Teaching of library skills in an inter-disciplinary context: a theoretical and practical perspective from Kenyatta University

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Abstract

In this article, we present experiences of teaching library skills at Kenyatta University. The introduction of a mandatory foundation course for all first year undergraduate students admitted in state universities began in 1991. This change provided an opportunity for the Librarians at the university to participate in the teaching of library skills, a component of the foundation course. The recognition of the role of the library in the students' learning is seen in the right direction. Previously, it was virtually impossible to integrate library skills course with academic programs. The opportunity to teach students how to become effective seekers and users of library resources need not scare librarians. This offers us the opportunity to appreciate the huge challenges students encounter as they embark on their academic programs. A number of issues considered critical in this activity include students' academic characteristics, attitudes towards library skills course, teaching methods, course materials, syllabus, time allocated and training. Suggestions are made on how to address challenges likely to be encountered in library skills instruction.