Technology Responsive Measures Adopted by University Libraries in Meru County, Kenya in Addressing Disruptive Forces

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Abstract

Commission of University Education guidelines demand university libraries to be responsive to the changing by modernizing infrastructure and technology. However, the university libraries are dealing with emergent changes in the information provision using outdated methods, and are either slow or unable to respond to the current user information needs and behaviors. The purpose of the study was to determine the technology responsive measures adopted by university libraries in Meru County. The study used qualitative approach and employed a survey research design. The target population was the senior library staff in Kenya Methodist University and Meru University of Science and Technology university libraries. The respondents comprised of 13 heads of library sections who were sampled using purposive method. This study conducted Focus Group Discussions for library heads of sections in each university library under investigation. Additionally, the study also conducted an analysis on documents such as university library annual reports, university procurement plan, policy frameworks, subscription details and library strategic plan. Data collected was purely qualitative and was analyzed using content analysis and thematic categorization. The findings revealed that university libraries have adopted several technology-based measures such as remote access software, my loft software, anti-plagiarism software such as Turnitin, e-resources such as e-Books and e-journals, and social media platforms such as WhatsApp, to ease communication. Therefore, the study concluded that libraries had implemented some measures in responding to technology-related changes. The libraries were also using several measures to ensure long-term availability of digital content through institution repositories, and to promote good working relationship with the IT people. The study recommends that library management fosters development of own solutions to library problems, such as how to deal with artificial intelligence and emerging the technologies.

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