LIBRARY AND INFORMATION EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN SOUTH AFRICA

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1. BACKGROUND

This chapter(1) aims to trace the development of library and information science (LIS) education and training in South Africa, and discusses the status, trends and challenges of library and information education and training in the country. Historically, the South African education system, including LIS education and training, was influenced by shameful inequalities largely championed through racial discrimination. Inequalities were (and still are) also expressed through levels of literacy, wealth distribution, geographic location and access to education, among other factors.

The development of LIS education in South Africa has been covered by authors such as Van Brakel (1992), Van Aswegen (1997) and, more recently, by Raju (2005) and Ocholla and Bothma (2007). Fundamentally, the growth of library schools in South Africa was shaped by periods of significant quantitative growth from 1938 to 2000, rising from one LIS school to 18 (Van Aswegen, 1997; Ocholla, 2000; Raju, 2005), followed by a notable decline from 18 to 12 between 2000 and 2006. The latter waning was largely caused by the transformation of South Africa's education sector, which led to the merger of many higher education institutions (HEIs) and a review of their structure in terms of the programmes or qualifications offered in their curricula.

Most LIS schools are located at HEIs or universities, which ensures that their curriculum development and quality control are adequately monitored and evaluated. This

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is both despite, and in addition to, the presence of national qualification authorities (such as the South African Qualifications Authority).

Before 1933, when the South African Library Association (SALA) offered correspondence training for librarians "following the 1928 recommendations of the Carnegie Corporation commissioners S.A. Pitt and M.J. Ferguson", as Raju (2005:1) reports, South African librarians obtained their qualifications via correspondence with Europe (largely Britain), as was the case in other parts of Africa. Unlike other African countries, whose LIS education and training began in 1960, South Africa has an LIS history dating back to 1938. In that year, the first education and training programme of librarians began at the University of Pretoria (UP), followed by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in 1939, and the University of South Africa (Unisa) in 1955.

Then came the rapid creation of LIS departments in 14 other universities, culminating in the establishment of the 15th LIS department at the University of Transkei. Technikons (now called "universities of technology") offering library education and training in five institutions followed only much later, between 1984 and 1987 (Van Aswegen, 1997:53–54). At present, 12 LIS departments located within academic universities and universities of technology are operational at the Universities of Cape Town, Pretoria, Western Cape, Zululand, KwaZulu-Natal, Walter Sisulu, Fort Hare, Limpopo, South Africa, Stellenbosch, Johannesburg and the Durban University of Technology (see the list at the end of the chapter).

The original building (inaugurated in 1939) of the Merensky Library of the University of Pretoria, which now houses an art museum. The university has 11 libraries in total on its different campuses.

(Courtesy of the University of Pretoria)

LIS education and training programmes at UCT and the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) only admit candidates with an undergraduate qualification, thus following largely the North American model. The transformation of HEIs during the last five years in South Africa has resulted in the demise of LIS schools formerly based at the Universities of the Free State and Potchefstroom (which is currently part of the University of the North-West). Also during this period, LIS schools at the University of Johannesburg (formerly known as the Rand Afrikaans University) and the Stellenbosch University redefined their qualifications to include only information and knowledge management, thereby abandoning librarianship completely.

In essence, LIS education and training in South Africa appears to have benefited from the development of strong HEIs. Unfortunately (although some would argue, fortunately), the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) does not provide guidelines or standards for LIS education and training in the country. This had been done as from 1948; the guidelines were revised in 1964 and again in 1979 by SALA and, subsequently, by the South African Institute for Library and Information Science (SAILIS). Although present LIS education in South Africa does not exclusively target the training and education of librarians, the (original) main focus of LIS schools was librarianship.

2. OVERVIEW OF TRENDS AND ISSUES

Essentially, common trends are noted in the following areas: the growth of LIS schools; review and revision of curricula; increased use of information and communication technologies (ICTs); the rise and fall of student numbers; amalgamation and reorientation of LIS programmes (e.g. at the Universities of Johannesburg and Stellenbosch); relocation of the academic administration of LIS schools (e.g. Information Science at the UP); as well as expansion and closures. (See Ocholla & Bothma, 2007; Minishi-Majanja, 2004.)

2.1 Growth of LIS schools

South Africa is the only country in Africa whose LIS schools have witnessed a drastic reduction in number during the last ten years – from 18 to the current 12 – with further possible closures. For example, the LIS school at UCT is due for closure in 2010, unless drastic steps are taken. This reduction has largely been caused by the transformation of the higher education sector in South Africa, which led to the downsizing of some HEIs and the creation of new structures for institutions, mainly through the merger and reorientation of academic dispensations. However, the general trend signifies that LIS schools are decreasing, and those remaining are merging with other disciplines.

2.2 Name changes

In the past, most departments were simply named Departments of Library Science, Library Studies, or Librarianship. In the 1980s, most departments were renamed to the "Department of Library and Information Science/Studies", and the 1990s again saw departments change their names to "Department of Information Science/Studies". A further name change at the University of Johannesburg – to the Department of Information and Knowledge Management – reflects the most recent change in criteria.

Traditionally, LIS schools formed part of a Faculty of Humanities, or Social Sciences, which still tends to be the case. However, and again reflecting current changes, some departments have moved to other faculties or schools. For example, the LIS programmes at UCT are offered by staff of the Centre for Information Literacy through the university's Graduate School of Humanities. At the University of Johannesburg, the department forms part of the Faculty of Management, and at UP, it is a member of the School of Information Technology (with Computer Science and Informatics/Information Systems).

2.3 Programme content and models

There is evidence that LIS qualification programmes have kept a minimum number of credit and content requirements for LIS education, such as management, information-seeking and retrieval, knowledge organisation, knowledge representation, and user studies, with an increased integration of technology. The contact teaching mode is most commonly used, with minimal distance teaching (the latter is the dominant teaching mode at Unisa, for example).

There are also two dominant learning models for librarianship qualifications in South Africa: the undergraduate and the postgraduate diploma model. The former is used most commonly in South Africa and consists of three to four years of study, during which topics from the field of Library and Information Science are combined with a number of compulsory and/or elective courses from other disciplines. This may then be followed by an Honours degree (one year), during which students specialise in topics from Library and Information Science. In the postgraduate model, a general degree is the admission requirement to the postgraduate diploma in Library and Information Science. This diploma is followed by an Honours degree. The postgraduate diploma model is used at both UCT and UKZN.

There are obvious advantages and disadvantages to both models. The most significant disadvantage of the undergraduate model is that students do not obtain a broad-based general education before starting with their LIS studies. However, their period of study is shorter and the costs to qualify as an information professional are lower. The disadvantages of the postgraduate model include the much longer period it takes to obtain a formal qualification in LIS and the considerably higher costs. However, these students do have a broad-based general education. The advantages and/or disadvantages of the two models are therefore diametrically opposed, and it is only when the Honours level is included that no differences are registered.

In all departments, undergraduate education programmes (either a degree or a postgraduate diploma) are followed by postgraduate programmes. In both instances, students obtain sound theoretical and practical knowledge of LIS topics before they commence with their postgraduate LIS studies. Three-year programmes are usually followed by a fourth year of study, widely known as an Honours programme. This, in turn, leads to a Master's programme, which is offered either through coursework or research. The coursework Master's programme is a specialisation, during which students study selected LIS topics in depth. The four-year undergraduate degree programme leads directly to a Master's or Honours degree. Master's programmes are followed by doctoral research programmes, although not all departments or schools offer doctoral pro-

grammes. The categorisation of LIS schools' qualifications may be viewed in five ways:

- the nature and type of qualification programmes offered (e.g. Bachelor's or Master's degree);
- the duration and credit requirements for a qualification (e.g. three or four years);
- the academic level of the qualifications (e.g. undergraduate or postgraduate);
- the mode of instruction (contact or distance); and
- the orientation of the LIS school (e.g. vocational or general education).

Notably, university-based LIS schools offer more general or theoretical education, and also offer undergraduate and postgraduate degree qualifications which take three to four years for undergraduates, and a minimum of one to three years for Honours, Master's and doctorate qualifications respectively. The mode of instruction is mainly contact education, whereas distance education is insignificant.

The LIS qualification programmes offered at the universities of technology offer vocational education and training qualifications, which take one to two years for certificates and three to four years for a diploma, higher diploma or Bachelor of Technology qualification. As in universities, the mode of instruction is mainly by contact.

2.4 Scope of programmes

Common qualification programmes focus on LIS education and training for library workers. A growing number of institutions focus on other related information fields, such as publishing, record management, multimedia, information technology and know-

Opening time at the Merensky Library of the University of Pretoria, used as an academic information service and study centre.

(Courtesy of the University of Pretoria)

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ledge management. These are either autonomous qualifications, or integrated disciplines within a holistic LIS qualification, as is strongly witnessed at the UP and UKZN.

LIS schools in Africa initially focused on the education and training of librarians, who would then work in libraries. The focus of current LIS schools within the region, and South Africa in particular, has grown more diverse as libraries alone are unable to provide enough job opportunities for LIS graduates. Hardly any new libraries are built and existing library services are unable to offer enough employment. Moreover, they are plagued by insufficient funds, a shortage of appropriate posts/vacancies to accommodate college and university graduates, and low salaries. Essentially, library management structures do not prioritise libraries for further development.

Libraries are also facing stiff competition from emerging information provision centres and services, particularly technology-driven services such as the Internet and wireless technology, whose proximity to information seekers and relevance in respect of content are increasingly rendering library services irrelevant to most people. Sadly, all these developments are happening to an old information service provision centre (the library) that has not created a niche area for itself, particularly in deprived communities, or communities that have always been marginalised. The majority of the population in Africa has yet to experience the library and its services, as a result of elitism, urban-centrism and Euro-centrism, as noted in numerous studies (e.g. Issak, 2000; Sturges & Neil, 1990) arguing that libraries in Africa are largely stocked with Western literature written in non-African languages.

The library collection rarely addresses Africa's context or readers' information needs, and the services are few and located far away from those who could benefit from them. We believe that these factors have, to a large extent, contributed to the declining student numbers in LIS schools for librarianship. For instance, most LIS schools in South Africa have reported a sharp decline in student enrolments for librarianship.

Responses to this situation have been varied. Some LIS schools have terminated their librarianship programmes; others have changed the names of their departments; a lot more have diversified their qualification programmes by providing additional qualifications in related information areas, such as knowledge management, multimedia, records management, publishing, information technology, etc.; whilst others have enriched their curricula by adding market-oriented courses and/or academic subjects. In essence, many LIS schools no longer target libraries alone, but broader information and emerging markets.

Furthermore, although the distinction between Library Science and Information Science is unclear and fuzzy at best, it is evident from a perusal of curricula at the various universities that a number of new topics are being phased in at most universities. These include courses dealing with information technology; the information society; legal, ethical and economic aspects of information; and information and knowledge management.

2.4.1 ICTs

There is also evidence of an increased integration of information technology into LIS curricula. Courses on computer literacy, ICT, hardware and software (for LIS and in general), databases, information systems and systems development can be found in most

curricula. In most cases, the study of ICT is conducted in support of information work, such as understanding computers and networks to facilitate online information retrieval. Courses on the information/knowledge society, globalisation and information/communication for development are found at the UP and UCT, while courses on information ethics, law, philosophy and economics are offered at the UP.

2.4.2 Information management

Most programmes include courses on information management. In LIS schools, information management is presented in different formats, as part of most (but not all) LIS programmes at undergraduate level. Very often, this is expanded to include information and knowledge management, or even separate specialist modules on knowledge management. Typical topics in information and knowledge management (e.g. at the UP) include:

- personal information management;
- tools and techniques for information and knowledge management;
- strategy formulation and implementation;
- information and knowledge audits; and
- information consultancy.

Theoretical models are also studied in detail. Thus, knowledge management courses appear to be offered either as autonomous courses, or as units of an existing management course, or as a standalone qualification programme in or outside an LIS school.

The LIS schools at the Universities of Johannesburg and Stellenbosch, for example, abandoned their original mandate and replaced it with an entirely different construct – perhaps to remain viable. At the University of Johannesburg, the department changed its name to Information and Knowledge Management, and moved from the Faculty of Humanities to the Faculty of Management. Two programmes are offered: a BA in Information Science, and a B.Com. in Information and Knowledge Management.

At the Stellenbosch University, the Department of Information Science changed the name of its courses in information science to socio-informatics, and offers (among other things) a BA in Socio-Informatics. There are some "traditional" information science topics retained in the curriculum. However, the focus is very much on information and knowledge management, information technology and multimedia, decision-making and value studies.

In the past, both these universities offered programmes in library and information science. In both cases, the focus changed to information science some years ago, and library science (both as a programme and as courses within the information science programme) was dropped. This focus has changed again.

2.4.3 Information literacy

Regarding information literacy, the Association of College and Research Libraries (2000: 2–3) defines it as "a set of abilities requiring individuals to recognise when information is needed and have the ability to locate, process, and use effectively the needed information. Information literacy forms the basis for lifelong learning."

Inside the JS Gericke Library of Stellenbosch University with its 1400 study seats,
10 seminar rooms and 27 study cubicles.
(Courtesy of the Stellenbosch University)

Information literacy is becoming increasingly popular in HEIs and LIS schools in South Africa, mainly because it has been recognised as essential for lifelong learning and for supporting students coming from information-deprived environments or communities. Their numbers are increasing rapidly in HEIs throughout the country. There are strong information literacy programmes at UCT, UP and UKZN in South Africa.

Information literacy programmes are normally offered or coordinated by LIS schools in the HEIs and usually form part of the LIS programme only. However, in some cases, information literacy courses are available to other students at the university, such as at UKZN (2007), where the students:

> … become familiar with a range of the most commonly used information sources and will acquire skills necessary to access these sources. [They] become acquainted with the latest computer-based technological developments such as CDs, email and the Internet [and] learn about other information agencies and their role in the provision of information. [They have to] understand the concept of information and how the information explosion came about. Finally, [they have to be] in a position to critically evaluate the information [they] find and use.

At the UP, the course in information literacy is a compulsory, credit-based semester course offered by the Department of Information Science to all first-year students en-

rolled at the university (more than 6100). It is a very practical, hands-on course dealing with information resources (both paper-based and electronic), the principles of information retrieval (including concept identification and Boolean logic), practical information-seeking and retrieval on the Internet, online databases and electronic journals, copyright, plagiarism, referencing techniques, the evaluation of information, and writing an assignment. This course is followed by a similar course in computer literacy, which is also compulsory for all first-year students.

2.4.4 Curriculum content

In order to enrich the LIS content, make it more relevant to the market and attract more students, LIS curricula have been expanded both within and outside of existing programmes. For example, computer troubleshooting skills are an interesting development in LIS curricula. One of the requirements for a driver's licence is knowledge about basic vehicle mechanics, such as changing a flat tyre. Similarly, computer users or operators, particularly in an environment where computer repair centres are minimal or non-existent, should acquire troubleshooting skills essential for the basic repair of computers. Most computer-oriented problems are minor and can be resolved by users who have basic troubleshooting skills.

Such a course is offered in the BA (Information Science) programme at the University of Zululand to teach students basic computer repair skills, thus catering for the uninterrupted use of the equipment. Interestingly, students who graduate from this programme use these skills to earn a living.(2)

2.4.5 Multimedia studies

Multimedia studies are equally important. At a number of universities, multimedia topics or subjects are included either as electives, or as compulsory modules that form part of the LIS or Information Science degree. For example:

- At the Stellenbosch University, students have to take a number of compulsory multimedia modules for a degree in Socio-Informatics.
- The University of Johannesburg includes the management of multimedia and web environments in its degree programmes.
- At the University of Zululand, students can specialise in multimedia, in addition to their standard information science courses. They may therefore choose web design and development (including HTML, XML and related technologies) as a specialised stream from their first to third year.
- The UP also includes multimedia topics and courses as part of its compulsory modules for the information science programme, but multimedia has also been developed as a fully-fledged degree qualification or programme. In this instance, students do a full major in multimedia and computer science, in addition to taking information science, language and visual design courses.

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2 See www.lis.uzulu.ac.za.

The entrance to the Informatorium that houses the computer laboratories of the School of Information Technology of the University of Pretoria, of which the Department of Information Science forms a part. There are 641 computers in 12 laboratories for undergraduate students and a further six research laboratories for postgraduate students. The School has a further 600 computers in eight laboratories for its two modules in computer and information literacy training (which are compulsory credit-bearing modules taught by the School to all first-year students at the University).

(Courtesy of the University of Pretoria)

Multimedia topics include the theory and practice of multimedia and hypermedia, multimedia technologies, human-computer interaction, web design and development (including HTML, XML and related technologies at a very advanced level), as well as computer game design, etc. Practicals include developing sophisticated XML-based websites, video and sound editing, animation with Flash and 3D Studio Max, and computer game design in Macromedia Director, and so forth.(3)

At the end of their studies, students are multimedia programmers with a very high understanding of information organisation and structure, and a feel for visual design and language.

2.4.6 Multimedia and publishing studies

Media and publishing studies have also become popular. This is a new addition to the traditional LIS curriculum in South Africa. As such, the UP has witnessed the evolution of publishing studies out of Information Science into a separate programme.

In addition to a number of information science topics, students study publishing management, commissioning, marketing and sales, copy-editing, design and production.4 To a greater or lesser extent, all programmes make provision for compulsory modules in ICT. At the UP, the School of Information Technology offers an interdisciplinary four-year programme in information technology. Students take three majors for this programme: information science, computer science and informatics (information systems), as well as a number of multimedia courses.(5)

2.4.7 Records management

Records management has also become increasingly popular in LIS schools. At some institutions it is offered as a fully-fledged degree qualification programme (e.g. at UKZN), or as a course or module within a larger degree programme. The latter is the most common option in most qualification programmes in LIS schools (e.g. at the University of Zululand and the UP).

3. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Recent challenges and opportunities facing LIS schools in South Africa are discussed by Minishi-Majanja (2004), Raju (2005) and Ocholla and Bothma (2007).

3.1 Challenges

Among the cited challenges are the following.

3.1.1 Student numbers

Without students, LIS schools cannot exist, in the same way that businesses cannot exist or thrive without customers. Whereas the number of students enrolling for library science has declined in most LIS schools in South Africa, the number of students enrolling for LIS with diverse qualification programmes, incorporating either broader information

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3 is.up.ac.za/academic/programmes/BIS_mm.htm
4 is.up.ac.za/academic/programmes/BIS_pub.htm
5 www.up.ac.za/academic/ebit/schoolit/academic/ung.htm#BIT

orientation or specialised information qualification programmes (such as Records Management, Publishing, Multimedia, Knowledge Management, and Information Technology) has in some cases increased or stabilised. Most LIS schools offer education and training for broader information-related jobs in emerging markets, or markets that have never employed LIS graduates before.

3.1.2 Career opportunities

Although libraries are reported to be the largest employers of LIS graduates in Africa, increasing career opportunities in emerging LIS markets are noted. Studies by Ocholla (2000; 2005) and Snyman (2000) focusing on career opportunities in South Africa noted that besides career opportunities in libraries, there are rapidly growing career opportunities in the non-library sector or emerging market.

The emerging market has forced most LIS schools to reorient their curricula to meet the needs of the new market in order to survive. Experience has shown that educating and training LIS graduates with more knowledge and skills in broader information disciplines is realistic, viable and rewarding. Graduates from broad LIS programmes can work in any information-related field. However, the LIS curriculum must consist of the core LIS subjects, courses and modules, such as:

- information and knowledge management;
- information storage, seeking and retrieval;
- knowledge organisation;
- knowledge representation;
- study of information users;
- information behaviour; and
- ICTs.

3.1.3 Funding

LIS schools are largely funded by the government through their affiliate institutions, such as universities. In South Africa, however, the funding of LIS schools falls within lower funding clusters, thereby affecting the resource support required for teaching and learning. Due to rapid technological changes in the information environment, resource support is of fundamental importance to the growth and sustainability of LIS schools.

Increasingly, LIS education and training are becoming highly dependent on modern computer hardware and software, efficient Internet access and connectivity, computer literate and highly skilled information technology staff, and well-equipped computer laboratories.

3.1.4 Investment in ICTs

Recent reports focusing on ICTs in LIS education in Africa (Ocholla, 2003, 2005; Minishi-Majanja, 2003, 2004; Ocholla & Minishi-Majanja, 2004) recognise increasing investment in ICT for LIS education in the region for teaching, learning, research, academic management and decision-making.

There are, however, disparities in the nature and level of access and use at institutional levels. Common issues include the need for ICT policies, resource support, student

After 4 p.m. on a Friday afternoon, these learners were found happily using a variety
of books in Sundumbili Public Library in the coastal region of KwaZulu-Natal.
(Courtesy of the Directorate of Library Services, KwaZulu-Natal)

and staff access (e.g. in laboratories and offices, Internet access, use of ICTs for teaching
and learning) and access to adequate computer hardware and software licences, which
would enable computer literacy. This should not, however, obscure the fact that LIS
schools based in South Africa have better technological infrastructure than those in other
parts of Africa and, in some cases, they are on par with those in developed countries.

3.1.5 Public libraries

Public libraries are known to provide jobs for LIS graduates in countries with strong li-
brary service policies. In Africa, a recent report on public libraries in Africa (Issak,
2000) provided an ontological account of trends, issues and problems of public librarian-
ship in ten Anglophone countries in Africa. The report highlighted poor services, declin-
ing budgets, lack of resources, outdated materials, lack of planning, inadequate knowl-
edge of the information needs of the users, and poverty. It blamed the Western model
of public library systems for the poor performance of libraries.

Although South African public library services were relatively better than those of
the other nine countries in the survey, several authors in this collected work suggested
the provision of alternative services (such as community information services), an im-
pact assessment of public library services, greater government commitment, improve-
ment in the professional commitment of librarians, and the provision of resources.

The proper planning and funding of public libraries are indeed major obstacles. For instance, the rapid rolling-out of public libraries in South Africa after the democratic dispensation dawned in 1994 has slowed down and affected not only library services and information access, but also the market for LIS graduates.

3.2 Opportunities

Optimists believe that threats can easily be turned into opportunities. Some positive prospects are discussed below.

3.2.1 Collaboration and partnerships

Fundamentally, collaboration and partnerships could be forged among LIS institutions in a country and regionally or internationally, in areas such as teaching, research, student and staff exchange, conferences, workshops, curriculum development, publications, research supervision, examination and distance teaching or research. It is essential that LIS schools meet regularly to network and review progress and discuss how these challenges may be overcome.

Another area of opportunity lies in the development of partnerships with industry and employers in curriculum development, teaching, research, publication and experiential learning.

3.2.2 Staff development

Opportunities also exist in staff development, both formal and informal. Well-trained information professionals are essential in any country, be it developed or developing. These persons are employed in libraries of all kinds (school, public, special, academic), in information centres (private, public, government), as consultants to big business, as information managers, and so on. There should, therefore, be a huge market for the graduates of LIS, information science and other such related programmes.

3.2.3 Market needs and marketing

A consistent demand for these graduates would translate into a similar demand for the programmes. This is sadly not the case in South Africa where, as mentioned, a number of library schools have closed down in the last few years and many existing LIS programmes are under threat. Nevertheless, this presents LIS schools with an opportunity to market their programmes actively and aggressively.

There are also opportunities for LIS workers emanating from collaboration and partnerships; human resource needs for knowledge management and information services in the government and corporate sectors; and the need for relevant research and new regional initiatives such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the East African Community (EAC).

There are many ways of determining LIS market needs, some of which have been reported in studies by Ocholla (2001, 2005) and Snyman (2000). These include:

- scanning newspapers for knowledge, skills and attitude needs;
- tracer/follow-up studies on graduates;

- focus group discussions through committees consisting of participants from LIS schools and stakeholders from the industry (including employers);
- consultations; and
- reading and reviewing relevant literature.

Recent studies indicate that libraries are still the largest employers of LIS graduates in the region, despite their low numbers. However, the emerging market, with its non-library jobs both in the public and corporate/private sectors, is rapidly growing and requires high levels of information competency.

Essentially, the LIS sector in the region requires comprehensive knowledge and skills in areas such as information literacy, information and knowledge management, information technology, information seeking and retrieval, research, communication skills, customer care, the ability to work both independently and in a team, and positive work-related attitudes.

3.2.4 Research and development

Research and development are known to form the backbone of any profession and teaching programme. There are numerous opportunities for relevant research in information-related fields in South Africa. Scholars from this country can make significant contributions to mainstream topics in, for example, information retrieval, information retrieval system design and development, information and knowledge management, and so forth.

There are, however, many unique opportunities for very relevant research in a South African and an African context, for example, in:

- indigenous knowledge and indigenous knowledge systems;
- information for development;
- the use of ICTs in the developing world;
- information ethics;
- legal aspects of information in an African context;
- dissemination of information in rural areas and health contexts (especially regarding the AIDS pandemic);
- literacy and information literacy training in a developing world; and
- information flow between the developed and the developing world.

All these topics are highly relevant in the developing world and may also radically influence the developed world in terms of its perceptions of, and relationship with, the former.

3.2.5 Continuing education

Although not covering present-day information, some of the initiatives in Africa using continuing education were reported by Ocholla (2000:43–44), and similar ideas in South Africa were reported by Kaniki (1997).

There are also fresh initiatives in progress in South Africa through continuing education and professional development (CEPD) and the Centre for Information Career Development (CICD). The need and relevance of CEPD has been recognised by LIASA

among its four focus areas: Personal Development, Professional and Support Skills Development, Information and Communication Technology, and Management and Leadership Development, including advocacy.

CEPD is crucial as it enables professionals to keep their practices current and relevant. It involves "learning to know" and "learning to do" through "the promotion and provision of education and training for LIS workers" and encouraging "the promotion of service standards and acceptable good practice."(6) This initiative is currently achieved through the CICD, which seeks "to access, offer and recommend a suitable spread of relevant programmes, thereby ensuring the trainees have access to a variety of courses that will enhance and upgrade skills pertinent to their personal and professional development".(7)

3.2.6 Change management and quality control

Redesigned curricula obviously have very serious implications for faculty members in LIS and information science departments. Faculty members have to leave their traditional comfort zones to ensure that they keep up to date with developments, thus enabling quality in teaching and research. Since training courses are not always readily available, and those that are available tend to be expensive, the implications are that faculty members have to take responsibility for their own education and training, and actually educate and train themselves, through a policy of lifelong learning.

This creates a great deal of stress and uncertainty and, in the case of less dedicated faculty members, may lead to teaching that is not of an acceptable standard or quality. This, in turn, will obviously place additional stress on everyone. Faculty members tend to take their own training very seriously, but this is unfortunately not always the case.

Change management is therefore a serious issue and quality control is extremely important. The heads of departments play an important role in this regard. International staff exchanges would enable LIS academics to gain valuable experience and fresh ideas, and this happens at most LIS schools to a greater or lesser extent. A general system of external examiners and regular external evaluations, however, tends to help departments keep on track, and ensures that their teaching and research are of an acceptable quality.

3.2.7 Other

These include opportunities such as the following:

- creation of a consortium of LIS schools;
- distance learning (e.g. at Unisa);
- multidisciplinary approaches to LIS education and training, which enable the extension of knowledge frontiers made possible by the location of most LIS schools in HEIs;
- uniqueness of programmes and avoidance of harmful competition;
- accreditation standards;

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6 www.liasa.org.za/cepd/index.php
7 www.liasa.org.za/partnership/cicd.php

- location of programmes – largely at established universities;
- Internet presence for web visibility; and
- networking and knowledge sharing.

A busy section of the main library of the University of Pretoria.
(Courtesy of the University of Pretoria)

4. CONCLUSION

This chapter has brought to the fore the following issues:

- Notwithstanding variations, there are common trends in the growth and development of LIS schools. These include periodic curriculum reviews and revision; increased application and use of ICTs; decreasing or increasing student numbers; mergers and reorientations; the relocation of LIS programmes; and expansion and closure.
- The number of LIS schools is decreasing in South Africa. This decline perhaps supports the view that the LIS job market is growing smaller or shrinking. A number of LIS schools have closed. We also note that certain expansions are not necessarily justified by market needs.
- The articulation of LIS schools varies by the type of qualification programmes offered, the duration of the programmes, credit requirements, levels of qualifications,

mode of instruction, and orientation. These trends are not common to LIS schools in South Africa alone.

- LIS schools no longer focus on the education and training of librarians to work in libraries, as was the case before, since libraries alone cannot sustain the employment needs of LIS graduates. Thus, the curricula of many LIS schools currently target the emerging or broader information market.

- There is strong evidence that the curricula and qualifications of LIS schools in the country have kept minimum content, core subjects and credit requirements for LIS education and training internationally.

- Although the integration of ICTs into LIS curricula is still problematic (largely due to resource support), LIS schools in South Africa have integrated ICTs into their curricula and are implementing ICTs in teaching, learning and research processes.

- In order to make LIS education relevant and current, and to make some LIS schools viable, there is a strong integration of new courses such as knowledge management, information literacy, multimedia, media and publishing studies, records management and basic computer technology into LIS curricula in general, or as separate degree qualification programmes.

- Major challenges facing LIS education and training (in addition to the issues already mentioned) include the review of student numbers and the circumstances under which they decline; knowledge and diversification of LIS job markets; funding of LIS schools; and the development of technology infrastructures both in quantity and quality. This, in turn, would allow for efficient access and the development of continuing education and short courses to provide new knowledge, skills and attitudes to LIS workers.

It is evident that LIS schools have taken the challenges of the changing information environment very seriously and have adapted their curricula, names and institutional alignments to reflect these changes.

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LIST OF LIS SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Durban University of Technology, Department of Information Studies
 (www3.dut.ac.za)

Stellenbosch University, Department of Information and Knowledge Management
 (academic.sun.ac.za/infoscience)

University of Cape Town, Department of Information and Library Studies
 (www.ched.uct.ac.za/cil/dils)

University of Fort Hare, Department of Library and Information Science
 (www.ufh.ac.za)

University of Johannesburg, Department of Information and Knowledge Management
 (www.uj.ac.za/infoman)

University of KwaZulu-Natal, Information Studies Programme
 (www.infs.ukzn.ac.za)

University of Limpopo, Department of Information Science
 (www.unorth.ac.za)

University of Pretoria, Department of Information Science
 (is.up.ac.za)

University of South Africa, Department of Information Science
 (www.unisa.ac.za)

University of Western Cape, Department of Library and Information Science (www.uwc.ac.za/arts/libinf)

University of Zululand, Department of Library and Information Science (www.lis.uzulu.ac.za)

Walter Sisulu University of Technology, Department of Library and Information Science (www.4icu.org)