

**THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY-BASED LIBRARIES IN
INFORMATION DISSEMINATION: A CASE STUDY OF THREE
KENYA NATIONAL LIBRARY SERVICE BRANCHES.**

BY

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*The role of
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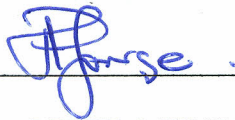
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DECLARATION

This is my original work and has never been presented for examination in any other university in part or whole.

Candidate: _____



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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as a University supervisor

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2005

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated with great affection to all my family members and to all who stood with me in prayers and offered words of encouragement. Special dedication goes to my dear wife and daughters without whose support, patience, and encouragement this work would not have been completed.

To my dear wife, who has been my constant source of strength and support, and indeed sacrificing so much for me, I dedicate this work.

I cannot forget my supervisor, Mr. M. N. Muthu, for his constant support, guidance, and encouragement throughout the project.

To all my teachers, who have been my source of knowledge and inspiration, I thank you for imparting such a great knowledge to me.

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Special appreciation goes to the staff of the library, who have been my constant source of information, and also to the staff of the library, who have been my constant source of information.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the role of KNLS Community-Based Libraries (CBLs) in information dissemination. Its particular focus was on the adult library clientele and the following areas were looked at: the library and information services currently available; their relevance and adequacy: accessibility to these services: extent of utilization of the information resources and the adult library users' information needs satisfaction.

Three CBLs: Karatina, Naivasha, and Mwingi formed the case study. Data was collected using mainly the questionnaire, though observation and interview methods were used to a lesser degree.

The study found out that a range of relevant services were currently being provided but the same were inadequate. Furthermore, it also found out that some adult library users were unaware of some of the available services. Though accessibility to services had been enhanced, some users were still experiencing some difficulties in accessing the services. The study found out that maximum use was being made of the available relevant information resources. However, on information needs satisfaction, the study found out that users were undecided on the issue.

The study therefore came up with recommendations that can be applied by CBLs to enhance effective dissemination of information to adult library clientele. These include: introducing additional and diversified services: marketing the currently available services: conducting user studies: training of library staff to enhance accessibility to information: providing relevant information materials: compiling a community information profile, and embracing new technology.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1. CBLs - Community-Based Libraries
2. CLS - Camel Library Service
3. KASNEB - Kenya Accountants and Secretaries National Examinations Board
4. KNLS - Kenya National Library Service
5. RLRDP - Rural Libraries and Resources Development Project

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

The Kenya National Library Service (KNLS) is a state corporation established by an Act of Parliament, **Cap.225 of the Laws of Kenya** that set up the KNLS Board in August 1965. The Act mandates the Board to **“promote, establish, equip, manage, maintain and develop library and information services in Kenya.”**

KNLS plays a dual role of a national and a public library. As a public library, KNLS provides access to knowledge and information through a range of resources and services to all members of the community regardless of race, nationality, age, gender, religion, language, status and level of education.

The KNLS Board’s vision is **“to have a knowledgeable information driven society and a sustained reading culture in Kenya”** and in order to realize this vision, the Board endeavours to: **“provide a well coordinated, efficient, cost effective and adaptive library and information services network in Kenya.”**

Since its establishment some forty- (40) years ago, KNLS has expanded and diversified its services to various parts of the country. From a humble beginning in a wooden structure at Nairobi’s Upper hill area, this organization now boasts of a network of thirty-six (36) branches countrywide. The expansion of the network has been extended to the community level where local people are actively playing a crucial role in the

development of libraries. This has led to the establishment of Community-Based Libraries (CBLs) in some parts of the country.

Previously, the development of KNLS branches mainly followed the administrative structure of the government. The libraries have therefore evolved in phases starting from provincial (phase 1), district (phase 2), and most recently to the community level (phase 3). It has been the intention of the KNLS Board to set up libraries all over Kenya in order to take library and information services closer to the people. Indeed, this is in line with the government's policy of District Focus for Rural Development (DFRD) strategy.

While accepting the fact that information is power and that the creation of a knowledge-based society will largely depend on accessibility to information by the public, the KNLS Board embarked on a strategy aimed at providing library and information services to communities that are disadvantaged in terms of information provision. A former minister for Home affairs, heritage and sports, Hon. Noah Katana Ngala as quoted by Kung'u, P. (2001), while in support of this KNLS Board initiative asserted:

Decentralizing community library services will enhance the eradication of ignorance among Kenyan communities and provide a way to achieving a new industrial status by the year 2020.

1.2 The Community approach to developing libraries

The idea of adopting a community approach to library development in the country was taken up after it became evident that the KNLS Board could no longer construct libraries and run them due to financial constraints. Due to unfavourable economic conditions, the government had reduced its grants to most developmental projects, and as a result, the

Board has not been able to put up any other branches since 1987 when Kabarnet District Library was opened to the public. There was need, therefore, for an alternative strategy if the Board was to continue providing and expanding library services and a solution was found in the adoption of a cost-sharing approach involving community participation.

With this approach, the communities are requested to put in place the necessary infrastructure such as acquisition of land, buildings, furniture and equipment. On its part, the KNLS Board provides the initial book stock, the staff and meets the recurrent expenditure.

The 'Community-Based Library' concept within KNLS organization and possibly in Kenya as a whole began in 1991 with the establishment of Karatina Community-Based Library. Perhaps this was a manifestation of the thirst for knowledge experienced by the community. As Kasimu, F.N. (2003:209), a librarian with KNLS has stated:

The idea of establishing Community-Based Libraries (CBLs) in Kenya was mooted and started in the early 1990s by KNLS in response to many invitations and applications from various communities asking KNLS to open branch libraries in their areas.

Since this was not possible due to financial constraints, the KNLS Board floated the idea of cost-sharing where the Board could share the responsibility for establishing, equipping and running local libraries with the communities in need of library services. Thus, CBLs were, and continue to be established as joint ventures with the full participation and input of the community on one hand, and the KNLS Board (the service provider) on the other.

While analyzing the advantages of the community-based approach, Ng'ang'a, S.K. (*Kenal News*, 1998) the immediate former KNLS Director stated:

These are two fold; it reduces dependency on the treasury for development of libraries and it involves the community on the running of the libraries. This community involvement provides confidence to the community on the affairs of libraries.

The "Community-Based Library" concept has gained prominence with time, and due to its popularity, it has led to the establishment of twenty (20) such libraries in different parts of the country. After a vigorous national sensitization campaign by KNLS Board, this new development strategy has received overwhelming support from a number of Kenyan communities who have entered into partnership with KNLS Board in bringing library facilities closer to themselves. This strategy has therefore enabled KNLS to take information resources closer to the people, which are geared towards meeting the specific information needs of the particular communities.

As Mutiso, A. M. (2004:6) has stated:

To date there are 20 CBLs spread all over the country. These are Dtizoni, Habasweni, Kapsabet, Karatina, Kilifi, Kinyambu, Kithasyu, Kwale, Laikipia, Malindi, Mbalabala, Mutyambua, Mwingi, Naivasha, Nyilima, Ol-kalau, Tot, Ukwala, Rambula, and Wajir.

Despite this encouraging development, majority of Kenyans and their communities are not very conversant with 'Community-Based Library' concept and even the role that such a library plays in dissemination of information for individual as well as community development. The purpose of this study therefore, is to investigate the role of Community-Based Libraries in dissemination of information to adult library users (i.e. patrons served in the adult sections of CBLs who are considered to be beyond primary

school level) in selected KNLS Community-Based Libraries, namely; Karatina, Naivasha and Mwingi.

1.3 Statement of the problem

The three critical problems of ignorance, poverty, and disease that challenged Kenya's developmental process at independence and which the newly independent government and subsequent ones purposed to address, continue to bedevil any development process of the present time. Even though libraries as well as other institutions were established in a bid to help combat these problems and particularly ignorance, the battle cannot be said to have been successfully won, even after forty years of independence.

The public library whose cardinal duty is dissemination of information to the public has largely been urban-based in Kenya and has catered predominantly for the urban population with almost total neglect of the larger and more disadvantaged rural population. As a result of this imbalance, there exists glaring information gaps in the rural areas, which have negatively affected any developmental process in these areas. The rural communities, with limited or complete lack of library and information services and the difficulties often experienced in accessing the same, continue to be severely handicapped in confronting the challenges of the modern day.

Though a number of Community-Based Libraries have been established in an effort to bridge the information gap, their success in accomplishing this mission is still in question. This study therefore sought to determine the success of Community-Based Libraries in bridging this information gap and was guided by the under mentioned objectives.

1.4 The Aim of the study

The general aim of the study was to investigate the role of KNLS community-based libraries in dissemination of information to adult library users.

1.4.1 Specific Objectives:

Within the overall aim, the study had four specific objectives:

- To establish the availability of relevant and adequate library and information services.
- To assess the accessibility to library and information services by the adult users
- To determine the extent of utilization of the information resources.
- To determine the extent to which the information services provided meet the adult users' specific needs.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The role of the present KNLS Community-Based Libraries in dissemination of information needs to be determined if similar projects are to be undertaken elsewhere in the country in future. As earlier mentioned, majority of Kenyans and their communities possibly may have very little knowledge about Community-Based Libraries leave alone the role they play in dissemination of information for individual as well as community development.

This particular study therefore will be an eye-opener to many Kenyans and the communities at large on the concept of 'Community-Based Libraries' in general and the role they play in dissemination of information in particular. The outcome of the study

will determine whether other communities can adopt a similar strategy in establishing libraries in their areas.

To KNLS, the study will be significant in that it will bring to light information which will be crucially important to KNLS Board in its decision making and particularly policy formulation in regard to Community-Based Libraries. Considering that a study of this nature has not been carried out before in Kenya, this study will therefore act as a measure of performance of Community-Based Libraries established so far. The findings can therefore be of particular importance to the libraries selected for study as well as others established on similar lines.

There exists few if any documented information materials about “Community librarianship” in Kenya and therefore, apart from satisfying the researcher’s own curiosity, the facts that were generated by the study will be an important contribution to knowledge in this field and to the wider field of library and information science.

1.6 Research Questions

- Are relevant and adequate library and information services available at Community-Based Libraries?
- What is the range of services being provided?
- Are the information services being provided meeting the expectations of the adult library users?
- Is accessibility to the library and information services easy?
- What are the difficulties experienced by the adult users in accessing the services?

- Are the adult users making maximum utilization of the available information resources?

1.7 Research Assumptions

- That Community-Based Libraries are providing relevant and adequate library and information services to the adult library users.
- That library and information services are easily accessible to most adult library users.
- That the adult users are utilizing the available information resources to the maximum.
- That there exists no information gap between the adult users' specific information needs and the available information resources.

1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The concept of "Community-Based Library" is restricted within the KNLS context and therefore no consideration has been made to any other Community-Based Library beyond this limit. Within this KNLS context, the Community-Based Libraries are taken to mean those libraries that are established and developed through partnership between KNLS Board and the local communities.

Although the KNLS Community-Based Libraries are at the moment twenty (20) in number, the study was based and restricted to only three selected libraries, that is, Karatina, Naivasha, and Mwingi. The study due to time and financial consideration could not be extended to cover all KNLS Community-Based Libraries and the three selected offered a good representative sample.

Considering that the researcher was undertaking coursework concurrently with the study, time shortage was a serious limitation on the study.

1.9 Conceptual Framework

In this section, the researcher has explained and illustrated the various concepts used in the study and shown their relationships.

Adult library users: patrons served in the adult section(s) of Community-Based

Libraries and who are considered to be beyond primary school level. They include high school students, college students, and other members of the general public.

Community-Based Library: - an information service point or centre that has been established through partnership between KNLS Board and any given community within a certain locality.

Dissemination of information: - an activity or process of taking information to potential users.

Information availability: - the presence of information materials (resources) and services in a particular CBL.

Information accessibility: - the ease with which information resources and services can be reached or obtained from a particular CBL.

Information utilization: - making effective use of the available information resources and services.

Information needs satisfaction: - the fulfillment derived from effective use of the information resources and services.

Dissemination of information is a process that does not occur in a vacuum and is definitely not a one party affair. Information is generated by one party, for example an author, and is disseminated by another, for example a librarian, to another party considered to be the 'consumer' or end user of the information; this could be a library user or reader. Within this context, the librarian (or library) acts as the intermediary between generators and 'consumers' of information. It has been said that information has no value until it is used and this creates the need for it to be disseminated to potential users.

There are some factors that are presumed to be central to effective dissemination of information. These factors (as illustrated in **diagram 1** on page 21) include: the library's collection (stock), library and information services, library personnel, library building, equipment and financial resources. All these factors are interrelated and all have an influence on each other in one way or the other.

Community-Based Libraries have been organized around these factors but there was need of finding out the relationships of these factors and the various variables within them and how they have affected CBLs role in dissemination of information. Effective dissemination was seen to be heavily dependent on the successful interplay and interrelationships between these factors.

Central to the role of a library in meeting the demands of its users is the collection of materials upon which its patrons will draw. For this reason, a library's collection must be

consciously assembled and developed with its own unique patron in mind. A library's collection is a function of the personnel and the financial resources.

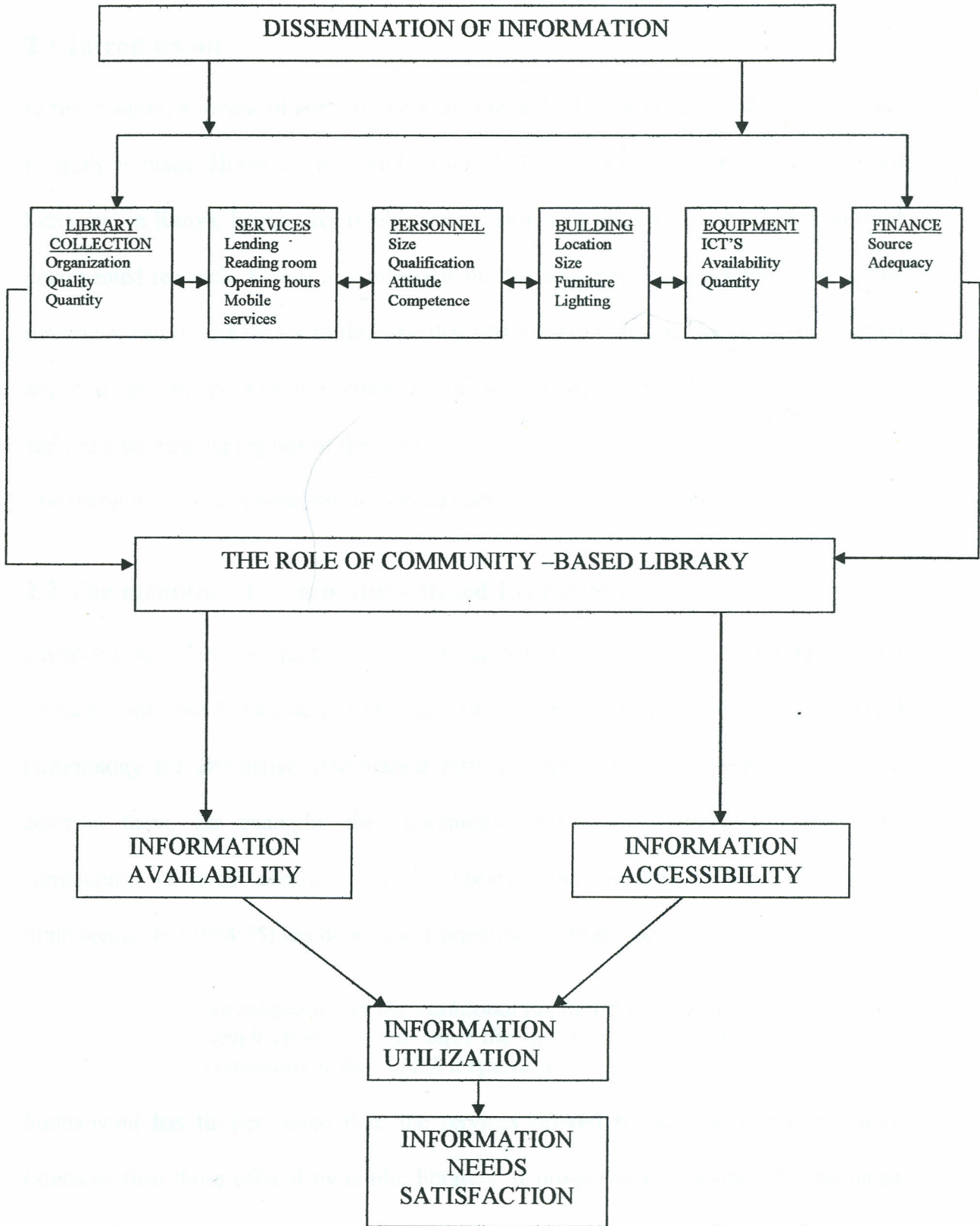
The availability of and accessibility to a suitable library collection will, without doubt, increase its rate of utilization in effect satisfying the information needs of the users. Services provided should suit the needs of the patron community and should be provided by appropriately trained personnel who clearly understand these needs. However, the range of services will also be determined by such other factors as; the building's size, location, equipment, and financial resources available.

The particular concern of the study was on how these factors have influenced CBLs' role in dissemination of information to their adult clientele. More specifically, the study focused on how these factors have influenced CBLs role in making information more readily available, easily accessible in effect enhancing its utilization towards the satisfaction of adult users' information needs.

Information is generated for use, therefore, it must not only be made available but should be easily accessible to the potential users. This will enhance its utilization and as a result go a long way in meeting the information needs of the users.

This is all what effective dissemination of information entails.

Diagram 1:



Source: the researcher

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, a review of some of the available and relevant literature about the subject of study is made. However, it should be noted that the concept of 'Community-Based Libraries' in Kenya, being a relatively new development does not have much in form of documented research. Few if any materials on the area currently exist and as such, the researcher had to make do with the little that was available. In addition, he also relied on any available literature on the prototypes of such libraries within the African continent and other developing regions of the world.

The literature review is however, presented under various sub-headings:

2.2 The meaning of Community-Based Libraries (CBLs)

Fairer-Wessels (1993) as quoted in *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science*: vol.5.No.2 October, 1995 pg. 149, suggests that, there is no standard terminology for alternative information services and that various terms are used to describe them, for example, the community library, the community centre, the community resource centre, people's library, and workers' library. However, Simbanyoni, E. (1998:75) has defined a 'Community Library' as:

An adaptation of the traditional public library service which endeavours to meet the needs of the specific community within which it operates.

Simbanyoni has further stated that, the services offered by such a library are more extensive than those offered by public libraries. It pro-actively provides information as well as physical space for studying, meetings, and other activities. The staff is actively

involved in the community and show great flexibility in offering services to meet the needs of its community.

Although the 'Community-Based Library' concept is unique within the KNLS context, it however represents one of the various approaches or strategies that have been designed and adopted in some African countries in an effort to address the 'information gaps' between the urban and rural areas.

As Mutiso, A.M. (2004: 6) has stated:

Community-Based Libraries (CBLs) in KNLS are integral branch libraries established by the KNLS Board with the support and participation of the community on cost-sharing basis.

Mutiso has gone further to explain how the cost-sharing is done: That the community puts in place the necessary infrastructure, that is, buildings and furniture while the KNLS Board provides books, staff and meets the recurrent expenditure.

Although this researcher has no problem with the above definitions, he particularly concurs with what Kiburu, L.W. (*Kenal News*, 1995:16) was reported as saying :That when we talk of community librarianship, we are talking of a branch of librarianship that is geared towards the specific needs of the community.

According to Kiburu, L.W. (*Kenal News*, 1995) a community library must have community participation at the grassroots level and the community must play an active part in the establishment and maintenance of the library.

It is important to stress here that, 'community librarianship' incorporates community involvement and participation at all levels and this is the main characteristic that distinguishes these libraries from others.

Turning our focus to the issue of 'information gaps' existing between regions and even amongst individuals within a given community, and recognizing that the role of a community library is to meet the specific information needs of the particular community, it becomes vitally important to ask ourselves - how well has the Community-Based Library been able to bridge this gap? Available literature does not give us an answer to this question and therefore it becomes even more imperative that an investigation be done to establish the status quo.

2.3 Establishment of a Community-Based Library

Ng'ang'a, J.M. (1979: 248), envisaged the establishment of libraries in Kenya through Community participation and involvement way back in 1979. Foreseeing that the then KNLS library development strategy of establishing two libraries per year would take rather long before library services reached every citizen, he had suggested an alternative, thus:

As in Jamaica, the KNLS Board should involve local communities who would be asked to provide suitable premises and the Board provide the staff and book stock. Kenya being a 'Harambee' (self-help) country, the community would willingly contribute towards library buildings if asked. Ng'ang'a J.M. (1979:254).

Ng'ang'a words were sixteen years later echoed in an article appearing in *Kenal News* (1995:10) which stated that: schools, hospitals, churches, and other institutions in the country are set up and successfully run on 'Harambee' basis. The library should also

follow suit if its survival is to be ascertained. The setting up of a library on 'Harambee' basis will however, depend on the local communities.

A community library does not just happen by chance, but has to be really planned and given adequate attention and support by the local community. Since this kind of library is by the people and for the people, its viability depends on the host community's willingness to exploit the resources to the maximum. It would otherwise turn into a 'white elephant' -*Kenal News* (1995:10)

It is worth emphasizing here that a community library comes into being as a result of the community's initiative and therefore, to ensure its success, it should never be imposed on the community.

As Kaniki, A.M. (1994: 49) has commented, a Community library need not necessarily be housed in a plush building but more so in a place which is easily accessible and preferably the centre of activity within the community, such as Community Centre.

The conversion of an old beer hall into a modern Naivasha Community-Based Library, can attest to the fact that, a purpose-built library must not necessarily be put up. As Atuti, R.M. (2001:233) has revealed, some community library buildings were previously nightclubs, disused social halls and even individual houses. Notably, however, Atuti observed that, most buildings had fulfilled their changed function and are effective functional libraries that provide 'customers' with a choice of best value.

In the adaptation of such buildings to library use, there are certain standards to be followed which are contained in the KNLS '*Community Library Model Manual*'.

Nevertheless, Kiburu, L.W. (*Kenal News*, 1995:16) has stated the following conditions for establishing community libraries:

- The willingness and the commitment of the community.
- The availability of the space where the library will be erected [or an old building to be rehabilitated].
- The space provided must be able to accommodate future expansion where the need arises.
- A sound financial support for the running of the library.
- The availability of qualified staff.

Once an identified building to house the library has been rehabilitated to the required standards, the KNLS Board provides the reading materials and the required personnel.

Kasimu, F.N. (2003: 210) has stated that once the KNLS Board has become involved in this way, it acquires the mandate of running the CBL as one of its own branches.

However, the community must surrender the title deed of the plot on which the library stands, this ensures non-interference in the CBL and guards against claims of ownership.

A notable illustration of how a community library's idea is conceived is given by the winner of the "Woman of the Year 1997 Award" in South Africa, Simbanyoni, E (1997:

362) who stated that:

When I moved to live in Soshanguve, it had no public library. The challenge that prompted me to take action came from the community itself. Requests for books which

could easily be found in the State library made me realize that there was a need for a library in the community. As I could not come to a decision about what to do, I involved our local church, housewives, sportsmen, teachers, nurses, businessmen and students to solve this problem.

This shows that a community library's idea is conceived by an individual within the community, who then shares the idea with other members of the community and eventually mobilizes them to starting a library within the locality. In this author's opinion, if more and more Kenyans were to take the initiative, we would have Community libraries being established in almost every location within the country, with or without, the support of the KNLS Board. Probably, this would be the best means of empowering the people in effect helping solve some of the problems that confront them daily.

2.4 Information as a resource and its availability.

Literature reviewed point to the fact that, information is not only one of the basic human needs after air, water, food, and shelter, but is also a vital national resource which seemingly has overtaken other resources as a factor of production. Ng'ang'a, S. K (1990:10) reported Elmadjra, M. (1985) as saying:

Information is not a luxury, nor is it a fashionable gadgetry. It has become an essential instrument for development.

Although access to information is one of the basic human rights, its unavailability may rightly be considered a violation of the human right. Information, as is now widely accepted, is a vital resource which does not only cost money, but has a price and a value. In the light of this, information has become big business in the contemporary society

mainly because, not everyone in need of relevant information may have it readily available at the time he or she needs it. Matenge, E.C. (1998:33) has defined 'information' as:

Data (that is, a collection of letters, words, signs, numbers, images, graphs, voices, and phrases) which have been gathered, manipulated, filtered, formatted, assembled systematically and assigned meaning.

Perhaps a shorter and clearer definition in the light of this study, is that provided by Kagoda-Batuwa, S. (1998:16) who quoting the Pan African Documentation and Information System (PADIS) stated that:

Information is intelligence or knowledge that contributes to the social, economic and cultural well being of society.

When such data, intelligence or knowledge is in the possession of an individual, a country or any agency for that matter, then, it is considered to be part of his or her resources which either party can use to its own advantage or to advance its own course. Indeed, man requires information to be able to manipulate the factors of production, that is, land, labour, and capital resources into meaningful and productive use. In this perspective, the availability of the right information, at the right time, in the right format to the right user, becomes crucially important without which, any decision maker will be incapacitated in making the right decision.

Information, as literature reviewed suggests, is a valuable resource which has an enabling and transforming power. As Matenge, E.C. (1998:33) has noted, information enables people to act upon their physical, social, economic, political and or cultural environment

for both tangible and intangible socio-economic benefits. Similarly, Ng'ang'a, S.K. (1998: 6) has observed that:

Information is a vital commodity that empowers people to make choices in all areas of development.

In the contemporary world, it is a fact that, it is information as opposed to natural resources, wealth and material possessions per se which has become the critical basis of progress, well-being and power. Indeed, the advocates of development have repeatedly formulated the proposition that 'Information is power.' In the light of this proposition, then, the critical and most important issue that remains unresolved and needs to be addressed is-who has this power or access to it and in whose interest is he utilizing it? Probably, this remains one of the most controversial issues on the topic of information in our contemporary society.

According to Lester, R. (1985:35), the prime objective of 'libraries' is to facilitate the transfer of information from those who produce it, to those who need to use it. In this regard, the critical issue that has not been adequately addressed is concerned with the availability of information. There is a general assumption that information is generally available to everyone in every corner of the world and this is not the case. In fact, to the majority of the world's population, this 'resource' is generally unavailable.

In our Kenyan context, just as other basic human needs-water, food and shelter are not generally available to every Kenyan, so too is this 'basic need' termed 'information'. This is particularly the case when you put the rural population into consideration. It is not surprising therefore, that Sturges, P. and Neill, R. (1998: 2) have described the general

information environment in Africa as yet another struggle: a 'quiet struggle' that rarely makes newspaper headlines, and that has failed to attract the attention of the cameras of the press and television.

Although Sturges and Neill have suggested alternatives to information provision in Africa, they have not researched thoroughly on the new approaches which include Community-Based Libraries in Kenya. In this case, therefore, they have left a gap which needs to be filled in regard to making information available especially to the information disadvantaged rural communities.

While there may be no argument about the value of information, serious gaps abound in the available literature as to how this resource can be made generally available. The role of the Community-Based Library, as one of the information providers in our Kenyan context, has not been adequately investigated even though the initiative has been lauded as one of the best approaches aimed at empowering the community that has for a long time been disadvantaged in terms of information provision.

As Atuti, R. M. (2002:3) has observed:

Accessing information to people in whatever format either in electronic, digital and print formats will certainly play a very central role in the development process and spur economic growth at community and national levels.

Even though Atuti had investigated the Community-Based Libraries in Kenya, he particularly focused his research on the buildings housing these libraries and not on the adequacy and relevance of the available library and information services which, in this

researcher's opinion are of particular importance if the communities privileged to have these libraries are to be empowered through provision of information.

Nevertheless, every effort should be made by all concerned to make information available to those who need to use it. As Obadare, S.O. (2003:2) has stated:

Information is useful only when it is available.

2.5 Information Accessibility

In an era where vast amounts of information are being generated all over the world, and where information has increasingly come to be considered a priced 'commodity', then, it is crucial to ask ourselves who has or does not have access to the information produced.

Available literature has not adequately addressed the issue of accessibility to available information especially by the information disadvantaged members of our society and who, needless to say, are the majority in our country Kenya.

Riggs, D.E. (1998:150) has observed that:

The gap between the 'haves' and 'have nots' in access to information is widening all over the world and considers that the efforts to reduce that gap have not yet seriously began to eliminate the problem of information poverty.

While this observation is notable, what Riggs fails to illustrate is the kind of measures that are being undertaken to address this problem and probably their success or otherwise.

In this case, therefore, Riggs leaves us with glaring gaps in as far as information accessibility is concerned.

There is no question to the fact that, access to information for all is more than ever needed in this century that has been aptly named the century of information society. Librarians' role, as noted by Wanjohi, G. W. (2004: 9), is that of facilitating access to information, whether documented in a book, a periodical publication or in an electronic file on the Internet. However, as he observed, much needs to change in the library scene in Kenya if librarians are to become team players with other information providers in facilitating access to information for all Kenyans.

While this observation is a sign of pro-activity and commendable, Wanjohi fails to pinpoint the specific areas that need change in order to enhance accessibility to information. Just like Riggs, he leaves us with clear gaps in terms of knowledge on what libraries can do in facilitating accessibility to information.

In the light of the preceding discussion, one area that needs change in the researcher's opinion, is attitude among the so-called 'professional librarians'. It is the high time according to this researcher, that these librarians shunned the traditional conservative attitude, and pro-actively participate in facilitating access to information in whatever way they can. Traditional librarianship is all about sitting down in the midst of books and expecting people to come and read. If they don't come, the librarian is not bothered and what really matters to him or her, is the pay at the end of the day. Obviously, this is not what is expected of the modern day librarian, and hence this attitude needs to change.

As Atherton, P. (1977) observed:

*Knowledge and information are readily available
somewhere in the world: but must however be made*

accessible to all kinds of users, means for communication and transfer must be established.

Atherton further observed that, in many countries, it is the gap in information accessibility and transfer, and therefore of use which must be bridged if economic progress is to be made. However, Atherton failed to adequately address the issue of information accessibility and, as a result, the means through which the gap could be bridged were not provided.

As the digital revolution is driving the globalization and integration of the world economy, it is regrettable that the vast majority of the people in the world remain untouched by this revolution. The 'digital divide' threatens to widen the already existing development gap between the rich and the poor, among and within countries.

It is envisaged that, the majority of the world's people will not be able to benefit from this revolution unless they are enabled to participate fully in the emerging information society. The researcher envisions one way of bridging the information gap and especially within our country, as through the establishment of more and more Community-Based Libraries. This KNLS library development strategy, is therefore, laudable and a step in the right direction. These libraries will not only avail but facilitate easy access to information.

2.6 Utilization of information resources

There may be no question to the fact that all information wherever and whenever generated is meant for use in one way or the other. Seemingly underscoring this fact, Atherton, P. (1977) rightly observed that:

Information in itself has no value until it is used.

In recognition of this fact therefore, the core business of libraries of all types remains to make information not only readily available but also easily accessible for effective utilization by the library clientele.

CBLs within our country have been established and charged with the same responsibility. But more specifically, these libraries aim at bringing information resources and services closer to the people so that individuals and groups within a given community can make effective use of these resources. There is a general assumption that when information resources are brought closer to the people, the same will be effectively utilized towards some desired end, whether informational, recreational, educational or any other.

Though a number of CBLs have so far been established within our country, literature available does not yield useful information regarding the utilization of the information resources held in these libraries. For this reason, we may not be very conclusive on whether heavy or optimal use is being made of these information resources.

Even though a few researches have been carried out on CBLs in Kenya in the recent past, none seems to give a true picture regarding this position. A research carried out by Mutiso, A. M. (2004) on CBLs in Makueni District focused mainly on the quality of service and hence utilization of information resources in these libraries was not given an in-depth treatment. However, this study seemed to suggest that there is a direct relationship between the quality of service and utilization of information resources and services in any given library. As quality of service improves, it leads to increased utilization and as quality goes down, similarly utilization declines.

Another past research carried out by Atuti, R. M. (2001) also does not yield much information as far as utilization of information resources in CBLs is concerned. This particular study focused mainly on the CBLs' buildings and apart from a notable observation that most adapted buildings had fulfilled their changed functions and are effective functional libraries, the study fails to give us a clear picture regarding actual utilization of information resources. However, this study strongly suggested that there is a close relationship between the buildings characteristics and actual utilization. Atuti's study revealed that some adapted buildings present problems in design of interior layout during delivery of services. Some premises due to size or space limitations are basically unsuitable for provision of a fully organized library service.

What we can deduce from the above observation is that space is an important determinant of effective utilization of information resources in any library. A library's location is also a factor that may affect utilization of information resources in any library in one way or the other. Perhaps, it is for this reason that Kaniki, A.M. suggested that a community library should be housed in a building which is easily accessible, preferably the centre of activity within the community.

Mutiso (2004) has reported Shirley (1996) as having observed that, majority of community libraries are characterized by lack of basic amenities such as electricity, telephone, good roads and tapped water. Even though CBLs can, and indeed have been established without some of these basic amenities, what Mutiso and Shirley failed to address is the relationship of these factors and the utilization of the information resources.

In this researcher's opinion, all or any one of these factors is bound to influence utilization of information resources in one way or the other.

While this researcher appreciates the previous works on CBLs by other researchers, he wishes to stress here that, it is not enough to set up a CBL, but a follow-up should always be made to ensure that the facility and the information resources are being utilized as per the expectations. Otherwise, the library might turn out to be just another place where students in need of a quiet place for study, do turn to in their hour of need without making use of the resources held there.

2.7 Services offered to meet information needs

According to Murrison, W. J. (1988: 225), a library as a social institution is concerned primarily with people, then with its operations, for the people are the target at which the service is aimed and for which it exists. In this regard, whatever the library does or fails to do must be measured against the needs of the community.

While this statement contains every truth in it, what should be explicitly pointed out is that a library, no matter its type, size or location, should provide a variety of services aimed at satisfying the needs of the particular community within which it is located. A Community-Based Library, just like any other library, is obligated to do likewise.

As noted in *Kenal News* (1995:16) a Community library is an all round library. It must not only serve the needs of the reading community but should also extend its services to the new literates, post literates and people with no reading skills at all.

A community library is expected to provide a service to the community and not simply be a storehouse of books. As the Zimbabwean Rural Libraries and Resources Development Project (RLRDP) Manual notes, a Community library must be a dynamic social agency, providing a wide range of information to the community. This project (RLRDP) uses the term 'Community libraries' concerning the holistic use of information resources in a community. The resources, as they emphasize, go beyond the printed matter ordinarily associated with libraries. Their idea of a library is inclusive of print and non-print materials, and people that volunteer to dispense wide categories of information by whatever means. All their programmes, as the Manual states, have elements of drama, song and dance as 'barefoot' means of exhaustively putting information across to the people they serve.

Ideally, the above illustration gives us a clear picture of the range of materials as well as activities that a Community library should have in order to facilitate effective dissemination of information to the community. The position of CBLs in Kenya in the light of this illustration is not known, and there is need to find out if the current CBLs are really meeting the information needs of the library users.

As Magwentshu, V.V. (1995:152) has observed, community libraries or resource centres have seen their role as that of pro-active information providers. They have thus attempted to provide services which cater for the development of relevant resource collections, repackaged information to make it accessible and relevant and provide referral services, provide user training to ensure full use of all resources available.

He has further observed that community libraries are vehicles for community development and therefore provide facilities that are needed by communities. Such facilities include; activities hall, pre-school centre, conference and workshop facilities, advice and referral centre, and study centre.

While this observation could be true regarding services and facilities available in community libraries in some parts of Africa, in this researcher's opinion, these services and facilities cannot be assumed to be uniformly available in any community library. Each community library strives to meet the information needs of the particular community within which it is located, and as such, it will provide unique services dictated by the environment and means within its reach. However, the general aim in the provision of any kind of service is to satisfy the information needs and this is where the focus should lie.

Butdisuwan (1991:1) when describing community libraries and information services in Thailand stated that, in that country because public libraries are considered to be few in number, university libraries, school libraries, special libraries, and the national library also serve as community libraries and as community information centres. These institutions, as he says, allow people in the community to use their facilities, resources, as well as services. Some libraries in that country have also launched outreach programmes to serve rural and remote areas. Included in these programmes are the mobile libraries. Butdisuwan has stated that there are various forms of mobile libraries depending on the circumstances of the sites to be served. Horse-carts, motor boats, motor cycles, or book vans are used to carry books and other reading materials, and audio-visual materials in

packages, boxes and bags to schools, factories, hospitals, hotels, temples, train stations, and the village reading centres.

While all these outreach programmes are laudable, at the basis of it all is the critical question of whether information needs of the users are ever met. In our country, we have the Camel Library Service (CLS) which is a concept of KNLS. The service is confined to the North Eastern parts of Kenya, where it targets a nomadic pastoral community. According to Atuti, R.M. (2002: 4), the service has since its inception attracted a lot of interest and support from both individuals and agencies around the world, but as he has noted, the current concerns of the service are mainly focused on the quality of the service and information formats available to meet the user community's needs.

It can be inferred from the above that, at the heart of every service is the critical issue of satisfaction. Unless a service satisfies the need for which it was intended, then it cannot be considered as being relevant.

As Kasimu, F.N. (2003: 210) has stated, the Community-Based Libraries provide a wide range of services to their communities, including:

- Adult and junior reading and lending services
- Community information
- Readers' advisory services
- Children's activities, for example, story telling
- Consultancy services on setting up of school libraries
- Mobile library services through donkeys, camels and motorbikes

- HIV/AIDS information
- Services to the visually impaired persons, for example, through Braille and large print books
- Community recreation facilities and games, for example, chess, draught and other local indoor games such as Ajua.

While this researcher may have no problem with the listing of such services, the critical question that remains unresolved is: to what extent has these services met the needs of the community and particularly their information needs? Hopefully, this research will yield the required answer to this pertinent question.

Butdisuwan (1996: 6) has observed that, although community libraries play a vital role in terms of providing information services to the community, it must have the following in order to satisfy the information needs of the people:

- a) A management structure that involves the community members in the planning and implementation of the service, that which continues to research the information needs of the community and one that provides on-going monitoring and evaluation.
- b) Resources that are relevant to needs: which are provided in many different formats for dissemination to enable all members to use the service, and that are culturally sensitive and build on the community's knowledge. Also, they should be resources that can support activities which encourage people to participate.
- c) The service must have human resources that are trained most importantly in communications, public relations, educational techniques and information storage

and retrieval. The human resources consequently must be chosen, trusted and respected by the community.

- d) Services that are pro-active as well as reactive and involve the community in information sharing activities (Shirley, 1996:11-12).

While these conditions seemingly look relevant, and therefore applicable even in CBLs within our country Kenya, the critical question that libraries of all types should strive to answer is: “have we satisfied the needs of our users?” Every library in Kenya is obliged to answer this question for unless it does so, it will be assumed to have outlived its usefulness. In this regard, CBLs within the country have no choice but to regularly conduct user satisfaction studies, to ensure that, they are constantly meeting the information needs of their users through the range of services they provide.

2.8 Research Gap

From the preceding literature review, it is apparent that a lot of literature on Community Libraries in other parts of the world exists, but few, if any materials focus on CBLs in Kenya. In particular, there is no documented research pertaining to the role of CBLs in dissemination of information in Kenya. This clearly shows the research gap that needs to be filled hence the justification for this study.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction:

This chapter outlines the methodology that the researcher followed in carrying out the study. It includes research design, location of the study, population of the study, sampling strategies, research instrument, methods of data collection and procedures.

3.2 Research Design:

The study was a descriptive research and mainly employed qualitative research method. This is because it mainly relied on respondents' views and opinions, and researcher's observations, which cannot be quantified.

3.3 Location of the Study:

The study was conducted in three KNLS Community-Based Libraries namely: Karatina, Naivasha, and Mwingi. These libraries were purposely chosen as a representative sample of the other CBLs spread throughout the country. The libraries were established in the years 1991, 1996 and 2000 respectively, and therefore are at different stages of development. A second consideration was that the libraries are located in different geographical locations with different environmental conditions, which impact differently on the communities' socio-economic status, and their information needs.

The researcher also considered the distances to be covered and the cost to be incurred in traveling.

Karatina Community-Based Library:

This library is located within Karatina town of Mathira division, Nyeri district in the Central province of Kenya. This area forms part of the cool central highlands of the Mt Kenya region and rainfall is normally high throughout the year. This, coupled with rich soils, explains why this area is most fertile and therefore good for agricultural activity. Mathira division has the highest population within the district, estimated at 191,995 in the year 2001*(**Nyeri District Development Plan 1997-2001 pg. 14**)

Naivasha Community-Based Library:

This library is located within Naivasha town, which lies at the floor of the Rift Valley approximately 100 kms from Nairobi on your way to Nakuru. Naivasha town is within the marginal area of Nakuru District and therefore it is relatively dry as compared to other parts of the district. Naivasha division as a whole has the highest proportion of people living below the poverty line in the district. They are mainly engaged in small scale farming and working as casual laborers in the flower farms. However, a greater part of the division is also taken up by dairying as well as tourism activities. The population of Naivasha Division was estimated at 175,457 in the year 2002*(**Nakuru District Development Plan, 2002-2008 pg. 8**)

Mwingi Community-Based Library:

This library is located within Mwingi town of Central division, Mwingi district in Eastern Province of Kenya. This area falls within the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) region and is therefore very vulnerable to drought. It is hot and dry for the greater part of the year. Some parts of the district are inaccessible due to hilly conditions. 'The district

shows a high prevalence of poverty estimated at 60 per cent and the population of Central division was estimated at 83,687 in the year 2002*(**Mwingi District Development Plan, 2002-2008 pg. 7**).

3.4 Population of the Study:

The target populations of the study were Library staff, Adult library users, and the Community library Development Committee Members. The researcher targeted library staff because they were deemed to provide professional and objective views concerning the CBLs.

Adult library users were targeted to enable the study determine whether their information needs were being met by the CBL or not.

The Community library Development Committee Members were included in the study to help gauge the communities' general opinion of the CBLs.

Considering that it was not possible to study the whole target populations, a representative sample was selected from the accessible population. Being a descriptive study, the sample size determination was based on the assumption that, at least ten per cent of the accessible population is considered enough for such studies. Thus, the following sample size was selected from the accessible population as follows:

	Accessible Population	Sample size
Library staff	50	32
Library committee members	25	10
Adult library users	150	45
	225	87

Source: field data

Altogether the sample collected was composed of 87 subjects who were distributed in the three CBLs as follows.

	Karatina	Naivasha	Mwingi	Total
Library staff	10	10	12	32
Library committee members	5	—	5	10
Adult library users	15	15	15	45
				87

Source: field data

A slightly larger number of library staff subjects were selected in Mwingi Library as the accessible population was slightly bigger than the other two CBLs. However, the researcher considered 10 subjects from each of these two libraries to be quite representative having picked over half the staff population. The researcher also considered 5 committee members from each library to be representative of the Library Development Committees. Unfortunately, Naivasha Library did not have an operational library development committee hence there was no population to sample from.

The researcher selected 15 subjects from each of the CBLs to represent the adult library users. He considered this number enough for the study.

3.5 Sampling Strategies:

In the selection of the sample from the library staff, Adult library users and the Community Library Development Committee members, purposive sampling technique was applied to enable the selection of respondents who were in a position to knowledgeably participate. This technique allowed the researcher to use cases that were deemed to have the required information and exclude those that were considered

unhelpful. For instance it helped the researcher exclude low cadre library staff from the study.

Snowball sampling technique was used in selecting the Library staff sample. The researcher approached and confided with each of the librarians in-charge to identify, locate and approach the respondents who in turn responded by identifying others who could knowledgeably participate. Through this technique a representative library staff sample was obtained.

In selecting the Adult library users' sample, this same technique was also applied. The researcher approached the librarians in-charge who in turn approached their staff to identify and approach the adult library users who participated in the study. The library staff were in a unique position to identify the respondents in this category since they are the ones who normally serve them and hence chances of being turned down were minimal.

Opportunistic sampling technique was applied by the researcher to help select and obtain a representative sample of the Community-library Development Committee members. The technique helped the researcher turn every opportunity to his own advantage. In this particular case, the researcher approached and requested the librarians in charge to identify members of the Community-library development committee who were easily accessible and hence could participate in the study.

3.6 Research Instrument:

Questionnaire: the questionnaire was the main instrument of data collection. The researcher prepared three sets of questionnaires, which were administered to the three categories of subjects in the libraries that were being studied: that is,

- Community library staff.(see appendix 1)
- Community library development committee members.(see appendix 2)
- Community library adult users.(see appendix 3)

The researcher prepared the questionnaires using both open-ended and closed question formats. The questionnaires were pre-tested before the actual study and after ascertaining that they were free from any errors or ambiguity, the researcher personally delivered them to the libraries under study.

The researcher sought the assistance of the librarians' in-charge and their staff in the respective libraries for the distribution, administration and collection of the questionnaires once they were filled up. Arrangements for mailing some of the questionnaires that were left behind were made by the researcher.

3.7 Research Methods:

a) **Interview:** the researcher interviewed each of the librarians in charge to obtain some useful and relevant information that could not be obtained directly through the questionnaire. The following interview schedule was used:

- i. What are the specific objectives for which the Community-Based Library was set?
- ii. From your own experience, would you say that the community library has achieved these specific objectives?
- iii. What are the major challenges that are currently facing your library?
- iv. What strategies have you laid down to confront the challenges that your library is facing?
- v. How do you see the future of KNLS Community-Based Libraries?

b) **Observation:** The researcher could not avoid observing and recording some certain phenomena that were of interest to the study. Some of those were, the library building, location, equipment, staff and library collection.

3.8 Data Analysis:

This process involved both organizing and interpretation of all the data collected in the study areas.

3.9 Data Quality Control

The researcher employed various data quality control measures to ensure reliability and validity of the data collected. This involved pre-testing the questionnaires before the actual study and employing other research methods such as observation and interview. These were necessary to validate information given in the questionnaires. Objectivity and rigorousness were maintained at all stages of the study in order to get accurate and reliable data.

3.10 Ethical Issues

Respondents were assured of strict confidentiality by the researcher of all the information obtained. Furthermore, anonymity of the respondents was guaranteed by ensuring that they did not write their names on the questionnaires.

3.11 Limitations:

Considering that the researcher was undertaking coursework concurrently with the study, time shortage was a serious limitation. Finances too, were not adequate. Some respondents were not serious in answering the questions. Delays were also experienced in the mailing of the filled questionnaires.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the data collected in the survey and was guided by the objectives of the study. The data is presented in graphs, pie charts, and tables. The following areas were specifically looked at:

- Services offered by CBLs.
- Relevance of services offered.
- Adequacy of services offered.
- Accessibility to library and information services.
- Utilization of information resources.
- Adult library users' information needs satisfaction.

The data analyzed and presented in this chapter was collected mainly through the questionnaire from the respondents as shown in table 1 below. The same was supplemented through observation by the researcher and interview conducted on the three CBLs branch heads. Only one subject in the adult library users' category failed to respond out of the 45 sampled. Altogether, 86 subjects responded. The response rate was 99 % making the information collected very reliable.

4.2 Response rate from all respondents

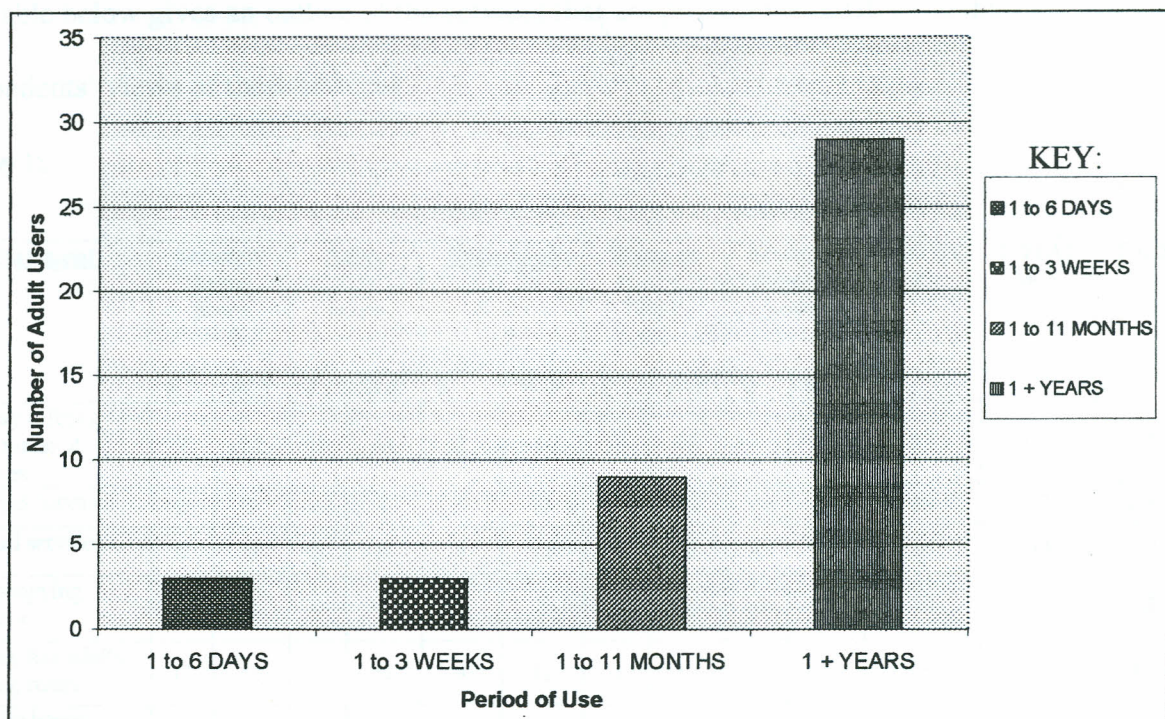
Table 1:

	Karatina	Naivasha	Mwingi	Total	Response %
Library staff	10	10	12	32	100 %
Library committee members	5	—	5	10	100 %
Adult library users	15	15	15	44	98 %
				86	99 %

Source: field data

4.3 Adult users' period of using the CBLs.

Figure 1:



Source: field data

According to figure 1 above, the highest number of adult users in all CBLs under study, that is, 29, indicated that they have used the libraries for over 1 year. This is indeed an indicator that the respondents are familiar with libraries they frequent and therefore they can be relied upon to give appropriate responses regarding these libraries and especially the services they offer. However, there are other adult users who visit the libraries for a number of days, weeks, and even months, whose views too, are important.

Majority of adult users possibly visit the CBLs mainly because there may be no other information centre within the locality that is easily accessible.

4.4 Services provided by CBLs as perceived by adult users.

The table below gives an outline of the services that are provided by CBLs and the respondents' views of these services.

Table 1:

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u> Score = 5		<u>Agree</u> Score = 4		<u>Undecided</u> Score = 3		<u>Disagree</u> Score = 2		<u>Strongly disagree</u> Score = 1		TOTAL F.	TOTAL W.F	T.A.S
	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F			
Library offers a wide range of services.	7	35	16	64	2	6	14	28	-	-	33	133	4.0
Internet services	0	0	1	4	5	15	16	32	16	16	38	67	1.8
E-mail services	0	0	0	0	4	12	16	32	16	16	36	60	1.7
Photocopying services	0	0	0	0	1	3	19	38	19	19	39	60	1.5
Library has adults' reading room	11	55	13	52	4	12	5	10	5	5	38	134	3.5
Mobile library service	4	20	6	24	6	18	12	24	12	12	40	98	2.5
HIV/AIDS information service	12	60	17	68	8	24	2	4	2	2	41	158	3.8
Library organizes public lectures	1	5	4	16	12	36	12	24	12	12	41	93	2.3
Library offers recreational games e.g. Chess, draught, etc	0	0	2	8	8	24	10	20	10	10	30	54	1.8
Library organizes traditional dance, poetry and drama.	5	25	5	20	5	15	10	20	10	10	35	90	2.6
Information on the local area	6	30	11	44	12	36	10	20	3	3	42	133	3.1
Newspapers/ magazines service	26	130	16	64	0	0	0	0	0	0	42	194	4.6
Book lending service	25	125	16	64	1	3	0	0	0	0	42	192	4.6

KEY: F = Frequency
W.F = Weighted Frequency
T.A.S. = Total Average Score

Source: field data

In table 1 above, the general opinion of respondents regarding services provided is obtainable through calculating the total average score. This has been done

using the formula below:

$$\text{Total Average Score} = \frac{\text{Total Weighted Frequency}}{\text{Total Frequency}}$$

According to this table, majority of Adult library users agree that the CBLs offer a wide range of services which is indicated by an average score of 4.0. Among the range of services that are provided, most respondents strongly agreed that Book-lending and Newspaper/magazine services are available in CBLs under study. This is shown by an average score of 4.6 for each of these services. Probably this indicates that these are some of the highest rated services available to adult users in CBLs. Book lending and Newspaper/magazine services are popular services that are provided by CBLs. This is because they are provided free of charge. Moreover, it has been said that majority of Kenyans are readers but not book buyers. Hence, they freely access these materials from the libraries available, including CBLs. The quest for current information among the Kenyan adults considering that the cost of newspapers/magazine is beyond the reach of many is what makes this service very popular.

Most respondents also agreed that HIV/AIDS information service and adult reading rooms are provided. This is shown by an average score of 3.8 and 3.5 respectively out of the maximum 5. HIV/AIDS is a national catastrophe whose fight requires a multi-sectoral approach. CBLs have not been left behind in this regard. Therefore, they are providing an important HIV/AIDS information service which is popular among the adult library users. The researcher observed that the provision of adults reading rooms is one of the important services provided by the CBLs to the adult library users. Perhaps this is

because majority of them come from homes whose environment is uncondusive to serious study.

Most of the respondents were undecided on whether the libraries offered information on the local area which was indicated by a score of 3.1. Similarly, they were also undecided on the following issues:

- Whether the libraries offered mobile library services
- Whether the libraries organize traditional dance, poetry and drama

These had average scores of 2.5 and 2.6 respectively. This clearly shows that although the libraries offer a wide range of services, most of the users may not be aware of their existence. In the researcher's opinion there seems to be lack of marketing of the available services in the CBLs under study.

Most Adult library users' respondents disagreed that the libraries organize public lectures. This is shown by an average score of 2.3. Many also disagreed that internet, e-mail, and photocopying services are available. This is indicated by an average score of 1.8, 1.7 and 1.5 respectively. Despite the scores, the researcher through observation and interview noted that none of these services is available in the CBLs under study.

According to these respondents, recreational games, for example chess, draughts, and others, are not available. This is shown by an average score of 1.8. The researcher agrees with this opinion since he also observed that none of the CBLs offered these games.

4.4.1 Additional services offered by CBLs according to library staff.

Table 2:

Statement	Strongly Agree Score-5		Agree Score -4		Undecided Score-3		Disagree Score -2		Strongly Disagree Score -1		TOTAL F	TOTAL W.F	T.A.S
	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F			
The library operates a mobile library service	16	80	5	20	0	0	2	4	8	8	31	112	3.6
Services for visually impaired.	7	35	9	36	1	3	2	4	8	8	27	86	3.2
Consultancy on setting up of libraries in the area.	13	65	9	27	4	12	2	6	0	0	28	102	3.6
Provision of educational video shows.	7	35	9	36	2	6	3	6	5	5	26	93	3.6
Book -box service to adult users.	2	10	4	16	0	0	12	24	14	14	32	64	2.0
Selective dissemination of information.	13	65	8	32	0	0	1	2	3	3	25	102	4.1
Provision of reference services.	27	135	5	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	155	4.8
Provision of referral services	16	80	6	24	0	0	5	10	3	3	30	117	3.9
Provision of inter-library lending service	10	50	10	40	1	3	1	2	4	4	26	99	3.8

KEY: F = Frequency
W.F = Weighted Frequency
T.A.S. = Total Average Score

Source: field data

From table 2 above, majority of library staff respondents agreed that the libraries operate a mobile library service (average score of 3.6). This fact was proved by the researcher

who through observation noted that, Mwingi, and Karatina libraries with the exception of Naivasha library had motorcycles that deliver books to primary schools and secondary schools within the divisions where these CBLs are located. Naivasha library needs to borrow this idea from these libraries.

Consultancy services on setting up of libraries scored an average of 3.6 showing that a greater percentage of respondents agreed on the availability of this service. These CBLs, as the only information centers within their localities provide professional advice on the setting up of libraries within their areas. For example CBL staff are often consulted whenever school libraries are being set up.

Educational video shows scored an equivalent score (3.6) proving that these services are organized by these libraries. However, through observation, the researcher noted that none of these libraries has video equipment. They source it externally through hiring from private firms and sometimes invite other agencies to show these videos within the libraries. However the researcher through interview noted that this service is not frequent due to cost and inconvenience in organizing the same.

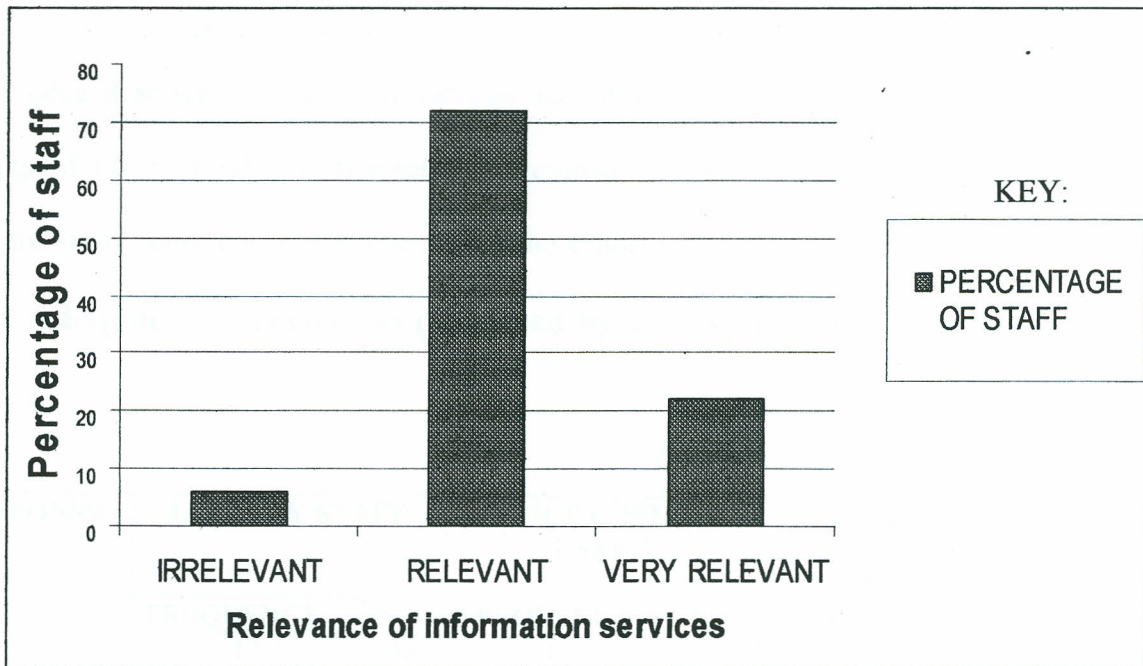
Book-box service to adult users scored an average of 2.0 indicating that majority of library staff disagreed on the availability of this service. However, the researcher through interview noted that the book-box service is only available in Karatina community library for the primary school children. On the other hand, most respondents strongly agreed that reference services are provided. This service scored an average of 4.8. This shows that these CBLs as the only information centres within their localities are heavily used for reference purposes by both researchers and students alike. Thus CBL staff rate it as one of the important services they provide to the adult library clientele. Selective

dissemination of information to adult users, referral and inter-library lending services scored an average of 4.1. This proves that these CBLs are active in selective dissemination of information to the adult clientele. The researcher noted that these CBLs are involved in KASNEB informational materials distributions which are meant specifically for KASNEB students who patronize these libraries.

Referral and inter-library lending services scored an average of 3.9 and 3.8 respectively proving that these services are provided. This shows that these CBLs cannot adequately meet the needs of their adult users and therefore have to refer their users to other libraries and even borrow materials for them through inter-library loans.

4.4.2 Relevance of services according to library staff:

Figure 2:



Source: field data

According to figure 2, the relevance of services provided by CBLs is rated in varying degrees by the library staff. These are irrelevant (6%), relevant (72%), and very relevant (22%). This clearly shows that majority of staff consider the services they provide not only important but also related to the needs of the adult clientele. However, there is still a measure of excellence that the services are yet to attain and these community libraries should strive towards this mark.

4.4.3 Adult users' opinion on relevance of services

Table 3:

STATEMENT	<u>Strongly Agree</u> Score=5		<u>Agree</u> Score=4		<u>Undecided</u> Score=3		<u>Disagree</u> Score=2		<u>Strongly Disagree</u> Score=1		Total F	Total W.F	T.A.S
	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F			
Relevance of services	13	65	13	52	7	21	8	16	2	2	43	156	3.6

Source: field data

KEY: F = Frequency
W.F = Weighted Frequency
T.A.S. = Total Average Score

From table 3 above, relevance of services according to adult library users scored an average of 3.6. This indicates that services provided by CBLs, are related to the needs of the adult users hence considered relevant by the majority of these respondents.

4.4.4 Adequacy of services as perceived by all respondents

Table 4:

RESPONSE	LIBRARY STAFF		ADULT LIBRARY USERS		LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	
	FREQUENCY	%	FREQUENCY	%	FREQUENCY	%
YES	13	42	17	41	4	40
NO	18	58	23	56	6	60

Source: field data

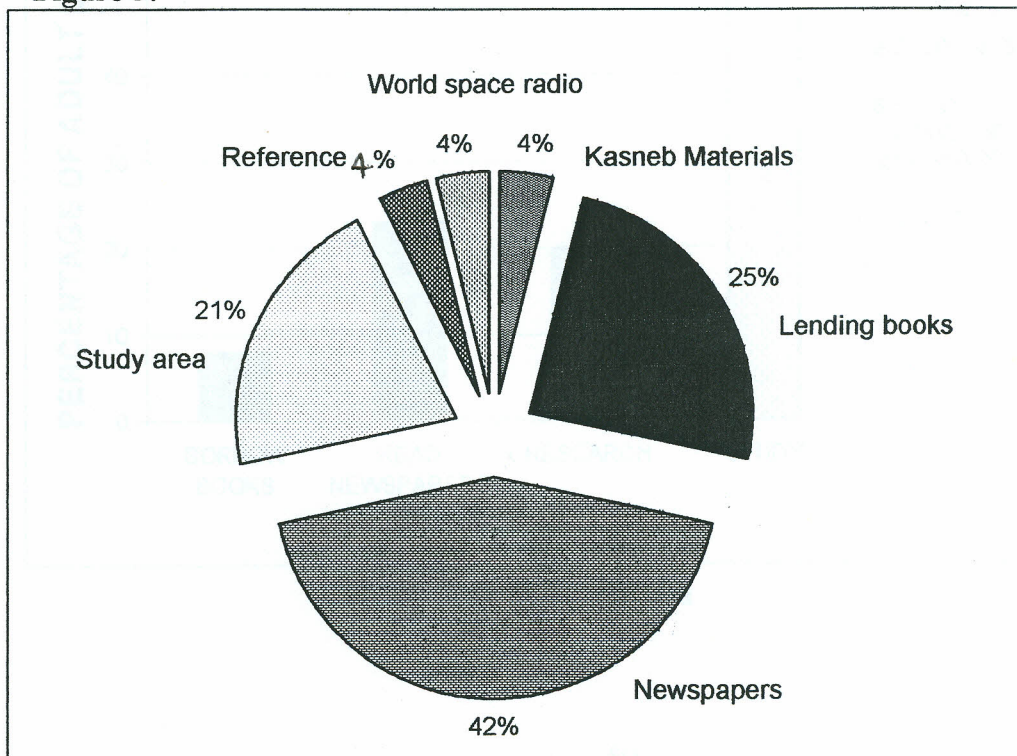
According to table 4, the adequacy of services provided by CBLs is wanting. The greatest percentage of respondents from all categories of respondents indicated that the services provided were not adequate. This is reflected by the following percentages: Community library staff (58%), Adult library users (56%), and Community Library Development Committee (60%). This clearly shows that CBLs need to explore more services to meet their users' expectations.

Some respondents gave some suggestions on additional services that can be provided. These include: internet services, photocopy, book-boxes, mobile service, public lectures among others.

There is a possibility that Adult library users themselves are not even aware of the range of services on offer and CBLs need to inform them.

4.4.5 Highest rated services by library staff

Figure 3:

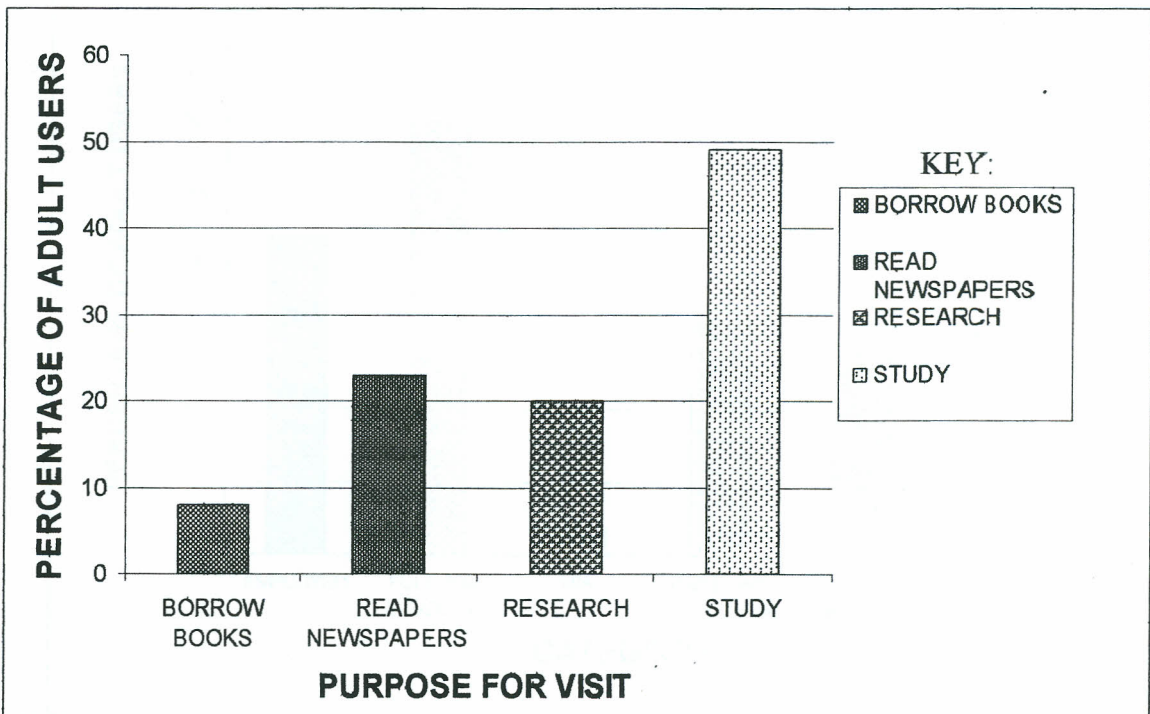


Source: field data

According to figure 3, the most highly rated services by community library staff are Newspapers/Magazines service (42%). Probably this is because of the current information they contain. Book lending service (25%), may rightly be due to the fact that majority of Kenyans cannot afford books due to their high costs and these libraries loan them free of charge. Study area (21%), may be due to the fact that the environment in most homes is not conducive for study. Hence most readers resort to CBLs for this service. However, other services are also considered important. These are: Reference service (4%), KASNEB materials distribution service (4%) and World Space Radio service (4%). this latter service is a unique service that is available only at Mwingi Community Library. Information from World Space Radio is downloaded and printed for library patrons depending on their requests. Perhaps all other CBLs need to borrow this noble idea from Mwingi Library.

4.5 Adult users' purpose for visiting library

Figure 4:

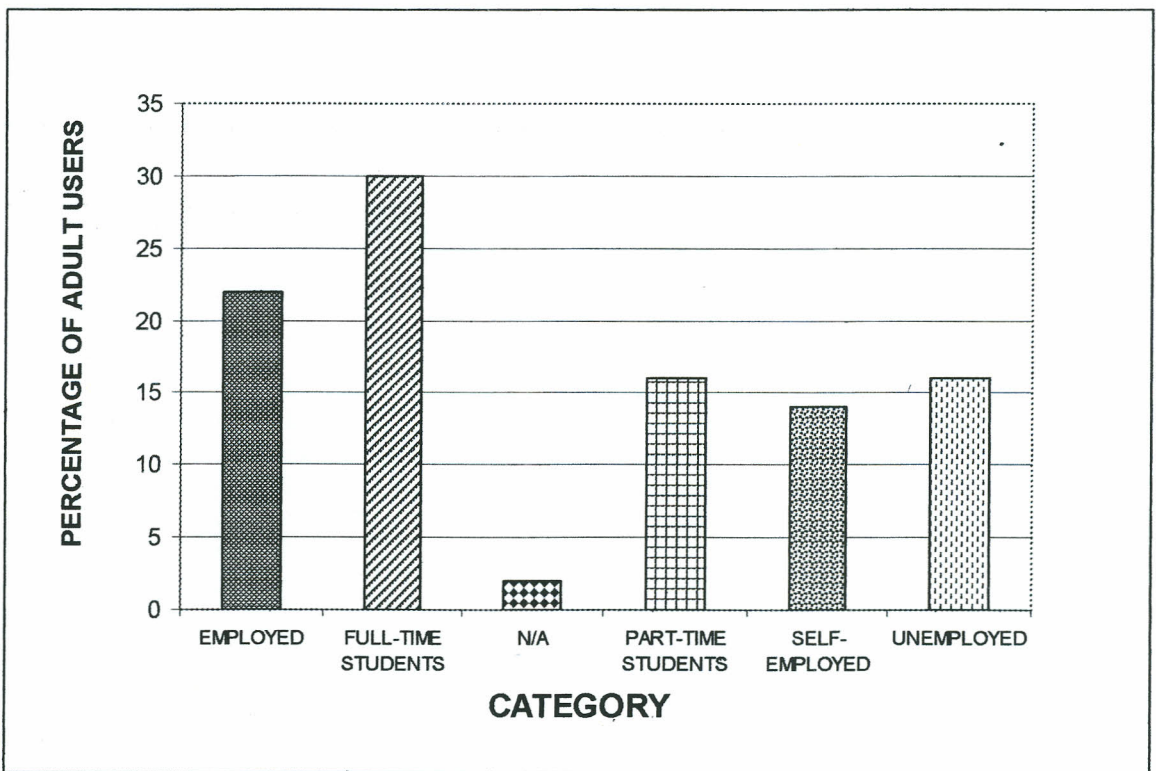


Source: field data

Although adult library users may visit the CBLs for more than one reason or purpose, the following seemed to stand out: The highest percentage (49%) indicated they visit the library for study purpose. Probably this is because majority lack alternative place to conduct their studies. 23% visit to read newspapers, perhaps to catch up with the latest information on both local and world arenas. 20% visit library for research purposes. CBLs can be an important source of local information that is useful to researchers. 8% visit to borrow books. This low figure indicates that majority of users who visit the library for study purpose read the books within the library but do not borrow for home reading.

4.6 Adult library users' categories

Figure 5:



Source: field data

In figure 5 , the highest percentage (30%) of adult users is composed of full-time students who are in pursuit of academic success. Other categories are; the employed (22%), most of who are seeking to advance on their professions, part-time students (16%), who are studying while working, the unemployed (16%), who are either seeking employment information or are just using their time constructively, and the self employed (14%), who could be seeking to advance their occupations. However, 2% gave no response. These could be idlers who just found themselves in the library for no apparent reason. From the above figures, it is clear that various categories of adult users visit CBLs. Therefore it is important for CBLs to know these categories so as to enable them plan for effective services.

4.7 Accessibility to Library and Information Services (All respondents).

Table 5:

Statement	Strongly Agree Score-5		Agree Score -4		Undecided Score-3		Disagree Score -2		Strongly Disagree Score -1		TOTAL F	TOTAL W.F	T.A.S
	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F			
Library's location is convenient.	36	180	35	140	2	6	10	20	1	1	84	347	4.1
Library's opening hours are convenient to most users.	46	230	32	128	1	3	4	8	0	0	83	369	4.4
Libraries rules and regulations pose no problems	26	130	17	68	7	21	2	4	1	1	53	224	4.2
Library Catalogue is used to access resources.	17	85	28	112	12	36	12	24	5	5	74	262	3.5
Library conducts user education often.	13	65	28	112	17	51	9	18	5	5	72	251	3.5
Organization of book stock is understood.	25	125	34	136	5	15	5	10	2	2	71	288	4.0
Book-lending period is convenient to users.	23	115	31	124	6	18	5	10	5	5	70	272	3.8
Library staff provide excellent service	20	100	16	64	2	6	3	2	1	1	42	173	4.1

KEY: F = Frequency
W.F = Weighted Frequency
T.A.S. = Total Average Score

Source: field data

According to table 5 above, CBLs location had an average score of 4.1, meaning that to the majority of respondents these libraries are located in ideal areas which are easily accessible. However, the researcher through observation noted that Mwingi Community Library is located in a 'hidden place' about a kilometre away from the town centre and therefore may not be easily accessible to some users.

Library opening hours are also convenient to the majority of respondents (average score-4.4). The researcher noted that these CBLs are open for the following hours every week: Monday to Thursday: 8.00am-6.30pm, Friday: 8.00am-4.00pm, Saturday: 8.00am-5.00pm. This proves that the CBLs hours of operation are suitable to almost every client. Majority of the respondents also indicated that library rules and regulations are not restrictive. This is reflected by the average score of 4.2. This can be interpreted to mean that rules are no obstacles to accessibility to services provided by these CBLs. Both library user education and the use of the catalogue scored an average score of 3.5. This shows that user education is carried out in CBLs and this equips the users with skills of using the libraries hence enhancing accessibility to information. Majority of the users also agreed that the library catalogue is used to access resources. This is shown by the average score of 3.5. The use of the libraries' catalogues enhances accessibility to information resources held in the CBLs.

The organization of book stock on the shelves is understood by most users. This had an average score of 4.0 showing that the organization of the CBL book stock based on the Dewey Decimal Classification is generally well understood. Book lending period is convenient to most library clients and this was indicated by the average score of 3.8. This can be interpreted to mean that the two week period of book loaning is considered enough by most users because there is always a possibility of renewing the borrowed books. According to majority of respondents, CBL staff provide excellent services. This is shown by the average score of 4.1. This means that the staff are instrumental in facilitating access to library and information services.

4.8 Library staff rating by both Adult library users and Community Library Development Committee Members.

Table 6:

<u>Staff performance</u>	<u>Excellent</u> Score = 4		<u>Good</u> Score = 3		<u>Fair</u> Score = 2		<u>Poor</u> Score = 1		<u>TOTAL</u> F	<u>TOTAL</u> W.F	<u>T.A.S</u>
	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F			
Availability	23	92	19	57	2	4	1	1	45	154	3.4
Approachability	17	68	13	39	7	14	0	0	37	121	3.3
Competence	19	76	22	66	9	18	1	1	51	161	3.2
Helpfulness	25	100	21	63	2	4	0	0	48	167	3.5
Attitude to work	22	88	25	75	4	8	1	1	52	172	3.3

KEY: F = Frequency
W.F = Weighted Frequency
T.A.S. = Total Average Score

Source: field data

Table 6 above shows some staff characteristics and their ratings by the respondents.

The staff characteristic that was rated highest is their helpfulness which had an average score of 3.5. What this means is that CBL staff offer all manner of assistance to not only their clients but anyone visiting the libraries for whatever reason. All other staff characteristics, for instance their availability and approachability to provide service, their competence in provision of service and their attitude to work were rated good with average scores of 3.4, 3.3, 3.2, and 3.3 respectively.

This goes to show that although community library staffs are not excellent in their provision of service, their performance is actually above average in the eyes of both the adult library users and the Community Library Development Committee Members.

4.9 Library staff responses to utilization of information resources.

Table 7:

Statement	Strongly Agree Score = 5		Agree Score = 4		Undecided Score = 3		Disagree Score = 2		Strongly disagree Score = 1		TOTAL F	TOTAL W.F	T.A.S
	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F			
1) The library's book stock is highly utilized	13	65	19	76	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	141	4.4
2) There is high wear and tear of materials	7	35	14	56	5	15	4	8	1	1	31	115	3.7
3) The number of books on loan is very high	11	55	16	64	1	3	4	8	1	1	33	131	4
4) Shelving work is too much for staff	3	15	6	24	3	9	13	26	5	5	30	79	2.6
6) Necessary equipment is available	0	0	6	24	4	12	12	24	8	8	30	68	2.2
7) Majority of users come to read the newspaper and magazines	3	15	14	56	3	9	7	14	6	6	33	100	3.0

KEY: F = Frequency
W.F = Weighted Frequency
T.A.S. = Total Average Score

Source: field data

From the table above, it is clear that most of the respondents agreed that the CBL book stock is highly utilized and that the number of books on loan is very high. These are shown by the average scores of 4.4 and 4.0 respectively.

They also agreed that there is high wear and tear of materials which can only arise out of high utilization of the available relevant materials and scarcity of the same. This had an

average score of 3.7.

However most respondents were undecided on whether shelving work is too much for them and even whether majority of users come to read newspapers and magazines. These had respective average scores of 2.6 and 3.0.

These scenarios can only be interpreted to mean that the staffs are too many to notice the amount of shelving work to be done and that they are not keen on the number of library users who come to read newspapers and magazines.

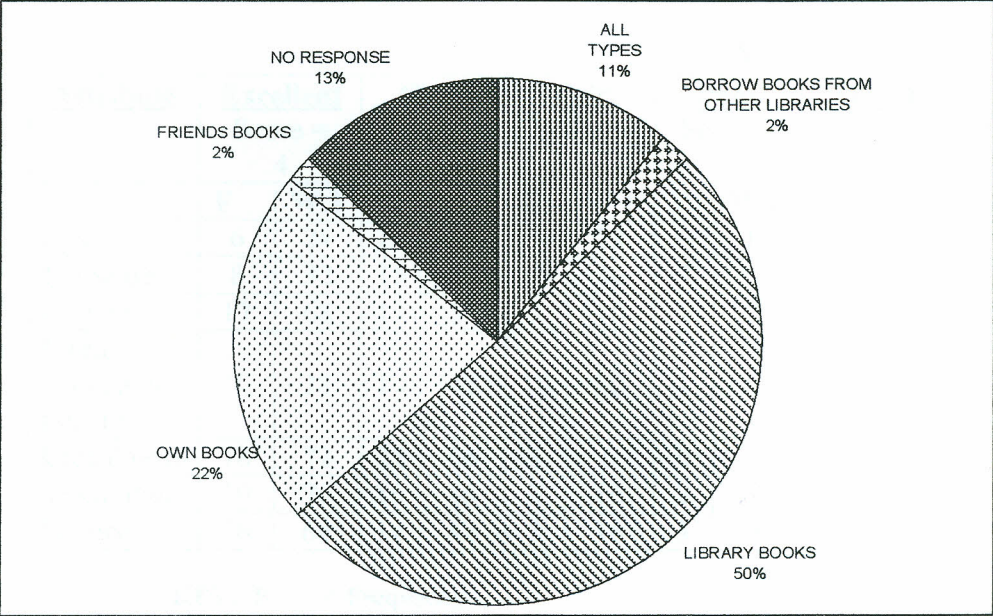
Regarding the availability of all necessary equipment, the respondents disagreed on the same, meaning that either this equipment is not available or is not adequate. However, the researcher observed that the equipment available in CBLs is not adequate to deliver effective services to the clientele. Computers for internet service for example, are lacking and photocopiers are also unavailable. Without this equipment, effective dissemination of information will continue to be handicapped.

4.9.1 Types of books read by adult library users:

When adult library users' respondents were asked to indicate the types of books that they read whenever they visit the library for study purposes, they gave the responses shown in **Figure 6** on the following page:

Types of books read by adult library users.

Figure 6:



Source: field data

Of all the books that are read by adult library users in CBLs, 50% are library books. This figure shows that adult library users are heavily dependent on the CBLs book stock. 22% are their own personal books, meaning that readers carry their personal books to read in the libraries. 2% are books from other libraries, indicating that users also borrow from other libraries. 2% are friends' books, showing that readers borrow from one another. 11% represent all or some of the already mentioned types. However, 13% gave no response meaning that they either came to the community library to read other materials or are not sure why they come to the library in the first place. Perhaps, this could be a potential clientele for other types of services that CBLs should explore.

4.10 Adult library users rating of CBLs

Table 8:

<u>Attribute</u>	<u>Excellent</u> Score = 4		<u>Good</u> Score= 3		<u>Fair</u> Score = 2		<u>Poor</u> Score = 1		TOTAL F	TOTAL W.F	T.A.S
	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F			
Space	6	24	12	36	14	28	11	11	43	99	2.3
Furniture	8	32	15	45	15	30	3	3	41	110	2.7
Lighting	17	68	19	57	5	10	1	1	42	136	3.2
Library collection (stock)	7	28	14	42	10	20	1	1	32	91	2.8
Cleanliness	18	72	22	66	3	6	0	0	43	144	3.3
Ventilation	19	76	16	48	8	16	2	2	45	142	3.2
Silence	16	64	14	42	8	16	3	3	41	125	3.0

KEY: F = Frequency
W.F = Weighted Frequency
T.A.S. = Total Average Score

Source: field data

From the table above some important library attributes were rated by adult library users as follows:

Space available scored an average score of 2.3% meaning that it was rated as 'fair.' All other attributes were rated 'good' with average scores of between 2.7 and 3.3. These are furniture (2.7), lighting (3.2), library collection (2.8), cleanliness (3.3), ventilation (3.2), and silence (3.0).

The rating of library attributes is important to CBLs in that these attributes may affect utilization of library and information resources in one way or the other. The ratings clearly show that CBLs studied have some work to do before they are rated excellent. Of particular concern is the space issue that has been rated relatively poorly compared to other attributes. The researcher through observation confirmed that sitting space is one of the serious problems that are facing the CBLs under study. Most of the CBLs' adult

reading rooms can hardly accommodate more than 50 readers while the demand for the same is in excess of 100 readers. The researcher observed that Karatina library has constructed grass thatched sheds “makuti” to cater for the overflow.

4.11 Community Library Development Committee Members rating of CBLs.

Table 9:

Attribute	<u>Excellent</u> Score = 4		<u>Good</u> Score = 3		<u>Fair</u> Score = 2		<u>Poor</u> Score = 1		TOTAL F	TOTAL W.F	T.A.S.
	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F			
Financial resources	0	0	0	0	6	12	2	2	8	14	1.8
Personnel size	2	8	5	15	2	4	0	0	9	27	3
Building size	0	0	3	9	3	6	3	3	9	18	2
Equipment	0	0	0	0	2	4	7	7	9	11	1.2

KEY: F = Frequency
W.F = Weighted Frequency
T.A.S. = Total Average Score

Source: field data

From the table above, it is clear that CBLs studied are not performing very well apart from personnel size. This had an average score of 3 meaning that CBLs are rated ‘good’ in as far as personnel size is concerned. Financial resources scored an average of 1.8 meaning that they are rated ‘fair.’ Buildings’ size shared almost a similar score of 2.0 and therefore were treated the same. This is comparable to adults’ users’ rating of space which scored 2.3 and was rated ‘fair.’

However equipment had a dismal performance with an average score of 1.2 and consequently rated ‘poor.’

4.12 Adult library users' information needs satisfaction

Table 10:

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u> Score = 5		<u>Agree</u> Score = 4		<u>Undecided</u> Score = 3		<u>Disagree</u> Score = 2		<u>Strongly disagree</u> Score = 1		TOTAL F	TOTAL W.F	T.A.S
	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F	F	W.F			
1) The library is meeting all your information needs.	5	25	11	44	4	12	15	30	4	4	39	115	2.9
2) The library understands users' needs.	7	35	18	72	11	33	2	4	2	2	40	146	3.7
3) The library often conducts user satisfaction studies	3	15	12	48	8	24	10	20	6	6	39	113	2.9
4) The materials available are relevant to most users	9	45	15	60	7	21	5	10	4	4	40	140	3.5
5) The library consults users whenever making selection of books	6	30	5	20	9	27	7	14	11	11	38	102	2.7

KEY: F = Frequency
W.F = Weighted Frequency
T.A.S. = Total Average Score

Source: field data

From table 10 above, it is clear that adult library users are undecided on whether the CBLs are meeting all their information needs or not. This had an average score of 2.9. This scenario can only be interpreted to mean that the CBLs are meeting adult users'

information needs to some extent that cannot enable them decide whether or not, all their information needs are met. This may be compounded by lack of ability on the part of the users to identify their anomalous state of knowledge (ASK), that is, the gap in their existing knowledge that needs to be filled up.

However, on being asked whether the CBLs understood their needs, they answered in the affirmative. This is shown by the average score of 3.7. This situation therefore, becomes very interesting in that the users think that the libraries understand their needs which they themselves are yet to identify. CBLs are therefore faced with a formidable task to help users not only to identify, but also to express their information needs.

When asked whether the CBLs conduct users satisfaction studies, respondents were undecided on this matter. This is reflected by the average score of 2.9. This goes to illustrate that the users are not aware whether the library conducts user satisfaction studies or not. Since they visit the libraries as individuals, they may not have experienced the exercise and may not be sure whether the same has been carried out on others.

On being asked whether materials available are relevant to most users, respondents agreed to the same. This is indicated by the average score of 3.5. This shows that CBLs have relevant materials although the same may not be adequate.

However, respondents were undecided on whether the libraries consulted users whenever making selection of books. This is reflected by the average score of 2.7. This may mean that, the libraries under study rarely consult their users on this issue.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the major findings of the study, makes conclusions and gives recommendations guided by the data analyzed and presented in chapter 4. However, the discussions are based on the specific objectives of the study as stated in Chapter 1 and the summary of findings is presented under sub-headings consistent with the same.

5.2 Services provided by CBLs

One of the objectives of the study was to establish the availability of relevant and adequate library and information services in the three CBLs under study. The study found out that Karatina, Naivasha and Mwingi Community-based libraries are providing a variety of services some of which differ from one library to the other. Among the range of services that are being provided are:

- Book lending service to individuals and institutions
- Newspaper/magazine (periodical service)
- HIV/AIDS information service
- Adult reading rooms
- Mobile library service through motorbikes
- Consultancy services on setting up of libraries
- Reference and referral services
- Inter-library lending

- World space radio service
- KASNEB materials' distribution
- In-service training to school librarians
- Educational video shows
- Service to the deaf(hard of hearing)

While some of these services are common and available in each library, the study found out that some are unique services that are available in either one or two libraries. Most notably, World Space Radio is a service that is only available at Mwingi community library and whose equipment was donated by a non-governmental organization in the area.

Mobile library service provided through the motorbikes is only available at Mwingi and Karatina libraries. The motorbikes are used to deliver books to schools and other institutions.

The study found out that while a broad range of services is acknowledged by the adult library users as being available, some of the services available in these CBLs were unknown to them. For this reason, some respondents were undecided on whether or not the following services were available:

- Mobile library service
- Information service on the local area.

Seemingly, the mobile library service has not made much impact on the adult library clientele, and therefore majority of the users probably think and feel this service is not available to them.

5.2.1 Relevance of services provided

On this particular issue, the study found out that the library and information services that are being provided by the CBLs under study are considered relevant by most adult library users and staff alike. This goes to prove that recipients appreciate the services that are being offered to them and therefore the CBL is considered an important facility in the respective areas.

5.2.2. Adequacy of services provided

In this particular aspect, the study found out that the services that are presently being provided by the CBLs under study are considered inadequate by most respondents. Most respondents from all categories, that is, library staff, adult library users, and members of the library development committee consider these services inadequate. Although they may appreciate the relevance of the services, recipients of these services are not convinced that the same are adequate in meeting their needs.

Consequently, they offered several suggestions on additional services that could be provided by the CBLs. These include:

- Internet services
- Photocopy services
- Book-box services
- Public lectures
- Recreational games
- Mobile library service through vans

5.2.3 Highest Rated Services

The study found that there is a discrepancy in what the library staff consider to be the most important services that they offer and actually what the adult library users consider to be the main reasons for visiting the community libraries. On one hand, the staff rated Newspaper/magazine as the most important service that attracted library users to the library on a regular basis whereas the users perceived this differently. The general opinion on the part of library users is that majority visit for study purposes. However, the Newspapers, Research and borrowing books followed in that order.

It is clear from these findings that majority of adult library users visit the libraries as a quiet place to undertake some serious and uninterrupted study. The second largest group visits the libraries to read newspapers and magazines. The third largest group visits the libraries for research purposes, while the fourth largest group visits to borrow books.

These findings rightly show that the CBL staffs have not clearly understood their patrons' needs and especially the purpose for which they visit the libraries. Without this understanding there is bound to be a mismatch between the expectations and the actual delivery of the services.

5.3 Accessibility to library and information services

The study set out with an objective of assessing accessibility to library and information services by the adult library users in the three CBLs.

The major finding in this area was that the location of most of these libraries is convenient to most users. However, it is inconceivable that every library would be located in an ideal and accessible location that is suitable to everyone who might need to

access it. In this regard, the study found out that Naivasha and Karatina libraries were more accessible than Mwingi library in terms of location. This is mainly because Mwingi library is located some distance away from the town centre as mentioned earlier on.

The study found out that the CBLs under study had enhanced accessibility to library and information services by having the following:

- Convenient opening hours
- Conducting user education
- Organization of book stock that is easily understood
- Convenient book-lending period
- Provision of excellent service by staff
- Rules and regulations that suit most clients
- Library catalogue that is used to access resources.

Despite these findings that seemed to suggest that library and information services are easily accessible by most clients, some clients cited the following difficulties in accessing the services:

- Congestion due to limited space
- Poor shelving
- Poor shelf labeling
- Unskilled staff
- Strict borrowing criteria
- Strict registration procedures
- Poor location of the library
- Impatient and uncooperative staff

- Difficult terrain and poor roads

However, despite some of the above misgivings about the community library staff, the study found out that the staff performance was really above average in the eyes of both the adult library clientele and the members of the Community Library Development Committee. All staff attributes including their availability, approachability, helpfulness, competence, and attitude to work were beyond reproach. The study found out that staffs were providing satisfactory services in the prevailing circumstances.

5.4 Adult library users' categories

Although the adult library clientele is composed of people from varying backgrounds within the given communities, the study found out that the largest group was composed of full-time students. However, this group did not fully dominate the adult clientele as other groups too were well represented.

These findings clearly show that Karatina, Naivasha and Mwingi CBLs are being patronized by all categories of users which include students (both full time and part time), those in formal employment, those self-employed and even those unemployed. As these CBLs plan for service delivery, they should take into consideration the varying categories of users.

5.5 Utilization of information resources.

Another objective of the study was to determine the extent of utilization of the resources held in the three CBLs. The study found out that the libraries book stocks are heavily utilized resulting into high wear and tear of materials. There was a general consensus that the number of books on loan is high and this proves that the book stock is being utilized.

Having found out that newspapers and magazines service was rated as the most important service by the library staff and second by the adult library users, this proved that these information resources are highly utilized.

Another important finding brought forth by the study is that, of all the books read by adult library users who visit the CBLs, 50% constitute Community library books. These users supplement library books with materials obtained from other sources which may include: personal books, friends, and other libraries. This finding illustrates that these CBLs constitute the main source of books that adult library clientele heavily depend on.

The adult users rating of Community libraries' collection as good (average score of 2.8) may be interpreted to mean that these materials are considered relevant to some extent. In this regard, the materials (resources) are useful to the clientele although they may not meet all the expectations of the adult library users.

5.6 Adult users' information needs satisfaction

The study found out that the adult library users were unable to state categorically whether or not their information needs were being met. This may arise out of several reasons: First, that the users have not identified their information needs which need to be met by the Community-based libraries. Secondly, that the users are unable to express their information needs in a manner that is clearly understandable by the staff and CBLs that provide them with an information service.

5.7 Problems facing the CBLs

The study found out that the CBLs under study are facing some problems which are incapacitating their efforts in delivery of effective service to adult library clientele. Some

of these include, inadequate financial resources, which mean that these CBLs are only sustaining the available services and not introducing new ones.

Inadequate financial resources seem to be the main reason why the buildings' sizes continue to be a severe limitation in delivery of service. Without adequate finances, the buildings' extensions cannot be undertaken. Hence congestion due to limited space continues to be a major phenomenon in these libraries.

Lack of necessary equipment including introduction of information communication technology (ICTs) continues to be a major handicap. This is also pegged on the inadequate financial resources.

5.8 CONCLUSIONS

In the light of the preceding findings, the researcher made the following conclusions:

- The library and information services currently being provided by the CBLs under study, although relevant, are considered to be inadequate.
- The adult library users are not very conversant with the full range of services available in the CBLs under study
- The majority of adult library users who patronize these CBLs visit the libraries for study purposes.
- The community library staff have not clearly understood the adult library clientele's information needs especially the reasons behind their visits to the library.

- Although the CBLs under study have greatly enhanced accessibility to library and information services, there is still a group of adults' clientele that is not yet satisfied.
- The adult library users' category is composed of varying groups of people with different backgrounds in terms of occupation. However, the largest group is composed of full-time students.
- Information resources available in CBLs are being utilized to the maximum depending on their relevance to the adults' clientele's needs.
- The adult library users are undecided on whether the CBLs are meeting all their information needs.

5.9 RECOMMENDATIONS/POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

In the light of the study findings and the conclusions drawn regarding the same, the researcher proposes the following could be done to enhance information dissemination by community libraries:

1. CBLs need to increase and diversify services. The current services are considered inadequate by the users and therefore there is need for CBLs to explore and introduce additional services to meet their users' expectations.
2. Marketing the available services within and beyond the community library. For effective dissemination of information library users need to know the kind of services that are available in a particular CBL. This calls for vigorous marketing of services in the CBLs and in their areas of operation. Library user education including publicity activities will go a long way in informing the users about the services available.

3. Conducting user studies: There is need for CBLs to regularly conduct user studies in order to know the kind of clientele they are serving and their specific interest. This will enable better planning for effective delivery of service.
4. Enhancing accessibility to library and information services. Any obstacles to accessibility in the form of unskilled and uncooperative staff need to be removed. The researcher therefore recommends training for most of the CBL staff.
5. Materials provided in the CBLs must be relevant, adequate, and up-to-date so as to meet the users' expectations.
6. Compiling a community information profile: This will help determine the needs of the current users and also help to anticipate the needs of the potential users and user groups. In this regard, the CBLs should help their users identify and express their information needs. An information profile will help to focus and relate the services to the needs of the users within a given community.
7. The CBLs need to embrace new technology in delivery of service. However, due to financial limitations, CBLs will have to look for any possible source of funding to make this a reality. This could be the community, donors, local government, and others.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

COMMUNITY LIBRARY STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear respondent,

The researcher is a student at Kenyatta University and is undertaking a study on "The role of KNLS Community –based libraries in information dissemination". Your library is one of those under study and your views are being sought to help the researcher make suitable recommendations that can be applicable to your library as well as others. Therefore, kindly respond to all the questions as honestly as you can. You are assured of strict confidentiality. Your name is not required.

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

Thank you.

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

- (i) Name of your library: _____
- (ii) Sex of the respondent: Male Female
- (iii) Age:
- (iv) What is your level of education / qualifications:
- (a) Secondary / High school
- (b) Certificate (library studies)
- (c) Diploma (Library studies)
- (d) Degree (Library studies)
- (e) Others (Please specify) _____
- (v) Indicate the number of years that you have worked in this library:
- 0 – 4 years
- 5 –9 years
- 10-14 years

SECTION B: SERVICES OFFERED

- (i) Items in this section are meant to seek your opinion concerning the services provided by your library. Please indicate with a tick (✓) the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements in the next page using the scales provided.

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u> Score =5	<u>Agree</u> Score = 4	<u>Undecided</u> Score = 3	<u>Disagree</u> Score = 2	<u>Strongly Disagree</u> Score =1
1) The library offers a wide range of services.					
2) Library offers adults book lending service.					
3) Library has an adults reading room.					
4) Internet service is provided.					
5) E-mail services are offered.					
6) Photocopying services are available.					
7) The library operates a mobile library service.					
8) HIV/AIDS information service is available.					
9) Library organizes public lectures on topical issues.					
10) Services for visually impaired persons are available.					
11) Information on the local area is available.					
12) Consultancy on setting up of libraries in the area.					
13) The library offers recreational games eg. Chess, draught, Ajua etc.					
14) The library organizes traditional dance, poetry and drama.					
15) Educational video shows are organized.					
16) Newspaper / Magazine reading.					
17) Book - box service to adult users.					
18) Selective dissemination of information to adult users.					
19) Reference services are provided.					
20) Referral services are offered.					
21) Inter-library lending service is offered.					

(ii) Please list any other service(s) that your library offers to the adult library users and has not been listed above:

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____

(iii) Which of the services would you consider to be the most highly rated by the adult library users and that attracts them to your library on a regular basis: You may specify one or more:

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____

(iv) Do you consider the library services offered to be adequate?

- (a) YES (b) NO

If your answer in (iv) above is (b), which other service(s) are you aware of that could be provided. Please specify below:

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____

(v) Do you consider the library services offered to be relevant to the adult library users? How would you rate them in terms of the following:

- (a) Very relevant
- (b) Relevant
- (c) Irrelevant

(vi) If you rate the services as 'irrelevant', could you please offer suggestion(s) on what can be done:

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____

(vii) Do you evaluate the services provided to your adult library users?

- (a) YES (b) NO

If your answer is (a) above, how often is this done?

- (a) Daily (b) Weekly (c) Monthly
- (d) Quarterly (e) Annually
- (f) Others (Specify) _____

(viii) If you don't evaluate the services provided to your users, do you have a possible reason why this is not done? Please state the reason(s):

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

(ix) Are you proud to be part of the team that is providing services in this library?
Please indicate your level of satisfaction:

(a) Very satisfied

(b) Satisfied

(c) Dissatisfied

(d) Very dissatisfied

SECTION C: ACCESSIBILITY TO LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES

(i) Items in this section are meant to seek your opinion in regard to accessibility of the library and information services. Please indicate with a tick (✓) the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below.

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u> Score = 5	<u>Agree</u> Score = 4	<u>Undecided</u> Score = 3	<u>Disagree</u> Score = 2	<u>Strongly Disagree</u> Score = 1
1) Library's location is convenient to most users.					
2) The staff are adequately trained to provide services.					
3) The catalogue is often used to access resources.					
4) The library conducts user education often.					
5) Library's opening hours are convenient to most users.					
6) Organization of book stock is understood by most users.					
7) Most users are information literate.					
8) Internet charges are affordable.					
9) Book lending period is convenient to users.					

(ii) From your observation and experience, what kind (category) of adult users mainly access your library and information services (please specify below)

(iii) What difficulties (if any) do you consider the adult library users face in accessing your library and information services (please specify)

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

SECTION D: UTILIZATION OF THE INFORMATION RESOURCES

(i) The items in this section are meant to seek your opinion regarding the utilization of the information resources available in your library. Please tick (✓) the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements by using the scales provided:

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u> Score = 5	<u>Agree</u> Score = 4	<u>Undecided</u> Score = 3	<u>Disagree</u> Score = 2	<u>Strongly disagree</u> Score = 1
1) The library's book stock is highly utilized.					
2) There is high wear and tear of materials.					
3) The number of books on loan is very high.					
4) Shelving work is too much for staff.					
5) Internet services are fully booked.					
6) All necessary equipment is available.					
7) Majority of users come to read the newspapers and magazines.					

(ii) In your opinion which are the most heavily utilized information resources in your library. Please rank in order of importance 1-6:

- (a) Reference books
- (b) Internet Sources
- (c) Fiction (Novels)
- (d) Non-Fiction (Subject books)
- (e) Newspapers/Magazines
- (f) Others (please specify) _____

(iii) Please indicate some of the subject areas that are heavily utilized in your library:
e.g. Generalities, Social sciences, Religion etc.

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____

(iv) Please indicate some of the subject areas that are hardly utilized in your library (if any)

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____

SECTION E: INFORMATION NEEDS SATISFACTION

(i) Items in this section are meant to seek your opinion concerning the extent to which your library is meeting the information needs of the adult library users. Kindly indicate by ticking (✓) in the appropriate box the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u> Score =5	<u>Agree</u> Score =4	<u>Undecided</u> Score = 3	<u>Disagree</u> Score =2	<u>Strongly Disagree</u> Score=1
1) The library conducts user satisfaction studies often.					
2) The library meets all information needs.					
3) The library consults users whenever selection of materials is done.					
4) The library is highly reputed within community.					
5) Materials available are relevant to information needs of community.					

(ii) What do you consider to be the most pressing challenge(s) that your library is facing in service delivery to the community?

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

(d) _____

(iii) What suggestion(s) can you offer to help overcome these challenges?

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

SECTION B: SERVICES OFFERED BY THE COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Items in this section are meant to seek your opinion in regard to the services provided by the Community Library. Please indicate with a tick (✓) the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements by using the scales provided:

(i)

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u> Score = 5	<u>Agree</u> Score = 4	<u>Undecided</u> Score = 3	<u>Disagree</u> Score = 2	<u>Strongly Disagree</u> Score = 1
1) The library offers a very wide range of services.					
2) The library offers adults book lending service.					
3) Internet service is provided.					
4) Photocopying services are available.					
5) The library operates a mobile library service.					
6) Library organizes public lectures on topical issues.					
7) Educational video shows are organized.					
8) The library organizes traditional dance, poetry and drama.					
9) The library offers recreational games e.g. chess, draught, Ajua etc.					
10) Library offers Newspaper / Magazine reading.					
11) Library offers book - box service to adult users.					
12) Inter-Library Lending Service is offered.					

(ii) Please list any other service(s) that the community library offers to the adult library users that has not been listed above:

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____
- (d) _____

(iii) Among the services provided to adult library users, which would you consider to be most important: You may specify one or more, ranking them in order of importance:

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____
- (d) _____

(iv) Do you consider the library services currently being offered by the community library to be adequate?

- (a) YES (b) NO

If your answer in (iv) above is (b), which other service(s) would you wish the community library to provide?

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____
- (d) _____

(v) Do you consider the library and information services offered to be relevant to the adult library users within the community? How would you rate them in terms of the following:

(a) Very relevant

(b) Relevant

(c) Irrelevant

(vi) If you rate the services as 'irrelevant', what plans have you put in place to remedy the situation: Please list them below:

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____
- (d) _____

(vii) How would you rate the community library staff in terms of provision of services. Tick (✓) your appropriate response in the table below:-

<u>Staff performance</u>	<u>Excellent</u> Score = 4	<u>Good</u> Score = 3	<u>Fair</u> Score = 2	<u>Poor</u> Score = 1
(a) Availability				
(b) Competence				
(c) Helpfulness				
(d) Attitude to work				

(viii) How would you rate the community library in terms of the following:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Excellent</u> Score = 4	<u>Good</u> Score = 3	<u>Fair</u> Score = 2	<u>Poor</u> Score = 1
a) Financial resources				
b) Personnel size				
c) Building size				
d) Library collection (stock)				
e) Equipment e.g. ICTs				
f) Furniture				

(ix) Are you proud to be associated with this community library? Please indicate your level of satisfaction:

- (a) Very satisfied []
- (b) Satisfied []
- (c) Dissatisfied []
- (d) Very Dissatisfied []

SECTION C: ACCESSIBILITY TO LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES

(i) Please indicate with a tick (✓) the extent to which you agree or disagree

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u> Score = 5	<u>Agree</u> Score = 4	<u>Undecided</u> Score = 3	<u>Disagree</u> Score = 2	<u>Strongly Disagree</u> Score = 1
a) Location of the library is convenient to most users.					
b) Library's opening hours are enough					
c) The library's rules and regulations are okay to most users.					
d) Library's charges are too minimal.					
e) The library has outreach programmes e.g. book-boxes, mobile library etc.					

(ii) From your observation, what category of adult library users mainly access the library and information services? Please specify: _____

(iii) What difficulties (if any) do the adult library users face in accessing the library and information services provided by the community library? You may list them below:

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____

SECTION D: INFORMATION NEEDS SATISFACTION

i) In your opinion, is the community library meeting the information needs of the adult library users in your community?

- (a) YES (b) NO

ii) What are the specific objectives for which the community library was set up?

Please list below:

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

(d) _____

(iii) In your opinion, has the community library achieved all these specific objectives?

(a) Yes

(b) No

(iv) If your answer in (iii) above is (a), Please list some of the achievements:

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

(v) If your answer in (iii) above is (b), Please indicate some of the problems that the community library is facing in trying to achieve its objectives:

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

(vi) What suggestions would you offer that can help the community library solve some of these problems: Please list below:

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Appendix 3

COMMUNITY LIBRARY ADULT USERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Library User,

The researcher is a student at Kenyatta University and is undertaking a study on "The role of KNLS Community –based libraries in information dissemination". The library you frequent is one of those under study. The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information that can help the researcher successfully conduct the study and possibly make suitable recommendations. Therefore, kindly respond to all the questions as honestly as you can. You are assured of utmost confidentiality. Your name is not required.

Please respond by ticking (✓) against your preferred response for questions with options. Also, write your answers in the spaces provided for questions without options. Thank you.

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

- (i) Name of the community library you frequent _____
- (ii) Sex of the respondent: Male Female
- (iii) Age:
- (iv) What is your level of education: (a) Secondary []
(b) College []
(c) University []
(d) Other (please specify) _____
- (v) Occupation: State whether (a) Employed []
(b) Self employed []
(c) Unemployed []
(d) Full-time student []
(e) Part-time student []
- (vi) If your answer in (v) above is (a) or (b), state nature of occupation _____
- (vii) For how long have you used this community library? Please specify the period:
Days []
Weeks []
Months []
Years []

(viii) How often do you visit the community library?

(a) Once a week []

(b) Twice a week []

(c) Three times a week []

(d) Four times a week []

(e) Five times a week []

(f) Six times a week []

(g) Once a month []

(h) Twice a month []

(i) Others (specify) _____

(ix) Indicate the purpose for which you visit the library

(a) Study []

(b) Research []

(c) Borrow books []

(d) Read Newspapers []

(e) Browsing Internet []

(f) To meet and talk with people []

(g) Any other (please specify) _____

(x) If you use the library for study purpose, indicate the kind of books that you read:

(a) The library's books []

(b) Books from other libraries []

(c) Your own books []

(d) Your friends' books []

(e) All of the above []

SECTION B: SERVICES PROVIDED

- (i) Items in this section are meant to seek your opinion concerning the services provided to you by the library. Please indicate with a tick (✓) the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below by using the scales provided:

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u> Score-5	<u>Agree</u> Score -4	<u>Undecided</u> Score-3	<u>Disagree</u> Score -2	<u>Strongly Disagree</u> Score -1
1) The library offers a wide range of services.					
2) Internet services are available.					
3) E-mail services are offered.					
4) Photocopying services are available.					
5) The library has a spacious adults' reading room.					
6) The library operates a mobile library service					
7) HIV/AIDS information service is available.					
8) The library organizes public lectures on topical issues.					
9) The library offers recreational games e.g. Chess, draught, etc					
10) The library organizes traditional dance, poetry and drama.					
11) Information on the local area is available.					
12) Newspapers/ magazines are always available.					
13) Library offers adults book lending service.					
14) The library services offered are adequate.					
15) The library services offered are relevant and upto date.					

(ii) Are you aware of any other service(s) that the library offers that has not been listed above? Please list below:

- (a) _____
 (b) _____
 (c) _____

(iii) Among the services that are provided by this library which ones do you consider to be most important to you? Please list them in order of importance:

- (a) _____
 (b) _____
 (c) _____
 (d) _____

(iv) How would you rate the library staff in terms of provision of service to you? Tick (✓) your preferred response in the table below:

<u>Staff performance</u>	<u>Excellent</u> Score = 4	<u>Good</u> Score = 3	<u>Fair</u> Score = 2	<u>Poor</u> Score = 1
(i) Availability				
(ii) Approachability				
(iii) Responsiveness				
(iv) Competence				
(v) Attitude to work				

(v) How would you rate the library in terms of the following?

<u>Attribute</u>	<u>Excellent</u> Score = 4	<u>Good</u> Score = 3	<u>Fair</u> Score = 2	<u>Poor</u> Score = 1
(i) Space				
(ii) Furniture				
(iii) Lighting				
(iv) Library collection (stock)				
(v) Cleanliness				
(vi) Ventilation				
(vii) Silence				

SECTION C: ACCESSIBILITY TO LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES

(i) Items in this section are meant to seek your opinion concerning how easy or difficult it is for you to access the library and information services. Please respond by ticking (✓) in the appropriate box the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u> Score = 5	<u>Agree</u> Score = 4	<u>Undecided</u> Score = 3	<u>Disagree</u> Score = 2	<u>Strongly disagree</u> Score = 1
1) Library's location is convenient to you.					
2) The library's opening hours are also convenient.					
3) You have no problem with library's rules and regulations.					
4) You often use the library's catalogue to access resources.					
5) The library conducts user education often.					
6) You understand the organization of book stock on the shelves.					
7) The book-lending period is convenient to you.					
8) The library staff provide excellent service.					
9) The internet services are highly reliable.					

(ii) What difficulties (if any) do you experience in your efforts to access the library and information services in this library?

Please list them below:

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

SECTION D: INFORMATION NEEDS SATISFACTION

(i) The items in this section are meant to seek your opinion concerning the extent to which the community library is meeting your information needs. Please indicate by ticking (✓) in the appropriate box the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below:

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u> Score = 5	<u>Agree</u> Score = 4	<u>Undecided</u> Score = 3	<u>Disagree</u> Score = 2	<u>Strongly disagree</u> Score = 1
1) The library is meeting all your information needs.					
2) The library understands users' needs.					
3) The library often conducts user satisfaction studies					
4) The materials available are relevant to most users.					
5) The library consults users whenever making selection of books.					

(ii) How would you rate the library's information resources in terms of the following?

<u>Resource</u>	<u>Excellent</u> Score = 4	<u>Good</u> Score = 3	<u>Fair</u> Score = 2	<u>Poor</u> Score = 1
a) Fiction books (Novels)				
b) Non-fiction (subject books)				
c) Reference books				
d) Audio-visual materials				
e) Internet services				
f) Newspapers/magazines				
g) Other (Specify) _____				

(iii) Are you satisfied with the services and information resources offered in this library? (a) YES (b) NO

If your answer in (iii) above is (b), please offer some suggestions on what can be done.

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

Thank you for your time and cooperation.