e. story telling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Film/video programmes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Puppet shows</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reading clubs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Computer programmes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Give reasons that make a programme very popular

__________________________________________________

__________________________________________________

__________________________________________________

a) Give reasons that make a programme not popular

__________________________________________________

__________________________________________________

__________________________________________________

__________________________________________________

18. List the different special materials and resources used by the visually impaired Child (ren) in your library

i. ___________________________   vi) ___________________________

ii. ___________________________   vii) ___________________________
19. Which resources are available in your library for the deaf and hard of hearing Children
   i. ______________________
   ii. ______________________
   iii. ______________________
   iv. ______________________
   v. ______________________
   vi. ______________________
   vii. ______________________

   Staffing

20. What is your professional qualification?

   Certificate
   
   Diploma
   
   Degree
   
   Masters
21. Is there a librarian(s) who is wholly assigned for children’s services?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

a) If your answer is to No. 21 is no, give reasons

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

22. Do the children approach you for assistance?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

a) If your answer to the above question is yes, indicate the kind of assistance they mostly requested for

a) Book selection [ ]

b) Reference services [ ]

c) Locating information [ ]

d) Others (specify) _____________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Recommendations

23. What recommendation would you make for the improvement of resources, services and programmes to suit the children’s needs?

a) Library resources

b) Library programmes

c) Library services
APPENDIX 3

Questionnaire for children

Please take a few minutes to answer these questions. Your answers will help improve the children’s library service at Kenya National Library. All the information you give is only for research purposes. Thank you for your co-operation.

Please tick (✓) where choices are provided. Where choices are not provided, write down your own answers in the spaces provided.

1. Name of the library __________________________________________

2. How old are you? ______________________________

   a) Are you a boy or girl ______________________________________

   Children Library Services

3. How did you know about the library?

   a) From my parents □

   b) From my friends □

   c) From my teacher □

   d) I read about it □

   e) Others (specify) __________________________________________

4. When you visit the library, do you go alone or are you accompanied?

   __________________________________________
5. When you visit the library, do you read / play games in a separate room/place from the adult?
   
   Yes
   No

6. Are you able to get a chair and table to use once you are at the library?
   
   Yes
   No

   a) If your answer to No.5 is no, give reasons for your answer


7. The opening and closing hours for the library is 8.00a.m to 6.30pm.
   Give your suggestions on other opening hours you would prefer.
   
   i) Weekday _______________ and _______________
   
   ii) Saturday _______________ and _______________
   
   iii) Sunday _______________ and _______________
   
   iv) Public holiday _______________ and _______________

Collection Development and Programmes

8. Would you like the librarian to seek your opinion when buying books video/film programmes, magazines etc.
   
   Yes
   No
9. Reading is an enjoyable activity. Below is a list of books you find in the library. Tick the ones you prefer to read most.

a) Simple story books
b) Science fiction
c) Magazines
d) Picture books
e) Text books
f) Horror stories
g) Others (specify)

10. If at times you don't find the books/magazines that you prefer to read, what hinders you from finding the item?

a) I don't know how to get it
b) There is no one to help me find it
c) The books are not there
d) The books are not in their position

e) Other (specify) ________________________________

11. In your own opinion, how would you rate the books in the children collection. Use "good", "fairly", "poor" non-existent

i) Fiction (story books, picture books _____________

ii) Science fiction ______________________________

iii) Magazines _________________________________

iv) Text books _________________________________

v) Computer programmes ________________________

vi) Reference books ____________________________

12. The following library activities are provided at the library. Which ones are you aware of?

a) Story hours (story telling) ____________________

b) Film/video programmes ______________________

c) Puppet shows ______________________________

d) Computer programmes ______________________

e) Others (specify) ______________________________
13. Do you use any special materials like braille books, large print books, hearing aids, magnifying glass etc.

Yes    □

No     □

a) If your answer is yes, to the above question, list the ones you use

i)_________________________    iv)_________________________

ii)_________________________    v)_________________________

iii)_________________________   vi)_________________________

Staffing

14. While at the library, is there a librarian(s) who attends to your or answers your questions?

Yes    □

No     □

a) If your answer is no No.14, please give the reasons why

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

15. How can you describe the Librarian(s)?

a) Very friendly and helpful    □

b) Harsh and indifferent        □
c) Never there (absent all times)  


d) Others specify _______________________________________

**Recommendations**

16. What would you like changed or improved about the children’s section?

i) _________________________________

ii) _________________________________

iii) _________________________________

iv) _________________________________

v) _________________________________

vi) _________________________________

vii) _________________________________
APPENDIX 4

Questionnaire for the guardian/parent.

I am a Masters student at Kenyatta University undertaking research on Evaluation of Children's Library Service at Kenya National Library Service. I am interested in finding out how you and your children respond to the children's library services. Any information given will be treated confidentially. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Please respond by ticking (✓) against your preferred response where options are provided. Write your answers in the spaces provided for questions without options.

1. Library ____________________

Children Library Services

2. What is the age of your child (ren) who is a library user? ____________________

a) Do you accompany your child(ren) to the library?

   Yes ☐

   No ☐

b) If your answer to question 2a is no, how does he/she get to the library?

   ____________________________________________________________
3. The opening hours for the library are 8.00am to 6.30pm. Please indicate your preference for the following

   i) Weekdays    Morning ___________________ Evening ___________________

   ii) Saturdays   Morning ___________________ Evening ___________________

   iii) Sundays    Morning ___________________ Evening ___________________

   iv) Public Holidays    Morning ___________________ Evening ___________________

   a) Any other suggestions on the hours __________________________

   ____________________________________________________________

   Collection Development and Programmes

4. The following are some of the activities / programmes that take place in the Children’s library. Indicate the ones you are aware of:

   a) Story hours (story telling)    □

   b) Film/video programmes    □

   c) Puppet shows    □

   d) Computer programmes    □

   e) Others (specify) ____________________________

   ____________________________________________________________
a) Please give your opinion on your choices

5. A library collection is made up of print and non-print materials. How would you rate the children’s collection. You can give more than two answers:

a) Adequate □

b) Fairly adequate □

c) Inadequate □

d) Other (specify) ________________________________

______________________________

a) Give reasons for the answer chosen

______________________________

6. Does your child use any of the special materials i.e. braille, large print books, hearing aids etc, offered at Kenya National Library Service

Yes □

No □

a) If your answer to the above question is yes, please indicate the type of special material used ________________________________

______________________________
7. As a parent / guardian, how well do you think the library meets the needs / demands of its users

Very well □
Fairly well □
Poorly □

Others (specify) ____________________________________________

a) What suggestions would you give for any improvement?

____________________________________________

Staffing

8. How do you find the attitude of the library staff?

a) Very helpful □

b) Unhelpful □

c) Hostile □

d) Other (specify) ___________________________________________

____________________________________________

a) Give brief comments for your choice __________________________
9. What improvements or changes would you like to see effected in the following areas in the children’s library?

   a) Furniture

   ______________________________________________________

   b) Library signs

   ______________________________________________________

   c) Lighting

   ______________________________________________________

   d) Floor

   ______________________________________________________

   e) Colour

   ______________________________________________________

   f) Any other

   ______________________________________________________

10. Make any recommendations or the changes you would like to see effected in the Children’s library

   ______________________________________________________

   ______________________________________________________