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# Contextualising the LIS curriculum in the Department of Information Science at Unisa through Africanisation: challenges, prospects and opportunities

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## Abstract

*Unisa as an institution claims in its mission statement to be the African university in service of humanity. Expectedly, this should reflect in its institutional culture, curricula and library holdings and practices. Despite the commitment, literature has revealed that generally academic institutions in Africa still demonstrate hegemonic practices from the colonial past. Amongst other things, this has resulted largely in institutions offering academic curricula that have not been contextualised or aligned with African realities. In this light, this article seeks to determine the extent to which the curricula in the Department of Information Science at Unisa have been aligned according to the dictates of the current milieu. The qualitative approach was considered appropriate for this study because it focuses on observing events from the perspectives of those who are involved and is aimed at understanding the attitude, behaviour and opinions of those individuals (Powell and Connaway 2004). A basic interpretive qualitative research design was used for this study. Data was collected through interviews and document analysis. The data were inductively analysed and the findings are presented and discussed using references to the literature that informed the study. The results show that in the Department there is no clarity on what Africanisation means, involves and implies, and what its exact parameters are. This article recommends that if Unisa as an institution underscores the importance of being an African university, there is a need to give strategic direction and leadership on the understanding and implementation of the concept of Africanisation.*

## Historical background

An African university cannot but be an important and critical part of the African Renaissance (Mbeki 2005); it cannot be neutral in matters of national significance (Woolman 2001); it should promote the development of African knowledge systems in their own right (Unisa 2007); and it should heed the call to trade the supremacy of Western orientation and culture for greater responsiveness and relevance to African identity, culture and issues (Lockett 2010) by mitigating the dominance of Western canons (Louw 2010; Prinsloo 2010). It has been reported in several studies that colonial education had the effect of undermining traditional societies: on the one hand by introducing an individualistic, Eurocentric value system that was alien to African communal mores and, on the other hand, by isolating students from their local communities (Woolman 2001). Okeke (2008) argues that the introduction of Western-style education failed to create an African identity devoid of acrimony, bitterness and feelings of division among Africans. Instead it eroded African cultural values and set the stage for some sort of cultural confusion and crisis.

Another scathing analysis of the impact of imperialistic education is made by Rwomire (1998) in Woolman (2001) who mentions a number of problems such as irrelevant curricula, antiquated methods, high dropout and repetition rates, and overcrowding. In the same vein, Okeke (2008) and Woolman (2001) argue that imperialistic tendencies left grave imprints of disillusionment, distrust, strange inklings, acrimony and violence on the psyche of many Africans, including the African educated elite. Unfortunately, even though colonisation was dismantled years ago, African universities still take too much pride in presenting themselves as copies of foreign ideals, offering watered-down versions of the curriculum operating in predominantly white universities (Davies 1994; Nkoane 2006 and Pityana 2009). Because of the relentless nature of colonial orientation, debates about transforming universities to reverse the impact of colonialism are still robust. Amongst other things this is based on criticisms about the standard of graduates, many of whom are seen to be docile and dependent, revealing low initiative (Okeke 2008). Unless drastic measures are taken to adopt a robust reconstructionist perspective (Woolman 2001) to mitigate ingrained elitism and the dominance of Western culture and intellectual hegemony, even in the post-colonial era most Africans will be bounded by colonial shackles Kistner (2008).

The foregoing viewpoints reflect general viewpoints about the standard of education in academe. Clearly, library and information science education has

also not been spared of the negative effects of colonial education. For instance, literature has revealed that the library and information science profession has been criticised at both educational and practical levels for not aligning itself with contemporary realities and setting itself up for failure in matters of national development. In sync with the above statement, before the democratic elections in 1994 progressive librarians started to raise questions about the appropriateness and responsiveness of LIS education to a democratic South Africa and, furthermore, made calls and proposals for the reformulation of LIS strategic objectives to align with the new political agenda (Lor 1993; Nassimbeni 1988; Walker 1988 in Bell 2002; Zaaiman 1985 in Bell 2002). However, years into the new political dispensation similar concerns have been raised (Alemna 1995; Sturges and Neill 1990), which goes to show that libraries have generally not been repositioned to extend frontiers beyond elitism and exclusion to socio-cultural consciousness and legitimation (Abdullahi 2007). Guiding this discussion is the assertion that different types of libraries, and information and documentation centres, undergo changes in terms of needs, functions, types and ranges of services offered, as well as tools and techniques used when offering the services (Singh 2003).

The assertion therefore implies that LIS education needs to change according to the dictates of the current milieu because it is not neutral, nor can it ever be. Instead it is a political tool, an agency promoting national and cultural pride and symbols as well as the spirit of nationalism embodied in the discovery of African roots (Woolman 2001). Mbeki (2005) concurs that all educational curricula in Africa should have Africa as their focus, and be indigenous in their grounding and orientation. He cautions that failure to do so may result in education becoming alien and irrelevant. This therefore is a call also for the LIS education to refocus on the priority of national development and to align with African ways of thinking. It should strive to show recognition for the cultural values of the people. This is critical as indicated by Okeke (2008) that the inaptness of a curriculum will wittingly or unwittingly have dire effects such as unemployment, disarticulation, and cultural irrelevance which is incongruent with local communities but instead continues to respond to the needs of the elitist minority.

## Transformation of the LIS curriculum: why and how?

The focus of the paper is on the state or extent of Africanising the curriculum in the Department of Information Science, as Africanisation is one of the

pronouncements that Unisa has adopted. The paper does not focus on curriculum development and the theoretical underpinnings thereof.

The fundamental intent of LIS education is to produce trained manpower to work in different types of libraries, information and documentation centres, and to determine which overtime experience changes are required in terms of needs, functions, types and ranges of services offered, as well as the tools and techniques to offer the services (Singh 2003). Clearly, as custodians of information (being by their very nature not static, but leading to constantly changing information needs) information centres need to brace themselves for constant adaptation and development (Singh 2003). This is in line with the principles of one of the greatest philosophers of LIS, Ranganathan, which principles are predicated on the notion of relevance, responsiveness, aptness and development. Abdullahi (2007) argues that the salient role of libraries is to expand socio-cultural consciousness, by understanding that people's ways of thinking and behaving are based on influences and factors such as race/ethnicity, social class and language. It is critical that libraries understand these socio-cultural identities in order for them to promote principles of accessibility and equity in line with existing diversity ranges.

On the contrary, library and information services (LIS) in Africa have generally been criticised for persistently providing elitist, urban-centric and Eurocentric services and products which benefit a minority and continue to perpetuate the exclusion of the non-literate majority (Alemna 1995; Sturges and Neill 1990). The above viewpoints on the inappropriateness of library and information services have a direct bearing on Library and Information Science education. This could mean that the academic offerings of library schools in Africa might not necessarily be empowering LIS graduates with knowledge, competencies and skills that will enable them to meet the realities evident in the current milieu.

Based on the foregoing pronouncements and the adverse effects of colonialism, libraries in Africa need to shift their focus and redirect their resources and efforts to align their services with the challenges, opportunities and realities of the post-colonial era. Some of the realities prevalent in an African setting include but are not limited to, high rates of illiteracy, poverty, unemployment, crime and war-ravaged casualties, dependency syndrome, lack of ambition and under-development. Considering that for the majority of people in Africa the factors mentioned above are a reality, LIS schools or departments should ideally be training people to be competent to effectively work from Afrocentric and patriotic perspectives.

In this regard Abdullahi (2007) asserts that the key to developing more responsive library professionals who will serve their community better and at the same time attract students from different cultural backgrounds to the LIS profession lies in improving the curriculum through the inclusion of diverse issues relevant to local actualities. In implementing a transformed curriculum, university academics need to ask questions arising from their context and start to find answers. They should write their own textbooks, develop theories, examples, illustrations, comparisons, models, social systems and structures, institutions, interpretations and misinterpretations which will give due regard to the African perspective and not present the LIS profession from a Western-dominated viewpoint (Nkoane 2006).

Likewise, Mehra, Olson and Ahmad (2011) concur that the LIS curriculum needs to be diversified, localised or contextualised mainly for the following reasons: the nature of librarianship as a service profession to meet the needs of diverse communities; libraries as centres of inclusion; responsiveness to changing interactions in a global networked information environment in the contemporary age; relationships of equity, democracy and information access for all; the need to break traditional stereotypes and public perceptions of the librarian; accurate reflection of the diversity experienced in people's lived realities; diversification of the LIS profession; diversity of ideas and growth of knowledge to provide best solutions to worldwide problems; and educating and providing a global perspective to parochial and narrow-minded cultural viewpoints. This summation pulls everything together by touching on the profession, its values and norms, the ethical responsibilities and legitimisation of the library as an institution, the professional obligation and socio-cultural awareness of the information worker, and the empowerment of the user as a grounded player in the local and global arenas.

Undeniably, there is a need for academic education in general and LIS education in particular to define, interpret, promote and transmit African thought, philosophy, orientations, character and identity. Africanisation is seen as a process or vehicle that could be used to achieve this objective (Botha 2007, 2009, and 2010; Makgoba and Tleane 1998). Africanisation is seen as casting a renewed focus on Africa, encompassing an African mind-set, or a shift in mind-set from a European to an African paradigm compatible with an African ethos (Makgoba 2003; Louw 2009; Viljoen and Van der Walt 2003). It starts with the ability to define and interpret African culture, diversity, character and identity leading to a sense of unity, pride and affirmation of Africanness (Pityana 2009). Several proponents concur that it is an ethos anchored in the belief that a clear and strong Afrocentric orientation is an effective instrument

for transforming educational, socioeconomic and cultural spheres to enable Africans to have a unique identity and character (Botha 2007, 2009, 2010; Cross, Mhlanga and Ojo 2009; Fourie 1999; Fourie 2005; Franke and Esmenjaud 2008; Horsthemke 2004; Kistner 2008; Kistner 2009; Makgoba 2003; Makgoba and Tleane 1998; Msila 2007; Nkoane 2006; Pityana 2009; Taylor 2010).

In essence Africanisation is not about excluding Western civilisations and insights but is actually about the deliberate inclusion or integration of Eurocentric orientations or global perspectives into indigenous knowledge systems in accordance with African orientations (Botha 2007 and 2010; Makgoba 2003; Nkoane 2006). In the same vein, Cross et al. (2009) argue that by inclusivity, Africanisation is non-racial, flexible and has a dual or multicultural paradigm that advocates thinking locally first before going international. In essence it means diluting foreign ideas, orientations, cultures or practices to such an extent that they take root in the native or local orientations or culture. Notwithstanding the depictions given, Nkoane (2006) cautions that the lack of clarity, coherence and detail on the definition and implications of Africanisation has largely lead to negative connotations (Botha 2009; Horsthemke 2004), such as anxiety, confusion and irritation in most scholarly circles.

However, despite the challenges of Africanising the curriculum, the exercise holds promise as a tool to reform and contextualise higher education by incorporating and integrating other cultures into African visions and interpretations (Makgoba 1998) in order to find appropriate solutions to African problems. There is evidence that Africanising or indigenising the curriculum can address critical issues of appropriateness and relevance in terms of the social, ethical, political and technical skills and competencies in the African context. According to Emeagwali (2005) in Msila (2007) an Africanised system will empower learners to challenge existing relations of power, and to be aware of societal ills at local and global levels.

Regarding the transformation of the curriculum the key question that always arises is how can it be done, what are the practicalities? Msila (2007) identifies three viewpoints of implementing the indigenisation of the education system as reflected in Table 1 below:

**Table 1: Options for introducing the indigenous knowledge system**

First option	Second option	Third option
Develop indigenous knowledge systems as separate strands in addition to the conventional education system.	Revamp the entire education system to introduce indigenous knowledge systems.	Use the present system and integrate it into the African context.
Criticism: The approach may appear to be patronising.	Criticism: It is not cost-effective.	Criticism: Educators need to be retrained for a transformative pedagogy.

(Table compiled from information taken from Msila 2007)

Literature has indicated that one of the fundamental characteristics of Africanisation is inclusivity, because it subscribes to the notion that not everything in the past education system is of no value: there are good practices that can be retained if they have the probability of being congruent with local ideals. Although in most circumstances people tend to adopt the ‘throwaway’ approach. Whilst in countries such as New Zealand, Australia and others option one has been implemented in certain universities, in South Africa this might not necessarily be possible in the current milieu. Developing a separate strand for indigenous knowledge systems would destabilise the agenda for reconciliation and unity. Likewise, it will contradict the fundamental ethos of Africanisation. Realistically, the third option seems feasible for LIS education as it would challenge LIS educators to consciously evaluate academic offerings against the needs and expectations of market, the capacity to attract students, the aptitude to maintain competitive advantage, the pronouncements of the university and the Department of Higher Education, and the philosophy of the profession, as well as national and international benchmarks. Admittedly, striking a balance between the different authorities and orientations would have its own challenges which have to be weighed up against the opportunities and prospects of contextualizing the curriculum.

### **Africanisation at Unisa: the institutional standpoint**

According to Pityana (2009), after 1994 the University of South Africa embraced the notion of Africanisation by situating it centrally in the institution’s core business. The Africanness of Unisa is revealed primarily by its vision of being “the African university in the service of humanity” (Unisa 2007). Notwithstanding Unisa’s positive standing toward Africanisation as revealed by its vision statement and other institutional pledges, when it comes to the practicalities of implementing the term “Africanness” generally there is a

lack of clarity about the meaning of the idea, what it involves or implies and a description of its exact parameters (Louw 2009; Prinsloo 2010; Taylor 2010). This is evidenced by the fact that in some circles in the University generally unguided talks about Africanisation are being held. Likewise, Taylor (2010) concurs that the reason there is very little internal dialogue on the Africanisation aspect of transformation is mainly because there are many institutional dynamics that come into play which in a way cause the dialogue to be ignored and suppressed. Mseleku (2004) in Cross et al. (2009) argues that an institution that claims in its mission statement to truly be an African university should reflect this in its institutional culture, curricula and library holdings and practices. Despite this indeterminate condition, the University and its edifices including the Department of Information Science need to work toward achieving the vision of being the African university in the service of humanity

## Statement of the problem

In light of persistent calls to reform the curricula at higher education institutions by contextualising academic pedagogy it is evident that Africans can begin to find African solutions to African problems. As part of the academe LIS schools need to heed the call to enable the profession to break elitist and exclusionist frontiers. Little is known about the inclusion or embodiment of indigenous or locally oriented content, both explicitly and incidentally, into the LIS pedagogy. This investigation was guided by the following research questions:

- (i) To what extent do academics understand and apply Africanisation in the curriculum?
- (ii) To what extent are indigenous perspectives reflected in the subject content, teaching approaches, research, language, community service projects as well as staff and student profiles?
- (iii) What are the perceived challenges, prospects and opportunities of Africanising the curriculum?

## Research methodology

This article is an exploratory piece of research which seeks to explore the extent to which the LIS curriculum has embodied African ideology from an interpretivist perspective. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate for this study because it focuses on observing events from the perspectives of those who are involved and is aimed at understanding the attitude, behaviour and opinions of those individuals (Powell and Connaway 2004). As with Ely (1991: 4), the aim was to have “those who are studied to speak for themselves, to

provide their perspectives in words and other actions”. A basic interpretive qualitative research design was used for this study (Welman and Kruger 2001; Merriam 2002). Data was collected through interviews and document analysis. Out of fourteen academics eight were interviewed, institutional documents were analysed, related literature was also analysed, and the researcher drew on her own experiences and exposure as a member of staff in the Department of Information Science. In particular the reviewed literature included primary sources such as institutional documents namely the Unisa Strategic Plan 2015, the Institutional Operational Plan (IOP), the Unisa Language Policy, the Africanisation in Tuition Document as well as Information Science documents including brochures, pamphlets, study guides, tutorial letters, records of ongoing and completed research, community engagement projects, research articles. The results of a study that employs a basic interpretive design are interpretative and descriptive as is this case with this research.

## Findings and discussions

The study focused on the undergraduate curriculum based on the belief that these rudimentary programmes provide a foundation for postgraduate qualifications and they are therefore likely to give a clear reflection of the general orientation of the Department of Information Science. The focus of this paper will be on the undergraduate curriculum. The Department offers two undergraduate programmes, namely the Bachelor of Arts in Information Science and the Bachelor of Arts in Applied Information Science. A rich descriptive account of the qualitative data is presented and discussed, using references to the literature that framed the study in the first place.

**Table 2: Tuition: Africanisation perspectives, challenges and opportunities**

<b>1. Tuition</b>		
	Current situation	Perceived challenges
Curriculum	<p>Infusing local content will depend on the merits of a subject; it cannot be applied blindly to all subjects. For instance, for courses like cataloguing and classification how can one infuse indigenous content into established principles and codes?</p> <p>Students are given the opportunity to give their own examples and also to apply learned knowledge to familiar contexts.</p>	<p>There is no clarity on what Africanisation is and what it entails in terms of subject content development and management.</p> <p>To what extent can Africanisation enable the LIS curriculum to be relevant to local realities and still have an international appeal considering that Unisa students come from all over the world .</p> <p>Is Africanisation not just a fad that will die slowly before it is fully understood and implemented?</p> <p>With the lack of clarity on the term itself how can academics ensure that quality is upheld?</p> <p>With Africanising the curriculum institutional pronouncements on curriculum development and management need to be considered. For instance the different support and professional sections that assist with curriculum development have to also understand Africanisation so that their programmes are in synch with those of academics.</p> <p>The students, the market and the country as a whole need to be prepared for the drive to enhance indigenous</p>

		<p>knowledge, skills and competencies.</p> <p>Other challenges are the fear that Africanisation may be seen as inferior; pedagogy that will have a direct impact on student intake; the academic standing of the Department; and its ultimate chances of sustaining itself.</p>
<p>Mode of delivery</p>	<p>In an ODL environment there are prescribed modes of delivery such as study guides and tutorial letters that are available in print and electronic format.</p> <p>Over the years channels of communication at Unisa have developed from postal services to electronic channels. Currently there is a strong drive toward e-learning which implies that study material (study guides and tutorial letters) is to be produced and communicated in electronic format.</p> <p>Communication takes place mainly via email, by telephone, through myUnisa, through discussion classes for a few modules, through tutorials</p>	<p>There is limited knowledge of the student profile. Students come from diverse backgrounds. Some complete their studies and some drop out. Therefore their profile is subject to constant change. How can it be possible to guarantee alignment with students' needs?</p> <p>With large numbers of students it would be difficult to customise the mode of delivery to individual students or even groups.</p> <p>The University prescribes how tutorial letters should be written and how often the study guide can be revised. The delivery mode such as the drive for e-learning and the use of social media are also controlled.</p> <p>Semesterisation is characterised by serious time constraints and pressure to meet deadlines. All of these somehow hamper innovativeness, academic freedom and the ability to think out of the box. Instead they enforce the compliance mode and mediocrity.</p>

	<p>and very rarely through student visits to lecturers' offices.</p>	<p>With Unisa introducing e-learning the conviction is that the student needs to adopt competencies in ICT. How this will complement or contradict Africanisation is not very clear.</p> <p>The University is sending mixed and unclear signals, and these are very confusing.</p> <p>Some new developments like Africanisation become hyped and as soon as vigour and renewed interest are lost, they are left hanging with a lack of clarity and continuity.</p>
<p>Language</p>	<p>In the past the Unisa Language Policy indicated that English and Afrikaans were given preference over other languages in terms of being regarded as official languages for tuition.</p> <p>But after 2008 the policy was changed to have English as the only language to be used for teaching and learning.</p> <p>Since 2010 the University has been driving an initiative to develop</p>	<p>This gave preference to those who understand these languages well; those who were not comfortable with them were at a disadvantage.</p> <p>If teaching and learning do not build upon the linguistic and conceptual resources derived from one's lived experience of the home environment, it will be difficult to master the language which will be a disadvantage because mastery of the language is a prerequisite for mastery of the subject matter. This may be the reason for the high failure rate.</p> <p>Although this is a milestone congruent with Africanisation, the problem is that the drive is still in its infancy and there is a lack of clarity regarding the scope,</p>

	<p>glossaries in different languages to ensure that students are given an opportunity to understand important concepts in their own languages which will assist them to assimilate their own cultures and realities.</p> <p>Each department is supposed to establish the dominating languages of registered students and then develop glossaries accordingly.</p>	<p>format or capacity within departments to handle translation responsibilities.</p> <p>Considering that South Africa has 11 official languages and the fact that the development of languages is not equal, it may be a challenge to have equivalent terms in all languages.</p>
Study material	<p>Study guides, tutorial letters, suggested or recommended reading (books, journals, e-reserves, e-books) and prescribed textbooks form part of the study material.</p>	<p>Realistically, most of the literature has a Western orientation.</p> <p>The problem is complex due to the North-South influx of information compared to the South-North or even South-South influx; most of the information available is from the North.</p> <p>With this lack of clarity on the matter, currently and in the near future Africanisation will be limited to the application of knowledge to local realities.</p> <p>The above notion raises the question of adaptability.</p>
Literature	<p>Books, journals, e-reserves, e-books, theses, dissertations, newspapers and</p>	<p>The problem is complex due to the North-South influx of information compared to the South-North or even the</p>

	<p>other grey literature form part of literature.</p>	<p>South-South influx; most of the information available is from the North.</p> <p>Most theories used in Information Science have not been developed in Africa. The concepts in LIS, and the ideologies and philosophies all have Western origins.</p>
<p>Assessment</p>	<p>There is both summative and formative assessment. These take the form of tests, assignments, portfolios and examinations (multiple-choice questions, short questions and essay-type questions).</p> <p>The University is strict about throughput rates; lecturers have to support students as much as possible. Whether this can be regarded as Africanisation (because it reveals principles of “Ubuntu”) is not clear.</p>	<p>It is not certain how Africanisation would apply.</p> <p>Assessment is generally based on principles of fairness; how they will fit or not fit into the ambit of Africanisation is not clear.</p>

**Table 3: Research : Africanisation perspectives, challenges and opportunities**

<b>2. Research</b>		
Final-year students enrol for a module in Research Methodology which focuses only on the theory and not on the practical element. The research content and application are very limited.		
	Current situation	Perceived challenges
Focus	It is open, and students are allowed to apply processes and techniques to familiar settings.	
Problematisation	It is open, and students are allowed to apply processes and techniques to familiar settings.	
Methods	The usual known methods are used.	There is limited information on a drive toward indigenous research methods, but not much is known about this. A lack of information and clarity leads to scepticism.
Impact	This is difficult to measure, besides being able to state that students pass and continue with postgraduate studies.	
Collaboration	This is done to a greater extent: intra-, inter- departmental and institutional.	Most research conducted is based on local issues; this could be Africanisation or not.

**Table 4: Community engagement: Africanisation perspectives, challenges and opportunities**

<b>3. Community engagement</b>	
<b>Current situation</b>	<b>Perceived challenges</b>
<p>There are community engagement activities that are undertaken in the Department.</p> <p>Community engagement is predicated on the conviction of social responsibility.</p> <p>The University and its entities are expected to plough back and add value to neighbouring communities.</p> <p>By their very nature the principles of community engagement emphasise partnerships with communities.</p>	<p>There is the need to extend the scope of community engagement projects.</p> <p>Developing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to determine quality, impact and relevance is important.</p>

**Table 5: Staff and student profile: Africanisation perspectives, challenges and opportunities**

<b>4. Staff and student profile</b>		
Current situation		Perceived challenges
Staff	<p>There is a reasonable mix of white, black and foreign nationals.</p> <p>No differentiation was noted according to any of the ranges in terms of understanding, optimism or pessimism about Africanisation.</p>	There are no perceived challenges.
Students	Unisa attracts students from all over the world, but most of them are from Africa.	Diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, geographical location and socio-political inferences might complicate or even negate initiatives toward Africanisation.

## Conclusions and recommendations

The aim of this article was to reflect on the extent to which the Department of Information Science has attempted to reform its curricula. The need to reform the curricula stems from the well-documented dire effects of colonial education. The influences of this imperialistic education became evident despite political liberation. This brought about the realisation that the education system in Africa needs to be overhauled through transformation of important aspects such as the curriculum. One of the approaches that have been applauded as having the merits of a constructivist approach is Africanisation. With regard to the context of the study Unisa as an institution has made pledges toward Africanisation, and so this article examined the extent to which the Department of Information Science has gone to actualise the Africanisation agenda. The results show that there is lack of clarity regarding the definition, breadth, depth and implications of Africanisation at the University as well as in the Department of Information Science.

Despite the acknowledgement that some parts of the curriculum were disarticulated and irrelevant to local realities, concerns were raised about the appropriateness of Africanisation in a department that has a diverse student base. Additionally the feasibility of infusing indigenous knowledge systems into the curriculum without prejudicing other student groups and limiting global networks was highly questionable. Somehow, this could be seen as being reductionist in nature considering that Africanisation upholds inclusivity and adaptability. The danger of indeterminate standpoint could be an opportunity lost, for developing a curriculum that would have African theoretical underpinnings and an international appeal at the same time. It would enhance an African approach to internationalisation in higher education (Botha 2007). A curriculum grounded on African actualities in essence, will offer the global community an opportunity to understand, and appreciate African philosophy and practice.

Overall, the lack of leadership on this matter was illuminated. This leads to an indeterminate state where individual academics carry out their responsibilities to the best of their ability without knowing the connection or disconnection to the principle of Africanisation. Additionally, important questions were raised about the preparedness of the market for graduates who have competencies and skills that are oriented toward indigenisation. Likewise, mixed messages sent by the University through providing systems and processes that on one hand negate flexibility and innovativeness on the part of academics while on the other call for Africanisation need to be addressed. Although the limitations of the current curriculum were

acknowledged, it was indicated that this could be a catch-22 situation considering problems such as the LIS literature, theories, competencies of staff, as well as the strategies for implementing Africanisation, and all this vis-à-vis University pronouncements.

Drawing on these conclusions the following recommendations were developed. First, there is a need for planning, prioritisation and popularising Africanisation within the institution so as to ensure that the notion is institutionalised, legitimised and understood by stakeholders. Second, there is a need to involve external stakeholders as well to ensure that the agenda to Africanise is congruent with market strategies, some of which may have global orientations. Third, the issue of capacitating academics is of utmost importance because they need competencies to implement this transformative pedagogy. Fourth, the Library and Information Association in South Africa (LIASA) as the professional structure needs to take cognisance of the debates surrounding the transformation of LIS education, so that the issue could be examined by stakeholders to determine its merits and demerits. Finally, in further studies on Africanisation its implications in terms of internal and external stakeholders are suggested. In conclusion, the transformation of the curriculum through Africanisation is a highly sensitive, contentious and underestimated issue. In order for this drive to actualise more work needs to be done to break the inherent frontiers.

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