

Analysis of Library and Information Science/Studies (LIS) Education Today: The Inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge and Multicultural Issues in LIS Curriculum

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Abstract:

The paper analyses the inclusion indigenous knowledge and multicultural issues in library and information science/studies (LIS) curricula. Using literature review the paper presents the scenario in both developed and developing countries. In North America and Europe, recognition of diversity as valuable to professionalism and necessary for generating culturally competent librarians and library staff is evident. On the contrary, LIS schools and LIS institutions and educators in developing countries of Africa have almost no record on the inclusion of indigenous knowledge and multiculturalism in LIS education. Challenges to the effective inclusion of indigenous knowledge and multiculturalism to LIS education programs in developing countries exist, and are largely perception and attitude, inadequacy in skills, and inadequacy in funding. There is a need to revise and improve the curricula for library schools, especially in the developing countries of Africa, towards the inclusion of indigenous knowledge and multicultural issues.

Keywords: LIS education, indigenous knowledge, multiculturalism

1. Introduction

Librarians in both the public and private sectors are custodians of information and are mandated to provide this information equitably to all library users with different cultural backgrounds including people with disabilities. The world today needs culturally competent institutions which are able to provide cultural competence guidelines within the library and information science/studies (LIS) profession for purposes of promotion and development of collections for less privileged groups of people. LIS schools therefore ought to include indigenous knowledge and multiculturalism course units in their curricula to fulfil this need.

Curriculum and methods of LIS education evolve to meet new expectations. Curriculum content is the core of the reform, and in many instances library schools and departments revise or re-design their curricula in which some traditional courses disappear as new ones come in to cater for the emerging issues and trends. In most cases LIS education has been re-conceptualised and re-positioned to supply graduates with the appropriate attributes to develop and maintain high quality professional practice in the rapidly changing 21st century.

Diversity in LIS education that is sufficient to prepare LIS students to be ready to design and deliver inclusive services to diverse populations in the information age is also a very key issue in LIS curriculum.

Diversity that prevails in LIS education should articulate a vision of teaching and learning within the diverse society we have become. “That vision must then be used to guide systematically, the inclusion of intercultural issues” (Abdullahi, 2007, p. 453) and knowledge practices throughout the LIS education. Today, as our societies are becoming more and more diverse so does the information. As a response some library schools have reconsidered the issues of diverse communities and the ways that LIS education and library training need to incorporate cultural competencies, knowledge and practices.

This paper provides an overview of the analysis of LIS education today and the inclusion of indigenous knowledge and multiculturalism, in both the developed world and developing countries. The paper is structured into five main parts. The first section looks at the meaning and definition of the terms; the second discusses the inclusion of indigenous knowledge and multiculturalism in LIS education in developed world; the third discusses the inclusion of indigenous knowledge and multiculturalism in LIS education in developing countries; the fourth highlights the challenges of inclusion of indigenous knowledge and multiculturalism in LIS curriculum; and the fifth and last section presents conclusions and recommendations

2. Meaning and definition of the concepts of LIS education, indigenous knowledge, and multiculturalism

Library science (often termed library studies, librarianship or library and information science) is an interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary devoted to applying theory and technology to the creation, selection, organisation, management, preservation, dissemination, and utilisation of collections of information in all formats (Reitz, 2004). Partridge (2011) defines LIS education as entailing librarianship, information management, records management, archive practice, and teacher librarianship. However, there is no generally agreed-upon distinction between the terms *library science*, *librarianship*, and *library and information science*, and to a certain extent they are interchangeable, perhaps differing most significantly in connotation. It seems today that the term library and information science (LIS) is most often used where most librarians consider it as only a terminological variation, intended to emphasize the scientific and technical foundations of the subject and its relationship with information science. Library and information science can also be seen as an integration of the two fields, library science and information science, which were separate at one point.

Today's age is defined by the intersection of information, technology, and human creativity. In this context, library and information science is dedicated to understanding the nature of information, the interaction between information and communication technologies, the relationship between information and knowledge, the cognitive and affective aspects of knowledge acquisition, and the interface between people and information. It offers new knowledge, technological benefits, and professional expertise for every dimension of human affairs.

The most urgent current issues in LIS education are many, as propounded by Wolske (2013): preparing LIS students for new role in rapidly changing job responsibilities; increasing student-centered educational opportunities through well-crafted service learning, practicum, internship, and alternative break opportunities; developing concepts surrounding information

technology that not only help students understand today's technology but to be able to assess, adapt, and utilize whatever emerges tomorrow; recruiting a more diverse student body and adapting curricula to reflect the more diverse populations served by libraries; and helping students develop new models and skills for engagement. The engagement needs to move beyond multiculturalism that spices up the existing ways of doing things to seeking out innovative approaches that challenge not only how to do things but also how to define and measure success.

There is increasing global recognition of indigenous knowledge as distinct, legitimate, valuable and vulnerable systems of knowledge. Velasquez and Rajib (2008) reveal that the United Nations (UN) already considers indigenous knowledge within Priority No. 3 of the Hyogo Framework for Action, which focuses on education and knowledge. One of the key activities identified under this priority action focuses on the importance of information management and exchange, and highlights the use of "relevant traditional and indigenous audiences. LIS professionals also are beginning to recognize Indigenous knowledge as a distinct system of knowledge that requires handling and management regimes.

There are different conceptual understanding and definitions of indigenous knowledge. Indigenous knowledge is commonly understood as traditional knowledge, although there is debate about whether the term Indigenous knowledge should be used interchangeably with the term traditional knowledge or whether it is more accurately a subset of the traditional knowledge category (World Intellectual Property Organization, 2001). Indigenous knowledge is a systematic body of knowledge acquired by local people through accumulation of experiences, informal experiments and intimate understanding of the environment of a given culture (Rajasekaran,, Martin, &. Arren, 1992). Indigenous knowledge refers to the unique, traditional, local knowledge existing within and developed around the specific conditions, indigenous to a particular geographic area (Tella, 2007). Indigenous knowledge is the sum total of knowledge and skills that are acquired by people in a given area which enables them to get the most of their environment (Horsthemke, 2008).

From the different definitions of indigenous knowledge we can conclude that indigenous knowledge is the local knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society, developed over time and continue to develop, and the basis for local-level decision-making. Indigenous knowledge is generally known and used in many developing societies as the basis for local decision-making regarding health, medicine, agriculture, food preparation, education, arts, crafts, music, natural resource management, and other spheres of great impact on their populations. Over the years, people have applied Indigenous knowledge in their day to day activities for socioeconomic and community development (Magara, 2013). Indigenous knowledge is used to sustain the community and its culture. Placing value on such knowledge could strengthen cultural identity and the enhanced use of such knowledge to achieve social and development goals, such as sustainable agriculture, affordable and appropriate public health, and conservation of biodiversity (Jabulani, 2007). The inference is that indigenous knowledge is an essential resource for any human development process.

Given its centrality in many developing societies, indigenous knowledge needs to be acknowledged, validated, reinforced, disseminated, innovated upon and preserved through practice (Ranganatha, 2005). It needs to be integrated in the learning environment, especially within the curricula of library schools. It is also held as necessary to integrate indigenous knowledge in the learning environment so that there is a body of knowledge, skills and competences to optimally exploit the existing indigenous knowledge into the nations development programmes with information management support (Magara, 2013).

Diversity within societies in the cultural, racial and ethnic composition and religion is evident in the developed and developing countries. This diversity within societies has made multicultural education crucial at all levels of education, and now, more emphasis should exist for integrating a culturally inclusive world-view into all areas of curriculum (Tarman & Tarman, 2011). Definitions of multiculturalism and multicultural education have been proposed by scholars, researchers and organizations. The following are some of the various definitions proposed by authors.

Montiel-Overall (2009) explains that multiculturalism is a term used to imply inclusive representation of diverse cultures. Originally it was used as a term applied to discussions focused on 'race.' Multiculturalism is currently used across social institutions, to describe a genuine commitment to diverse representation of multiple cultures and groups including religious, sexually oriented, age, and ability. "Multiculturalism is a body of thought in political philosophy about the proper way to respond to cultural and religious diversity" (Song, 2010, p. 1). Earlier, Song (2008) indicated that multicultural claims include a wide range of claims involving religion, language, ethnicity, nationality, and race. Culture is a notoriously overbroad concept, and all of these categories have been subsumed by or equated with the concept of culture. Consequently, a multicultural society consists of several cultures or cultural communities with their own distinct systems of meaning and significance and views on people and the world.

According to Bennett (2003), multicultural education is an approach to teaching and learning that is based upon democratic values and beliefs and that affirms cultural pluralism within culturally diverse societies in an interdependent world. Gorski's (2001) definition of multicultural education provided a strong foundation on which curriculum should be developed. Multicultural education is a transformative movement in education that produces critically thinking, socially active members of society. It is not simply a change of curriculum or the addition of an activity. It is a movement that calls for new attitudes, new approaches, and a new dedication to laying the foundation for the transformation of society (Gorski, 2001). Multicultural education does not only presume the understanding of other cultures, but also the ability to see oneself and one's culture in the eyes of the other. Through this mutual understanding, respect and willingness to learn other cultures, people can make bridges between their separate selves and turn individuals into communities (Abdullahi, Kajberg & Virjus, 2007).

The union of different cultures, their histories, beliefs, traditions, different life perception and perspectives form highly intellectual, socially and culturally mature society where every person contributes into society development despite his/her origin, race, skin color or religion. Libraries are considered the main provider of access to different cultures, ideas and knowledge, informal learning, consulting, a meeting place for people/users from different communities thus facilitating social and cultural interaction between citizens with different backgrounds. Therefore, international and intercultural opportunities are essential components in educating and training library and information professionals. Abdullahi & Kajberg (2007). LIS education needs to be devoted to the development of students and staff as citizens of the world that emphasize cultural diversity.

According to Leask (1999) graduates with multiculturalism perspective should be able to: display an ability to think globally and consider issues from a variety of perspectives; demonstrate an awareness of their own culture and its perspectives and other cultures and their perspectives; appreciate the relation between their field of study locally and professional traditions elsewhere; recognize international issues relevant to their professional practice;

appreciate the importance of multicultural diversity to professional practice and citizenship; appreciate the complex and interacting factors that contribute to notions of culture and cultural relationships; value diversity of language and culture; Appreciate and demonstrate the capacity to apply international standards and practices within the discipline or professional area; and demonstrate awareness of the implications of local decisions and actions for international communities and of international decisions and actions for local communities.

Inclusion of indigenous perspectives and knowledge in and across LIS curricula would substantially assist in achieving one of the aims of United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 26 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states in its section ii:

“Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace”.

Indigenous knowledge and multiculturalism in LIS education in developed world

A review of literature revealed the following insights concerning the inclusion of indigenous knowledge and multiculturalism in LIS education in developed world. The literature is focused on North America and Europe.

Montiel-Overall and Littletree (2010, pp. 67-68) report that: “Historically, library and information science (LIS) professionals have primarily reflected main stream populations. However changing demographics in the United States have resulted in rethinking how LIS services are delivered and who delivers them”. They go on to say that “to accomplish diversification of the LIS profession” (quoting Wheeler, 2005, p. 181) “librarians must possess a level of cultural competency that enables them to function successfully and to provide effective information services within a racially and culturally diverse society”.

Montiel-Overall, (2009, P. 1) reports that: “during the past several decades, other service-oriented fields including health, social welfare, psychology and the education sectors have prepared for a multicultural society by developing cultural competence professional guidelines. Examples include ‘The American Psychological Association’ (2003) ‘Cultural competence guidelines’ which identify specific areas where disparities among diverse groups can be eliminated by culturally competent practitioners and professionals in the field.”

Montiel-Overall, (2009, P. 1) also observes that “to provide adequate library services for multicultural populations, the profession must ensure that providers of the services including staff and professionals have a clear understanding of the cultural backgrounds of the communities served.”

In the United States of America, recognition of multiculturalism and Indigenous knowledge valuable to professionalism and necessary for generating culturally competent librarians and library staff is more vivid following standards that were developed by the Racial and Ethnic Diversity Committee of ACRL (Association of College and Research Libraries), based on the 2001 National Association of Social Workers Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice (<http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/diversity>). The standards are intended to emphasize the need and obligation to serve and advocate for racial and ethnically diverse

constituencies. As such, they are intended to apply to all libraries supporting academic programs at institutions of higher education. ACRL understands that if libraries are to continue being indispensable organizations in their campus communities, they must reflect the communities they serve and provide quality services to their increasingly diverse constituencies. Out of the 11 standards, all of which emphasize the need for culturally competent librarians and library staff, a few standards are cited to illustrate the position.

Standard 1: Cultural awareness of self and others. Librarians and library staff shall develop an understanding of their own personal and cultural values and beliefs as a first step in appreciating the importance of multicultural identities in the lives of the people they work with and serve.

Interpretation

Cultural competence requires that librarians and library staff examine their own cultural backgrounds and identities to increase awareness of personal assumptions, values, and biases. Librarians and library staff need to be able to move from being culturally aware of their own heritage to becoming culturally aware of the heritage of others.

Standard 2: Cross-cultural knowledge and skills. Librarians and library staff shall have and continue to develop specialized knowledge and understanding about the history, traditions, values, and artistic expressions of colleagues, co-workers, and major constituent groups served.

Interpretation

Cultural competence is not static, and requires frequent relearning and unlearning about diversity. Librarians and library staff need to take every opportunity to expand their cultural knowledge and expertise by expanding their understanding of the following areas: the impact of culture on behavior, attitudes, and values; the help-seeking behaviors of diverse colleagues, co-workers, and constituent groups; the role of language, speech patterns, and communication styles of colleagues, co-workers, and various constituent groups in the communities served; the resources (agencies, people, informal helping networks, and research) that can be used on behalf of diverse colleagues, co-workers, and constituent groups.

Standard 10: Professional education and continuous learning. Librarians and library staff shall advocate for and participate in educational and training programs that help advance cultural competence within the profession.

Interpretation

Cultural competence is a vital link between the theoretical and practical knowledge base that defines librarianship. The practicing librarian should stay abreast of current educational trends and training methods needed to stay ahead of changes in professional practice, which includes the evolving needs of diverse populations. Diversity needs to be addressed in library education curricula and needs to be viewed as central to faculty and staff appointments and research agendas. The library profession should take steps to ensure cultural competence as an integral part of LIS education, training and practice, and to increase research and scholarship on culturally competent practice among library professionals. Academic library administrators should be encouraged to provide culturally competent in-service training and opportunities for continuing education for library faculty and staff.

Standard 11: Research. Research shall be inclusive and respectful of non-Western thought and traditional knowledge reflecting the value of cultural ways of knowing.

Interpretation

Cultural competence requires acknowledgment of Western cultural bias, and respectful inquiry of other systems of thought, including sources of traditional knowledge. Categories of traditional knowledge could include: agricultural knowledge; scientific knowledge; technical knowledge; ecological knowledge; medicinal knowledge, including related medicines and remedies; biodiversity-related knowledge; “expressions of folklore” in the form of music, dance, song, handicrafts, designs, stories and artwork; elements of languages, such as names, geographical indications and symbols; and, movable cultural properties (ALA Traditional Cultural Expression Taskforce 2010).

Abdullahi et al. (2007) depict multiculturalism inclusion in LIS education in North America and Europe. They indicate that in the USA and Canada, the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE), set up a Special Interest Group and an International Relations Committee with the following terms of reference:

To maintain liaison with LIS education programs and groups in other nations; to represent the Association’s interests in international forums; to recommend cooperative ventures and programs with other nations and Interest groups; and to recommend representation and programs for the IFLA section on education and training.

For several years, through its International Relations Committee it organized various panels of discussion and presentation on international education issues (Abdullahi et al., 2007). One of the landmarks of its international activity was the Joint Meeting held with The European Association for Library and Information Education (EUCLID), in Potsdam, Germany, July 31-August 1, 2003. About 80 LIS educators, practitioners and students from 20 countries participated. In Europe, there is a joint forum for European LIS schools – the European Association for Library and Information Education and Research (EUCLID). The basic purpose of EUCLID is to promote links and co-operation between LIS schools and LIS educators in Europe. EUCLID has organized joint seminars on LIS education topics and for several years there has been a marked interest in curriculum development issues within the Association. EUCLID’s concern with the convergence of LIS educational programs and the contents of LIS curricula in European countries culminated in the completion of a major joint European project entitled “LIS Education in Europe: Joint Curriculum Development and Bologna Perspectives” in 2005.

The American Library Association (ALA), through its International Relations Office and International Relations Committee (IRC), has provided strong leadership in international relations by encouraging its members to actively participate in the work of international library organizations and Forums. In Europe, the European Union (EU) has, for many years, exerted a major influence on cross-border co-operation in HE and schemes for joint recognition of qualifications. The EU’s SOCRATES program has been very visible and acted as the major player in this area. Together with the EU programs, the plans for developing a European Higher Education Area through the so-called Bologna Process are adding new dimensions to collaboration and networking efforts of LIS academic institutions in European countries. In exchanging teachers and students, many European LIS schools rely on collaborative schemes such as ERASMUS, a component of the multi-dimensional

SOCRATES program, and NORDPLUS, a scheme for HE institutions in those countries (Abdullahi et al., 2007).

Abdullahi et al. (2007) further show that European and multicultural initiatives are also thriving outside the formal schemes and should not be forgotten in this context. An example of this nature is given, the International student summer (ISSS): (Anguelova and Stancheva, 2006 cited in Abdullahi et al., 2007). The idea of the ISSS is to gather LIS students from five European partner institutions in Bulgaria, Germany, Lithuania, Netherlands and Poland for informal learning and discussion sessions covering selected topics. LIS schoolteachers participate as well. Dealt with at the summer seminars are ranges of topics that relate to international cooperation. Among the major aims of the ISSS are:

To practice intercultural communication; to share knowledge on culture, heritage and educational subjects; to enable students to acquire presentation skills and skills in conducting workshops; and to allow participants to experience the local/national culture of the host country.

The Circulating International Program in Information Management (CIP), hosted by an American, an Asian and a European partner institution in turn, provides an example of an intensive undergraduate course, international and multicultural in scope that circulates between three LIS academic institutions in Denmark (The Royal School of Library and Information Science), Singapore (Division of Information Management of the Temasek Information Technology School) and the USA (School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill). Information about this program is available in “a detailed description of the cross continental and multicultural ‘class,’ offered by the three CIP network institutions” (Kajberg, 2006 cited in Abdullahi et al., 2007).

More conventional, but still valuable, multicultural initiatives include international conferences jointly organized by LIS schools (Abdullahi et al., 2007). Illustrative of this type of partnerships are the joint bi-annual conferences arranged by the School of Library and Information Management, Emporia State University, Emporia, Kansas, USA and the Department of Library and Information Sciences, “St. Kliment Ohridski” at the University of Sofia, Bulgaria. The 2006 bi-annual conference in Sofia was part of an international conference series hosted in Kansas City, Kansas (1995), Warsaw, Poland (1997), Sofia, Bulgaria, (2000, 2002 and 2004). This series is designed to explore the impact of globalization and change on the development of libraries, information infrastructure, and society.

In April 2002 the School of Information Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill initiated and hosted an international meeting on globalization of Library and Information Science education (Daniel & Scepanski, 2002). A small group of LIS educators, most from LIS schools from American universities, participated in this unique international seminar. A few colleagues from LIS academic institutions at other continents were invited as well. The successful seminar covered such topics as types of international program activities of particular relevance to LIS faculty members and students; benefits that can be obtained from increased globalization from a LIS education perspective; ways in which LIS schools can prepare their graduates to be leaders in a global society; vehicles through which information technology can effect enhanced global connections; research collaboration among faculty members from various parts of the world; funding to support globalization initiatives in various countries; what the individual faculty member can do to enhance the awareness of international issues in LIS education on a specific university campus; and the

role of LIS educators in developed countries in assisting their colleagues in the developing world.

Abdullahi & Kajberg (2004) study of issues and patterns of multiculturalism of LIS education in Europe, the USA and Canada provides stocktaking of the efforts made by LIS schools to include multiculturalism in their programs and activities. The findings of the study showed that most of the LIS schools in the USA, Canada and Europe are equally interested in multicultural issues in LIS education. The study further showed that most of the international cooperation among schools is equally maintained by formal and informal agreements. In the USA and Canadian LIS school world, there is a solid and long-established tradition of having international students in the classroom. In Europe, the picture is more blurred; the numbers of international student enrolments are somewhat lower. In Europe, student mobility between LIS academic institutions has really gained ground, but partnerships that go beyond mobility projects, joint study visits, visiting teachers, regular information exchange, contacts at conferences, etc. seem difficult to find.

Lor & Britz (2010) indicated that in the UK a number of LIS schools (e.g. Loughborough, Sheffield and Aberystwyth) have become well known in the LIS profession throughout the (British) Commonwealth because so many senior LIS figures in the Commonwealth countries received their training there. Similarly, foreign students, especially but by no means exclusively from the Far East, are an important feature of US LIS schools, and this is reflected by the significant number of those who stay or come back to teach there. Foreign LIS students are also found in the Nordic and other West European countries, in Australasia and increasingly in developing countries such as Botswana and South Africa. Various forms of partnerships have developed with and between developing countries. Some of these are less equal than others and not all have been successful. Lor & Britz, (2010) cite two recent publications Johnson (2009a, 2009b) that has given a thorough account of international collaboration between LIS schools, reviewing the quite extensive literature on international partnerships in LIS education and research and discussing constraints, challenges, and practical steps in the formation of viable partnerships (Lor & Britz, 2010).

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Section on Education and Training provides a forum for advancement of educational theory and practice (Campbell, 2002). The Section also issues guidelines for library and information science educational programs. (IFLA Section on Education and Training) Personal relationships developed in the Section lead to the advancement of theory, exchanges regarding educational practices, and personal development. Other IFLA sections focus on type of library services, multicultural services, and regional collaboration. These sections also frequently involve LIS educators and thus contribute to improved educational practices, consideration of multicultural services, and personal development.

3. Indigenous knowledge and multiculturalism in LIS education in developing countries

There has been a significant growth of LIS schools in Africa, notably in Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe (Musoke, 2008, Musoke and Landoy, 2009; Okello-Obura and Kigongo-Bukenya, 2011; Magara, 2010; Bothma and Ocholla, 2007; Ocholla, 2008). Most LIS Schools are located within universities, ensuring that curriculum development and quality control is adequately monitored and evaluated. However, 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 organization, knowledge representation and user studies, with an increased use of technology. LIS curricula also increasingly provide core courses or electives/auxiliaries in knowledge management, multimedia, publishing, records management, information and communication technologies (Ocholla & Bothma, 2007). Most of the LIS schools on the continent have not integrated issues about Indigenous knowledge and multiculturalism in curricula. There are very few cases that reveal some Indigenous knowledge and multiculturalism in their library and information science education and training.

Several LIS educationalists, researchers and trainers have discussed LIS curriculum and posted that despite several challenges, LIS education has strongly gained momentum in developing countries (Kigongo-Bukenya & Musoke, 2008, Musoke & Landoy, 2009; Okello-Obura & Kigongo-Bukenya, 2011; Magara, 2010; Bothma & Ocholla, 2007). The developments are generally supported by the national budgets. However, the budgets approved by governments to support LIS development in general and LIS education in particular are inadequate. Consequently, additional financial and technical support from international agencies and development partners such as Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), Norwegian Programme for Development, Research and Education (NUFU), the Carnegie Cooperation of New York, Ford Foundation, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency/ Department for Research Cooperation (Sida/SAREC), the World Bank, and the African Development Bank have boosted the developments (Kigongo-Bukenya & Musoke, 2011).

In the few cases the inclusion of multiculturalism in LIS education and training has notably been through cooperation among LIS schools. Kigongo-Bukenya, Koehler & Albright (2012) expound this as they observed that Ugandan and US library science faculty have expressed an interest in some form of inter-programme cooperation as early as 1999 when discussions were started. As an initial consequence, Dr. Wallace Koehler became external examiner to the East African School of Library and information Science (EASLIS) for several years. In addition, the Valdosta State University (VSU) Master of Library and Information Science program offered assistantships to and admitted three Ugandan students to the master's program. In 2004, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the School of Information Science (SIS), University of Tennessee, and, EASLIS Makerere University. The library and information science schools the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee and Valdosta State University later agreed to participate in that understanding. The purpose of the MoU was to promote cooperation among the institutions in the spheres of teaching, research, publication, and the exchange of faculty and students. For a variety of reasons, both institutional and the global recession, the MoU was not fully or properly implemented.

More recently, the concept was reintroduced. Prof. Kigongo-Bukenya accepted an invitation in spring 2012 from VSU to serve as a visiting professor. The re-inauguration of the cooperative agreement was undertaken at a meeting on 16 and 17 April, 2012, it was agreed that the MoU could be inactivated and that it should include SLIS, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee; Faculty of Information Science, University, of South Carolina; the MLIS Program, Valdosta State University; Department of Library and Information Studies, Uganda Christian University; and the Department of Information and Communication Technology, Mutesa 1 Royal University. Implementation is under consideration at all institutions (Kigongo-Bukenya, et al., 2012).

Another landmark development in the same region is the Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern Africa Librarians (SCECSAL), a Biannual Conference that unites

librarians and institutions related to library and information services and systems in the region (Kigongo-Bukenya, Koehler & Albright, 2012). As a Pre-conference activity of SCECSAL XVI hosted by the Uganda Library and Information Association (ULIA), a seminar, was organized towards the formation of a Library and Information Schools Network of Eastern, Central and Southern Africa (LISNET-ECSA). The seminar was sponsored by IFLA/Action for Development through American Libraries Programme ALP, with partial sponsorship from International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP) and International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The goal was to establish cooperative machinery between the LIS education institutions in the region. A Coordinating Committee was set up to work out the logistics and plans of establishing the Network. The Committee completed the assignment but follow up was stillborn because of lack of funding to reconvene the meeting and decide on the implementation of the Network. Nothing has taken place since then (Kigongo-Bukenya, et al., 2012).

For LIS academic institutions outside English-speaking countries, the offering of international programs taught in English provides an avenue towards multiculturalism and indigenous knowledge (Abdullahi et al., 2007). Several LIS academic institutions have embarked on MA/MSc projects of this type. Grants received from the Danish Centre for Culture and Development (DCCD), the Royal School of Library and Information Science, Copenhagen, enabled to conduct a working seminar for 13 specially invited teachers from library schools in developing countries between 10-12 August, 2005. The theme of the seminar was curriculum development with special focus on public libraries as vehicles for collecting and mediating local non-written cultural heritage in developing countries.

Makerere University East African School of Library and Information Science (EASLIS) in Uganda provides one of the examples of LIS schools in developing countries attempt to integrate indigenous knowledge in curriculum (Magara, 2013). Attempts have been made to integrate indigenous knowledge preservation and conservation into its diploma and bachelor's degree programmes. In a recent curriculum review done at EASLIS, efforts were made to integrate indigenous knowledge skills through a number of courses, including information, gender and society, community information services, museum management, and publishing and book trade. In all the programmes, preservation and conservation forms a core part of the programme. A component of the Master of Science in Information Science course is the Indigenous Knowledge Management Systems. Some efforts are also being made at EASLIS to integrate some aspects of indigenous knowledge management skills into the subjects of oral history and paleography (Magara, 2013).

In less developed countries such as those in Sub-Saharan Africa, collaboration in LIS education has been reported to be instrumental in multiculturalism among librarians and library staff, especially where national or regional library associations exist. But, in general, collaboration in the developing world has been less extensive and systematic than in North America and Europe, and there have been more barriers to its successful implementation (Abdullahi & Kajberg, 2004; Virkus, 2007; Lor & Britz, 2010).

4. Challenges

The review of the literature revealed a number of challenges (obstacles) to the effective inclusion of indigenous knowledge and multiculturalism to LIS education programs and these are now described.

Library and information science educators have long sought to internationalize scholarship to enrich the quality of educational programs and professional practice. But many obstacles restrict the size and growth of traditional international education efforts, particularly in developing countries (Abdullahi & Kajberg, 2004; Juznic & Badovinac, 2005; Virkus, 2007). Additionally, LIS specialists in developing regions often experience significant administrative or legal hurdles in establishing collaboration beyond national boundaries, especially when pre-existing models of cooperative working do not exist. Several challenges were exposed from the literature review that included the following;

Montiel-Overall & Littletree (2009, P.68) quote Trejo, (1978) as saying “In part, the lack of success may be attributed to a lack of understanding about what is required to ensure successes of diversity programs”. Successful diversity programs in LIS have existed in the past but little if any analysis of the elements of success has been carried out. For example, a LIS program that demonstrated great success was the Graduate Library Institute for Spanish-Speaking Americans (GLISSA) established in 1976 at the University of Arizona library school by Dr. Arnulfo Trejo, who envisioned the need for Latinos in the profession. GLISSA was extremely successful in educating and placing Latinos in librarianship. Despite its success, limited information is available on the GLISSA program (Montiel-Overall & Littletree, 2009).

Montiel-Overall (2009, P.1) observed that “Cultural Competence guidelines do not exist for the LIS profession”. She goes on to say that, “few library and information science (LIS) professionals are prepared to deal with the enormous responsibility of transforming libraries into institutions which truly meet the needs of diverse populations particularly since the communities served are generally ethnically and culturally different from those providing services”. She further adds that (P.4) “And while many have advocated for improving services to adequately serve diverse populations (quoting Trejo, 1969.), few have focused on library services to further develop “existing assets” of minority communities. Instead, underserved populations are often seen as “lacking” language skills, education, literacy, and citizenship indicating an underlying deficit model in planning library services”.

Velasquez, & Rajib, (2008) noted that Indigenous knowledge is culture specific, and represents people’s lifestyle, and thus, the dissemination and wider practices of this knowledge is often a challenging issue. While, Hallam, (2007) observed that LIS education in Australia appears to attract plenty of criticism, but very few constructive ideas to respond positively to the challenges presented. This is a challenge facing other countries as well.

LIS education and training in Africa is being challenged because of the foreign nature of the profession (Sturges & Neill, 1990; Isaak, 2000; Ocholla & Bothma, 2007; Minshi-Majanja, 2012). It has been observed that library science is a changeling because of the fact that the African indigenous knowledge systems were discarded by colonialism, and replaced by predominantly western knowledge and information systems. The library as seen as marginalized the majority of the population in Africa because of its elitism, urban-centrism and Euro-centrism and the argument that libraries in Africa are largely stocked with western literature that are written in non-African languages. The libraries’ collection rarely address Africa’s context or readers information needs and they are few and located far away from those who could benefit from their services. The authors believe that these factors have, to a large extent, contributed to the declining student number in LIS schools for librarianship on the continent. For instance, Ocholla and Bothma (2007) indicate that most LIS schools in South Africa have reported a sharp decline in student enrolment for librarianship. Responses to this situation have varied. Some LIS schools have closed librarianship programmes

completely, 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 a broader information or emerging market (Ocholla & Bothma, 2007).

There is a worrying paucity of LIS indigenous literature in Uganda. A head count of the LIS textbooks revealed that about 90% of LIS stock in the EASLIS Book Bank originated from outside Uganda (Kigongo-Bukenya & Kaddu, 2010). This could be worse in Southern Sudan. This has forced LIS educators to rely on foreign based materials to teach the LIS curriculum. The paucity squarely lays on the disinterest or too much pressure from the teaching workload of LIS professionals in Uganda to allow authoring such books or undertake relevant research from which publications could be produced (Kigongo-Bukenya & Musoke, 2011).

A lack of relevant professional skills is a common feature of the field of LIS in many developing countries; this has been documented as one of the factors which led to the failure of LIS schools in Africa in forming successful collaborations (Ocholla & Bothma, 2007). This may be hindering the development of collaborative work that could lead to culturally competent librarian and library staff in the region.

Lack of LIS Curriculum Specialists/Consultants is also a major challenge (Kigongo-Bukenya & Musoke, 2011) facing integration of issues such as multiculturalism and indigenous knowledge in LIS curricula in Africa. Uganda so far has one specialist in LIS curriculum. So LIS curriculum in Uganda has been undertaken on freelance experience and no wonder the LIS curriculum process has not been given the priority it deserves. It is feared that this might have led to cut and paste programmes from other LIS Institutions which might not be reflecting Uganda unique needs. The situation is not any better in Southern Sudan though the country has had useful input from Diana Rosenberg, Makerere University staff, University of Bergen Library and EASLIS academic staff (Kigongo-Bukenya & Musoke, 2011).

Paucity of LIS Information Production Materials and Services

However, as more Ugandans graduate from PhD courses, the situation is gradually improving.

Failure to initiate and monitor standardization of LIS programmes (Okello-Obura & Kigongo-Bukenya, 2011). Worldwide, extensive effort has gone into the creation and implementation of international standards for information management, which implies that even at national levels LIS education programs should be standardized. The main professional body in Uganda for professional librarians, documentalists, archivists, records managers, and conservators is the Uganda Library and Information Association (ULIA). According to the constitution of ULIA, ULIA is expected to monitor the standards of LIS education in Uganda. Unfortunately, this is not happening. Sometimes LIS programmes are launched without ULIA's official input. This is destructive to standardisation of curricula, and we challenge ULIA on this. Although the accreditation of all academic programmes in Uganda is the responsibility of Uganda National Council of Higher Education, the involvement of professional association like ULIA in the development of LIS programmes is important. As argued by Rankin (2011), the professional bodies have a strong tradition of supporting LIS training and education, and this need to be tapped to improve LIS education in Uganda.

As argued by Bothma and Ocholla (2007), LIS institutions are mostly funded by governments and since such funding is inadequate these institutions have had to scale down their expenditure which has adversely affected LIS curriculum activities, facilities and student numbers. Although International partners such as Norwegian University Cooperation Programme for Capacity Development in Sudan (NUCOOP) under the Norwegian Programme for Development Research and Education (NUFU and Sida/SAREC have supported LIS education and training, there is still the challenge of sustainability at the end of development support. Yet national governments' support has been inadequate and far less (Kigongo-Bukenya & Musoke, 2011).

5. Conclusion and recommendations

In North America and Europe recognition of diversity as valuable to professionalism and necessary for generating culturally competent librarians and library staff is evident. There have been strides in this direction, though not very much intense, especially through curriculum developments, joint cooperation and networking, exchange programmes and visits, and international conferences organised by LIS schools. On the contrary, LIS schools and LIS institutions and educators in developing countries of Africa have almost no record on the inclusion of indigenous knowledge and multiculturalism in LIS education. There are very few cases that reveal some Indigenous knowledge and multiculturalism in their library and information science education and training. Challenges (obstacles) to the effective inclusion of indigenous knowledge and multiculturalism to LIS education programs in developing countries exist, and are largely perception and attitude, inadequacy in skills, and inadequacy in funding.

The most significant way of achieving inclusion of indigenous knowledge and multiculturalism in LIS education is to revise and improve the curricula for all library schools in Africa. They also need to take part in exchange programs, study visits, international seminars and workshops, collaborate, link and network with LIS schools and institution with the African region and the rest of the world. Sending African students to attend LIS schools in Europe and North America can help broaden and diversify their international perspective. Later these students will come back to their native country and implement knowledge and skills obtained during their studies in which they have been exposed to cultural diversity.

There should be critical analysis of the elements of success of all the past successful diversity programs in LIS education like the GLISSA program at the University of Arizona and their subsequent implementation in present and future LIS education diversity programs. Also cultural competence guidelines should be drawn up and subsequently enforced by the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) and its affiliates with the inclusive participation of the minority communities in order to accommodate the cultural diversity that the global community presents.

Emphasis should be put on recruitment, hiring, retention and promoting diverse staff, faculty and administrators who reflect the diversity of the population, serve as role models, have the diverse skills and expertise to design and implement a comprehensive educational program and provide the supportive services needed by students. Cultural diversity efforts need to be a priority in budget allocation in both developed and developing countries if any progress in the commitment to MLIS education is to be made.

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