

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

---

Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)

Libraries at University of Nebraska-Lincoln

---

Summer 12-15-2021

## COLLABORATION BETWEEN LIBRARIANS AND ACADEMICS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION STUDIES FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN KZN

Petros PN Dlamini

*University of Zululand, nhlavu2000@yahoo.com*

Bethiweli Mlambo

*University of Zululand, Bethiwelimplambo@gmail.com*

T Masenya

*Durban University of Technology, MasenyaT@dut.ac.za*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac>

---

Dlamini, Petros PN; Mlambo, Bethiweli; and Masenya, T, "COLLABORATION BETWEEN LIBRARIANS AND ACADEMICS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION STUDIES FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN KZN" (2021). *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. 6746.

<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/6746>

**COLLABORATION BETWEEN LIBRARIANS AND ACADEMICS IN THE  
DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION STUDIES FOR CURRICULUM  
DEVELOPMENT IN KZN**

**University of Zululand, South Africa**

**Department of Information Studies**

Bethiweli Mathatha Mlambo

[Bethiwelimlambo@gmail.com](mailto:Bethiwelimlambo@gmail.com)

**&**

Dr. PN Dlamini; Dr TM Masenya

[DlaminiP@unizulu.ac.za](mailto:DlaminiP@unizulu.ac.za); [MasenyaT@dut.ac.za](mailto:MasenyaT@dut.ac.za)

**ABSTRACT**

The aim of this study is to assess the level of collaboration between librarians and Library and Information Science (LIS) academics for the development of the LIS curriculum, being aware that collaboration is an instructional strategy that positively affects student academic achievement. The term collaboration has become popular concept in areas of life where two or more individuals, organisations, institutions or nation embark upon a mutually agreed process. Collaboration provides the opportunity for experts and researchers to partner and fine-tune thoughts and develop strategies for multi-dimensional thinking towards achieving common and uniform practice. Collaboration between librarians and LIS academics has been seen as a strategic activity in the management of LIS education programs and library and information services.

It is widely acknowledged that there have been program structure and the content changes in Library and Information Studies (LIS) over the past decade. The supplementary drivers for change included changing client demand, innovations in information technology and the desire of LIS academics to cater to a wider information management marketplace than the traditional one. These changes are attributed mostly to library automation and the digital environment and it can be said that these changes affect the LIS curriculum to be unstable. The LIS education has been affected by these changes and the changing environment has compelled LIS schools to improve their curriculum so that it is in line with the LIS job market. The researcher

believes that the changes in Library and Information Science (LIS) job market, changes in LIS education and the changing environment can be addressed through collaboration between librarians and LIS academics. The consistent collaboration between librarians and LIS academics can tremendously improve the relevance of the LIS curriculum. In regard of the present study, the researcher will critically review the literature that will be retrieved from different resources such as books, journals and articles based on collaboration between librarians and LIS academics as well as curriculum development in LIS institutions internationally, nationally (African setting) including South African setting.

**Keywords:** collaboration, LIS academics, curriculum development, library and information science, information literacy, research, LIS job market.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Developing effective forms of collaboration has become essential for organisations dealing with the challenges of complex, dynamic and changing environments. Within the tertiary education sector, collaborative endeavours have been imperative in tackling issues associated with the growing number and diversity of students, reduced government support of the sector and the consequent intensifying competition for limited resources, mounting emphasis on quality assurance and measurement of outcomes in education and research, shifts in learning paradigm, demand for flexible modes of delivery facilitated by modern technology and the proliferation of educational resources and resource formats (Pham & Tanner, 2015).

Although the importance of collaboration between librarians and LIS is widely accepted, collaboration is a complex concept representing a high level of human relationship and there are many potential barriers affecting the development of an effective collaborative partnership. The potential barriers to developing an effective collaboration include the lack of commitment, the lack of relationship, and the lack of respect to other colleagues (Sacchanand, 2012).

In universities seeking to enhance academic performance and research capacity, there is increasing recognition of the need for collaboration between librarians and LIS academics. Such collaboration may relate to selecting appropriate educational resources and embedding cataloguing and classification skills as a backbone in the LIS profession, information literacy skills and research skills into the LIS curriculum. Without effective collaboration between librarians and LIS academics, information instruction is likely to lack relevance in the LIS discipline and can be perceived by students to be of little value (Pham & Tanner, 2015).

## **2. Problem statement and specific research objectives**

An effective collaboration between librarians and Library and Information Science (LIS) academics act as an instructional strategy that positively affect the LIS education. The professionalisation of LIS is developed through collaboration of librarians and academics in the LIS profession (Burke, 2010; Sacchanand, 2012). Therefore, collaboration between librarians and LIS academics thus become an inspiring tool for the success of the LIS profession. However, there are potential barriers that affect effective collaboration between librarians and LIS academics (Shen, 2012). The potential barriers that affect effective collaboration between librarians and LIS academics include the lack of commitment, the lack of relationship and the lack of respect to other colleagues (Sacchanand, 2012). The traditional perceptions, stereotypes of librarians and the low respect for librarians' knowledge in the LIS discipline and in education more broadly are still experiential barriers to the initiation of collaborative activities with LIS academics (Shen, 2012).

The potential barriers to developing an effective collaboration between librarians and LIS academics coursed a growing distance between them, in a way that librarians feel in many ways that LIS academics had abandoned them (Sacchanand 2012; Burke, 2010; Virkus, 2007). It can be said that a growing distance between librarians and LIS academics affect the effectiveness of their collaborative engagement. Therefore, without effective collaboration between librarians and LIS academics, information instruction is likely to lack relevance in the LIS discipline and can be perceived by students to be of little value (Pham & Tanner, 2015).

There have been programme structure and the content changes in the LIS profession over the past decade (Shongwe, 2015; Raju, 2017). Therefore, it can be said that these changes affect the relevance of the LIS curriculum. Yadav and Bankar (2016) stated that LIS education should equip students with the required knowledge, skills and advance graduates, librarians and academics' understanding to adapt within the changing LIS environment. However, the LIS schools' curriculum development has shown considerable advances in ICT (Edegbo, 2011). Ocholla and Ocholla (2014) observed that the LIS programme is offered more theoretically than practically.

Contributing to this, Sibiya (2017) emphasised that there seem to be no sufficient time allocated for students work integrated learning.

The collaboration gap between librarians and LIS academics has been identified; the study seeks to expose potential barriers that affect effective collaboration between librarians and LIS academics. The study will enlighten, shed light on the status of collaboration between librarians and LIS academics and it will also assist on the curriculum development in LIS schools. The specific research objectives of the study were presented as follows:

- To investigate the current status of collaboration between librarians and LIS academics.
- To determine whether LIS curriculum is relevant to the expectations of the LIS job market.
- To examine the factors affecting effective collaboration between librarians and LIS academics.

### **3. Literature review**

This section present a literature review on the current status of collaboration between librarians and LIS academics internationally and nationally, the relevance of the LIS curriculum towards the expectations of the LIS job market as well as factors affecting effective collaboration between librarians and LIS academics.

#### **3.1. The concept of collaboration**

This section introduces and unveils the concept of collaboration. Collaboration is normally known and understood as the way in which two groups of people work together for the fulfilment of a mutual goal. Styhre and Aaboen (2013) defined collaboration as an instructional strategy that positively affects student academic achievement. Students' performance on their academic work is enhanced through collaboration between librarians and LIS academics. In addition, collaboration comes with instructional strategies of handling challenges and factors to effective collaboration. Sacchanand (2012) revealed that collaboration is the key term that

strengthen the ability to achieve the mutual goal of the LIS schools and academic libraries, and the capacity of librarians and LIS academics to increase the quality of teaching, learning, research, library and information services as well as cost advantages in sharing human resources.

The collaboration between librarians and LIS academics benefits the LIS students. The collaboration between librarians and LIS academics is an integral component for the success of the information science education programs and the management of library and information services mainly to ensure high quality library and information science educational programs as well as user-centered, effective and efficient library and information services (Pham & Tanner, 2015).

### ***3.2. The current status of collaboration between librarians and LIS academics internationally***

Several studies have been conducted based on collaboration between librarians and academics internationally, an Australian study conducted by Pham and Tanner (2014) focused on the impacts caused by the nature of the collaborative engagement between librarians and academics in library and information science globally. It is perceived that collaboration between librarians and LIS academics have the good impact on students' academic achievement. Pham and Tanner (2014) stated that collaboration between librarians and LIS academics in improving students' academic success and research capacity has been progressively recognised in many institutions. In addition, Pham and Tanner (2014) further elaborated that collaboration between librarians and LIS academics bring about a variety of activities such as developing library resources, facilitating resource access and discovery and embedding information literacy skills and research skills into the tertiary curriculum. Such activities improve the relevance of subject-specific resources and information and learning skills for students, enriching their learning experiences and developing their lifelong learning skills (Ocholla & Shongwe, 2013; Becker, 2006; Bennett, 2009).

Collaboration between librarians and LIS academics facilitate the change from traditional teaching methods in universities, tackling the challenges posed by dramatic changes in the learning paradigm, modes of delivery, diversity of students and the

expansion of resources (Pham & Tanner, 2014). The challenges include the poor infrastructure, shortage of funds, lack of expertise, lack of standardisation, the closed-stack material organisation system, inadequate user services, the poor match between resources and curriculum, out-dated technology and information management systems or unprofessional staffing (Ocholla & Shongwe, 2013; Robinson, 2006; Tran, 1999).

True collaboration sees both parties (librarians and LIS academics) working toward a common goal which embodies respect, tolerance, trust, competence and on-going collaboration (Ivey, 2003; Meulemans & Carr, 2013). Sacchanand (2012) stated that LIS academics generally operate from beliefs separate by narrow content focus, autonomy, time constraints, resistance to change with negative attitudes, established perceptions of the library and attitude towards librarians. The effective collaborative engagements between librarians and LIS academics have been affected by their beliefs and attitude towards collaborating with each other. Librarians and LIS academics unwillingness to participate is one of the critical obstacles that prevent librarians to reach academics and it has been noticed that there is a growing distance between librarians' and LIS academics that many librarians feel in many ways that LIS has abandoned them (Sacchanand, 2012). In addition, Sacchanand (2012) elaborated that an isolation from professional practice led librarians and LIS academics to operate in distinctly 'separate worlds', with little collaboration.

The collaborative engagement between both parties (librarians and LIS academics) requires them to view the world from the same side. In addition, for an effective collaborative engagement between librarians and LIS academics requires them to strive for the mutual goal. It has been widely acknowledged that librarians and LIS academics are still working separately due to dissimilarities in their goals, nature of work, expertise and status (Shen, 2012; Pham & Tanner, 2014). The developing role of librarians working collaboratively with LIS academics in designing and teaching students' research skills and information is not well acknowledged (Christiansen et al., 2004), due to the traditional perceptions, stereotypes of librarians and the low respect for librarians' knowledge in the LIS discipline and in education more broadly are still experiential barriers to the initiation of collaborative activities with LIS academics (Shen, 2012). Lately, there has been a demand for more systematic research



inspecting the differences of organisational structures in the relationship between librarians and LIS academics (Christiansen *et al.*, 2004) and factors impacting their relationship-building in the academic environment (Phelps & Campbell, 2012).

The collaborative engagement between librarians and LIS academics had moved from collection development and the improvements of students' academic achievements to a wide variety of collaboration areas. The areas of collaboration are wide-ranging from collection development to strategic planning (Dickson, 2004), policy partnerships, research and scholarship partnership, curriculum and academic development for teaching and learning information literacy that matches the graduate attributes and capability-building for librarians and academics (Bruce, 2001). Amongst the wide-ranging areas of collaboration, the integration of information literacy and research skills development into the educational process are the most notable emerging areas in the current academic–library collaboration in Australia (Pham & Tanner, 2014).

The collaborative programmes have reflected the shift of librarians' central roles in providing general training on information skills to the shared responsibilities of librarians and LIS academics in integrating and teaching these skills inside the LIS curriculum (Dearden, 2005; Thompson, 2002). It is widely recognized that librarians role has been conceptualised as a cause of change in the academic sphere for the transformation of teaching and learning methods (Candy *et al.*, 1994). The librarians' role has been further extended as a teacher to reflect the shift of their responsibilities from bibliographical instructor to information literacy teacher (Dorskatsch, 2002; Doyle, 1994; Lupton, 2002). Yousef (2010) mentioned that librarians and LIS academics have many mutual goals and concerns in which they both want to enhance LIS student information literacy and help them become writers, problem solvers, critical thinkers, self-directed and lifelong learners. Particularly in the LIS education, librarians develop a greater understanding of and respect for books, journals, and other intellectual property (Yousef, 2010).

Collaboration requires the collaborative parties (librarians and LIS academics) to fully understand and respect each other. A successful collaborative programme requires a high level of librarians and LIS academics commitment, mutuality, effort, trust and respect in order to work collaboratively in programme design and planning (Yousef,

2010; Nayda, 2009; Thompson, 2002). Pham and Tanner (2014) discovered that the current notable barriers to the collaborative effectiveness of librarians and LIS academics includes the lack of commitment, mutuality, commitment, effort, trust and respect for the role of librarians and their knowledge within the LIS profession and in other disciplines.

### ***3.3. The current status of collaboration between librarians and LIS academics in an African setting including South Africa***

It has been noted that collaboration in Africa and South African context has been contextualised in a collaborative research, aiming at discovering new ideas as a group to enhance knowledge sharing and collaboration. Several studies acknowledged that collaborative research has become popular in a South African setting (Lai, 2011; Styhre & Aaboen, 2013; Muriithi, 2015; Livina, Ukwoma & Nwamaka, 2017). A collaborative research is a way in which researchers come together to achieve the common goal in order to produce new scientific knowledge (Styhre & Aaboen, 2013). The attention in collaborative research is on empowering librarians to take charge of the research process in LIS education and this empowerment can be achieved by means of numerous methods that should be determined by the details and the rate of collaborative works of librarians in the LIS field (Livina, Ukwoma & Nwamaka, 2017).

Livina, Ukwoma and Nwamaka (2017) mentioned that a true collaborative research in LIS involves respecting, understanding the participants and recognizing the knowledge and capabilities of librarians who can work among themselves as well as others (particularly, LIS academics) to obtain analyses and solutions in librarianship and in the LIS profession. Accurately collaborative research in LIS involves recognizing the knowledge and capabilities of each other (specifically, librarians and LIS academics). Muriithi (2015) stated that they are factors to positively collaboration between librarians and LIS academics. These factors include the personal characteristics such as information seeking and communication behaviour, level of commitment and process management (Miller & Pellen, 2013).

The collaborative engagement between librarians and LIS academics is open for knowledge sharing. The reasons of librarians to collaborate among themselves as well as collaborating with LIS academics includes the access to special equipment, special

skills unique materials, visibility, recognition, time efficiency, labour efficiency, gaining experience, training researchers, increase productivity, multiply proficiencies, avoid competition, surmount intellectual isolation, confirmation of a research problem, intellectual stimulation of cross pollination, spatial closeness, accident or coincidence and social motivations (Styhre & Aaboen, 2013), including enjoying stimulating experiences and working with old colleagues. In addition, Styhre and Aaboen (2013) stated that university researchers that collaborate with other researchers within or outside an institution have superior research performance than their colleagues who do not collaborate.

The professionalisation of the LIS is developed and enhanced through librarians and LIS academics collaborative engagement. The LIS profession is developed through collaboration of librarians and LIS academics in the profession (Lai, 2011). In addition, (Lai, 2011) revealed that collaboration between librarians in academic libraries and LIS academics has been seen as a strategic activity in the management of LIS education programs and services. Therefore, it can be said that collaboration between librarians and LIS academics ensures the quality of information delivered. Furthermore, the collaborative practices between two parties (librarians and LIS academics) in any organisation assist in an enhancement of the quality management style. Collaboration between librarians in academic libraries and LIS academics make use in sharing of ideas, solutions to problems and knowledge dissemination based on challenges that they face in their daily activities (Muriithi, 2015).

Livina, Ukwoma and Nwamaka, (2017) stated that 73% of librarians are involved in collaborative writing due to the fact that they find it easy to write a paper with a group of people and make the paper come out in good time because there is division of labour, brainstorming and suggestions that makes the paper to be publishable while assistant librarians have the highest collaboration of 29% due to the fact that they are new to the profession and they haven't carried out any research. In addition, Livina, Ukwoma and Nwamaka (2017) concluded by saying that several studies has reported that librarians are involved in collaborative research probably due to the nature of their job and it have been noticed that there is an increase need for specialization and accelerating cost of research in a manner that shows the willingness of librarians need for more collaborative research.

Pham (2008) conducted a survey to study the perceptions of librarians and LIS academics on the implementation of information literacy at seven Vietnam universities and found that the lack of collaboration between librarians and LIS academics was one of the major factors challenging the performance of information literacy programmes at these institutions. Although the roles of librarians in working with academics in an educational process have not been well established but there has been a rise in the need to develop information literacy skills and information searching skills for LIS students (Muriithi, 2015). The collaboration in LIS schools is driven by many factors including the LIS changing environment. The collaboration between librarians and LIS academics are due to changes in the higher education environment, paradigm shift in the library and information profession and the instructors' and librarians' changing roles (Lai, 2011). The networked environment lends itself to collaboration and the sharing of ideas and solutions to problems common to libraries no matter where they are located (Kesselman & Weintraub, 2004; Styhre & Aaboen, 2013). The digital age of information demand collaborative engagement between parties (librarians and LIS academics).

#### ***3.4. The relevance of the LIS curriculum to the expectations of the LIS job market***

The formal education of LIS professionals has to take into account the diversity of information work in the 21st century (Ashcroft, 2005). Hence, many education programmes are becoming increasingly generalised by providing a range of generic and specific skills together with an understanding of the underlying principles of information management to enable LIS graduates to pursue various professional career paths (Brine & Feather, 2003). The LIS education had moved from the traditional setting modern communication technology. Contributing to this, Edegbo (2011) stated that LIS education has been attracted by the modern communication technology and it concentrate on ICTs with an aim to dismiss areas of librarianship that do not fit within the technological boundaries. Therefore, it has been confirmed that the LIS schools' curriculum development has shown considerable advances in ICT competence as most LIS schools have developed relevant ICT modules and merged relevant ICT knowledge in traditional modules (Muriithi, 2015; Edegbo, 2011).

However, most LIS schools teach these modules theoretically because they have inadequate quantities, quality of computers and poor Internet access (Edegbo, 2011).

The LIS job market requires one to be well skilled and knowledgeable. Therefore, Yadav and Bankar (2016) stated that the LIS education should equip students with the required knowledge and skills and also to advance graduates, librarians and academics' understanding to adapt within the changing LIS environment. On the other hand, Edegbo (2011) specified that the submitted LIS courses should provide students with appropriate knowledge and skills to enable them to enter the profession. The LIS changing environment has an influence on the LIS job market as well as LIS education. Sacchanand (2012) stated that the LIS education and training institutions play a major role in equipping students with the required and ever changing skills for the LIS job market. Johnson et al. (2001) identified mismatches between employment expectations and what has been taught in LIS schools. Contributing to this, Gorman (2004) revealed that the gap between what is being taught in many LIS schools and what is being practiced in most libraries is wide and widening. There is a huge difference between the LIS curriculum and the LIS job market requirements in term of the expectations. In addition, the LIS curriculum has been affected by the changing environment of the LIS job market. Raju (2015) revealed that LIS profession has been affected by the changing environment and the changing environment has compelled LIS schools to improve their curriculum so that it is in line with the job market.

The LIS changing environment has affected the LIS job market as well as the LIS curriculum. Shongwe (2015), Raju (2017) reported that there have been programme structure and the content changes in the LIS job market over the past decade. In addition, the changes in the LIS job market affect the LIS curriculum. Willard and Wilson (2016) mentioned that the supplementary drivers for change included changing client demand, innovations in information technology and the desire of LIS academics to cater to a wider information management marketplace than the traditional one. These changes are attributed mostly to library automation and the digital environment and it can be said that these changes affect the LIS curriculum to be unstable (Shongwe, 2014; Raju, 2017). Edegbo (2011) stated that these changes are brought in the LIS profession by ICTs. Ocholla and Shongwe (2013) mentioned that the emerging LIS markets have changed the LIS curriculum in some schools, pushing

them to become more inclusive and diversified and to produce graduates that are largely multi-skilled.

The LIS curriculum had shifted towards a broader dimension due to the LIS changing environment, teaching and learning methods. Librarians and LIS academics have been optimising information technology (IT) applications in the learning process (Bailin, 2011), focusing on collaboration between librarians and LIS academics, embedding information literacy into the curriculum, supporting research and international students (Smith, 2011), developing electronic resources, infrastructure, facilities, designing information/learning commons (Bailin, 2011; Bundy, 2012) and benchmarking and measuring library performance (Smith, 2011).

Shongwe (2015) stressed that the LIS professionals have been compelled to acquire Information Technology (IT) skills. Contributing to this, the digital age has forced LIS professionals to acquire basic IT knowledge and skills and this includes traditional LIS jobs such as librarianship (Riley-Huff & Rholes, 2011). Therefore, IT skills have become one of the most important skills in the LIS profession. Edegbo (2011) stated that the increasing dominance in electronic media has resulted in the disappearance of traditional information retrieval, research, information literacy, cataloguing and classification in which the semantic web brings some recognition of the need to improve the logical structure on the web, which is the field of expertly trained for information retrievers, researchers and cataloguers in LIS profession.

### **3.5. Factors affecting effective collaboration between librarians and LIS academics**

The Library and Information Science (LIS) field is characterised by a great diversity and complexity. The great change is found in traditions, approaches, models, program structures, levels, placements, the duration of courses, thematic profiles of curricula, the content of courses (Ferman, 2011), ways of teaching and assessment, and other factors contribute to the change and difficulty in the LIS profession (Kajberg, 2006). Virkus (2007) stated that the European Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are facing

common challenges related to the growth and diversification of Higher Education Institutions, the growing demand for education and training in a lifelong learning perspective, the shortage of skills in many key areas, the employability of graduates as well as the expansion of private and transnational education.

It has been noted that in the European LIS profession, the diversity, complexity and incompatibility of institutional structures and regulatory systems are often highlighted as obstacles as well as challenges to collaboration between librarians and LIS academics (Virkus, 2007). Several authors point to the administrative and legal problems in collaborative activities between librarians and LIS academics (Phelps & Campbell, 2012; Ferman, 2011; De Zilwa, 2010; Johnson, 2000; Berger, 2003; Dixon & Tammaro, 2003). However, a study by Virkus in 2007 stated that the declining public funding and scarcity of funds is an issue that is frequently mentioned by different authors in LIS institutions (Pham & Tanner, 2015). Yet it was previously noted that the lack of financial resources makes LIS institutions moderate their international aspirations and may stop many initiatives (Phelps and Campbell, 2012; Kajberg, 2002). The language and moral problems are also presenting obstacles to collaboration between librarians and LIS academics (Berger, 2003), the Linguistic and didactic problems continuously affect the collaborative engagement between librarians and LIS academics (De Zilwa, 2010). Differences in philosophies, culture, belief systems, values and attitudes might influence significantly collaboration (Beehrens, 2004), as well as stereotypes and categories can also prevent collaboration (Ferman, 2011; Richards, 2001).

Phelps and Campbell (2012) stated that the lack of empirical research has a bad influence in different organisational structures as well as the contextual factors influencing their relationship-building in the university environment. The lack of experiential, realistic and observed research in the LIS profession affects relationship building of librarians and LIS academics. Pham and Tanner (2015) stated that there are possibilities of a lower-status party to be overexploited when academic partners are pursuing their own professional advancement. The culture of librarians and LIS academics unwillingness to participate is one of the critical obstacles that prevent their collaboration effectiveness (Sacchanand, 2012). Pham and Tanner (2015) widely reported that the collaboration factors between librarians and LIS academics are

resource constraints, time constraints on academics, inadequate management support, lack of understanding about partners' roles and expertise, and various contextual factors. The contextual factors have a large impact on the nature of collaboration between librarians and LIS academics.

The nature of universities and academic profession has been drawn under the contextual influences of financial worries and dynamic changes of the environment that have been outlined as follows: globalisation and economic rationalism, the emergent entrepreneurialism and managerialist model, the massification of student associates, the greater level of accountability and the advanced development of technology (Ferman, 2011; De Zilwa, 2010). The low possibility of achieving a genuine collaboration between librarians and LIS academics is where one party felt that their role and contributions were being taken over (Pham & Tanner, 2015). In addition, Pham and Tanner (2015) stated that the common factors of collaboration between librarians and LIS academics include power, influence, professional identity, and integrity. There are many of factors that act as a barrier towards an effective collaboration between librarians and LIS academics. In addition, barriers to effective collaboration include individual factors. Sacchanand, 2012) stated that individual factors such as personality and attitude are also significant concerns in collaboration between librarians and LIS academics. The current study seeks to fill this collaborative gap between librarians and LIS academics.

#### **4. Methodology**

Generally a research methodology is normally known and understood as how a research is going to be carried out in a particular field of study. Neuman (2014) stated that the research methodology is the systematic process a researcher uses to gather and analyse data in order to arrive at a solution to a problem. The current study critically reviewed the literature that has been retrieved from different resources including books, journals and articles based on collaboration between librarians and LIS academics as well as curriculum development in LIS institutions internationally, nationally (African setting) including South African setting.



## **5. Findings and discussions**

This section provides the findings on the status of collaboration between librarians and LIS academics for them to effectively develop the LIS curriculum. The findings on the relevance of the LIS curriculum are also discussed. However, the research findings have been retrieved from the critical review of the literature by using different books, journals and articles on collaboration and curriculum development.

### **5.1. The status of collaboration between librarians and LIS academics**

Collaboration is known and understood as the way in which two or more groups or people or individuals embark upon a mutual goal. In addition, collaboration is more about knowledge transfer, sharing information and ideas. Therefore, collaboration between librarians and LIS academics has been perceived to be significant in improving the relevance of the LIS curriculum. However, several studies had confirmed that there is a growing distance between librarians and LIS academics in a way that librarians feel in many ways that LIS academics had abandoned them (Virkus, 2007; Burke, 2010; Sacchanand 2012).

Sacchanand (2012) specified that LIS academics generally operate from beliefs separate by narrow content focus, autonomy, time constraints, resistance to change with negative attitudes, established perceptions of the library and attitude towards librarians. The literature emphasise that there is still a gap between librarians and LIS academics that is coursed by differences in beliefs. The developing role of librarians working collaboratively with LIS academics in designing and teaching students' research skills and information is not well acknowledged (Christiansen et al., 2004),

Pham (2008) conducted a survey to study the perceptions of librarians and LIS academics on the implementation of information literacy at seven Vietnam universities and found that the lack of collaboration between librarians and LIS academics was one of the major factors challenging the performance of information literacy programmes at these institutions. It can be said that working collaboratively is the sign of partnership. Therefore, it is significant for librarians and LIS academics to improve their collaboration in order to improve students' academic performance as well as the development of the LIS curriculum.

## **5.2. The relevance of the LIS curriculum towards the expectations of the LIS job market**

The relevant LIS curriculum encourages the production of well skilled and knowledgeable graduates who meet the expectations of LIS job market requirements. However, the relevance of the LIS curriculum is influenced by the fluctuating environment of the LIS job market. Raju (2015) revealed that LIS profession has been affected by the changing environment and the changing environment has compelled LIS schools to improve their curriculum so that it is in line with the job market. Contributing to this, Shongwe (2013) articulated that the emerging LIS markets have changed the LIS curriculum in some schools, pushing them to become more inclusive and diversified and to produce graduates that are largely multi-skilled.

Shongwe (2015), Raju (2017) reported that there have been programme structure and the content changes in the LIS profession over the past decade. The LIS programme and content had shifted from traditional sphere of knowledge to modern ICT based modules. It has been confirmed that the LIS schools' curriculum development has shown considerable advances in ICT competence as most LIS schools have developed relevant ICT modules and merged relevant ICT knowledge in traditional modules (Majanja, 2007; Gorman, 2004; Brine & Feather, 2003; Ashcroft, 2005 & Edegbo, 2011). However, most LIS schools teach these modules theoretically because they have inadequate quantities, quality of computers and poor Internet access (Edegbo, 2011).

Ocholla and Ocholla (2014) confirmed that students face various challenges in which one of the Universities assessment rule/ regulations such as setting a two/three hour paper for both theory & practical is limiting sufficient assessment of students taking the modules. However, Sibiya (2017) revealed that the practical aspect based on students' work integrated learning is lacking on the LIS profession. Several studies including (Gorman, 2004; Sacchanand, 2012; Yousef, 2010) confirmed that there is a gap between what is being taught in many LIS schools and what is being practiced in libraries. In addition, Johnson (2001) identified mismatches between employment expectations and what has been taught in library and Information Science (LIS) schools. Therefore, it can be said that the LIS curriculum does not meet the expectations of academic libraries.

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

It can be concluded that LIS academics focus more on theory rather than the practical part of LIS courses including information literacy, information retrieval, cataloguing and classification modules while the LIS job market requires graduate with computer skills. Sibiya (2017) mentioned that collaboration between librarians and LIS academics should be available and strong links established to ensure a relevant LIS curriculum in internationally including South Africa. Sacchanand (2012) confirmed that there is still a gap between theory and practice in the LIS education. It has been confirmed that the LIS changing environment of the LIS profession has affected the LIS curriculum and it has compelled LIS schools to improve their curriculum so that it is in line with the job market (Raju, 2015). The LIS changing environment affected the LIS job market and it bounce back to affect the relevance of the LIS curriculum.

Sacchanand (2012) sated that collaboration between librarians and LIS academics have been seen as a strategic activity in the management of LIS education programs and library and information services. In addition, the collaboration between librarians and LIS academics is seen as the most important instructional strategy to improve the relevancy of the LIS curriculum. Sacchanand (2012) also stated that the LIS is developed through collaboration of librarians and LIS academics in the profession. It can be said that the collaboration between librarians and LIS academics play a huge role in curriculum development (Sacchanand, 2012). Therefore, the researcher believes that the collaboration between librarians and the LIS academics can tremendously improve the relevancy of the LIS curriculum. Therefore, it is recommended that:

- The LIS curriculum should be broadened and diversified in order to produce graduates that are largely multi-skilled.
- LIS students should be given more time to do practicals.
- Librarians and LIS academics should enhance their level of collaboration in order to produce graduates that meet the expectations of the LIS job market requirements.

- LIS schools should increase quantities and qualities of computers as well as the internet access for each and every student to have his/her own desktop with high quality and that easily access on the internet.
- The practical examination/test should be separated from that of the theory in order to increase sufficient assessment of students taking the module.
- LIS students should be familiarized with ICT based courses as well as computerized information literacy, research, cataloguing and classification in order for them to attain/ acquire relevant knowledge and skills.

## **7. References**

Anh Tran, L. (1999). Recent library developments in Vietnam. *Asian Libraries*, 8(1), 5-16.

Ashcroft, L., & McIvor, S. (2005). Library and Information Science journal articles, higher education and language. In *World Library and Information Congress: 71st IFLA General Conference and Council "Libraries: A voyage of discovery*.

Austen, G., Schmidt, J., & Calvert, P. (2002). Australian university libraries and the new educational environment. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 28(1), 63-67.

Bailin, K. (2011). Changes in academic library space: A case study at the University of New South Wales. *Australian Academic & Research Libraries*, 42(4), 342-359.

Beerkens, E. (2004). *Global opportunities and institutional embeddedness: Higher education consortia in Europe and Southeast Asia* (pp. 45-49). Enschede: CHEPS/UT.

Becker, L. K. (2006). Globalisation and changing practices for academic librarians in Australia: A literature review. *Australian Academic & Research Libraries*, 37(2), 82-99.

Bennett, O., & Gilbert, K. (2009). Extending liaison collaboration: Partnering with faculty in support of a student learning community. *Reference Services Review*, 37(2), 131-142.

Brine, A., & Feather, J. (2003). Building a skills portfolio for the information professional. *New library world*, 104(11/12), 455-463.

Bruce, C. (2001). Faculty-librarian partnerships in Australian higher education: Critical dimensions. *Reference Services Review*, 29(2), 106-116.

Bundy, A. (2012). Better, more accessible, libraries for all in Australia: Progress and potential. *Australasian Public Libraries and Information Services*, 25(3), 138.

Candy, P. C., Crebert, R. G., & O'leary, J. (1994). *Developing lifelong learners through undergraduate education*. Australian Government Pub. Service.

Christiansen, L., Stompler, M., & Thaxton, L. (2004). A report on librarian-faculty relations from a sociological perspective. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 30(2), 116-121.

Dearden, R., Dermoudy, J., Evans, C., Barmuta, L., Jones, S., Magierowski, R., & Waters, D. (2005). Aligning information literacy with the faculty teaching and learning agenda. *Australian Academic & Research Libraries*, 36(4), 138-152.

De Zilwa, D. (2010). Current and emerging challenges. in De Zilwa, D. (Ed), *Academic Units in a Complex, Changing World*, Springer, New York, NY, pp. 151-169.

Dickson, V. (2004). Collaboration plus! The development of an information literacy and communication program. *The Australian library journal*, 53(2), 153-160.

Dixon, P., & Tammaro, A. M. (2003). Strengths and issues in implementing a collaborative inter-university course: The international masters in information studies by distance. *Education for Information*, 21(2-3), 85-96.

Doskatsch, I. (2002). Australian and New Zealand Institute for Information Literacy (ANZIIL): new body to champion information literacy. *Australian Academic & Research Libraries*, 33(2), 113-116.

Doyle, C. S. (1994). *Information literacy in an information society: A concept for the information age*. Diane Publishing.

Edegbo, W. I. (2011). Curriculum development in library and information science education in Nigerian universities: issues and prospects. Available: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1591&context=libphilprac>. [Accessed: 16/03/2019].

Edegbo, W. O. (2011). Curriculum development in library and information science education in Nigerian universities: issues and prospects. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, 1.

Ferman, T. (2011). *Academics' work and the concept of "profession: an Australian case study* (Doctoral dissertation, Queensland University of Technology).

Gorman, M. (2004). Whither library education? *New Library World*, 105(9/10), 376-380.

Pham, H. T. & Tanner, K. (2015). Collaboration between Academics and Library Staff: A Structurationist Perspective. *Australian Academic & Research Libraries*, 46(1), 2-18. Available: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00048623.2014.989661>. (Accessed: 08/05/2019).

Ivey, R., (2003). Information literacy: how do librarians and academics work in partnership to deliver effective learning programs? *Australian Academic & Research Libraries*, 34(2),100-113.

Kajberg, L. (2003). A survey of internationalisation activities in European library and information science schools. *New Review of Information and Library Research*, 9(1), 25-60.

Kesselman, M. A. & Weintraub, I. (2004). *Global librarianship*. New York: CRC Press.

Khan, M.A. and Law, L.S., (2015). An Integrative Approach to Curriculum Development in Higher Education in the USA: A Theoretical Framework. *International Education Studies*, 8(3), 66-76. Available: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1060861.pdf> [Accessed: 16/03/2019].

Lai, E. R. (2011). Collaboration: A literature review. *Pearson Research Report*, 2.

Livina, D. C., Ukwoma, S., & Victoria, O. (2017). Perception of librarians towards collaborative research in academic libraries in Nigerian Universities. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. 1596.

Lupton, M. (2002). The getting of wisdom: reflections of a teaching librarian. *Australian Academic & Research Libraries*,33(2), 75-85.

Miller, W. & Pellen, R. (2013). *Cooperative efforts of libraries*. London: Routledge.

Minishi-Majanja, M. K. (2007, August). Integration of ICTs in library and information science education in sub-Saharan Africa. In *World Library and Information Congress: 73rd IFLA General Conference and Council*, 19, 1-23.

Muriithi, A. K. (2015). Building collaboration between library and information science educators and practitioners in Thailand: transcending barriers, creating opportunities. In *World Library and Information Congress, Helsinki*, (pp. 11-17).

Meulemans, Y. N & Carr, A. (2013). Not at your service: building genuine faculty-librarian partnerships. *Reference Services Review*, 41(1), 80-90.

Nayda, R., & Rankin, E. (2008). Information literacy skill development and lifelong learning: exploring nursing students' and academics' understandings. *Australian Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 26(2), 27.

Ocholla, D. & Shongwe, M. (2013). An analysis of the library and information science (LIS) job market in South Africa. *South African Journal of Libraries and Information Science*, 79(1), 35-43.

Pham, X. H. (2008). Challenges facing the implementation of information literacy programs in Vietnamese universities. In *IFLA/ALP Indonesian workshop on information literacy (WIL)*, 07e11 July.

Pham, H. T., & Tanner, K. (2014). Collaboration between academics and librarians: a literature review and framework for analysis. *Library Review*, 63(1/2), 15-45.

Phelps, S. F. & Campbell, N. (2012). Commitment and Trust in Librarian-Faculty Relationships: A Systematic Review of the Literature. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 38(1), 13–19.

Raju, J., (2017). LIS professional competency index for the higher education sector in South Africa. Available: <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/LIS-professional-competency-index-for-the-higher-in-Raju/1d4980e3bd96cd1ffc63e6f3a0ca5a7110f935a2> [Accessed 20/10/2010]

Ryan, S. E. (2009). *Academic Business: Tensions between academic values and corporatisation of Australian higher education in graduate schools for business*. Doctor of Philosophy at The University of Sydney, Australia.



Richards, M. (2001). *Collaboration uncovered: The forgotten, the assumed, and the Unexamined in Collaborative*. Westport, Conn: Bergin & Garvey.

Riley-Huff, D. A. & Rholes, J. M., (2011). Librarians and technology skill acquisition: Issues and perspectives. *Information Technology and Libraries*, 30(3).  
<https://doi.org/10.6017/ital.v30i3.1770>

Robinson, M. R. O. (2006). *Learning resource centres in Vietnam: a case study in collaborative development*. Available: <http://www.atlanticphilanthropies.org/>  
[Accessed 10, 03/ 2020].

Sacchanand, C. (2012). Building collaboration between library and information science educators and practitioners in Thailand: transcending barriers, creating opportunities. In *World Library and Information Congress, Helsinki, August* (pp. 11-17).

Shen, L. (2012). Improving the effectiveness of librarian-faculty collaboration on library collection development. *Collaborative Librarianship*, 4(1), 3.

Sibiya, P. T. (2017). Cataloguer's job requirements: the South African perspective. International Conference on Communication and Information Science, National University of Technology, Zimbabwe, Kariba.

Shongwe, M. M., (2015). The information technology influence on LIS job descriptions in South Africa. *Information Technology for Development*, 21(2), 196-204.

Smith, L. (2011). Monash University library and learning: A new paradigm for a new age. *Australian Academic & Research Libraries*, 42(3), 246-263.

Thompson, G. B. (2002). Information literacy accreditation mandates: What they mean for faculty and librarians.

Smith, M. (1958). The trend toward multiple authorship in psychology. *American psychologist*, 13(10), 596.

Styhre, A., & Aaboen, L. (2013). Exploring university-industry collaboration in research centres. *European Journal of Innovation Management*, 16(1), 70-91.

Virkus, S. (2007). Collaboration in LIS education in Europe: Challenges and opportunities. In *Proceedings of the World Library and Information Congress: 73rd IFLA General Conference and Council. Libraries for the future: Progress, Development and Partnerships* (pp. 19-23).

Yadav, A. K. & Bankar, P. D. (2016). Employment opportunities in LIS field in India: A content analysis of positions advertised. *Annals of Library and Information Studies (ALIS)*, 63(1), 53-58.

Yousef, A. (2010). Faculty attitudes toward collaboration with librarians. *Library Philosophy and Practice* (e-journal). 512.  
<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/512>