

ABSTRACT

Continuing professional development (CPD) of librarians is essential to maintain professional competencies for the provision of quality library services. This is particularly important in the rapidly changing digital environment. Despite the growing importance of CPD, librarians' views and experiences of CPD have not been researched in Uganda. Therefore, the study aimed at exploring librarians' views and experiences of CPD in public university libraries (PULs) in Uganda. The study was framed within the social constructivist learning theories. From this perspective, learning is perceived as active engagement, social interaction, and situated in context.

The study adopted an interpretivist paradigm and a qualitative multi-case study. Individual face-to-face interviews, and focus groups, document analysis, observations were conducted with a purposeful sample of 37 librarians. The data were analysed using abductive thematic analysis with the aid of qualitative data analysis software package, ATLAS.ti version 8.4.26.

The findings suggest that CPD is a complex concept with various meanings and interpretations. The term CPD is not commonly used within the university setting. The participants valued CPD as a means of keeping up-to-date, developing new knowledge and skills, career advancement, improving performance on the job, enhancing the status of the profession, compliance with institutional requirements, and personal growth and development. The participants valued CPD activities that provided opportunities for active participation, social interaction, and collaborating with colleagues. However, several contextual factors affect individual participation in CPD activities positively and negatively.

The participants recommended increasing awareness about CPD, personal commitment to CPD, and work-based learning. The study concluded that adequate regulatory frameworks should be put in place to strengthen the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of librarians' CPD. Finally, a CPD framework for enhancing CPD of librarians in PULs in Uganda was proposed.

Keywords: Continuing professional development, Situated learning, Communities of Practice, Librarians' perspectives on CPD, Public University Libraries, Uganda.