

ABSTRACT

This study sought to establish the information-seeking behaviour of Art and Design students in diploma-awarding institutions in Uganda, in order to propose a model of information-seeking behaviour for Art and Design students. Specifically, the study sought to: (i) establish the information needs of Art and Design students, (ii) establish the sources of information used by Art and Design students, (iii) determine the information-seeking strategies used by Art and Design students, (iv) identify the challenges (if any) Art and Design students encounter when seeking information, and (v) propose an information-seeking behaviour model for Art and Design students. The study population comprised Art and Design diploma students, library heads, and directors at the National Council for Higher Education. Data was collected using questionnaire, interview, and observation methods. Quantitative data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences while qualitative data was analysed thematically.

The study revealed that the information needs of Art and Design students were principally related to their academic activities (creation of artworks). The most needed information included information on: employment opportunities in the art and design industry; production materials for art and design products; tools and equipment for art and design products; art markets and sales for art and design products; production techniques for art and design products; computer graphic design programs; and on art and design industries for internship placements.

The study found that Art and Design students used varied sources of information, with the visual resources being predominant. The most used sources included art and design lecturers, images, Pinterest, artists and designers, YouTube, nature and the environment, and art documentaries. The study also revealed that Art and Design students used various information-seeking strategies to locate and access information. Browsing online images, photographing activities in the environment, recording videos of activities in the environment, and consulting Art and Design librarians were prevalent strategies. In addition, the study found that the students encountered varied challenges when seeking information, primarily related to the Internet and library system, including lack of Internet connectivity at the institutions, high cost of Internet data, inadequate relevant and outdated information materials in the library. The study recommended that the study institutions should: (i) invest heavily in the ICT infrastructure, including Internet connectivity, (ii) provide access to a variety of quality visual information resources, such as images; and that the Government of Uganda should subsidize Internet in the study institutions.