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Information among Postgraduate Students in Kiambu County Kenya**

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**Abstract**

**Purpose:** The study investigates the effects of student literacy self-efficacy competences on management of scholarly information among postgraduate students in Kiambu county Kenya. Self-efficacy is a tool in information literacy.

**Methodology:** The study adopted a mixed methodology so as to collect and analyze qualitative and quantitative data where data was collected using self-administered questionnaires.

**Findings:** The findings of the study revealed that self-efficacy as a practice of information literacy influence Management of Scholarly Information.

**Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy:** The paper recommends that more attention be given to the practice of self-efficacy competence since it's a vital factor evaluate to quality papers among scholars. Further studies should evaluate the extent to which self-efficacy influence postgraduate scholars on their scholarly information management.

**Keywords:** *Self-Efficacy, Competence, Management of Scholarly Information*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Globally, information and communication technology have led to development of the management of scholarly information. The change has been a tactic in regard to information storage and retrieval management. It has led to establishment of electronic information storage which were unavailable in the ancient times thereby easing information storage modes (Palparisi, 2013). There are therefore minimal risks in loss of scholarly works. This has assured the academic fields' reinforced capacity with regard to continually access and use the stored information for long. It is therefore on the basis of this background that this paper sought to study on the effectiveness of self-efficacy as an information literacy practice on the management of scholarly information among postgraduate students in Kenya.

### **Problem Statement**

Information literacy is a basic human right since it encompasses knowledge of one's information concerns and needs. It has the ability to identify, locate, evaluate, organize and effectively create, use and communicate information to address issues or problems at hand (Information Literacy Meeting of Experts, 2003). According to a report by CUE, despite having a large number of registered PhD students only 20 percent of those students complete their studies. Among the major reasons of this small number of students who complete their studies, is delayed completion of thesis by the students. It has been noted that the students spend most of their time in dissertation writing which could be linked to ineffective information literacy practices affecting the management of scholarly information.

Despite the fact that information literacy practices are crucial at postgraduate level of education (Anney & Moshia, 2015) there is no evidence of establishment of information literacy scheme in Kiambu County universities. Thus, no management of scholarly information. The main challenge in this scenario is lack of necessary skills in information literacy hence no skills to conduct research by the students impacting negatively on research performance capability. The study therefore recognized the prevailing situation and sought to carry out a study on effectiveness of self-efficacy competence in management of scholarly information.

### **Justification of the Study**

Recent surveys have shown the number of postgraduate students who complete their studies lower than the number that enrolls. The issue has been attributed to delayed completion of research thesis which always comes along with higher demands for research. This fact calls for skills in management of scholarly information. Additionally, there is rising need for universities to publish scholarly works for wider contribution to the body of scholars. This raises demand for proper management of scholarly information to meet the required demand for online publications. The necessity to have high quality dissertation gave credence for this study where self-efficacy is a practice of information literacy.

### **Significance of the study**

The study will be of significance to postgraduate students and institutions having postgraduate programs regarding management of scholarly information.

The study will influence policy formulation in education sector in regard to management and administration of postgraduate programs.

The study will be of great benefit to electronic information management sector regarding provision of information on trending practices.

The study will also benefit the body of scholars who will undertake the research in the future.

### **Scope of the study**

The study focused on the influence of self-efficacy on management of scholarly information among postgraduate students in Kiambu County where 4 universities were involved.

The study focused on intext citations, provision of reference lists, problem solving and reading, understanding then paraphrasing authors words.

The study faced several limitations which includes;

- i. Respondents attitudes where the researcher overcame them by use of closed ended questionnaire.
- ii. Time constraints among target respondents where the researcher overcame this challenge by reaching them out to students during their study rooms.
- iii. Institution bureaucratic procedures where the researcher produced an introductory letter to the institution and assuring them the study is academic.

The study assumed that;

- a) Participants possessed a certain level of ability to retrieve academic information resources.
- b) Participants were aware of the existing information literacy need as a key component of accessing and using information for academic purposes.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Self-Efficacy Competence on Management of Scholarly Information**

Self-efficacy competence is one of the skills in information literacy which aids in navigating the present landscape of information (Eisenberg *et al*, 2004). Information literacy on the other hand is a set of skills and knowledge that not only allows us to find, evaluate, and use the information we need, but also more important, allows us to filter out information we don't need.

Self-efficacy as a tool in information literacy has been widely used as a study material by many scholars in assessing academic performance of students. Research has revealed that self-efficacy together with use of electronic information, forecast and contribute to a large extent to the academic performance of students (Adeyinka Tella, Ayeni, & Omoba, 2007). Through various information literacy standards such as ALA, 1989; SCONUL, 1999; ACRL, 2000 persons who have completed certain levels of education are expected to have a high level of information literacy skills. This is in short to say that the higher education level that one has the better the information literacy practice levels. These self-efficacy practices are for example competences in IT, presentation, analysis and interpretation of information.

Research by Oliver and Towers, (2000) also found a disparity between university and students' access to and level of practices in using ICTs. According to Stern, (2003) a large number of students never consider the quality or the reliability of information gathered due to their lack of or possession of poor ideas. Embi, (2007) observes that the development of computer self-efficacy can be related to anxiety, where by the lack of knowledge about computers can create a psychological fear, hence dampening the development of confidence. Davis (1989) cited by Embi, (2007) studied 152 computer users and found that perceived technology usefulness was positively associated with use and intention to use technology. In his study, perceived value was significantly correlated to both self-predicted future usage ( $r = .85$ ) and self-reported

current usage ( $r = .63$ ). Igbaria and Parasuraman (1989) in Embi, (2007) found that with respect to the anticipated relationships between attitude towards computer use and anxiety toward usage, attitude is negatively correlated with anxiety. Anxiety toward computer use is negatively associated with computer skills, thus leading one to conclude that low anxiety toward computer use should be related to higher computer use practices, and high stress with fewer computer skills (Embi, 2007).

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted the mixed methodology involving both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. Quantitative research design was used in seeking empirical data through the research questions while the qualitative design helped in emphasizing the essence of observing variables in their natural setting. The mixed methodology approach allows the researcher to collect and analyze not only numerical data, which is customary for quantitative research but also narrative data which is the norm for qualitative research (Creswell, 2003).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The following parameters were used in establishing the influence of self-efficacy on management of scholarly works;

- i. Ability to evaluate different information sources.
- ii. Ability to access and identify a variety of relevant information sources.
- iii. Ability to use information technology such as use of the internet.
- iv. Ability to organize different knowledge and ideas to cover the specific topic of interest.

The findings showed that among the used practices, use of IT was the best self- efficacy practice by the postgraduate scholars in management of Scholarly information. The practice rated 86.7% hence the other practices got the remaining share of rating indicating less preference.

The practice that has the highest influence on the management of Scholarly information in Kiambu County is use of IT. Apart from formal information technology, to retrieve open web there is also need for substantial information technology from the informal practices (Gui, 2007) observed that to retrieve information in the open web, not only formal information technology Students with self-efficacious competence are the only capable of accessing the information with ease.

The real problem in the contemporary scholarly works is not in production or storage of information but in enhancing accessibility of the information produced (Pezeshki-Rad and Zamani, 2005). The scholars further concluded that analyzing, interpreting and presenting information to be used in any setup is a vital skill that users of information resources should have if they are to be relevant. University students together with university academic staff have excellent communication skills jointly with IT skills (Pavey , 2003).

**Table 1: Extent to which Postgraduate Students Self-Efficacy Issues Affect Management of Scholarly Information**

Level of extent	f	%
To a very high extent	99	40.4
To a high extent	118	<b>48.2</b>
To a moderate extent	20	8.2
They do not have any effect	8	3.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The results clearly revealed that student's self-efficacy competencies influence Management of Scholarly information to a great extent. In consideration to this, clear focus should be directed to the practices of self-efficacy in universities of Kiambu County if there is to be improvement in the Management of Scholarly Information among the institutions.

Among the many aspects of management of scholarly information affected by the students Self-efficacy competencies editing and formatting was the main aspect affected by the self-efficacy while grammar was the least affected according to the results.

On the information normally affected by students' self-efficacy competency a majority of them indicated that problem solving such as thesis development through identifying relevant sources was also affected. The chi-square test results reveal that there exists a statistically significant association between the student's information literacy self-efficacy and their Management of Scholarly Information. Therefore, since significant association have been found between students' literacy self-efficacy practices and Management of Scholarly

## **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Conclusion**

The conclusion according to the data collected was that the students have a number of self-efficacy practices that influence the management of their scholarly information. The practices included ability to use IT such as use of the internet, knowledge on computer skills use such as typing, formatting etc. and ability to access and identify a various types of relevant information sources.

Further, the study concluded that postgraduate students' self-efficacy practices significantly influence Management of Scholarly Information. The general conclusion was that self-efficacy competency influences Management of Scholarly Information practices such as problem-solving during writing of scholarly papers, reading and understanding, then paraphrasing other authors' words and citing references used.

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