

Title: Compliance with University Library Standards by Universities In Uganda

Name: ODONG PATRICK

ABSTRACT

University libraries play a crucial role in supporting teaching, learning, research, and innovation in Higher education institutions. However, there is concern about compliance with the minimum standards prescribed by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) for information resources, staffing, infrastructure, information and communication technology (ICT), funding, and library services. The purpose of this study was to assess how well universities in Uganda meet the set library standards to improve the quality of library services and user satisfaction. Specifically, the study examined the level of compliance with NCHE library standards, the challenges faced in achieving full compliance, and some strategies and recommendations to enhance compliance at Ugandan universities. The study was grounded in Institutional Theory, Compliance Theory, Total Quality Management (TQM), and Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science, utilizing international standards established by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), and NCHE. The research used a pragmatic, mixed-methods approach. Data were collected from 433 respondents, including head librarians, university library staff, library users and NCHE officials, through questionnaires, interviews, observation, and document reviews.

The study found that compliance with the NCHE library standards in Uganda was moderate. University libraries were on the right track, with KOHA and DSpace representing significant steps towards automation. However, there were issues with the availability of information in both print and online formats, as well as with its relevance, currency, and content quality. The provision of library infrastructure generally did not meet the NCHE requirement of 2.5 m² per user. Services for people with disabilities were inadequate, lacking assistive technology and facilities, and there was no specialised staff member to provide support. Staffing levels were insufficient, professional development opportunities were limited, and librarians received little academic recognition as same as teaching staff as per NCHE standards. Limited access to the Internet, computers, and assistive technologies hindered ICT services. Major challenges included weak enforcement of standards, insufficient funding, poor ICT infrastructure, limited information resources, and low staffing levels. Most universities spent less than the NCHE-recommended 10% of their institutional budgets on library services.

The study concluded that, despite higher levels of automation and the provision of digital services in university libraries in Uganda, these libraries' ability to meet the NCHE library standards remains limited, partly due to structural and resource constraints. The study recommends that regulatory enforcement and monitoring be strengthened, library funding expanded, and investments made in information resources, ICT infrastructure, staff, and physical infrastructure. It also advocates for continuous professional development and for institutions' commitment to quality assurance. These measures are essential for improving compliance, service quality, and user satisfaction within the libraries.

.Keywords: University Libraries; NCHE Standards; Compliance; Information Resources; Staffing; ICT Infrastructure; Funding; Service Quality; User Satisfaction; Uganda.