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Application of Library Service Charter in Quality Service Delivery in University Libraries

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Introduction and Background Information

The Kenyan government has a mandatory requirement for all government ministries, departments and agencies to come up with among others, action control guidelines such as service charter, which serves as the strategic tool intended for improved efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and timely delivery of all aspects in the services offered. Introducing some of these approaches is a clear demonstration that the government is enhancing the quality of services, aiming at refocusing the mindset of the public service away from the culture of inward looking towards one of business focused on customer and results (Obong'o, 2009). The University of Nairobi Library falls under the public service sector. As the integral unit within the university it is expected to cascade services from the service charter, strategically plan, and entrench the related matrices in the locus of services offered through documented information guidelines and standards that informs the gamut of this research. Provision of quality services in library is recognized not only by the institution administrators but also by the librarians. Academic libraries are powerhouses of information and knowledge that support research, teaching, learning and community services of universities (Makori, 2015). According to Makori, these libraries administer and provide quality information services to students, staff, researchers and the general academic community so as to enhance higher customer satisfaction and better return on investment.

Emerging approaches and trends of service delivery continue to develop rapidly, while standardization and fundamental principles and practices have to be applied and evaluated constantly, due to the changing nature of service orientations and delivery mechanisms in libraries. The university library service charter that has been pegged as the apex of service delivery provides guiding principles and quality objectives, which dictates the processes and procedures of providing services to the clients and stakeholders. Fundamental objective of the service charter is to commit the university library to well defined and standardized course of action, for the purpose of supporting and realizing the core mandate of teaching, learning, research and consultancy services. Additional core objectives include developing systems for preservation and conservation of valuable and rare information resources for posterity, increase and update facilities for improved information delivery, and increase collaboration and partnerships at national, regional and international levels (UoNL Website, 2014).

Formulation of guiding quality objectives among other measures that have been adopted to improve service delivery and client satisfaction in academic institutions is a practice that has been acquired from the private business sector. This practice has led to conceptual shift in management approach of academic institutions and libraries, which are required to cascade and align operations within the mission, vision and objectives of the parent institutions. One of the trends being experienced in the new dispensation of operations and provision of services in academic libraries is the paradigm shift from bibliographic control to managerial approach. There is increased demand of information services leading to adoption of managerial tools and standards such as the service charter, benchmarking, management by objectives, quality assurance, and performance contracting that were not predominant in academic library services. Library management is responsible for planning, organisation, decision making, leading, budgeting,

monitoring, assessment and evaluation. The university library service charter defines the priorities and areas where the management has to focus concerted efforts in order to accomplish its mandate, goals and objectives (UoNL Website, 2014). In accordance with this, the library being the integral unit within the university is expected to cascade services from the service charter, strategically plan, and entrench related matrices in the locus of services through documented information guidelines and standards that informs the gamut of this research.

Context of the Study

The Director of Library of Information Services is the chief executive responsible for administration, management, strategic planning and formulation of policies, and represents the library in university management boards and related forums (UoNL Website, 2014). Deputy Directors, Campus Librarians, Section Heads and other information professionals, head the organizational structure and management governance of the other library sections. The library systems serve the colleges of the University of Nairobi, that include the College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences (Upper Kabete Campus), College of Architecture and Engineering (Main Campus), College of Biological and Physical Sciences (Chiromo Campus), College of Education and External Studies (Kikuyu Campus), College of Health Sciences (Kenyatta National Hospital), and College of Humanities and Social sciences (Main Campus - Faculty of Arts; Parklands-Faculty of Law; Lower Kabete Campus - Faculty of Commerce). The library endeavours to empower the university to retain its leadership role as the world class university through quality information to enhance teaching, research and consultancy programmes. Functions of the university library towards the accomplishment of the mandate of the university are to acquire, organize and disseminate information in support of teaching, research, learning and community services. The library provides information products and services, reference and research materials and other services to the clients - students, academic faculty, non-academic staff and scholars. Digital information resources of both books and journals are also offered in the library. Information products and services are automated and the library has established the institutional repository since July 2014. The University of Nairobi Digital Repository manages and disseminates scholarly research outputs of the University of Nairobi (UoNL Website, 2014).

Statement of the Problem

The service charter of the university library outlines the practices used to deliver services to the customers based on value, vision, mission, functions and best standards (UoNL Website, 2014). The charter also acts as the identifier of the approaches to be embraced in service delivery. However, it is not known if this creates the natural tendency that limits the library staff thinking of the services provided, thus fostering the defence of status quo rather than formulating new and innovative ideas and practices. Additionally, previous research shows that service marketers may not always understand what consumers expect in service delivery (Langeard et al. 1981 & Pa-rasuraman & Zeithaml, 1982), neither do they always appreciate aspects that connote high quality services to customers as spelt out in such standards. Management structure and diversity as well as views of the stakeholders constitute major stumbling block on application and relevance of library service charter. Lack of agreed checklist or template to determine if the service

charter is the right tool for tracking the challenges facing the library is also an area of concern. Besides, it is yet to be established if the library work force has the desired capacity, competences, skills and knowledge to actualize the matrices of the service charter. With all these uncertainties, it is unclear whether the introduction of library service charter at the University of Nairobi Library has enhanced and improved service delivery to the customers. This study therefore sought to examine the application of the University of Nairobi Library service charter on quality service delivery.

Purpose and Objectives

The aim of the study was to assess the application of library service charter on quality service delivery at the University of Nairobi Library. Objectives of the study were to:

- i. Examine the extent of the library service charter in quality service delivery in the library.
- ii. Establish levels of library staff awareness, perception and responsiveness to information service delivery.
- iii. Assess the actualization of the matrices of the library service charter for quality improvements.
- iv. Establish the challenges experienced by the library in realising the commitments of the service delivery charter.
- v. Propose measures to be undertaken to ensure successful actualization of the library service charter.

Research Questions

- i. To what extent has the library adhered to library service charter parameters of quality service delivery?
- ii. How does staff awareness and perception of the service charter influenced their responsiveness to service delivery in the library?
- iii. How has the library realised the application of the matrices of the information service charter?
- iv. What factors hinder the library from realising the objectives of the service charter?
- v. How can the university library effectively use the service charter to improve information service delivery to clients?

Literature Review

Central Role of Academic Libraries

University libraries are expected to provide variety of services to support the teaching, learning and research capabilities of the institution (Adam, 2017). Sample of information services provided in academic libraries include, information literacy training programmes, access to digital or electronic information resources, internet of things solutions and conducive research space. University libraries provide support services for formal educational programs and facilities for research and generation of new knowledge (Cristobal, 2018). Therefore, it is important for information professionals working in academic libraries and related establishments know the real needs of the user community (Gunasekera, 2010). In the library service charter, user satisfaction is an important measure of service quality that provides valued feedback for libraries and information

professionals to assess and improve services (Kumar, 2012). Main clients of university libraries include the students' community, faculty academic staff, non-teaching members and researchers. For successful customer satisfaction, university libraries must provide adequate information products, services and facilities (Gama, 2013). With the service charter based on quality vision, mission, goals and strategic objectives university libraries constantly and regularly provide information services to support the needs of the customers.

Development of digital technology and internet of things have impacted on the role of universities libraries and information professionals in sustaining the information needs and seeking behaviour of customers. Information professionals and university libraries are evolving and rapidly changing to the needs of the digital knowledge environment. Library users that once needed to work with the librarian to access information resources in the physical library building can now access scholarly works and other library materials from school offices or home at any time regardless of library hours (Pearl, 2014). Students and faculty can get synchronous online research help through virtual reference, instant messaging, or video chatting with librarians, adds the author. Cristobal (2018) notes that, first, modern university and college libraries are faced with challenges on several elements such as mega book stores, online information providers specially the internet, online databases (both free and subscription based), e-learning and multimedia products, document delivery services, and other competitive sources of information that seems to be threatening the role of academic libraries. Second, academic libraries may have to adopt more strategic direction in which the creation and delivery of service satisfaction for the users play important role. Finally, in order to achieve customer satisfaction on services, academic libraries should conform to quality standards (national or international).

Library Service Charter and Quality Service Delivery

The library service charter is a social contract, commitment and agreement between the library management and the clients (UoNL Website, 2014). This contract highlights fundamental aspects of the service charter as follows. It is a quality assurance tool, written and signed document that sets out the roles and responsibilities of the partners to improve performance, enhance and fast track delivery of services so as to improve the lives and engagement experiences of clients in relation to access and use of information services. The service charter enables information services beneficiaries to understand the role and expectations of the university library and forms the basis of engagement between the library management and the stakeholders. Service charter document sets standard guidelines that stipulate commitment of the particular library and information organization in clear and simple terms on how service is to be delivered to the clients and stakeholders. The tool sequentially prescribes the nature, standards and schedule of services delivery. Fundamentally, the document establishes the engagement platform of interactions and communication that provides commitment to consistence and professionalism among the stakeholders. The library service charter is the indemnity to information clients or patrons that the services to be offered shall be in line with core values and aspiration of the given academic library or institution. Librarians and information professionals in embracing such standard guideline clearly express a high

level of interest in actualizing its matrices, but occasionally lack skills and competences needed to effectively implement the various themes of the service charter in the most appropriate context.

Library Staff and Information Service Delivery

In educational and academic institutions, libraries are normally the heart and centre of teaching, research, learning and scholarly communication. Academic libraries are powerhouses of information and knowledge that supports and influences research, teaching, learning, publishing and community services in higher education and learning (Makori, 2015). The university library is an integral part of the parent institution that is vested with the responsibility of supporting the core functions of teaching, learning and research activities (Adam, 2017). University libraries provide information products and services that support the scholarly communication and information sharing. The university library or any other library attached to the institution of higher education exists to support the vision, mission, goals and objectives of the parent organization (Cristobal, 2018). Academic information professionals coordinate the administration and planning of academic libraries based on the goals and objectives of the parent. Library top management must focus on the service charter and high quality services driven through the vision, mission and strategic objectives. In addition, the role of the library top management is to implement and promote the core functions of the university through the service charters. In order to function and serve the information needs of the users, the library must have information resources (both print and electronic materials), render different services and provide facilities for effective service delivery, assets Adam. Academic libraries more so university one advance and disseminate knowledge in addition to making sure that the services are effectively utilized to benefit the customers.

Library service charter refers to the professional code of practice and conduct that guide information professionals in delivery of high quality services to the clientele. Purpose of the service charter is to ensure that the needs and demands of the patrons are achieved in relation to the services provided. Service is a concept that is fundamental to libraries, and since library users are the focus point of library service, it is important that libraries incorporate high standards of customer service (Kaur & Singh, 2010 & Hong & Mia, 2007). Service charter is useful and effective if the both the staff and patrons are aware of its existence and provisions. Information professionals and university libraries have the cardinal duty and responsibility of creating awareness of the service charter and its application in service delivery. It is commonly accepted that quality customer service is based on two requirements, a formal strategy for quality customer service, and a commitment to hiring front-line people selected, trained and supported with customer-service goals in mind (Kaur & Singh, 2010).

Academic libraries face numerous challenges. The application of customer relationship management aims at adding value not only to the information services but also to confidence and satisfaction among users (Vongprasert et al. 2011). Correspondingly the author admits that the knowledge and understanding of customer relationship management of library staff and leadership of library administrators, which include perception and awareness of service quality as well as clear vision and mission of

strategic plan, focuses its importance in service delivery in academic libraries. The library service charter provides communication feedback mechanism that usually helps customers to evaluate information services and staff performance. From Cristobal (2018), listening and asking customers to share experiences and views about service library, helps the library management to understand the perceptions of the customers and the value the library provides rather than drawing conclusions and inferences using the one-sided vision of the assumptions and beliefs of the management.

Library Service Charter Matrices

Strategic objectives of the university library that guide the service charter in delivery of services include to: provide access to information for teaching, learning, research and consultancy; enhance facilities and environment for improved information delivery, enhance staff capacity and innovativeness; and promote collaborations and partnerships for resource-sharing (UoNL Website, 2014). The service charter of the university library is guided by the principle to: serve clients with dignity, courtesy and respect; provide efficient and effective information services at all times; adhere to ethical and professional service provision; uphold transparency and accountability at all times; exhibit natural justice at all times; and adhere to set international standards. Feedback, complaints, compliments and suggestions are forwarded to the respective units for action through telephone, letters, e-mail, suggestion boxes or in person; and should be addressed within two days while confidentiality and privacy are observed. The clients expect efficient and effective provision of services based on prompt and transparent provision of information services, safe and healthy environment, courteous and timely response to requests and enquiries, and prompt clearance of students and staff. The library in return expects from the clients and stakeholders to treat the staff with respect and courtesy; provide sufficient and accurate information to attend to inquiries and requests appropriately; and provide feedback and comments on the services rendered. The university library is involved in provision and dissemination of information services to the customers, and therefore collaboration is fundamental in quality service delivery.

Theoretical Framework

The theories that provided adequate knowledge on the application of library service charter in quality service delivery in the context of university settings are motivation and goal setting theory (Maslow, 1954 & Latham & Locke, 1979). Motivation theory focuses on explaining and predicting the behaviour of people based on the hierarchy of needs and desires developed by Abraham Maslow - physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualization. These fundamental aspects normally influence human motivation and behaviour in life including working environment in university libraries. Motivational theory focuses on the welfare of the staff but does not consider the work processes and influences of interventions to operations and service delivery applied in the research. The library service charter provides detailed analysis of the parameters and responsibilities of the information staff and the customers (UONL Website, 2014). First, motivation theory encompasses the values and aspects of human needs and behaviour in the university libraries. Second, factors that enhance the service charter and staff performance in the library depend on the fundamental hierarchy of needs. From the library service charter perspective, the needs of the staff must be sustained in order to enhance service delivery

to the customers. Third, social contract together with responsibilities of the partners, including the library staff and customers are well defined and elaborated. As a consequence, the library service charter provides the library management and the information staff with standard guidelines and expectations for effective service delivery to the customers. Hence, the library service charter aspects of staff performance and customer service satisfaction and improvement are grounded in motivation theory.

Subsequently, this goal setting theory (GST) was adopted to guide the research because it is directly related to the objectives and also provides the framework for answering the research questions. According to Locke and Lotham (1979), first, motivation and performance are higher when individuals are set specific goals, when goals are difficult but accepted, and when there is feedback on performance. Second, participation in goal setting is important as a means of getting agreement to the setting of higher goals. Finally, feedback is vital in maintaining motivation, particularly towards the achievement of even higher goals. Goals also affect behaviour (job performance) through other mechanisms such as direct attention and action. This theory focuses on behaviour, values and goals that affect both staff performance and customer service delivery. In essence, these are the collective and complementary management objectives and intentions of the library service charter. Staff performance and customer expectations are instrumental in goal setting theory. In highlighting staff performance and customer expectations of the service charter, the goal setting theory provides the library management with tools to enhance delivery of services to customers.

Research Methodology

Research Design, Sample and Sampling Techniques

Mixed research method of quantitative and qualitative design within a case study was applied. Qualitatively and quantitatively, the participants provided opinions, perceptions and experiences on application of the library service charter on quality service delivery. This research involved a single case study of the University of Nairobi Library Systems together with the library staff. This university library system has six college libraries including the central library, Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library that houses the administration. The selected colleges are College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS), College of Education and External Studies (CEES), College of Biological and Physical Sciences (CBPS), College of Architecture and Engineering (CAE), College of Health Sciences (CHS) and College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences (CAVS). Respondents for data collection included library assistants, senior librarians and directors. In total, all the 152 staff members of the university library were incorporated in the research process. The top management included the Director, Library and Information Services (DLIS), Deputy Directors, Library and Information Services (DDLIS), College Librarian (CL), Head Section (HS) and non-management staff (NMS) (Table 1). Data and information from the respondents were collected through interviews, questionnaires and document reviews. Information was presented in frequencies, percentages, graphs, direct excerpts and descriptive narrations.

Table 1: Sample Size

Library System	DLIS	DDLIS	CL	HS	NMS
Main Library	1	3	1	10	32
Kikuyu Library			1	3	15
Art and Design Library			1	2	7
Chiromo Library			1	3	12
Medical School Library			1	3	14
Upper Kabete Library			1	3	14
Lower Kabete Library				1	8
IDS Library				1	5
Parklands Library				1	8
	1	3	6	27	115
Total					152

Discussion of Findings

Background Information of Respondents

Background information of the respondents was established on the basis of age and duration of services at the university library. Most respondents were aged 39-40 years. The age of respondents is not necessarily directly proportional to the years of service in the library. This explains the variation between the number of years in service and the age of the respondents. Most respondents (87%) strongly agreed that age is not the major factor that influences the services offered to the library clients though (68%) those between 50-59 years said the changing dynamics of service demands adequate and continuous capacity building program if the staff are to keep advancing orientation of service delivery and specifically on technology, new requirements of management standards and policies to be adopted in the library service. Respondents were of the opinion that though the library service charter is important it does not necessarily contribute to provision of quality services, having entirely worked in the library with dedication and integrity before the charter was introduced. The respondents said the core values focus on service, professionalism and ensuring that clients are contented with the services offered. This notion is further supported by the 2003 user survey on satisfaction with services offered at the University of Nairobi Library which was at 78% clearly indicating higher level of desired services that were being offered, when most of the library management tools including the library service charter had not been introduced. The staff aged 20-39 years old said the service charter guarantees customers the assurance of high quality services and provides the basic framework of standardised engagements in information work with the patrons.

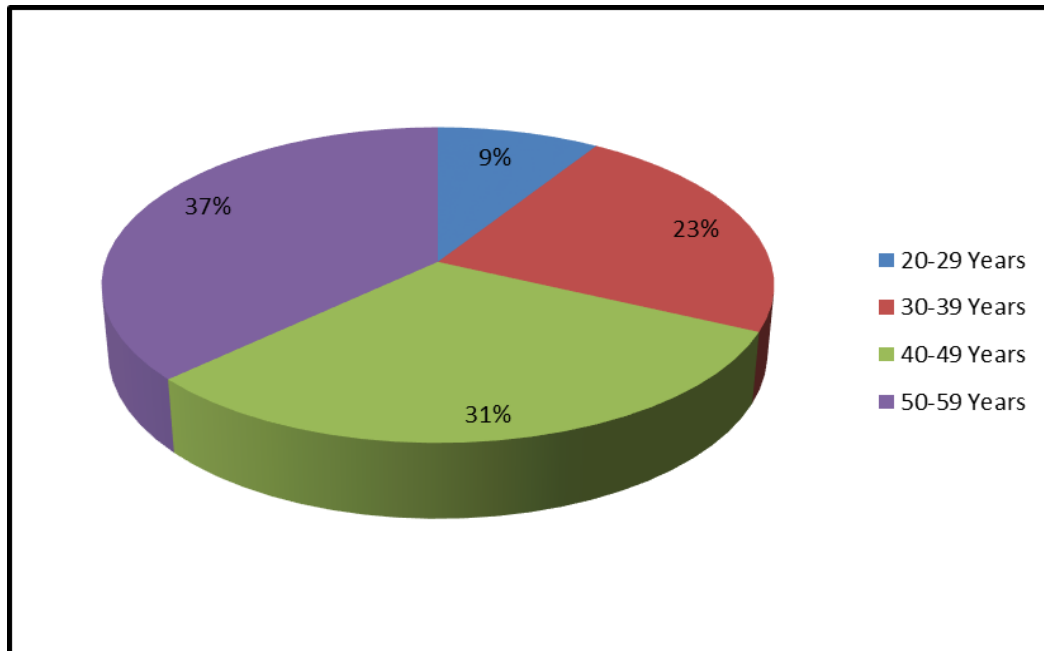


Figure 2: Distribution Age of Respondents

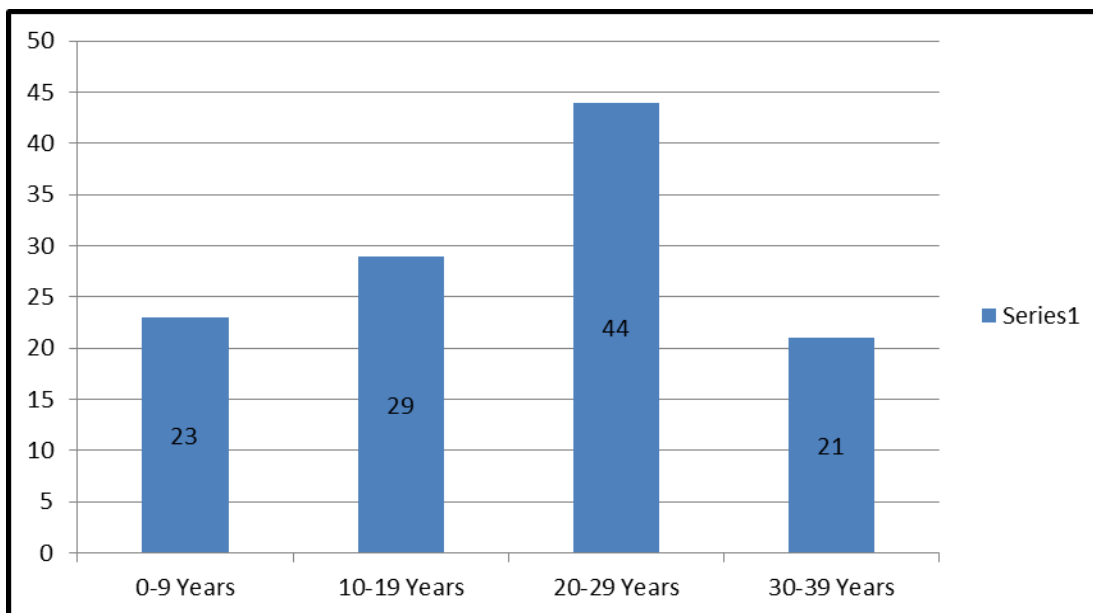


Figure 3: Staff Duration of Service in the Library

Library Service Charter and Quality Services

The first objective examined the extent of the library service charter in quality service delivery in the library. The level of influence (direct and indirect) was determined by several parameters such as staff ability to cascade and adhere to the core values, strategic objectives, principles of service delivery, client expectation, commitment to service delivery and provision of timely feedback as stated in the library service charter. All

these are important indicators of the general level which the library service charter influences service delivery by the university library. The intention of the charter is to provide library clients with high quality services. Ideally, the library staff are supposed to set individual targets from the strategic objectives of the library. The library service charter has identified four strategic objectives that include: providing access to information for teaching, learning, research and consultancy, enhance library facilities and environment for improved service delivery, enhance staff capacity and innovativeness, and establish and promote collaborations and partnership for resources sharing. The first objective of providing access to information for teaching, learning, research and consultancy is the cumulative responsibility of all staff in the library while the rest concerns the top library management. Consequently, 95% of the senior management staff agreed while 97% of the junior staff were not aware that the library service charter was the source of the strategic objective that informed the targets of service delivery within the given financial year. Most important, cascading of the strategic objectives as the key of setting individual targets of service delivery was identified as a key factor that influences service delivery. However, most junior library staff are unaware of this key service objective.

The second strategic objective of the library service charter is to enhance library facilities and environment for improved service delivery. Most senior library staff (97.2%) were affirmative that this objective makes the charter an appropriate tool for enhancing service delivery as most of the targets set in the performance contract on enhancing library facilities and environment are derived from this one. One respondent said;

The library has been able to provide justification on the basis of continuous improvement of library facilities such as the buildings, technology, furniture and equipment, and the general library environment by quoting this objective during the defense of the performance contract.

Findings revealed that most junior staff (93.3%) play a very minor role in enhancing library facilities while the environment which involved decisions is at the managerial level. One of the respondents said:

My role is very minor regarding the process of enhancing library facilities and the environment. Basically I'm tasked with care and maintenance of these facilities and the environment as well as promoting collaboration partnership for resource sharing and staff capacity while innovation is taken care of by our supervisors.

The third strategic objective on appropriateness of the service charter was the level at which staff capacity and innovativeness has been embedded in the daily operations and service delivery. Indeed, most senior library staff (94.1%) said the library had implemented this objective to the letter. Top library management respondents unanimously said;

We have a continuous training program that is tailored to keep the staff abreast with the current trends in library and information science. The staff have been trained on digitization of grey literature in the library, new standards of cataloguing, various policies like plagiarism and acquisition, open access, open

science, public and customer care and data security among other programmes that enhance capacity and innovativeness of library staff. All these gearing up to improved service delivery to our users.

The final objective of establishing and promoting collaboration and partnerships for resource sharing, and determining appropriateness of the service charter as the quality assurance and improvement tool gave varied responses. Most senior staff said the top library management (Director and Deputy Directors) was responsible for this objective, though minority (5.3%) said they would be willing to play a role if given the chance to establish and promote collaborations and partnerships for resource sharing. The study found out that though the objectives of the service charter were clear and straight forward, the level of collaboration and the most appropriate tool of quality assurance was still wanting. The library management needs to be more inclusive and open to contributions, especially from the creative and innovative junior staff of the library most of whom said they felt alienated from the decision making process with regard library operations and services.

Staff Awareness, Perception and Responsiveness to Service Delivery

The second objective was to establish levels of library staff awareness, perception and responsiveness to information service delivery. This aimed at analyzing the transformation in library operations and services brought about by the introduction of the library service charter. Findings showed that a number of changes had generally taken place in the entire university library system. Most (70%) librarians indicated the changes in the client attitude towards the library staff that was attributed to the level of professionalism, ethics and standards requirement of the service charter. Ten percent (10%) of the library staff from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences said staff capacity and innovativeness had been enhanced essentially because of the requirement of the service charter of establishing a capacity building scheme and staff development program that has been entwined in the library performance contract which establishes the various targets of training and capacity building to individual and group cadres of the library staff. The respondents from all the colleges said teamwork was enhanced through the introduction of the services charter that clearly defines the structure of governance, roles and responsibilities of the library staff. The structure of governance generates the basic unit of command that guides the systematic approach of executing tasks, and therefore, the processes are fashioned on the basis of command and behavioural control. This has also created a stable and predictable environment in the library that has conveniently enhanced staff cooperation for mutual and exclusive benefits to all stakeholders.

All library staff from all the college libraries said they had experienced changes on the job description as it had to include training for purpose of enhancing service delivery and processing of information resources. Most respondents from all the college libraries of the University of Nairobi Library were of the opinion that the service charter had played a major role in streamlining and standardizing library services and operations. The clarity of stated customer satisfaction, library expectation and commitment to service delivery through the pledge of operating and opening the libraries within specified time, had

greatly helped to manage the desires of the patrons. This has ensured that access to information is as far as possible free from any subjective biasness stemming from individuals' personal convictions, religious or cultural affiliations or otherwise. A clear distinction has been made between personal convictions and professional duties with the aim of minimizing personal beliefs interfering with provision of access to information resources at the University of Nairobi Library. Library service charter provides the fundamental framework that stipulates the roles of the stakeholders and the expected standards of services while maintaining professionalism and not personal convictions and beliefs.

Actualization of Library Service Charter Matrices

The third objective assessed the actualization of the matrices of the library service charter for quality improvements. The service charter directly and indirectly relates to other management standards and tools in the library. These management tools include the strategic plan, Rapid Results Approach, Performance Contracting, Transformative Leadership, International Standards Organisation, Management By Objectives, High-Performance Work Practices, Management Information Systems, Benchmarking, Stretch Targets, as well as Systems Thinking and Institutional Capacity Building. Most (94.7%) junior library staff from all the college libraries had a challenge in identifying the distinction between the library service charter and other tools of management. For example, in the recent past the University of Nairobi Library had adopted and introduced varied tools of management. The respondents in this cadre said they could not clearly differentiate between the various tools of management. From the responses, most respondents opined that:

Where a library management tool has been introduced, there is often little or no communication to the junior library staff, either few copies of the policy documents are available with very insignificant follow up training programmes to ensure that this cadre of staff are fully aware of the matrices involved in initiating the management tool, thus, the staff are left to come up with their own mechanisms of interpreting the different standards. Actually it is only once in 2016, during a team building event that the Director mentioned about the strategic plan and performance contract.

It was established that most junior library staff were unable to distinguish between International Standards Organization standards, staff appraisals, strategic plan and performance contracting. Tools such as management objectives, quality assurance, and rapid result initiatives are mostly of concern to senior library staff. All cadres of staff from all colleges' libraries said most documents of the standards and tools of management are voluminous, and contain technical jargon that requires expert interpretations. This has contributed to duplication as standards requirements have not been harmonised and synchronized to be consistent with varied provision of each standard. The only document that had been simplified is the library service charter which is a 14 paged pocket size document.

The respondents said one limitation of the charter is that it lacks a cross reference and an indicative tool that comprehensively defines the existing relationship with other tools and standards of management. However, all the management tools and standards are related directly or indirectly to the service charter as pointed out by majority of the library senior staff.

The strategic plan is the main document that gives birth to the performance contract, guided by the quality assurance tool of the service charter and ISO standards. All these standards and policies are cascaded from the same documents of the University of Nairobi. The library mission and vision as stated in the service charter has been cascaded from the University of Nairobi Vision and mission.” In addition, “The four strategic objectives of the service charter include to provide information for teaching, learning, research and consultancy, enhance library facilities and environment for improved information delivery, enhance staff capacity and innovation and establish and promote collaborations and partnerships for resource sharing forms among the library targets and individual staff targets of the performance contracting. This is one of the clear alignment of the service charter to other tools and standards of the management performance contract.

Though the library service charter is aligned to other policy documents, tools of management standards and action control protocols, most junior staff was unaware of this approach and how it affected work and productivity. Most senior library staff were all aware of the distinction of the various tools but attributed this to the job description that included but not limited to policy formulation and interpretation. The University of Nairobi Library might be required to implement strong information fluency programs of promoting and upholding the various matrices of the service charter so as to ensure that all stakeholders comply with the provisions of the charter. The library might also need to consider creating a single document with a thesauri and summary of what the various tools of management present, relate and contextualize their applications. The unification of the various aspects of different tools of management allows the library to create seamless working environment devoid of conflicting roles and responsibilities as spelt out in the standards and tools of management.

Realization of the Library Service Charter

This research established factors that influence the library in actualizing the realization of the library service charter. Factors considered to establish this were managerial support, client satisfaction and attitudes of library staff. From the findings most respondents were optimistic about the essence and provision of the service charter. Respondents believed that it improved the job performance and that the staff were up to the challenges that arise during implementation of the service charter. This also indicates staff readiness to embrace new approaches of service delivery despite the challenge of training which means strong information literacy programs is of profound importance to catch up with the numerous emerging managerial tools and standards. However, the respondents felt there were concerted efforts from the management to support and acknowledge their contribution and performance. Lack of timely communication and different interpretation of the provisions of the library service charter were cited as frequent stressors.

Insufficient formal training of information fluency programs created the highest level of stress. One respondent aptly captured this in the following remark:

The library management need to train all the library staff on how to cascade some of the provision of the service charter. We have a serious problem of understanding the extent to which we are supposed to do without conflicting with the provision and demands of the service charter. We also need students trained to ensure that they are in the picture of what is expected of them. Ideally, all stakeholders in the University should strive to ensure that they play their respective roles in actualization of the provision of the service charter. For example a cleaner should know that the effort in their work helps the library to provide a conducive environment but again this cleaner should have the right tools and protective clothing provided by the University.

Responses from College of Humanities and Social Sciences indicated that apart from being required to respond to inquiries within 24 hours, there were very few people who were trained on how to use the helpdesk platform which automatically updates the user on the progress of the query time and creating efficiency and effectiveness in providing feedback. This was different from the responses from the College of Education and External Studies where almost every staff had the knowledge on how to operate the helpdesk platform.

The attitudes of library staff actualizing the provision of the service charter like opening the library on time without failure, providing patrons with timely feedback, promoting prompt and transparency provision of services, mainly depend on the motivating factors such as the terms and conditions of employment and managerial support in training staff. Learning self-management skills including professional or career growth lacked support of the parent institution. However, senior librarians who enjoy better terms of service tended to have more positive attitudes than those of the lower carders. Therefore, improvement of terms of service, implementing strong information fluency programs, promoting and upholding professionalism in service provision; setting explicit standards and policies adequate are crucial in encouraging library staff to show positive attitude towards the implementation of the provisions of the service charter. This reaffirmed that sufficient knowledge of any management tool and resources are important to the development of the positive attitude to the management tool being introduced in the library by all categories of the staff.

The responses from the library staff show that the levels of understanding of the requirements of the service charter varied from one college library to another with different reasons for the variations. First the responses indicated that levels of understanding of the requirements of the service charter varied between the staff with differences in training levels where those with certificates and diploma were not as effective as those with the first degree and above. The other element on perception and response of library staff towards the library service charter was the level of customer satisfaction. To establish the level of user satisfaction of the library, the study relied on the reviews of the last five years of users' satisfaction surveys carried out by the University of Nairobi Library giving a general overview of the average indicator of client

satisfaction as summarized in the Table 2 which clearly indicates that the level of client satisfaction throughout the university has been very high. Clients of the University of Nairobi Library through the feedback process have rated the level and nature of services as indeed very good at 80.6% from the year 2012 to 2016. The level of satisfaction indicates that the quality of library services provided is indeed very good to the users. Consequently, the client satisfaction survey attributes the rating to varied reasons, for which the library service charter plays a key role in ensuring that the needs and desires of the patrons are in line with the services provided.

Table 2: Level of Client Satisfaction in the Library

SNO.	Year	Level of Client Satisfaction in Library (Percentage)
1	2012	78%
2	2013	81%
3	2014	79%
4	2015	82%
5	2016	81%
Total Percentage of Client Satisfaction		80.6%

Challenges Experienced in Realizing Commitments of the Charter

The fourth objective established the challenges experienced by the library in realising the commitments of the service delivery charter. Challenges experienced by the University of Nairobi Library in realising the commitments to service delivery as set out in the library service charter were also ascertained in the study. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 3. It was observed that there is a general endorsement by respondents that issues like understanding and conceptualizing the provision of the library service charter was a major challenge, especially among the junior library staff who were majority of the respondents. Other challenges include alignment of the library service charter to the performance contract that demand alignment with the strategic objectives of the library service charter. Staff said this setup inhibits individual performance because of being confined to work with the set targets of the performance contract further hindering creativity as the target does not compel library staff to think “outside the box”. Workload that requires certain competences are set as targets and the staff cannot attain and actualize the target within the job matrices because of lacking enabling capacities, qualification and competences.

Table 3: Challenges in Realizing Commitments of the Charter

SNO.	Factor	Agree		Disagree	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1	Lack of motivation	70	59.9%	47	40.1%
2	Workload	78	66.7%	39	33.3%
3	Complexity of the charter	96	82.1%	21	17.9%
4	Evaluation	32	27.4%	85	72.6%
5	Limited time	48	41%	71	59%
6	Facilitation	94	82.9%	23	17.1%
7	Institutional weakness	41	34.1%	76	65.9%
8	Human resources	82	70.1%	35	29.9%
9	Bureaucracy	64	54.7%	53	45.3%
10	Target performance	97	82.9%	20	17.1%

In spite of the mandatory requirement for implementing the provisions of the service charter in all the departments within the university, most library staff lack motivation, feel that evaluation is biased and not defined and the time for implementation is limited. Institutional weakness to support and fund effectively the budget for complete actualization so as to ensure efficiency, effectiveness, quality, accuracy or timeliness of providing supporting resources and materials to enable successful actualization of the provisions of the library service charter. Most respondents said bureaucracies in library procedures contributes to the slow implementation and actualization of the provisions of the service charter, while delay in decision-making because the library relies on other departments such as the University management and University legal office in case of policy interpretation that play greater role in slowing down the process of implementation and actualization of the provisions of the service charter. Human resource factors such as inadequate qualified personnel were cited as major contributors to delays in service delivery. Respondents were of the opinion that the University of Nairobi Library needs to liaise with the relevant departments to ensure that adequate, qualified, skilled, knowledgeable and competent staff are employed in all its units to facilitate successful actualization of the programmes and more so the provision of the library service charter. Deci and Flaste (1996) stated that intrinsic motivation results from action that produces self-satisfaction, self-confidence and enjoyment.

Measures to Ensure Successful Actualization of the Charter

The fifth objective proposed measures to be undertaken to ensure successful actualization of the library service charter. The measures to be undertaken to ensure successful actualization of the library service charter in improving information service delivery were also established (Table 4). The University of Nairobi Library needs to come up with a conceptual approach to focus on understanding the areas that inhibits the complete actualization and realization of measurable and sustainable results of the library service charter (Table 7). This is can be achieved through elaborated information fluency programmes that impact competences, skills, knowledge and experiences to develop a workforce that fully appreciates the importance of achieving the set targets. Again, there is an urgent need to establish congruence of working objectives of the various tools of

management. Teams should work in pursuit of unifying objectives that relates to the vision and mission of the library through concerted and coordinated efforts. Remuneration and equity in rewarding employees often results in more pronounced performance. Respondents said a fair discipline culture if sustained could result in systematic approach of providing services and create a propitious environment for innovation and creativity that speedily delivers desired results.

Table 4: Measures to Ensure Actualization of the Charter

SNO.	Measures Taken	Agree		Disagree	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1	Capacity building	97	82.9%	20	17.1%
2	Unity of Workload	94	80.3%	23	19.7%
3	Remuneration	41	34.1%	76	64.9%
4	Team spirit	82	69.1%	35	29.9%
5	Discipline	64	54.7%	53	44.3%
6	Order	97	82.9%	20	17.1%

The exponential rate at which the modern academic library progress in adopting approaches that focus on improved client satisfaction and experience in service delivery, has transformed the terrain of library services and operations. In spite of the initiatives undertaken by the University of Nairobi Library to ensure seamless adoption and maximisation of benefit from various tools of management that it has cascaded in its operations and services challenges are still abound. The library has put in place information fluency programs for both the library and information professionals and clients but it is still inadequate and requires more resources and time allocation if maximum advantages are to be realised. Other factors that have been established as mitigating the effective actualization of most provisions of the service charter include adequate and timely communication, duplication of standards and matrices of various management tools and adequate budgetary allocation.

This step enhances accountability and transparency further bridging the gap between users and service providers (David & Sanjay, 2008). In essence it creates a sense of ownership of the process among all the stakeholders of the library enabling and facilitating successful implementation. The issue of feedback to the patrons consulted is most important, even though many do not expect that all of their views and wishes will be accepted but definitely want to confirm that opinions have been listened to and taken into account (Elke et al. 2007). The service charter should be posted at service delivery points in order to improve its awareness (Mario & Carmen, 2010). Further, different units in the library should work in pursuit of unifying objectives that relates to the vision and mission of the library through concerted and coordinated effort that creates a balance between individual, group and the library interests.

Conclusion

The university library strives to cascade, implement and adopt elements of the required action control programmes as demanded by the parent organization and the government. The library management needs to allocate adequate resources, establish more elaborated information fluency programmes and avail adequate copies of the policy document if it has to reap maximum advantage and benefits from the adoption and implementation. The impact of implementation of the service charter on service delivery remains such intractable challenge. There is need to take stock of the service charter implementation programme in order to establish the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats, map the best way forward. There is need for the university library to improve communication and ensure timely consultations with various stakeholders who have roles in the process of adoption, interpretation, implementation and realization of the library service charter. The library should invest in professionalizing the staff through education support and other capacity building strategies to improve on adherence to customer service charter commitments. The university library should greatly improve on the implementation strategies of the service charter through adequate investment in processes and procedures. This will help in determining the various needs and demands of the clients in order to ensure conformity with the established standards in the library service charter.

Recommendations

Service Charters and Quality services

The library service charter is one of the most appropriate management tools that any academic library should adopt and implement in order to enhance operations and service delivery. Information organizations and management should provide adequate resources so as to support and sustain the principles and practices of service charter. Most important, the library service charter being a living public document that guides quality assurance management and improvement should be shared with the stakeholders. Information professionals in academic libraries and related agencies must implement the service charter for effective and efficient high quality services and customer satisfaction.

Management Tool Transparency and Accountability

In essence, the library service charter influences provision of information operations and services provides to the customers. Positive impact naturally leads to high quality services to the customers, increased work performance and productivity, effective mechanism for solving issues, and accountability in libraries and organizations. With the service charter, the library management and information professionals can ensure effective coordination and provision of innovative products and services to the customers. Standards and procedures improve service delivery where high quality and value investment has been compromised. The library service charter being the modern management tool and mechanism for transparency and accountability should be aligned and embraced in academic libraries and information organizations. With the service charter, it is quite possible for the library management and information professionals to assess and evaluate the strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats that might hinder high quality services to the customers for improvement.

Total Quality Management

There are numerous management tools and standards that guide coordination and improvement of service delivery in academic libraries and organizations. In the digital economy, the library service charter is a total quality management strategy and approach that guides the development and implementation of information operations and services in rapidly changing and competitive business environment. Academic libraries and information professionals have to adapt and cascade the new management plans and approaches in order to ensure effective service delivery and customer satisfaction.

Innovative Approaches and Strategies

Considering the ramifications of the adoption of different management tools in the information environment, academic libraries need to focus on innovative approaches and strategies so as to produce a dynamic and blended culture for both staff and clients. There is need to adhere to the provision and matrices of the charter that demands stable and mutually respectful work environment as well as allocation of adequate resources in the process of facilitating the actualisation of the different demands of the given policy document. Library staff should be empowered through capacity building so as to understand and comprehensively implement tools of management embraced and adopted. Academic libraries and information professionals are guided by the fundamental philosophy of the service charter that defines operations and services based on the needs and desires of the clients. Total quality management, customer satisfaction demands and value addition have to be cascaded and implemented in a seamless environment without any conflict of interest whatsoever. Information literacy training programmes can impart knowledge, skills, competences and experiences on the provisions of the service charter.

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Websites

UoNL Website 2014

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MIDDLE MANAGEMENT

GENERAL INSTRUCTION

This is an educational research that investigates the influence of service charter on service delivery at the University of Nairobi Library. Kindly participate in providing answers to the following questions to help out find your opinion on performance contract and service delivery at your work place. Please note that your response will be treated with utmost confidence. Please use a tick [✓] within the space provided to respond to the questions, and provide suggestions or comments where required.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Gender. _____
2. Job Title. _____
3. Years of Service. _____

INFLUENCE OF LIBRARY SERVICE CHARTER AND SERVICE DELIVERY

4. Select the appropriate level of awareness of the service charter in the library.

NO.	Service Charter Awareness	Yes	No
1	Aware of the existence of the service charter		
2	Knows the University of Nairobi service charter		
3	Library service charter used as quality assurance tool		

5. Indicate the level of the library service charter, using the scale of 5 to 1, where 5 = Very High (H), 4 = High, 3 = Average, 2 = Low and 1 = Not At All.

NO.	Level of Library Service Charter	5	4	3	2	1
1	Aware of the core values of the library					
2	Knows the strategic objectives of the library					
3	Library services offered as stated in the service charter					
4	Library provides client feedback platform					
5	Aware of the client expectations from the library					
6	Aware of the library expectations from the clients					
7	Knows the library structure and governance					
8	Knows of the library's commitment to service delivery					
9	Aware of the principles of service delivery in the library					
10	Knows the clients/stakeholders in the library					

6. Highlight the vision of the organization.

7. Outline the main aspects of the university library vision.

8. Select the appropriate response in relation to the library service charter.

NO.	Library Service Charter	Yes	No
1	Strategic objectives drawn from the library mandate		
2	Strategic objectives linked to government policy priorities		
3	Strategic objectives are simple and specific		
4	Measurable and attainable objectives		
5	Realistic and easily understood objectives		
6	Ensures that patrons have access to relevant information		
7	Facilities are updated to improve information delivery		
8	Identifies priority areas to maximize customer results		
9	Performance contract reports are submitted		
10	Feedback of performance is provided		
11	Rewarded for improved performance		

MANAGEMENT AND CUSTOMER PARTNERSHIP IN SERVICE DELIVERY

9. State the expectations of the staff in realising the objectives of the service charter.

10. State the expectations of the clients from the staff.

11. Indicate your opinion on the library service charter since its inception.

12. Indicate your general perception on the stated positions. Use the scale of 5 to 1, where 5 = Very High, 4 = High, 3 = Average, 2 = Low and 1= Not At All.

NO.	Perception on Service Charter	5	4	3	2	1
1	Library service charter is a waste of time					
2	Hard to relate my performance targets with the service charter objectives					
3	Firmly support the use of the service charter as quality assurance tool					
4	Understand why the library service charter was adopted in the library					
5	Firmly support the indicators in the library service charter					
6	Need to explain the library service charter clearly					
7	Implementation of the service charter need to be monitored well					
8	Library should continue using the service charter					

13. Suggest improvements that can be done to the university library service charter.

14. State challenges encountered when using the library service charter.

15. Suggest ways the above challenges of library service charter can be overcome.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE GUIDE FOR TOP LIBRARY MANAGEMENT

GENERAL INSTRUCTION

This interview process is for educational research that investigates the influence of service charter on service delivery at the University of Nairobi Library. Kindly feel free to provide and share your thoughts, opinions and any other information relevant to the study. Please note that your response will be treated with utmost confidence.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Gender. _____
2. Job Title. _____
3. Years of Service. _____

STRATEGIC PLANNING, DECISION MAKING AND MANAGEMENT

4. Highlight the vision statement of the university library and its contents.

5. Outline the contents of the mission statement of the university library.

6. State the mandate and application of the University of Nairobi Library.

7. Outline the objectives of the University of Nairobi Library.

8. Explain on the policy that support implementation of the service charter.

MANAGING AND SUPPORTING SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE LIBRARY

9. Highlight the key requirement required for operations and service delivery.

10. State the nature of computing resources that support operations and service delivery.

11. Explain on the human resource and personnel that service the customers.

12. Highlight if the library has a section committee that monitors and evaluates implementation of the matrices of the University of Nairobi service charter.

13. Indicate if the library has an officer appointed to purely coordinate service charter implementation.
