



**UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL**  
**INYUVESI  
YAKWAZULU-NATALI**

**INFORMATION LITERACY LEARNING EXPERIENCES OF FOURTH-YEAR  
PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS IN KENYAN UNIVERSITIES**

by

Ephraim Mudave Kanguha

(BSc, MLS, MAMS)

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in  
the Information Studies Programme, School of Social Sciences, College of Humanities,  
University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg,  
South Africa.

March, 2016

## ABSTRACT

This study explored the information literacy (IL) learning experiences of Kenyan undergraduate students by focusing on fourth-year psychology students in four universities. Although there is a growing advocacy for IL in higher education, there seems to be little effort to understand how it is experienced by students. Several studies have concentrated on first-year students, with a limited number focusing on those who are exiting the university. This study addresses the following key questions: What are the IL learning experiences of psychology students in Kenyan universities; what are the goals of the IL programme; what pedagogical approaches are applied in delivering IL; what is the role of information communication technology (ICT) in the delivery of IL; what are the perceptions of students and staff towards IL; and what are the challenges affecting delivery of IL.

This research adopted the seven faces of IL model by Bruce as its theoretical framework; and applied both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Empirical data collected from in-depth interviews, questionnaires and document reviews demonstrate the different conceptions and experiences of IL by students. Results revealed that IL learning experiences of fourth-year psychology students positively related to activities such as using ICTs, interaction among students and interactions between students and librarians. There appeared to be no single experience or set of activities that affected IL learning. The findings place academic librarians at the forefront in championing IL learning in their respective universities, but note that they cannot do it alone; there is need for a collaborative approach that includes faculty and senior administrators.

Challenges that faced IL initiatives included lack of adequate learning resources and facilities, low number of qualified staff to teach IL, lack of IL training for lecturers and librarians and large class sizes. Further challenges included limited time allocated for IL learning, unavailability of students during IL sessions and lack of an IL policy framework at institutional or national level. The study recommended that all stakeholders in the university be involved in IL initiatives to produce an information-literate graduate, because successful IL interventions are a shared responsibility. The study further recommended increased lecturer-librarian collaboration and support from academic leadership. Universities must ensure there is an IL policy that would guide development and implementation of IL.