EDITORIAL

The previous issue did not have an editorial due to an oversight at the printers. We wish to extend our apologies to our readers. There were also several other omissions in that issue, for which the printers have apologised.

This issue contains contributions on the use of mixed methods research in library and information services (LIS) research in South Africa, natural sciences research outputs in South Africa, with special reference to research projects such as theses and dissertations, transformation in the library and information sector in South Africa, Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) membership among LIS workers in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), the Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF) and LIS education and training in South Africa, a case study on the adoption on e-learning in school librarianship at the University of the Western Cape, the perceptions and expectations of undergraduate students of the quality of service at Chancellor College Library in Malawi, a model to predict customer satisfaction with service quality in Sri Lankan university libraries, the challenges facing the Nigerian university libraries in meeting users' service demands in this 21st century, a general contribution on the 12th International Conference on Scientometrics and Informetrics held in Brazil, and concludes with a book review.

Using a content analysis research design, Patrick Ngulube, Koketso Mokwatlo and Sipho Ndwandwe posit that using mixed methods research affords researchers the possibility of addressing issues from a large number of perspectives. They recommend that researchers in the LIS field in South Africa make mixed methods research happen by researching and publishing works which combine or integrate qualitative and quantitative methods. The next article, by Omwoyo Bosire Onyancha and Daisy Jacobs, examines selected natural science research outputs in South Africa. It reveals that the trends of capacitating national research in the natural sciences in South Africa follows a mixed pattern of growth. Biology is the most researched subject, co-supervision of research projects in South Africa is minimal and research capacity building is largely at the level of the masters degree. They recommend that completed research projects should be converted into publishable research articles for wider dissemination of research findings.

Gavin Davis examines the current state of libraries in South Africa. He draws on the state's role in the provision of library services in South Africa since 1994. He contends that a library should play a role in education, in the promotion of moral values, the eradication of illiteracy, the alleviation of poverty and assist in the quest for knowledge and the promotion of democracy in society. According to him, this calls for a well-informed and empowered library "professional".

According to a study undertaken in 2007 by Musa Khomo and Jaya Raju among LIS workers in KZN, LIASA has been unable to draw significant membership from the support staff category in LIS services despite its constitution claiming to embrace all LIS workers. The study recommends that LIASA market itself more aggressively to increase membership levels, particularly in the public library sector and among support staff in all LIS services. It also recommends that LIASA should consider involving itself in the industrial concerns of the LIS sector.

Mabel Minishi-Majanja looks at the HEQF and the changing environment of LIS education and training in South Africa. She comes to the conclusion that while establishing common parameters and criteria for designing qualifications, the HEQF poses challenges to the LIS education needs and practices including names, levels and articulation of qualifications, as well as titles of posts and hierarchies in the workplace. Still on the education front, Sandy Zinn discusses the adoption of e-learning in the ACE School Librarianship programme at the University of the Western Cape. The main lessons learned from the programme were that (i) the e-learning environment is not necessarily intuitive and participants need opportunities to digest novel features, such as the discussion forum; (ii) several of the advantages and disadvantages of e-learning are identified in this study; and (iii) setting up an e-learning course is best achieved incrementally.

The next three articles are on quality assurance concerns in academic libraries. Naomi Kachoka and Ruth Hoskins discuss the perceptions and expectations of undergraduate students of the quality of service at Chancellor College Library in Malawi. A LibQUAL+™ instrument was used to assess the students' perceptions and expectations of the quality of service. Undergraduate students of the Chancellor College had higher expectations of service quality than the perceived quality of service. Chaminda Jayasundara, Patrick Ngulube and Mabel Minishi-Majanja present a theoretical model that may facilitate the identification of service quality attributes and domains that can be used to predict customer satisfaction, from a service quality perspective. Amanze Unagha looks at the challenges facing the Nigerian university libraries in meeting users' service demands in this 21st century and the role of university administrators in assisting them in this regard. He identifies these challenges as non-application of technology to service delivery, increase in students' intake with its attendant effect on the available limited resources, inefficient reference service, and competition from other service providers. Finally, he recommends amongst other things that knowledge and application of technology in service delivery in libraries is unavoidable in this century, quality service delivery in terms of selection and acquisition of appropriate materials should not be taken lightly, knowledge of human beings and human relationships is important, especially in reference service, library user education should be undertaken by library staff, staff training should be a continuous exercise, and university libraries should transform themselves into one-stop shopping centres for all information retrievals in the face of competition.

Enjoy the read!
Prof Patrick Ngulube
Editor-in-Chief