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Professional development for subject librarians in KwaZulu-Natal

By

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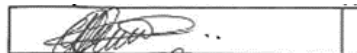
2019

DECLARATION

I, Mbangiseni Eric Mchunu, declare that:

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Signed:



Student Name: Mbangiseni Eric Mchunu

Date: ...17 October 2019

Name of Supervisor: Dr Gbolahan Olasina

Signature:



DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my two lovely sons Nkosinathi and Zibusisoziyeza. You are always missed, hoping that one day we will meet at Jesus' feet, my Angels.

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ABSTRACT

Professional development (PD) is an important consideration for academic librarians. The broad purpose of the study was to investigate the PD of subject librarians in four selected academic institutions in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). The four institutions were the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), the University of Zululand (UZ), Durban University of Technology (DUT) and the Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT). The Maintaining Professional Competence Model provided the conceptual theoretical framework for the study. The model highlights the roles of both individual and organisational factors in what it refers to as “updating activities”. In terms of the methodology, the population numbered 50 subject librarians from the four institutions of which 48 responded giving a response rate of 96%. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were applied. The former comprised a questionnaire survey administered by email to all 48 participants while a focus group discussion constituted the qualitative method. Eight subject librarians from the Pietermaritzburg Campus of the UKZN participated in the focus group. In terms of the findings, PD was seen in a positive light by the vast majority of the respondents. Attendance of workshops and conferences and furthering studies were shown to be the leading forms of PD opportunities offered at the institutions and the prominent forms of PD activities. There was evidence of a “mismatch” in certain instances between what subject librarians thought was needed concerning PD and what management thought. Information communication technologies (ICTs) and information management skills emerged as the most sought after by the respondents. As expected, finance was identified as the major challenge and there was overwhelming support for the use of webinars in PD. The study confirmed that there is a strong support for PD taking the form of in-house training and workshops. The subject librarians perceived PD in a positive light being seen as both important and beneficial. Conclusions were made and recommendations put forward. Some of these include the need for management to recognise the importance of PD and ensure that they are supportive of it; to make more use of PD activities which had less financial costs (such as webinars using the Internet); to focus on the skills identified as needed by the subject librarians (including teaching and

training skills); and to be sensitive to age and gender of their subject librarian staff with regard to PD. Finally, various suggestions for further research were made.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CPD:	Continuing professional development
DUT:	Durban University of Technology
HELIG:	Higher Education Libraries Interest Group
ICT:	Information and communication technology
KZN:	KwaZulu-Natal
MUT:	Mangosuthu University of Technology
NQF:	National Qualification Framework
PD:	Professional development
RETIG:	Research and Training Interest Group
SAQA:	South African Qualifications Authority
UKZN:	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UZ:	University of Zululand
LIASA:	Library and Information Association of South Africa
LIS:	Library and information services/sectors

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

There is a great need for librarians to keep on learning new information and upgrading their skills. Horton (2019) found that librarians recognise the necessity of remaining lifelong learners themselves to keep pace with the ever-expanding amount of available information. The area of professional practice experiencing the most rapid change over the last decade has been in information technologies. Librarians need not only know how to use these technologies in their jobs, but they need also be able to decide which technology to implement in their libraries for today's users.

Chapter One focuses on the background to the study, the research problem, the purpose of the study, key objectives, the concomitant research questions and the justification for the study. It also briefly introduces the conceptual framework (model) upon which the study was assembled, outlines the methodology adopted, provides the delimitations of the study and the definitions of important terms used and ends with an overview, by chapter, of the remainder of the study. As Behnam and Nikoukhesal (2017) pointed out, the purpose of the introduction is to orient the reader with the nature of the problem, the background, the purpose and the significance of the study, and the method applied to address the problem.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Two issues are addressed here. Firstly, the roles subject librarians perform and secondly, various aspects relating to their professional development (PD) including legislation and the professional association.

1.2.1 Roles and professional development of subject librarians

In academic libraries, subject librarians are working in a challenging and changing environment (Sputore, Humphries and Steiner, 2017). Change is due to the increasing number of users who are often inadequately prepared regarding library and information skills,

budgetary constraints, staff shortages, changing work structures and technological developments (Maesaroh and Genoni, 2012: 83). However, good quality services are expected from the subject librarians. According to Majola (2010:25),

subject librarians are playing a major role in academic institutions by ensuring skills transfer to students and staff, developing the library collection in designated subject areas of the university curriculum, and liaising with academic departments on library integration and academic programmes, as well as assisting in research, and the formulation and evaluation of policies.

Chanetsa and Ngulube (2017) reiterated and further expanded on the roles mentioned above. In their study subject librarians were revealed to mainly provide support on a subject, discipline, department or faculty basis. Additional roles involved supporting teaching, learning and research activities of students, faculty and staff from designated departments by selecting, managing, providing or facilitating the creation and dissemination of subject-specific information. Subject librarians trained and empowered users to become lifelong learners who are able to independently search for, retrieve and optimally use information for their decision making, problem-solving and planning activities. The authors envisaged a future role for subject librarians which would include actively participating in the research process by conducting research and becoming knowledge creators and disseminators in their own right.

Long and Applegate (2008) noted that librarians recognise the need to remain life-long learners themselves to keep pace with the ever-expanding amount of available information. The area of professional practice experiencing the most rapid change over the last decades has been information technology. Librarians need not only know how to use these technologies in their jobs, but they must also decide which to implement in their libraries for today's users. Mathew, Baby and Pillai (2011) pointed out that to meet the ever-changing demands of the users, library professionals need continuously updated knowledge and skills for effective performance.

In South Africa, the government has created legislation to support CPD (Sewdass and Theron, 2004: 105). This legislation comprises the Skills Development Act (no. 97 of 1998) and the Skills Development Levies Act (no. 9 of 1999), which are aimed at incorporating education, training and development within the workplace, and the payment of a levy by each

organisation to the National Skills Fund as a certain percentage of their wage bill. In addition, the Employment Equity Act (no. 55 of 1998) was developed to achieve equity in the workplace and this meant that a focus is placed on the CPD of all staff to ensure that they are competent to do their jobs and to achieve equality and equity targets in the workplace. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act (no 58 of 1995) was another initiative created to ensure that the standards and qualifications registered on the National Qualification Framework (NQF) articulate nationally and are comparable to international frameworks (Sewdass and Theron, 2004). All of the above pieces of legislation assist with opening doors to, and playing a vital role in, CPD. It needs to be noted that the adoption and implementation of CPD (also referred to as ongoing professional development) programmes are based on the assumption that professionals have received a basic professional education in library and information work (Coetsee and Weiner, 2013).

In South Africa, the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) is the professional, non-profit organisation representing library and information workers. It strives to unite, develop and empower people in the library and information field (Coetsee and Weiner, 2013). Interest groups are used by LIASA as platforms for librarians to share their knowledge and experience and teach each other about the new issues and developments in the profession. Most librarians depend on professional organisations, online tools, and professional literature to maintain their awareness of professional developments in library and information services (LIS). Being a member of LIASA is not compulsory but an individual choice. LIASA was recognised by SAQA as a professional body in 2014 (LIASA, 2018).

1.2.2 Current status of academic libraries in South Africa

Academic libraries usually get their funding from the academic institutions they serve. Hoskins and Stilwell (2011: 61) in their study found that most South African academic libraries were underfunded as they were not getting more than six percent of the institutional budget, which the authors claimed to be the benchmark for an acceptable level of funding. Hoskins and Stilwell (2011: 61) also found that university libraries' budgets had decreased due to inflation and institutional demands. Against this backdrop, it is evident that academic libraries work under a constrained budget making it difficult to cover all operational costs including those for PD activities. Hoskins and Stilwell (2011: 62) make the important point that university libraries are crucial in terms of the research function of the university and that

university librarians need to lobby their parent institutions to provide them with an institutional allocation budget of six percent or more to ensure that they can maintain an effective and efficient library service. In terms of PD, Hoskins and Stilwell (2011: 57) stated that university libraries need to ensure that their staff are adequately trained and have the necessary knowledge and skills to administer and maintain their own institutional repositories.

Given these findings regarding university libraries in South Africa, it is apparent that there is a need for improving our understanding of approaches to PD in a setting of dwindling funds and opportunities for training and retraining.

1.2.3 Tertiary institutions in KwaZulu-Natal

The four tertiary institutions in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) which were the focus of the study are the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), University of Zululand (UZ), Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT), and Durban University of Technology (DUT). The selected research sites met the requirements of the study in terms of addressing the research questions posed (see below) and each is now briefly described.

1.2.3.1 UKZN

The UKZN was formed on the 1st of January 2004 due to the merger between the University of Durban-Westville and the University of Natal. The new university brought together the rich histories of both former universities. The UKZN has five campuses, two of them in the central part of Durban (Howard College and Nelson Mandela Medical School), two on the Western side of Durban (Westville and Edgewood) and the fifth campus is based in the Midlands (Pietermaritzburg). Each campus has a main library with subject librarians. At the time of doing the study (2018), there was a total of 26 subject librarians. The UKZN has different colleges within the university and these are: College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science; College of Health Sciences; College of Law and Management Studies; and College of Humanities. There are different schools within each college, and the subject librarians serve different disciplines in the colleges and schools (University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2018).

1.2.3.2 UZ

The UZ is situated in the Northern region of the province of KZN. It has two campuses, one in Kwa-Dlangezwa and one in Richards Bay. The university has four faculties, namely, Faculty of Arts; Faculty of Commerce, Administration and Law; Faculty of Education; and Faculty of Science and Agriculture. Each campus has a library and, at the time of the study, there was a total of seven subject librarians (University of Zululand, 2018).

1.2.3.3 MUT

The MUT, formerly Mangosuthu Technikon and renamed in November 2007, is situated in the second largest township of South Africa, Umlazi, south of Durban. It has two campuses and comprises three faculties. The faculties are: Faculty of Engineering; Faculty of Management Science; and Faculty of Natural Science. As MUT is a two-campus institution, it has two libraries, one at the main campus and the other one is situated at the Department of Agriculture in the nearby campus across the Umlazi Highway. Both libraries provide information services to the three faculties and there are three subject librarians employed (Mangosuthu University of Technology, 2018).

1.2.3.4 DUT

The DUT, initially known as the Durban Institute of Technology, is the result of the merger in 2002 of the ML Sultan Technikon and the Technikon Natal. It has six campuses, four of which are in Durban, namely, Brickfield Campus, City Campus, ML Sultan Campus and Steve Biko Campus. The remaining two campuses are in Pietermaritzburg, namely, Indumiso and Riverside (Durban University of Technology, 2018). The DUT has six faculties, which are: Faculty of Accounting and Informatics; Faculty of Applied Science; Faculty of Arts and Design; Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment; Faculty of Health Sciences; and Faculty of Management Sciences. Each DUT faculty has one or two subject librarians depending on the size of the faculty (Durban University of Technology, 2018). There was a total of 12 subject librarians at the time of doing the study.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

PD for subject librarians fulfils a need for the continuing acquisition of knowledge and competencies that have not been met by either formal education or on-the-job-training (Pan and Hovde, 2010: 1). According to Chanetsa (2014) subject librarians are the human resources in academic libraries who are professionally trained, with vast experience, knowledge of, interest in and responsibility for, the literature of a designated subject or subjects. As outlined under Section 1.2.1, subject librarians have several responsibilities or functions, including collection development, materials selection, user education or library and information skills instruction, and they provide subject-based information or reference service to library users. Subject librarians work in a challenging and changing environment. This environment includes an increasing number of users who are often inadequately prepared regarding library and information skills, budgetary constraints, staff shortages, changing work structures and technological developments, the latter including the Internet and World Wide Web (WWW or Web) (Ahmad, Ahmad and Hussain, 2019). Consequently, subject librarianship has had to constantly re-evaluate and re-engineer itself, to remain relevant in the ever-changing technological and information environments (Chanetsa and Ngulube, 2016). Unfortunately, according to the authors (Chanetsa, 2014) changes to the profession in Africa have not been carried out in a standardised way.

Despite the changes pointed to above, a high level of quality service is still expected from subject librarians. To keep pace with the new environment, PD is crucial as emphasised by Moonasar and Underwood (2018) who carried out a study on the continuing professional development (CPD) practices of academic librarians at the DUT. They found that PD is important for developing skills that are required by a workplace or type of employer; keeping abreast of changing technology or other workplace developments; and acquiring new skills that are needed to fill promotional positions or other changes to job descriptions.

It is thus evident that PD is an important consideration for academic librarians (and other professional groups) and it is this consideration which prompted the researcher to investigate PD of subject librarians in the selected institutions. According to Coetsee and Weiner (2013) South African academic libraries have made substantial successful efforts to respond to changes in the higher education system. Among these are the creation of new library associations, collaborative consortia, and adoption of new technologies. PD of subject

librarians is, arguably, an important component of this response of academic libraries. Consequently, subject librarians need to be constantly developing their skills and knowledge through PD.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The broad purpose of the study was to investigate PD for subject librarians at the selected academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa.

In order to accomplish the purpose, five specific research objectives were formulated and these are listed below.

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study were:

- 1.5.1 To establish the form that professional development of subject librarians in the selected academic libraries takes;
- 1.5.2 To determine the perceptions of the subject librarians with regard to their professional development;
- 1.5.3 To ascertain the professional developmental needs of the subject librarians;
- 1.5.4 To identify the challenges associated with the professional development of the subject librarians; and
- 1.5.5 To determine the role or roles played by the professional association in the professional development of subject librarians.

In line with the research objectives, the research questions were formulated as follows:

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1.6.1 What form does professional development of subject librarians in the selected academic libraries take?
- 1.6.2 How do the subject librarians perceive their professional development?
- 1.6.3 What are the professional developmental needs of the subject librarians?

1.6.4 What are the challenges associated with the professional development of the subject librarians?

1.6.5 What role or roles does the professional association play in the professional development of the subject librarians?

1.7 JUSTIFICATION FOR THE STUDY

The justification for the research is multifaceted. For instance, the researcher has been in the library field for more than 15 years – five years in a special library, five years in public libraries and five years in two academic libraries in KZN. As a subject librarian, the researcher has observed the rapid changes being experienced in academic libraries and the concomitant need of subject librarians for PD to keep pace with these changes. PD will empower subject librarians with relevant skills and knowledge for their current situation. According to Chanetsa and Ngulube (2017), the ever-changing ICTs constantly find their way into universities and their libraries and academic librarians, especially subject librarians, who train both students and faculty members, have to ensure that their skills (and services) are always current and relevant. Since the field of subject librarianship is constantly changing, continuing education and/or PD is a prominent issue in many academic libraries. Moreover, Neerpath (2004)'s study entitled *“Developing guidelines for performance appraisal of subject librarians in KwaZulu-Natal academic libraries”*, recommended that training processes and procedures should constantly be evaluated and modified to meet ever changing needs. CPD in the form of training will allow subject librarians to keep pace with the changes in technology and will ensure that their competencies and skills are constantly updated.

In addition, when the researcher looked at the UKZN's institutional repository (Research Space) as well as various online databases, the researcher did not come across any study which examined PD for subject librarians in KZN. This is in line with the urgent call by Dale (2016) and Rosenkranz, Burrow and Crane (2016) to unravel the PD landscape of subject librarians. Consequently, the study could be seen as an attempt to fill this gap.

It was anticipated that the findings of this study would advance our understanding of the PD of subject librarians in KZN in particular and that of South Africa in general, and have the potential to improve their practices. As such, the study could be of interest and of use to the

management of the selected institutions in terms of both reminding them of the importance of PD of their staff and their own role in ensuring that such development takes place.

It was against this background that the researcher was motivated to conduct the study on the PD of subject librarians.

1.8 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Maintaining Professional Competence Model taken from a study done by Chan and Auster (2003) underpinned the study. The model is premised on the PD of the individual and the organisation and depicts the relationship between participation in updating activities and individual characteristics; and the relationship between participation in updating activities and organisational factors. Chan and Auster (2003: 267) defined maintaining professional competence as the process by which professionals keep and update their current knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to function effectively in their profession. The model identifies factors that can affect (either hinder or encourage) individuals' participation in PD. These factors are both individual and organisational. The former include motivation, age, barriers to participation and professional commitment while the latter includes the updating climate and managerial support (Chan and Auster, 2003). The conceptual framework is discussed in more detail in the following chapter (Chapter Two).

1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Kumar (2019), the path of finding answers to the research questions constitutes the research methodology. In this study, both qualitative and quantitative research methods or approaches were applied. In terms of the quantitative approach, all the subject librarians in the four selected institutions were surveyed by means of a questionnaire. A focus group discussion was adopted for the qualitative dimension of the study. The focus group participants comprised subject librarians from the UKZN Pietermaritzburg Campus. The questionnaire was pretested on the five librarians in charge of circulation at each of the campus libraries at UKZN. A response rate of over 90% was achieved. Quantitative data was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) while the qualitative data, derived from the focus group and open questions in the questionnaire, was analysed

using thematic content analysis. The research methodology is discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

1.10 DEFINITION OF TERMS RELEVANT TO THE STUDY

Goes and Simon (2015) state that “Defining important terms is essential to ensure a common understanding of key concepts and terminology is shared between the dissertation author and his or her audience”. In the light of this the following terms are defined:

1.10.1 Professional development

According to MacKay (2017) “Professional development is regarded as a stock of knowledge, skills and learning for use in work and potential career progression.”

1.10.2 Continuing professional development

Maesaroh and Genoni (2012) refer to CPD as the acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities required for both personal and career development of academic librarians.

1.10.3 Subject librarian

Majola (2010:25) in the study “*Verbal communication*” defined subject librarians in terms of the role they play. Subject librarians play

a major role in academic institutions by ensuring skills transfer to students and staff, developing the library collection in designated subject areas of the university curriculum, and liaising with academic departments on library integration and academic programmes, as well as assisting in research, and the formulation and evaluation of policies (Majola, 2010).

1.10.4 Professional competence

According to A-Ling (2009), professional competences include providing excellent instruction and support for library and information services (LIS) users, assessing information needs, designing and marketing value-added information services and products to meet identified needs and having expert knowledge of the content of information resources.

1.10.5 Maintaining professional competence

According to Chan and Auster (2003) maintaining professional competence is the process by which professionals keep the current knowledge, skills and abilities needed to function effectively in their profession.

1.10.6 Updating activities

Chan and Auster (2003) stated that updating activities of employees focus on maintaining the current knowledge, skills and abilities needed in the present job and developing the knowledge, skills, and abilities for future roles.

1.11 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was delimited to four tertiary institutions in KZN. A further delimitation was the targeting of academic librarians who held the position of subject librarian in their respective institutions. The study thus excluded all other library workers employed by the institutions. The limited nature and scope of the coursework dissertation necessitated these delimitations.

1.12 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Chapter One is the introduction to the study. It focuses on the background to the study, the research problem, the purpose of the study, research objectives, the concomitant research questions and the justification for the study. It also briefly introduces the conceptual framework (model) upon which the study was based, outlines the research methodology adopted, provides the delimitations of the study and the definitions of important terms used.

Chapter Two comprises the literature review. This chapter will cover the role of subject librarians in academic institutions, PD, challenges faced by subject librarians with regard to PD and the role of professional associations. It ends with the presentation and discussion of the conceptual framework.

Chapter Three is the research methodology adopted for the study. Included in the chapter is the research paradigm, approach and design. The population and sampling approach are also described followed by the data collection methods used (the survey questionnaire and focus group) and how the data collected were analysed. The pretest of the questionnaire is also

outlined. Finally, the chapter provides the ethical issues that were observed in conducting the study.

Chapter Four is the presentation of the data of the study. The data from the questionnaires are presented in the form of bar charts, pie charts and tables to convey the information. The findings stemming from the open questions and focus group discussion are presented in the form of text.

Chapter Five is the interpretation and discussion of the findings. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2016), discussing the findings means relating the findings to the original research problem and specific research questions and objectives.

Chapter Six, the final chapter, provides a summary of the main findings, the conclusions arrived at and the recommendations stemming from the findings. It ends with suggestions for further research.

1.13 SUMMARY

This introductory chapter provided the background to the study. It briefly described the four selected tertiary institutions and underscored the need for the PD of subject librarians given the context of change, particularly in the area of technology. The statement of the problem was outlined. This was followed by the purpose of the study and the study's objectives and concomitant research questions. The conceptual framework and methodology adopted were briefly introduced. Definitions of terms relevant to the study were provided and the delimitations of the study given. The chapter ended with an overview, by chapter, of the remainder of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to present and elaborate on various issues in the literature relating to PD for subject librarians. Some of these issues were introduced in Chapter One. According to Fink (2019), the literature review is the part of the thesis where there is an extensive reference to related research and theories in the field being studied. Also, it is where the connections are made between the source texts that one draws on and where one positions his or her research among these sources. It is important to explore the field in which the research is conducted and gain a thorough awareness and understanding of the current research. Denney and Tewksbury (2013: 218) described a literature review as

a comprehensive overview of prior research regarding a specific topic. The overview both shows the reader what is known about a subject, and what is not yet known, thereby setting up the rationale or need for a new investigation, which is what the actual study to which the literature review is attached seeks to do.

The literature review helps to explain how your work builds on the work of others. Several authors explain this differently. For instance, Creswell (2014) and Booth, Sutton and Papaioannou (2016) stated that the purpose of a literature review is to share with the reader the findings of other studies that are related to the one being undertaken and to place each study in the context of how it contributes to an understanding of the subject under review. Moreover, the literature review describes how each study relates to the others under consideration, and to identify and resolve conflicts across seemingly contradictory previous studies. It identifies what previous scholars have discovered to prevent a researcher from needlessly duplicating their efforts. The literature review provides a framework for establishing the importance of the study as well as a benchmark for comparing the findings with other findings. Finally, it relates a study to the larger, ongoing dialogue in the literature, filling the gaps and extending prior studies (Creswell, 2014).

Looking at the above points, the researcher sees the importance of completing a review of the literature before conducting any research no matter how big or small it is. In other words,

reading the literature helps the researcher to focus on important issues and variables that have a bearing on the research topic. Accordingly, this review concentrated on the theme of PD for subject librarians in academic libraries by exploring what is known (and less known) in the literature and illuminating how the current study fits into the larger frame.

The researcher has been guided by the research questions and the adopted theoretical framework to map the themes discussed. To begin with, the role of subject librarians in academic libraries, outlined in the previous chapter, is addressed. This will be followed by a review of the PD of subject librarians in academic libraries. Reviewed here are the activities and challenges or problems linked with PD in academic libraries and the role of professional associations in such development. The chapter ends with a discussion of the conceptual framework, that is, the Maintaining Professional Competence Model and its applicability to the study.

2.2 ROLE OF SUBJECT LIBRARIANS IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

According to Chanetsa and Ngulube (2017), subject librarian functions include collection development and management, marketing (including the production of user guides, current awareness bulletins, and selective dissemination of information services), faculty liaison or user-based services, information literacy (IL) training, and reference services or research support. In a recent study by Robertson (2018) at Deakin University Library in Australia, it was found that the role of the subject or liaison librarian is to link managers and service providers. Thus, what emerges is the importance of the liaison role. As Esterhuizen and Kuhn (2010) pointed out, the main purpose of subject librarians is to liaise with staff and students in designated faculties, schools and research centres to ensure that the library is responsive to the teaching, learning and research needs of the university's community. Robertson (2018) pointed out that relationship management and seizing opportunities to further develop support services to schools and faculties are keys to strengthening the links between the library and faculties, and demonstrating the value that liaison librarians add to the university's agenda (Robertson, 2018). Related to this is the change in focus of the liaison librarians' role. For instance, increasingly, liaison librarians are developing their skills and knowledge in such areas as research data management practices, bibliometrics, data repositories, digital humanities and digital rights management (Robertson, 2018).

Chanesta (2014) in their study entitled “*The changing roles, responsibilities and skills of subject and learning support librarians in the Southern African Customs Union region*” found that subject librarians’ roles were closely related to their responsibilities or functions with these terms sometimes being used interchangeably. According to the authors, their main roles were to teach IL, provide reference or research support, liaise with faculty, participate in the collection development and market the library and its services.

Idoniboye-Obu (2017) emphasises the training or instructional role of subject librarians referring to them as instructors in various facets of user education, that is, in library orientation for new students, seminars, lectures on the resources of the library and how to use such resources, guided tours, basic bibliographic instruction, advanced literature searching and information literacy. It is evident that providing training to users on databases and how to access the information therein has become an important aspect of user education.

Moselen and Wang (2014) are of the opinion that the role of subject librarians is evolving from that of being service providers to being educators who are active contributors in curricular design in the higher education sector. However, a research project conducted at Auckland University in New Zealand by Cossham and Fields in 2013 found that many of their subject librarians were uncertain about how to promote the integration of IL into the curriculum to academic staff and felt that they lacked the pedagogic knowledge and skills to do so. It could be argued that this finding does point to the need for PD to, in this instance, address and resolve the subject librarians’ uncertainty.

2.3 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PD refers to a variety of educational experiences related to an individual’s work and is designed to improve practice and outcomes (Patton, Parker and Tannehill, 2015). PD opportunities may be voluntary or mandatory, individual or collaborative, and formal or informal. For teachers (and the same could be said of subject librarians), PD is both an obligation and an opportunity, serving as a forum for change and confirmation of current practice (Patton, Parker and Tannehill, 2015). As noted in Chapter One, PD is often referred to as CPD which is defined as “the conscious updating of professional knowledge and the improvement of professional competence throughout a person’s working life” (Puteh and Kaliannan, 2016).

Aguenza and Som (2018), Northouse (2018) and Trevino and Nelson (2016) mention the important advantages of PD. One such advantage the authors point to is PD increasing employee retention. In an era where more and more employers are cutting costs related to training, by offering and promoting some PD options, organisations stand out from the rest. Providing PD shows employees that employers care about their career progression and are interested in keeping them in the organisation for a long time. Confidence and reliability are, as a consequence, build up in employees. Megginson and Whitaker (2017) in their book entitled *Continuing professional development* argue that no one likes to feel as if they are missing important skills in their jobs. Providing PD training opportunities allows employees to build confidence in the work they do. It also helps employees to build credibility as they continue to gain a new skill set and qualifications. Moreover, the succession plan turns out to be easier. The authors also emphasise that individuals are responsible for controlling and managing their own PD, and they should decide their own learning needs and how to fulfil those learning needs (Megginson and Whitaker, 2017). In this regard, the current study does examine the attitudes of subject librarians towards PD both presently and in the future. It also examines the extent to which the subject librarians are committed to their libraries which may, as the studies above and below suggest, be a consequence of the opportunities for PD on offer (or not on offer) in the library.

Hilliard (2015), Johnson et al. (2016) and Becker et al. (2017) all note that PD programmes are excellent tools for training future leaders within an organisation. Rather than hiring outside the business, promoting from within is a great way to show the employees that they can have a long career within the organisation. It can also reduce the knowledge gaps that are inevitable with turnover and outside hires. By choosing PD programmes that help their employees to master skills they need to progress, employers can shape the development of their future leaders.

Various other benefits of PD are outlined in the literature. It can, for example, re-energise employees and improve efficiency (Crews, 2018); help in breaking up the monotony of everyday work and improve employees' creativity (Dhar, 2015); and help employees gain new skills and perspectives, which can translate into how they approach their duties (Cohen, 2017). Moreover, not only does PD offer new skill sets, but it also gives employees

opportunities to learn from others in training. As other professionals share their experiences, employees can pick up new ideas and perspectives.

Coetsee and Weiner (2013) in their study entitled “*Key professional principles for South African academic librarians*” suggested some avenues for CPD that can be used by subject librarians to develop their profession. These include, for instance, inviting speakers, attending conferences and other PD programmes such as personal reading and personal study. Formal and informal group discussions, forming journal clubs and participating in exchange programmes for academic librarians both within South Africa and outside of the country were also mentioned as possible avenues. Benefits accruing to subject librarians would include keeping abreast of current trends, keeping librarians enthusiastic in their profession, offering opportunities for gainful and healthy competition, and getting exposed to mentors. With regard to mentors Coetsee and Weiner (2013) in a study entitled “*Key professional principles for South African academic librarians*”, mentioned that providing mentors and coaches from different countries or institutions could also help in PD. The role of mentorship in PD is an important one (and also touched on in this study). The study by Barnett, Shoho, and Okilwa (2017) entitled “*Assistant principals’ perceptions of meaningful mentoring and professional development opportunities*” made the point that mentoring received was an informal process, rather than the result of participating in formal mentoring programmes. In the light of the importance of mentoring in terms of PD, this aspect was addressed on a number of occasions in the research instrument adopted for this study (see Appendix 7).

Finally, before focusing on PD for subject librarians more specifically, the point needs to be made that some authors (Körkkö, Kyrö-Ämmälä and Turunen, 2016; Girvan, Conneely and Tangney, 2016) regard PD-driven research as not being well understood. Accordingly, the present study can also be viewed as an attempt to improve the understanding of PD as it pertains to subject librarians from the selected institutions in KZN.

2.3.1 Professional development for subject librarians

As emphasised in the preceding chapter, subject librarians work in a challenging and changing environment. This environment comprises numerous challenges (some of which are discussed under Section 2.5) and despite this environment, a high level of quality service is still expected from the subject librarians. To avoid being overwhelmed and to keep pace with

this environment, PD for librarians (and subject librarians) is, as stated by Dale (2016) and Maesaroh and Genoni (2010), crucial.

PD (or more specifically CPD) offers learning opportunities for library and information professionals to overcome any challenges they might face. However, Majid (2004) in Alawadhi, (2015: 84) argued that most library and information professionals lagged behind other professionals due to the limited CPD opportunities available in several regions of the world. Unfortunately, as already alluded to, there is also not much literature on the PD of subject librarians (Moreillon, 2016; Purpur et al., 2016) and the researcher has been unable to find any studies focusing on the PD of subject librarians in South Africa which in turn underscores the needs for studies such as this one to add to global understanding and knowledge of the field. Recent studies on the PD of librarians which have been identified are pointed to below and, amongst other things, they all reiterate the importance of such development. Lastly, before outlining these studies, Brooker (2017) views PD as a crucial part of her job as a school librarian. What she goes on to say is equally applicable to subject librarians in the academic library sector: “We are part of the education sector and need to be life-long learners and take as many opportunities for PD as possible; reading articles and completing on-line courses as well as attending physical PD sessions” (Brooker, 2017:16).

Haneefa and Shyni (2015) in their study “*Workplace learning among library professionals of university libraries in Kerala*” found that the majority of the library professionals were engaged in workplace learning to keep them up-to-date with their profession. In the study conducted by Idoko, Ugwuanyi and Osadebe (2016), PD was perceived as the continuing process of acquiring new knowledge and skills that relate to one’s profession, job responsibilities or work environment.

In Owusu-Acheaw (2017)’s study “*Professional development programmes for polytechnic library staff in Ghana: challenges and prospects*”, staff confirmed that the knowledge they had acquired through PD had considerably improved their work performance. Similarly, Anugrah and Nabila (2017) in their study of CPD for librarians in a university library in Surabaya, Indonesia revealed that CPD was used as a mechanism to gain new knowledge and skills, as well as a form of education for the librarians in the study.

In their study on CPD in ICT for academic librarians at the DUT, Moonasar and Underwood (2018) perceived PD as the process of ensuring that individuals have the opportunity to keep up-to-date with trends and continuously learn and improve their subject and professional knowledge.

Anunobi, Ukwoma, and Iwundu (2017) in their study which examined the impact and challenges of CPD programmes on beneficiaries found that the participants (beneficiaries) had improved their knowledge, skills and attitudes. In addition, they were able to share cultural values, and networked and collaborated among themselves.

The study by Maesoroh and Genoni (2010) entitled “*An investigation of the continuing professional development practices of Indonesian academic libraries*” revealed that there are challenges which appear to be linked to the underdeveloped infrastructure for CPD in some libraries. For example, over 40 per cent of the libraries surveyed either did not have a staff development plan or were unaware if they had such a plan. However, in the South African context, the LIASA (2018) made it clear that it expects all its members to complete a CPD plan and record annually. Meeting these expectations will mean that its members keep learning and will perform better than those who are not members. Subject librarians who are members of LIASA are expected to deliver their services better than those who are not members.

With regard to mentoring, Idoko, Ugwuanyi and Osadebe (2016) in their study on mentoring as a strategy for PD of librarians in Nigerian universities, described mentoring as a process of learning and development based on a personal relationship in which an experienced librarian called a mentor helps a new librarian called a mentee to develop as a professional and achieve professional goals. Aslam (2017) in a study that investigated how universities support and manage their CPD, emphasised that financial support is very important for participation in CPD activities.

2.4 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

PD activities in the library are activities that are designed for the personal and professional growth of librarians (Posigha and Felicia, 2015). Mathew, Baby, and Pillai (2011) in their study of PD activities amongst library professionals at universities in Southern India

included, as part of PD, librarians' enrolment in higher education (a majority having done so), their publication patterns (a very small minority having published), their membership in professional associations (a majority) and their participation in continuing education programmes (less than half having done so).

PD activities are divided into structured and self-directed, and both have formal and informal events (Corcoran and McGuinness, 2014). Structured formal training and events or activities are a full education programme, which might produce a certificate or diploma. These could come from short courses, workshops, seminars and electronic (e)-learning modules. Informal activities could include communities of practice, professional learning communities and mentoring. Self-directed formal activities could comprise mentoring or buddying, the formation of journal clubs, attending conferences, and being a member of PD committees. Informal activities might include blogging, subscribing to journals, reading relevant literature, and following relevant people on Twitter, blogs, and other social networks (Matthew, Baby and Pillai, 2011).

According to Attebury (2016), PD can come in various forms including workshops, local and national conferences, and college courses. Attebury (2016) also categorises PD activities as either formal or informal. Formal activities include courses and workshops offered in-house by educational institutions or by professional associations. The informal activities largely echo those listed by Matthew, Baby and Pillai (2011) and include attending conferences, discussions with colleagues, participating in email discussion lists, reading professional literature and pursuing self-directed projects. Moreover, Welp et al. (2018) stated that coaching, mentoring and teamwork are also PD activities. PD is an ongoing process that includes practice evaluation, a definition of learning needs, participation in learning activities and reflection on their outcomes. Ultimately, some of the professional activities in this review informed the design of the instrument (the survey questionnaire) used in the current study.

In a study conducted by Sputore, Humphries, and Steiner (2017) in Australian libraries, the skills found to be necessary for being a successful practitioner during the Library 2.0 movement were quite generic. The authors were of the opinion that the focus should be on attitudes and traits rather than technical and technological skills. Traits identified were interpersonal communication, change management, information management and leadership skills. Being innovative, adaptable and an active learner were also included. It is thus evident

that PD activities extend beyond the mere imparting of practical skills and include more attitudinal qualities as well.

Coetsee and Weiner (2013: 121) in their article on the transition in academic libraries state that South African librarians tend to resist change when confronted by the reality of the new technologies, such as the Internet, Google and Web 2.0 tools. Their stance tends to be that the library is superior or better than these new technologies or they look for faults with them. Moropa (2010) in Coetsee and Weiner (2013) mentioned that there is a great need for librarians to overcome these negative attitudes and habits. It could be argued that this could be done through PD activities.

Coetsee and Weiner (2013) think that the shift towards learner-centred curricula, as in problem-based and resource-based learning, and to different delivery methods, such as e-learning and short courses, require new approaches to the provision of access to learning and information resources. There are several studies that attribute poor information skills among many South African college students to a lack of IT resources and staff in campus libraries. Again, it could be argued that PD activities would need to take into consideration this shift towards learner-centred curricula and different delivery methods.

Makhathini (2015) highlighted that subject librarians rely on systems which support people for training on new technologies – they do not get training directly from the vendors. Due to ongoing technological changes, subject librarians need the provision of training to enable them to use new technologies when performing their jobs. New technologies are introduced regularly, making the tasks of subject librarians more challenging day by day. Myeza (2010) in Makhathini (2015), emphasising the importance of technology skills, refers to a new policy in the United States of America (USA) that requires every subject librarian to have some IT qualification in addition to the library qualification because subject librarians are experiencing challenges transferring the relevant skills and information to academic staff and students. The role of PD with regard to these developments is thus an important one.

Ukachi and Onuoha (2014) point out that the advent of ICT and the adoption of the exploding Internet and media technologies into library services have caused expansion and dramatic changes in information provision and communication processes. For the librarians to keep up-to-date with these changes and flow with the trends and developments in the field, they

need to train and retrain themselves, especially in technological skills acquisition. In similar vein, Gregersen (2013) pointed out how subject librarians are also being challenged by the new ways of publishing on the web, using e-books and print on demand. The new paradigms that arise from e-learning and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) might lead to new ways of organising most activities in higher education including librarianship. Gregersen (2013) further adds that the technological change towards mobile technology and “bring your device” (“BYOD”) leads to a new ecology with easy and more frequent access to resources outside the institutions. These challenges need to be met by university libraries offering highly specialised services in a rapidly changing environment.

It is clearly evident as Maesaroh and Genoni (2012: 83) pointed out, that “academic librarians are working in a challenging and changing environment” and PD in this regard is crucial. It can be argued that more than ever before, there is now a serious global interest in the area of creative and innovative LIS delivery as well as the important role that CPD can play in ensuring this delivery. As pointed out in the previous chapter, the fact that there is an increasing number of students who are often inadequately prepared regarding library and information skills makes the subject librarian’s job more difficult in the light of the changes taking place but also underscores the importance of PD for these librarians. One also needs to bear in mind in this context of rapid change Shelley (2014)’s point that while the duties of subject librarians have either changed or been affected by changes in areas that relate to their work, the broad topics for which they seek professional training remain relatively constant.

In this study, much attention was paid to establishing the various PD activities that were on offer at the four institutions and which the subject librarians had engaged in. In addition, attention was also paid to establishing the PD needs of the subject librarians with a view to ensuring that the activities offered were indeed relevant to the needs of the librarians.

In a more negative light, Ukachi and Onuoha (2014) have bemoaned and catalogued the multifaceted consequences of refusing to acquire the relevant skills necessary for innovation and creativity in LIS delivery. Such refusal could be the result of challenges associated with the PD of academic librarians and subject librarians in particular. These challenges are outlined and discussed below.

2.5 CHALLENGES TO THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF SUBJECT LIBRARIANS

Coetsee and Weiner (2013) in their study identified numerous challenges faced by academic libraries in South Africa when it comes to PD. These include negative attitudes, a lack of vision, the need for staff development, slow adoption of technology and technological developments, inadequate support for research, an inadequate budget and the need for leadership development. These are significant problems for many academic librarians and some of the problems, together with other challenges, are highlighted below.

2.5.1 Time constraints

Makhatini (2015) points to the nature of the work that subject librarians do in that they are expected to be available in the library all the time for their users. As a result, they do not have time to attend regular trainings on new technologies, and universities cannot afford to have subject librarians out of their offices without having assistants left behind to assist the users. Similarly, in the study undertaken by Alawadhi (2015) in Kuwaiti academic libraries, study participants revealed that lack of time was the main reason for them, as library staff, not being able to take part in PD activities. It was pointed out that librarians have to do multiple jobs and are forced to take on more responsibilities due to the reduction of staff in the workplace. There is evidence that a similar situation pertains in South Africa. For example, in their study reported on above of CPD opportunities at the DUT, Moonasar and Underwood (2018) found that among the major challenges that hindered subject librarians in attending CPD activities were budget and time constraints.

2.5.2 Age

Interestingly, the authors also identified age as an issue – most CPD activities side-line those who are most experienced as management would rather invest in the younger generation (Moonasar and Underwood, 2018).

2.5.3 Budget constraints

The issue of budgetary or financial constraints is frequently mentioned in the literature and was also an issue which was focused on in the current study Corcoran and McGuinness (2014) and Cossham and Fields (2013) see financial constraints as one of the barriers that

need to be overcome for librarians to participate in CPD activities. In the African university context, Chanetsa (2014) refers to the often-limited resources both material and human impacting on the development of subject librarianship. Similarly, Ezeani, Eke, and Ugwu (2015) in their study of academic librarians in South-east Nigeria found that there was a lack of funding for PD programmes as well as a dearth of professional mentors. With regard to the financial costs of PD and the inadequacy of funding to meet these costs, Alawadhi (2015: 90) makes the important point that CPD should incorporate low-cost activities and these could include inviting speakers from other academic libraries and offering in-house workshops on a regular basis to all staff. According to Corcoran and McGuinness (2014) in Alawadhi (2015: 84) financial constraints, time and lack of employer encouragement are the main barriers to overcome for participation in CPD activities. In line with the conceptual framework underpinning the study and taking into consideration findings in the studies being reviewed, the issue of employer encouragement or motivation for PD was examined in the current study.

2.5.4 Human challenges

The “human” challenge in PD is an interesting one. Not only is there a shortage of qualified mentors (as pointed to above), there is also the challenge of library management’s reluctance to encourage and support the PD of their staff. According to Dzandza and Akussah (2018) in their study entitled “*Professional development in private university libraries in Ghana*”, 58.3% of librarians indicated that they struggled to get approval for PD programmes from their management. A similar finding was made by Owusu-Acheaw (2017) in his study concerning PD programmes for library staff in Ghanaian polytechnics, thus clearly pointing to negative attitudes towards PD on the part of some library managers.

2.5.5 Inadequate support

Coetsee and Weiner (2013) mentioned inadequate support for research as one of the problems facing academic librarians. As has been documented by Mathew, Baby, and Pillai (2011) only a very small portion of academic librarians are involved in research leading to publication. The reasons for this could be numerous including a lack of support. This is a problem as the need for librarians to engage more in research activities is clearly evident. Wilkinson (2015), for example, points to the need for more practice-based research due to the rapidly changing environment and development of new applications for librarianship. Practising librarians will then be in a position to identify the problems that need to be solved

through research. Also, conducting research better aligns subject librarians with the research responsibilities of the teaching faculty.

2.6 ROLE OF PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Goldman, Arnolds, and Eksteen (2016) stated that professional associations play an important role in communities of practice such as accountants, lawyers and engineers. They provide services to organisations, business firms, educational institutions, hospitals and courts of law. Professional associations set the rules and guidelines on how each profession should operate in the communities in which they practice. According to Corcoran and McGuinness (2014), the role of the professional library organisations in facilitating, supporting and promoting CPD varies from country to country and from organisation to organisation. He mentions that in the Republic of Ireland, for example, CPD is not compulsory, but strongly recommended. Ezeani, Eke and Ugwu (2015) see professional associations as bodies that play a huge role in licensure, in determining who is qualified to practice and ensure that members are competent in their practice.

According to Dorner, Campbell-Meier, and Seto (2017), library associations with well-chosen objectives and strategies can play an essential role in influencing and contributing to social change. In South Africa, LIASA was launched in 1997. Coetsee and Weiner (2013) define LIASA as a professional non-profit organisation that strives to unite, develop and empower all people in the LIS field in South Africa. It is an organisation that leads in transforming, developing, and sustaining LIS for all people in the country. It provides South African librarians with opportunities to make vital connections with colleagues, training and skills development programmes, advocacy, and the promotion of library workers' status. LIASA established the Higher Education Libraries Interest Group (HELIG), which provides a platform for academic librarians to share knowledge and experiences. HELIG meetings take place at the annual LIASA conference. Another interest group within LIASA is the Research and Training Interest Group (RETIG), which provides a platform for academic librarians, as practitioners and as lecturers, to discuss issues.

Importantly in terms of this study is that LIASA has a formal CPD policy, which aims to improve the capacity of each professional to develop their technical and professional

knowledge and to improve their personal and ethical capacities. The CPD policy is to ensure that professionals fulfil their responsibilities, tasks or duties completely and to allow professionals to improve their performance in their current roles (LIASA CPD Guidelines, 2018). As indicated in the introductory chapter one of the research questions guiding the study was to ascertain the role played by LIASA in the PD of the subject librarians.

2.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In terms of the conceptual framework underpinning the study, the researcher has adopted the Maintaining Professional Competence Model taken from the study done by Chan and Auster (2003) on the relationship between participation in updating activities, that is, PD and individual characteristics, and the relationship between participation in updating activities and organisational factors. The model is premised on PD being about these two parties – the individual and the organisation. This model identifies factors that can affect individuals' participation in updating activities. These factors at an individual level are motivation, age, and barriers to participation and, at the organisational level, the factors are an updating climate and managerial support (Chan and Auster, 2003).

The model is depicted graphically in Figure 2.1

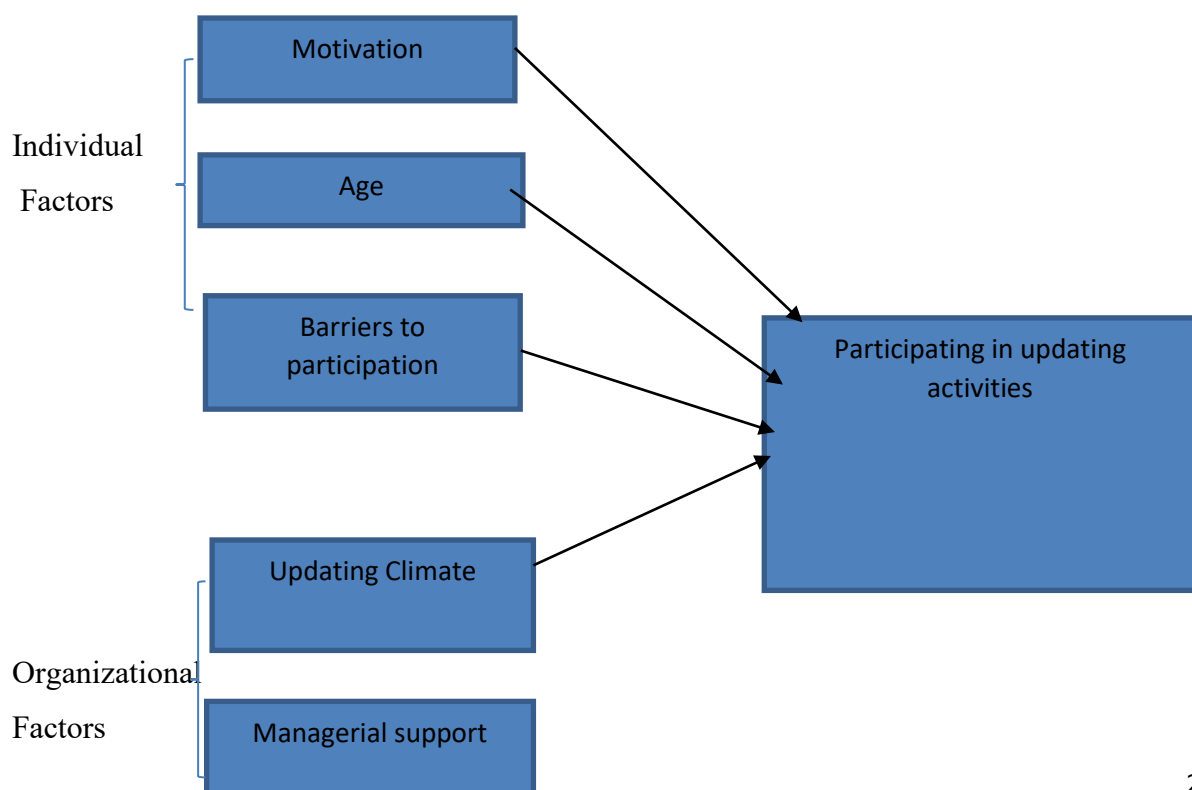


Figure 2.1: Maintaining Professional Competence Model

Source: Chan and Auster (2003)

Chan and Auster (2003,267) further clarify the factors:

- **Motivation**

The individual needs to be motivated to participate in PD activities. Benefits could be intrinsic, that is personal satisfaction or extrinsic, which may be better pay, rewards, awards or promotion.

- **Age**

Age also contributes to the interest in participating in PD activities from both the individual and the organisational perspectives. That is, older people do not feel encouraged to attend PD activities and organisations do not feel like investing in people who are about to retire. Young people are more motivated to participate in PD activities with the hope of subsequent benefits.

- **Barriers to participation**

There might be a barrier that can restrict individuals from participating in PD activities. Barriers could include the inability to participate in the activity which could be due to cost, lack of time or personal problems, for example, family issues.

- **Updating climate**

This refers to the organisation's policy and plans related to updating skills and the qualifications of staff. An updating climate also includes the perception that the organisation facilitates or inhibits PD activities.

- **Managerial support**

Managers and supervisors in the organisation actively support employees in their updating or PD efforts.

In terms of the present study, one sees the afore-mentioned factors being reflected in the research questions asked. For example, research question 2, "How do the subject librarians perceive their professional development?" motivational factors come into play such as how the subject librarians see themselves as benefiting either extrinsically or intrinsically (or both) from PD activities; whether age is a factor in how they perceive PD; and whether

organisational factors have any influence on their perceptions. These factors are also reflected in research question 3 “What are the professional development needs of the subject librarians?” while research question 4 “What are the challenges associated with professional development of the subject librarians?” sees both organisational factors and individual factors coming into play. For example, the organisational factor “updating climate” will include subject librarians’ perception as to whether the library facilitates or inhibits PD activities while the organisational factor “managerial support” will reflect the extent to which supervisors and managers in the library are supportive of PD. One could also envisage research question 5, namely, “What role does the professional association play in the professional development of the subject librarians?” being included as an organisational factor. Individual factors in terms of challenges associated with the PD of subject librarians drawn from the model would include their ability to participate as determined by, for example, the availability of funds, time and personal problems such as family issues.

2.8 SUMMARY

This chapter provided a review of the literature as well as the conceptual framework adopted in the study. Issues introduced in Chapter One were expanded on. The chapter began with a discussion of what a literature review is and why it is important. This was followed by a discussion of the role of the subject librarian in an academic library. Noted in the discussion was the changing role of the subject librarian. The concept of PD was then discussed and, more specifically, PD for subject librarians. The lack of research related to the PD of subject librarians, in particular, was pointed out. The various PD activities directed at librarians were then outlined with the importance of technology-related skills being highlighted. The challenges associated with, the PD of subject librarians were discussed, with budgetary constraints frequently coming to the fore. The role played by professional associations such as LIASA in South Africa with regard to PD was described. The conceptual framework, namely, the Maintaining Professional Competence Model was introduced in more detail and the linkages between it and the research questions underpinning the study outlined.

Chapter Three follows and comprises the research methodology used in the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Maphoto (2016), the research methodology explains in detail how the study was carried out and which techniques were used. The researcher further describes the research methodology as a section that provides the layout of the methods that were used in a study. On the other hand, Lines et al. (2016) define research methodology as a method of systematically collecting research data about an on-going organisational process relative to a goal, objective, or need of the organisation. In this chapter various aspects relating to the methodology used in the study are outlined and discussed. These are the research paradigm, approach and design, the population and sampling method, the data collection methods and their reliability and validity, and the analysis of the collected data. The ethical considerations relating to the study are also described.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

According to Maree (2010: 47), a paradigm is defined as “a set of assumptions or beliefs about fundamental aspects of reality which gives rise to a particular world view.” Paradigms serve as organising principles by which reality is interpreted (Leech, 2016). In addition, DuPlooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2014) explain that a paradigm describes a cluster of beliefs and dictates for scientists in a particular discipline what should be studied, how research should be done and how the findings should be interpreted. Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) in their study state that a paradigm constitutes the abstract beliefs and principles that shape how a researcher views the world, and how she or he interprets and acts within that world. It implies that paradigms serve as the lens or organising principles by which reality is interpreted (Maree, 2010). Paradigms legitimise the manner in which the research is conducted and guide the researcher concerning what knowledge exists and how it can be known and comprehended. In other words, paradigms are like lenses that help to view phenomena (Munyua and Stilwell, 2012).

According to Hewlett and Brown (2018), paradigms influence the methodology and methods adopted in a particular study. Paradigms are important for understanding and contributing to

the logic and harmony of qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods studies (Munyua and Stilwell, 2012). Paradigms also help filter researchers' ways of viewing the world and guide how knowledge is conceived and analysed to uncover the essential features of the research (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999). Creswell (2014) notes the use of worldviews and paradigms as interchangeable and highlights the four widely discussed paradigms in the literature. These are post-positivism, constructivism, transformatism and pragmatism. Given the nature of the current study, a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods was used. Consequently, the pragmatic paradigm was adopted for the study.

3.2.1 Pragmatic paradigm

According to Yee, Wong, and Turner (2017), pragmatism is defined as an approach to understanding what works in the world, considering context and human behaviour. Colley and Scott (2018) stated that pragmatists date back to the late 19th century where American philosophers such as Peirce, James and Dewey argued that knowledge is about doing, not seeing. Creswell (2014) stated that pragmatism is not committed to any one system of philosophy and reality. Thorne (2016) noted that pragmatism in an educational research setting considers research findings not as actual descriptions of reality, but rather as possible connections between action and consequences. Badley (2003) further observed that pragmatists view all forms of inquiry as ways of helping people to cope with aspects of the world, with no one approach to research being superior to the other. According to Green and Thorogood (2018), pragmatism does not view truth as absolute but provisional and focuses on the "what and how" of research to meet the intended purpose, with research outcomes being possible connections between actions and consequences. According to Creswell (2009), pragmatists further believe that research is contextual and that historical, social and political aspects need to be considered in research.

Stilwell and Majinge (2013) in their study entitled "*Library services provision for people with visual impairments and in wheelchairs in academic libraries in Tanzania*" used a pragmatism paradigm and applied both qualitative and quantitative methods to conduct a survey and observation-based research. Nabutto (2014) in his study entitled "*Staff training and development in Ugandan private chartered university libraries*" also adopted the pragmatism paradigm. As done in the current study, he stated that pragmatism was chosen because the nature of the study demanded a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to soliciting and analysing data.

To summarise, pragmatism is a problem-focused philosophy of personal experience that encourages people to seek the best ways to achieve their desired goals. It focuses on the problem and not on the methodology or research philosophy, and allows the researcher to employ appropriate approaches that could lead to possible solutions to the problem faced (Nabutto, 2014). Pragmatism is concerned with one's response to life's process, believing that there is no absolute reality, but only the possible connection between actions and consequences that are context-specific. In applying pragmatism to this current study, the researcher understood that the PD of academic librarians was not static or fixed – it will vary from case to case and institution to institution and would require different approaches. The pragmatist paradigm was deemed appropriate for the study because it gave the researcher the flexibility needed to select investigative techniques that adequately addressed the research questions. The adoption of the pragmatic paradigm in the current study was further reinforced through its use, of late, by several researchers in the library and information field. Thus, apart from Nabutto (2014) and Stilwell and Majinge (2013), it has also been used by Lutaaya and Hoskins (2015), Keller (2015), Raju (2017), and Moonasar and Underwood (2018).

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

Fox, Bayat and Bayat (2007) argue that when selecting the research approach, the question to respond is whether the relevant solution will be found in the past, present or the future. In deciding that, the appropriate approach could be historical, descriptive or experimental in nature. This decision provides a sound basis for further planning. Creswell (2014), in more detail, defines research approaches as the plans and the procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to specific methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Creswell (2014) advances three research approaches, namely, quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. In terms of the quantitative approach, a survey comprising mainly closed questions was used while a focus group responding to a list of open questions constituted the qualitative approach. Thus, using the two approaches involved the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data to answer the research questions posed (Creswell, 2009). Using both approaches drew on the strengths of each thereby minimising the limitations (Creswell, 2014). Furthermore, (and returning to the issue of paradigms) as pointed out by Creswell (2014), pragmatism is often used as the epistemology to guide the

use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This study, descriptive in nature, adopted a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches in line with the pragmatic paradigm.

3.3.1 Quantitative approach

According to Maree (2010), a quantitative approach is used when a researcher relies on numerical data to test the relationships between variables or to describe trends. Creswell (2014) states that the quantitative approach is used for testing objective theories by examining the relationship between measurable variables, and these variables, in turn, can be analysed using statistical procedures. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), Brannen (2017) and George (2019) the emphasis in quantitative methodology is placed on numbers and statistical data. Shekhar et al. (2019) state that quantitative methods can provide generalisable findings while qualitative methods, on the other hand, generate rich, descriptive understanding of the investigated phenomenon (see below).

According to Savela (2018), quantitative methods can provide valuable insight into the ordering of reality and materialised discourses and they can also mitigate personal bias. Moreover, answering the “how many” or “how much” type questions are best served by a quantitative approach (McCusker and Gunaydin, 2015) and the survey instrument used in the present study comprised questions eliciting quantifiable data. In addition, the findings from the quantitative approach were easily and effectively presented in the form of graphs and tables (see Chapter Four). Both Mathew Baby and Pillai (2011) and Owusu-Acheaw (2017) in their studies concerning the PD of academic library staff adopted purely quantitative approaches.

3.3.2 Qualitative approach

Creswell (2014: 4) defined qualitative research as “an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.” According to Coates (2014: 329),

Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting.

Maree (2016) explained that in qualitative research the issue of quality can be addressed by dealing with issues of validity, practicality and effectiveness. The emphasis in qualitative

methodology is on words, with data collected including what people said or how the researcher described what he or she saw or experienced (Creswell, 2014; Maree, 2010). Leedy and Ormrod (2016) refer to qualitative research as an approach in which complex descriptions are used to describe phenomena. Methods for collecting qualitative data include observation and interviews – the former often using a checklist and the latter an interview schedule (Bryman, 2017). Other methods are narratives and analyses of documentary sources, artefacts and group discussions (Ritchie et al., 2013). Qualitative data is inductively analysed and processed to generate themes that seek to give meaning to the data describing the problem under study.

The study found the qualitative approach suitable as it allowed the researcher to explore the participants' perceptions. Through the focus group, the researcher was able to give participants an opportunity to express their views and opinions. However, the weaknesses of the qualitative approach are that it can be time-consuming and costly. These, however, were not concerns in the study. The researcher led the focus group thus allowing for further probing of issues raised and comparing what was said with the facial expressions of those who said it.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is defined by Sood et al. (2018) as a plan that a researcher uses to determine research participants and collect information from them. It helps the researcher to gather, examine and find the meaning in the observed facts (Maleka et al., 2018). There are different types of research design such as survey design, non-experimental designs, correlation designs, criterion-group designs, cross-sectional designs and longitudinal designs (Clark and Creswell, 2008). The current study adopted a survey research design.

3.4.1 Survey research design

Privitera (2017) defines a survey as a common measurement tool in the behavioural sciences which comprises a series of questions or statements to which participants indicate responses. Survey research uses a written questionnaire to gather information on the background, behaviours, beliefs, or attitudes of large numbers of respondents (Neuman, 2014: 49). Survey methods or experiments are the techniques used in collecting largely quantitative data (Nardi, 2018) and these include questionnaires, tests or measures, structured interviews and

observation (Coughlan, Cronin and Ryan, 2009). While surveys are overwhelmingly quantitative in nature, a qualitative approach can be used to augment the quantitative data. Jane (2017) states that the purpose of survey research is to gather and analyse information by questioning individuals who are either representative of the research population or are the entire research population. In a similar vein, Maree (2010) points out that in survey research the researcher selects a sample of respondents before administering a questionnaire to collect information about their attitudes, values, habits, ideas, demographics, feelings, opinions, perceptions, plans and beliefs. As Privitera (2017) points out, a survey can be administered in print form or orally via an interview.

Babbie (2017) argues the strengths of surveys lie in their ability to describe characteristics of a large population, more so a self-administered questionnaire as it makes a large population study feasible. The survey is also flexible because it allows many questions to be asked on a given topic and gives flexibility in analysis. Babbie (2017) stresses that surveys use standardised questions, which is an important strength regarding measurement generally. Surveys are an economical means for gathering data from a large number of participants at a particular moment in time to describe the nature of existing conditions (Bertram and Christiansen, 2014). However, according to Bryman and Bell (2015), the weakness of the survey is the requirement of standardised questions which often seem to result in fitting round pegs into square holes. The authors further add that standardised questionnaire items often represent the least common denominator in assessing people's attitude, orientations, circumstances and experiences (Bryman and Bell, 2015). While acknowledging the weaknesses, the questionnaire (detailed below) used in the current study was highly structured comprising closed questions and statements in terms of which respondents were required to choose a response from a list of possible responses.

In terms of the literature, the survey design is a commonly used one when investigating the PD of librarians and the approaches are largely quantitative in nature. For example, Owusu-Acheaw (2017) in his study of PD programmes for polytechnic library staff in Ghana adopted a questionnaire-based quantitative approach only. Mathew, Baby and Pillai (2011) in their study of the PD of library professionals in Kerala also used a quantitative approach in which a survey was conducted using a structured questionnaire to collect data. Finally, Makhathini (2015) in his study on the preparedness of subject librarians meeting the challenges of information technology in higher education institutions in KZN, used a survey design with a

questionnaire incorporating questions which elicited both quantitative and qualitative data. Other studies in LIS (not PD per se) such as those of Moyane (2007), Munyoro (2014), Ncwane (2016) and Idoniboye-Obu (2017) all used the survey design pointing to the general acceptance (and use) of such a design in research in the discipline.

3.5 POPULATION

According to Privitera (2017), a population is a set of all individuals, items, or data of interest to which researchers will generalise the findings. Similarly, Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006) refer to a population as the pool from which the sampling elements have been taken and to which findings are to be generalised. The population used in this study was subject librarians from four tertiary academic institutions in the KZN Province. The institutions were selected on the basis of their traditional or conventional status and, importantly, on their accessibility and availability of subject librarians to meet the requirements posed by the research questions underpinning the study. As noted in Chapter One, the academic librarians selected were from UKZN, the UZ, the DUT and the MUT. Table 3.1 shows the participating institutions and the number of subject librarians employed.

Table 3.1: Institutions surveyed and the number of subject librarians per institution

Name of institution	No. of subject librarians
UKZN	29
UZ	6
DUT	12
MUT	3
Total	50

Source: Websites of the four institutions

3.6 SAMPLING AND SAMPLE SIZE

Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016) define a sample as a set of selected individuals, items or data taken from a population of interest. When an entire population is targeted for the study it

is referred to as a census sample. The term “census” generally refers to any study in which data is collected from the entire target population. According to Gray (2009: 220) census is defined as a “study of every member of a given population, and mostly used to survey the entire population of a country.” Grey (2009) as cited in Olasina, (2014) highlighted several advantages of using a census to study a population, namely, that a census provides a true measure of the population because there is no sampling error, benchmark data may be obtained for future studies, and detailed information about small sub-groups within the population are more likely to be available. Isibika (2013) states that where the potential population is small, it is often feasible to undertake a census to ensure that all their views are represented. Thus, with a small population, the census is possible and convenient. Furthermore, numerous studies (for example, Kuria and Kimutai, 2018; Hussain, Hashmi and Gilani, 2018; Idoniboye-Obu, 2017; Munyoro, 2014) which have used census sampling have achieved excellent response rates of between 70% and 100%. As Maxfield and Babbie (2014) point out, “A response rate of at least 60 per cent is good, and a response rate of 70 per cent is very good.” Achieving a high response rate does assist in generalising one’s findings to the entire population.

In the study and for the afore-mentioned reasons, the researcher decided to use a census sample. Thus, the entire population, that is, all 50 subject librarians in the targeted academic libraries comprised the sample for the study and were approached to participate.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

According to Bryman and Bell (2014), data collection is defined as the process of gathering the basic information that the researcher will use to conclude the study. The instruments used to collect data include, among others, interviews, questionnaires and focus groups (Pickard, 2013). In the study, the researcher triangulated a questionnaire and a focus group to collect the data.

3.7.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaires are defined by Bryman and Bell (2014) as a collection of questions administered to respondents. Questionnaires are the single most popular data collection tool in any research involving human subjects (Pickard, 2013). When used on its own, the term usually denotes a self-completion or self-administered questionnaire. There are a number of

advantages associated with using a questionnaire including cost cheaper, time saved and geographical location participants do not have to be in one place (Pickard, 2013; Isibika, 2013). Isibika (2013) points out that questionnaires are very effective and the response rates can be high if the target population is educated and interested in the topic being studied. Furthermore, in most cases, respondents can complete the questionnaires on their own time thus allowing them to be more accurate in their responses. The aforementioned advantages motivated the researcher to employ a questionnaire as one of the instruments for collecting data.

There are two types of questions used in a questionnaire, namely, closed and open-ended questions. Privitera (2017) defined a closed question as a question or statement in a questionnaire that includes a restricted number of answer options to which the respondents need to respond. A closed or forced-choice question is one in which a number of alternative answers are provided from which respondents are required to select one or more (Ngcobo, 2016: 102). According to Neuman (2014), the advantages of using closed-ended questions are that it is easier and quicker for respondents to answer, the answers of different respondents are easier to compare, the answers are easier to code and statistically analyse, and the less articulate or less literate respondents (which was not an issue in the study) are not at a disadvantage. Ngcobo (2016) states that the biggest disadvantage of closed-ended questions is that they may introduce bias, for example, by either forcing the respondent to choose from the answers provided or by making the respondent select an alternative that might not have otherwise occurred.

An open-ended question is defined as a question or statement that allows the respondents to give any response in his or her own words, without restriction (Privitera, 2017). Bryman and Bell (2014) highlighted several advantages of open-ended questions, namely, they allow for unusual responses which are responses that the researcher may not have thought of including, they do not suggest certain kinds of answers to respondents and , they can open up new areas for exploration which the researcher can recommend for further research. However, disadvantages include respondents giving different degrees of detail in answers to open-ended questions; responses possibly being irrelevant or buried in useless detail; comparisons and statistical analyses being difficult; respondents being intimidated by open questions; and, answering open-ended questions being time-consuming and challenging for the respondents

to answer and, as a consequence, such questions may be skipped or only answered in a perfunctory manner (Neuman, 2014).

The questionnaire used in the study comprised entirely of closed-ended questions or statements which responded to the research questions posed and took into consideration the conceptual framework. The vast majority of the items in the questionnaire were statements which respondents had to rate using a four-point Likert scale. The two extremes were “Strongly disagree” and “Strongly agree” while the mid-points were “Disagree” and “Agree”.

The questionnaire was administered to subject librarians from the identified libraries via email and follow-ups were done via the telephone and, where circumstances allowed, through personal visits. (See Appendix 7.)

3.7.2 Focus group

A focus group is defined as a group discussion organised to explore a specific set of issues, with the explicit use of the group interaction as research data (Oates and Alevizou, 2018). According to Privitera (2017), the goal of a focus group is to get participants talking to each other and to get them to share their ideas and experiences on a predetermined topic. Johnson and Christensen (2017) describe the focus group as a type of group interview in which a moderator leads a discussion with a small group of individuals to examine, in detail, how the group thinks and feel about the topic. In most cases, the group consists of between three to eight people and the questions or survey items used in a focus group are mostly open ones. Focus group discussions are frequently used in a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of social issues. They aim to obtain data from a purposely selected group of individuals rather than from a statistically representative sample of a broader population (O Nyumba et al. 2018). Focus group environments are socially oriented in that they provide a setting where participants can discuss problems and possible solutions can be found from others who may have encountered similar problems (Mutsvunguma, 2013). The author further states that since focus group interviews are conducted as group discussions, there is a great need for controlled moderation of the discussion. The researcher’s role is more of a moderator than an interviewer (Mutsvunguma, 2013).

Kamberelis and Dimitriadis (2013) point out that focus groups have evolved from the focused interview where participants are selected because they are known to have been involved in a

particular situation that is the focus of the discussion. The authors also mention that the focus group has become a popular method to examine how people, working together, construe research topics (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis, 2013). Moreover, focus group participants can emphasise issues that they deem to be important and significant because the moderator relinquishes some control to the participants and, through the group, the researcher can study how participants collectively make sense of a phenomenon and construct meaning around it (Cyr, 2019). Johnson and Christensen (2017) mention that one of the aims of using a focus group is to obtain general background information about the topic of interest. The focus group also helps to generate the hypothesis that can be submitted for further research and testing using more quantitative approaches and stimulate the formation of ideas and creative concepts (Johnson and Christensen, 2017). Stewart et al. (2009) further mention that focus groups can diagnose the potential challenges within a new service or product and help in learning how respondents talk about a phenomenon of interest.

The focus group in the current study consisted of eight subject librarians at the UKZN Pietermaritzburg Campus. The reason for choosing this campus was that it has students from all the schools within the university, namely, Medical, Law and Management, Education, Social Sciences, and Humanities. Focus groups were held in neutral settings and conducted in a non-judgmental atmosphere. In terms of the study, the venue used was quiet and had enough space to accommodate all participants. Privitera (2017) suggests that the typical size of a focus group is six to ten members. However, the size of a focus group can vary considerably – from three to eight people as mentioned earlier in this discussion. Adeleke (2017) emphasises that a small group in the focus group is preferable if the goal is to explore a difficult, controversial or emotional subject, or to inspire thorough explanations.

The researcher made use of a focus group guide comprising a list of open questions which complemented or validated the questions asked in the survey questionnaire and responded to the research questions underpinning the study. Amongst the issues discussed was the usefulness of PD for subject librarians; the support they received from management in terms of PD; what motivated them to participate in PD; the structures in place to support such development; the challenges faced; and, the role played by the library association in PD. (See Appendix 8.)

3.7.2.1 Process for conducting the focus group

Stewart and Shamdasani (2014) list the steps to be followed by a researcher when planning the focus group. These are: the researcher needs to define the problem, identify the participants, appoint the moderator and draw up the questions which will serve as the guide for conducting the focus group discussion. Johnson and Christensen (2017) noted that a focus group is normally scheduled for a session of one to three hours and that in some cases it may be necessary to hold more than one session. The role of the moderator or facilitator is an important one – “[They] ... must know when to probe or ask for more information and ... need to be aware of the personal and interpersonal dynamics at work within the group” (Johnson and Christensen, 2017). This includes the comfort level of the group from the beginning to the end. The moderator or facilitator should choose a comfortable and central venue that all participants can reach. As noted above, the venue chosen for the focus group in the study was appropriate. Once the participants are seated, the moderator welcomes them and puts them at ease by assuring them that there are no right or wrong responses. The moderator requests permission from the participants to record the discussion and assures them that their identities will remain confidential. Privitera (2017) notes that focus groups work better if they are recorded and subsequently transcribed because relying on note-taking only will not be sufficient for the researcher to capture all the processes whereby meaning is collectively constructed during a session.

In this study, the researcher asked the participants’ permission to record the session and this was granted. Participants’ confidentiality was also assured. During the process leading up to the discussion, the researcher would need to prepare a question or topic guide to help in directing the discussion and cover all key issues to be examined in the session (Liamputtong, 2011). The question guide should be based on the research questions of the study.

Once the focus group discussion is completed, the audio recording of the discussion needs to be transcribed to enable the data to be analysed. Liamputtong (2011) defines transcription as transforming the spoken word to the written word. He further states that transcription permits further analysis and provides a permanent written record of the interviews conducted by the researcher (Liamputtong, 2011). This means that the researcher can share with others who are interested in the research. However, nonverbal communication, gestures, and behavioural

responses are not reflected in a transcript (Carey and Asbury, 2016) but these can be noted by the researcher if necessary.

3.8 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

According to Kimberlin and Winterstein (2008), the key indicators of the quality of a measuring instrument are the reliability and validity of the measures. The process of developing and validating an instrument is in large part focused on reducing error in the measurement process. Johnson and Christensen (2017: 163) refer to reliability and validity as the two most important properties to consider in using a test or assessment procedure.

3.8.1 Reliability

Reliability estimates evaluate the stability of measures, the internal consistency of measurement instruments, and the inter-rater reliability of instrument scores. According to Bryman and Bell (2014), reliability is concerned with the question of whether the results of a study are repeatable. Thus one approach used in checking for reliability is the “test-retest method”, which involves using an instrument with a group on two separate occasions and analysing how closely the two sets of results conform to each other (Johnson and Christensen, 2017). One set of results is essentially determining which measurements or observations are consistent across time, and this is known as test-retest reliability. In this study to demonstrate test-retest reliability, a Cronbach’s Alpha measure of scale reliability was conducted in respect of the survey questionnaire to establish reliability, internal consistency and overall reliability of the key variables of the research. The coefficient alpha for the scale was found to be 0.91 suggesting good reliability as approved by Gliem and Gliem (2003).

3.8.2 Validity

Validity is the extent to which the interpretations of the results of a test are warranted, which depends on the use the test is intended to serve. Ensuring validity can be achieved in various ways, one of which is to carry out an initial investigation (a pre-testing study) using the intended data collecting instrument to check the “authenticity and relevance of the data produced” (Birley and Moreland, 1998: 42). According to Neuman (2011) a pre-test or feasibility study as different scholars often call it, is a process whereby the researcher

distributes a questionnaire to a sample group to identify potential challenges with the questions and to amend such challenges before the actual data collection process begins.

Dubey et al. (2016) state that pre-testing a research instrument involves a critical inspection of the understanding of each question and its meaning by a respondent. Pre-testing provides the researcher with an opportunity to identify questionnaire items that may be misunderstood by the respondents and it allows them to point out problematic questions, poor instructions and pointless or misplaced questions (Connaway and Powell, 2010).

Dubey et al. (2016) point out that a pre-test should be carried out under actual field conditions on a group of people similar to one's study population. In this study, a pre-test of the survey questionnaire was conducted with five professional librarians who headed the circulation sections of the five UKZN campus libraries because they were convenient and accessible to the researcher. Neuendorf (2016) argues that this exercise allows the researcher to check the following: clarity and layout of questions, spelling, ambiguous and unclear questions, the omission of relevant questions, difficult questions for respondents and comments from respondents. All five professional librarians found the questionnaire easy to understand and experienced no difficulty in completing it. Consequently, no corrections or changes were made to the questionnaire.

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS

According to Creswell (2009: 186), "coding is the process of organising the material into chunks or segments of text before bringing meaning to information." This includes taking text data or images gathered during the data collection process, placing them in categories and labelling those categories with terms based on the actual language of the participants (Creswell, 2009). Before analysing the raw data, each completed questionnaire was checked for missing data, ambiguity, omissions and errors. According to Powell (1997, 63), cleaning data can involve everything from simply reading results, looking for surprising responses and unexpected patterns, to verifying or checking the coding of the data. The SPSS described by Bryman and Bell (2014) as possibly the most widely used computer software for the analysis of quantitative data for social scientists, was used to analyse the data obtained via the questionnaires. Descriptive analysis was used to generate percentages, frequencies, bar charts and cross-tabulation in line with Bryman and Bell (2014).

One of the most common approaches to qualitative data analysis is undertaking a search for themes in transcripts or field notes (Bryman and Bell, 2014). The qualitative data obtained from the focus group discussion were analysed and interpreted using thematic content analysis. Thematic content analysis was preferred because it offered an accessible and theoretically flexible approach to analysing the qualitative data. Thematic analysis produces and presents data effectively, and it reflects the reality of data collection (Adeleke, 2017).

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

De Vos (2011) identified ethical issues which need to be taken into consideration when doing research. These include not harming participants, voluntary participation, informed consent, deception of respondents, violation of privacy or anonymity and confidentiality, denial of treatment, compensation and debriefing of participants.

Regarding ethical issues concerning the study, the researcher ensured that permission to do the research was granted by all four institutions through their research offices. Confirmation of this was provided to the participants by attaching the gatekeepers' letters to the informed consent form that was presented to each of the participants and which they had to sign. All participants were assured of confidentiality. Participants were further informed that participating in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time if they felt uncomfortable. The actions by the researcher were in terms of, and in line with, the Research Ethics Policy of UKZN (2014). The various documents outlined above are included in the appendices.

3.11 SUMMARY

In this chapter, various aspects relating to the research methodology used in the study were identified and discussed. A pragmatic paradigm was adopted which allowed for both a quantitative and qualitative approach. A survey questionnaire was used to collect the quantitative data while qualitative data was collected via a focus group discussion. Each of the two methods used was discussed. The population of the study, which also comprised the sample, was the 50 subject librarians from four KZN tertiary institutions, namely, UKZN, MUT, UZ, and DUT. The mechanisms used to ensure the reliability and validity of the survey questionnaire were described. This was followed by how both sets of data, qualitative from

the focus group and quantitative from the survey questionnaire were analysed. The chapter ended with a brief outline of the ethical considerations of the study and how these were met.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

As stipulated in Chapter One, the purpose of the study was to investigate the professional development of subject librarians at the selected academic libraries in KZN Province, South Africa. This chapter presents the research data which was collected from the subject librarians via a survey questionnaire and a focus group. Both data collection methods were informed by the research questions guiding the study (see Section 1.6 in Chapter One). The data from the questionnaire were coded and entered into the SPSS. Descriptive analysis was used to examine the data to address the research questions. Findings derived from the questionnaire are presented in bar charts, pie charts and tables. Findings from the focus group are presented in text form. In terms of the arrangement of the findings, Bazeley (2009: 207) points out that quantitative and qualitative components can be considered “integrated” to the extent that these components are explicitly related to each other within a single study and in such a way as to be mutually illuminating, thereby producing findings that are greater than the sum of the parts, and this is known as an integrated strategy. Similarly, Creswell (2014) describes this process as one in which the researcher first reports the quantitative statistical findings and then discusses the qualitative findings that either confirm or disconfirm the statistical results. Consequently, the presentation of the findings is not broken into two separate sections but integrated into a logical sequence with the findings from the qualitative focus group complementing the dominant quantitative results.

4.2 RESPONSE RATE

As noted in the previous chapter, there were 50 subject librarians employed by the four academic libraries at the time of the study and they formed the target population. Also as noted, a census sample was adopted and thus all subject librarians were approached to participate. For the survey, 48 subject librarians returned the completed questionnaire giving a response rate of 96%. The researcher learnt that the two subject librarians who did not return the questionnaires were in the situation which was beyond their control. All eight subject librarians from the UKZN Pietermaritzburg Campus attended the focus group session giving a 100% response rate. According to Adeleke (2017), the goal of every researcher is to

attain a response rate of approximating 60%. Adeleke (2017) adds that a low response rate diminishes the validity and reliability of survey outcomes while a high response rate decreases the risk of bias. The response rate achieved in the questionnaire survey and the focus group could thus be described as excellent (Adeleke, 2017).

Table 4.1 presents the details of the response rates for each library for the quantitative aspect of the study:

Table 4.1: Distribution of subject librarians according to institution

Academic library	Expected respondents	Actual respondents	% of actual respondents
UKZN	28	26	92.8
UZ	7	7	100
DUT	12	12	100
MUT	3	3	100
Total	50	48	96

4.3 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

In this section the demographic details of the 48 participating subject librarians are given. The demographic information comprised respondents' gender, age, the number of years of experience as a subject librarian and highest qualification. The findings are presented in Figures 4.1 to 4.4 below:

4.3.1 Gender

The gender of the respondents is presented in Figure 4.1 below.

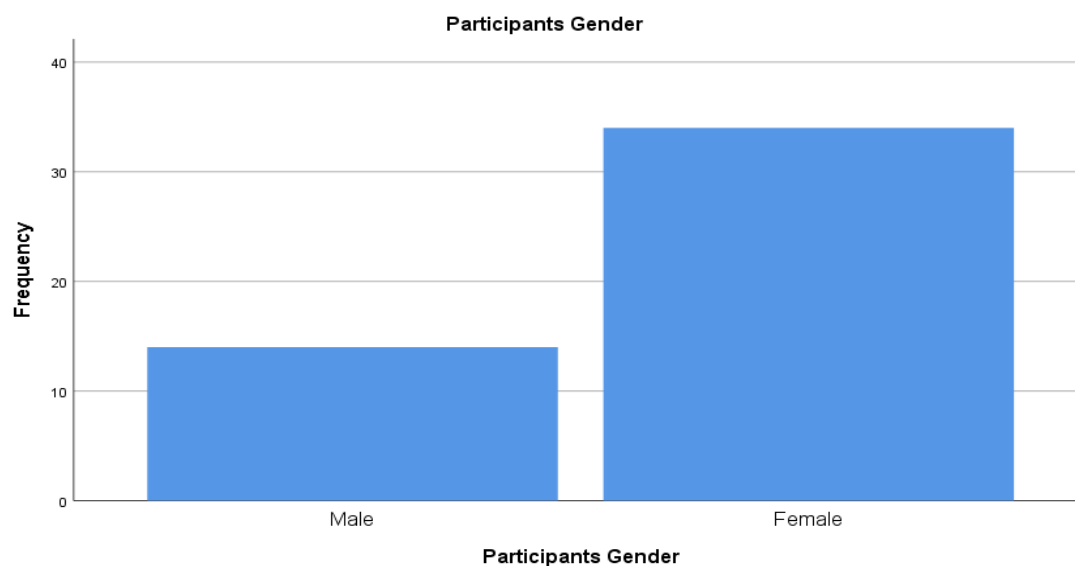


Figure 4.1: Gender of subject librarians (N=48)

Figure 4.1 revealed that there were 34 (70%) females and 14 (29%) males. It is evident that there are more female than male subject librarians in the four selected academic libraries in KZN universities.

4.3.2 Age

The respondents were asked to indicate their age group. The findings from the 48 subject librarians are presented in Figure 4.2:

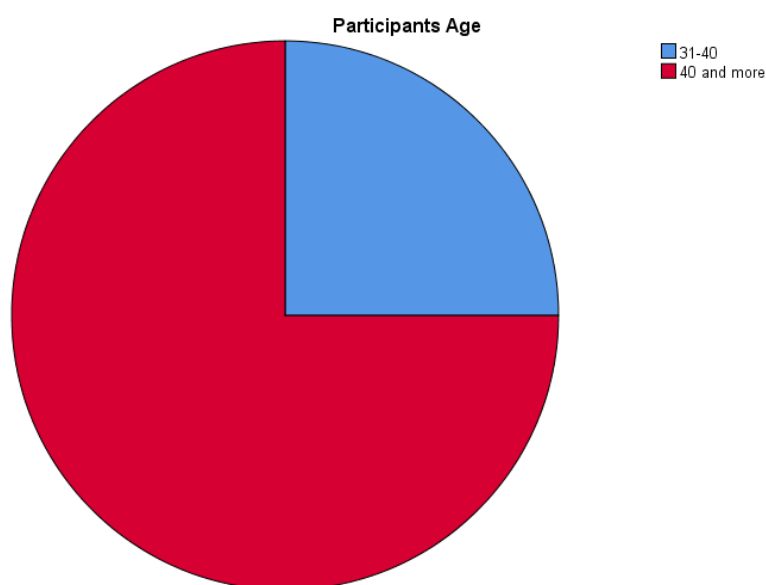


Figure 4.2: Age of subject librarians (N=48)

The dominant age group of respondents in the survey was 40 years old or more accounting for 36 (75%) respondents. The remaining 12 (25%) were in the age range of 31-40 years.

4.3.3 Work experience as subject librarians

The respondents were asked to indicate how long (in years) they have worked as subject librarians. The findings are presented in Figure 4.3 below:

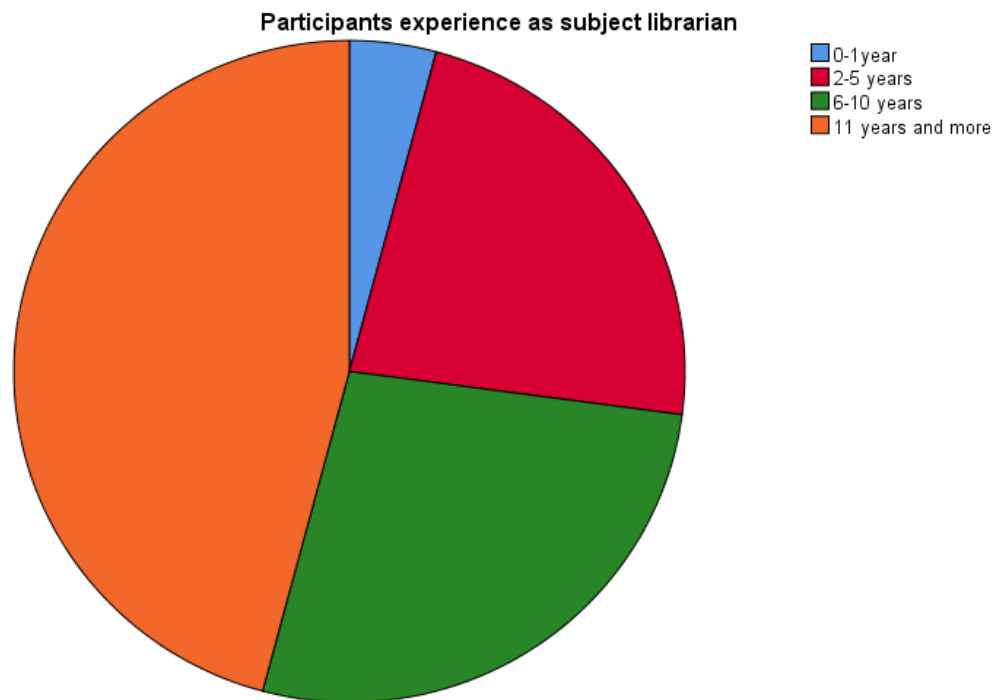


Figure 4.3: Years worked as a subject librarian (N=48)

The findings revealed that 22 (45.8%) respondents had 11 years or more experience. This was followed by 13 (27%) respondents who had between six- and 10-years experience. A minority of respondents, 13 (27.1%) had five years or less of work experience.

4.3.4 Highest education level attained

The respondents were asked to indicate their highest education level. Figure 4.4 below presents the findings:

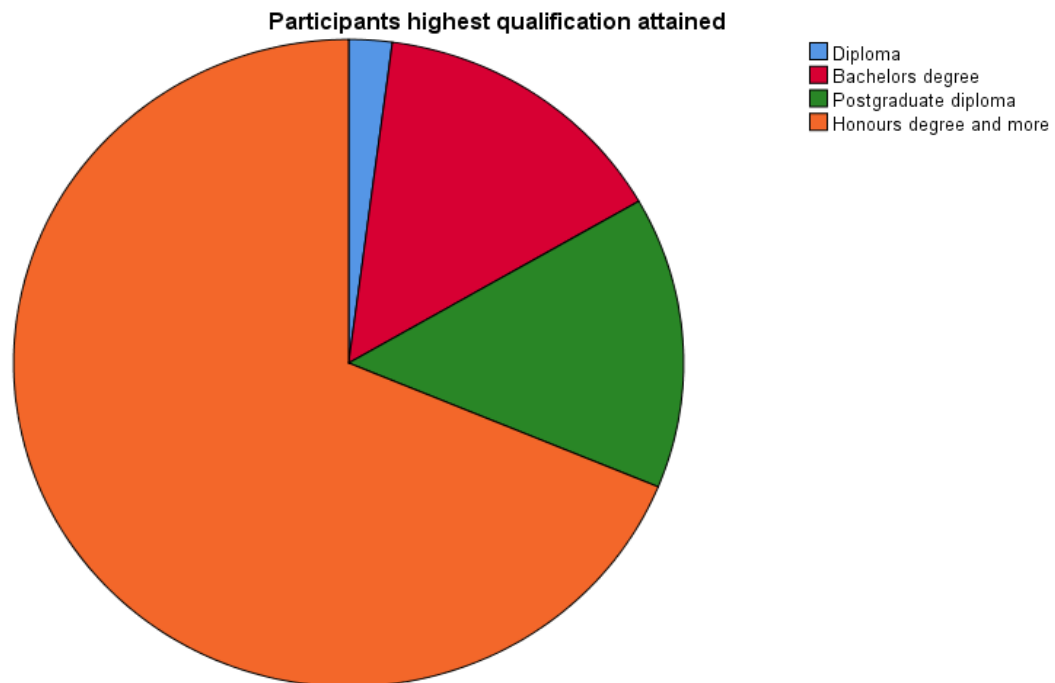


Figure 4.4: Highest education level attained by subject librarians (N=48)

The findings revealed that the majority 33 (68.8%) of the respondents had an honours degree in librarianship or more. This was followed by seven (14.6%) respondents with bachelor's degrees in librarianship and a further seven (14.6%) with postgraduate diplomas in librarianship.

4.4 FINDINGS

This section presents the findings from both the questionnaire survey as well as the focus group. As mentioned in the introductory paragraph, the findings from each data collection method have been “integrated” and are presented in terms of the research questions underpinning the study.

4.4.1 Form professional development of subject librarians in the selected academic libraries takes in UKZN universities

Two questions from the survey questionnaire are applicable (that is, questions 5 and 6).

4.4.1.1 Opportunities for professional development that exist in each institution

In the questionnaire (Appendix 7) respondents were asked to indicate the opportunities for PD that exist in their respective libraries. The findings are presented below in Table 4.2:

Table 4.2: Opportunities for professional development (N=48)

Opportunity	No of participants	% of participants
To attend workshops	43	89.6%
To attend conferences	36	75%
Further studies	36	75%
Job rotation	10	20%
None	2	4.2%

(Multiple responses received)

The findings revealed that the vast majority of respondents 43 (89.6%) indicated attendance at workshops as an opportunity in their libraries. This was followed by 36 (75%) respondents who listed attendance at conferences and the same number which indicated further studies. Job rotation was not that common and a few (4.2%) respondents surprisingly mentioned that no PD opportunities exist in their libraries.

4.4.1.2 Professional development activities participated in

The subject librarians were asked to indicate the PD activities they had participated in. The findings are presented in Table 4.3:

Table 4.3: Professional development activities participated in (N=48)

Activity	No of participants	% of participants
Workshops	46	96%
Conferences	38	79%
Further studies	35	73%
Internal course	32	67%
Participation in professional bodies	30	62%
Skills based training	24	50%
Formal learning	23	48%
Informal learning	23	48%
Continuing education	22	46%
Research	18	38%
Mentoring	18	38%
Online courses	17	35%
External courses	15	31%
Research publications	14	29%
Video or sound learning	13	27%
Job rotation	8	17%
Internal job exchanges	8	17%
Internships	4	8%
Industrial attachments	0	0%

(Multiple responses received)

An overwhelming majority 46 (96%) of respondents indicated that they had participated in workshops. There were four other activities in which more than half of the respondents had participated, namely, conferences (79%), further studies (73%), internal courses (67%) and professional bodies (62%). The least participated in activities were job rotation (17%), internal job exchanges (17%) and internships (8%). No respondents had participated in industrial attachments.

In the focus group guide (Appendix 8) the focus group subject librarians were asked about the relevancy of the PD activities they had participated in. Half (50%) of the participants

indicated that some of the workshops were unnecessary and irrelevant for their present job whereas the remaining half argued that they were relevant. One participant remarked: that “We are not given the required skills such as marketing despite being expected to market the library services and other resources. We are always told that marketing is not a library-related course”. Some relevant extracts from the focus group discussion are provided verbatim below.

SL1: *I think most of the workshops that we are attending are not necessary and relevant to the work that we are doing. For instance, we are not allowed to suggest where we want to be developed.*

SL2: *Some workshops are necessary for the working environment but not the profession of being a librarian. I was invited to attend the workshop on social cohesion and social diversity which are not related to our profession.*

SL3: *Management are doing choices for employees to attend PD, for instance, if there is a marketing skills workshop, librarians are told not to attend because it is not a library-related course, whereas librarians are expected to market the library services and resources.*

SL4: *PD activities are not relevant because we are not choosing them. Sometimes we participate in these workshops but our working conditions are not changing.*

4.4.2 Subject librarians’ perceptions of professional development

The second research question (Chapter one, Section 1.6) sought to determine the perceptions of PD by the subject librarians. To answer this research question, the researcher relied on the responses to several statements and these are presented in Tables 4.4 to 4.8.

4.4.2.1 Perceptions of professional development

The respondents were asked to choose the statement they strongly disagree, disagree, agree and strongly agree with. The findings are presented in Table 4.4:

Table 4.4: Perceptions of professional development (N=48)

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I find professional development useful to my work	2 (4.2%)	2 (4.2%)	14 (29.2%)	30 (62.5%)
Professional development will enable me to accomplish my work goals quicker	1(2.1%)	1(2.1%)	16 (33.3%)	30 (62.5%)
Professional development activities or participation will increase my job outcomes	1(2.1%)	2 (4.2%)	13 (27.1%)	32 (66.7%)
Professional development allows me to access more knowledge and skills for my job	1 (2.1%)	---	14 (29.2%)	33 (68.8%)

From Table 4.4 it is evident, that the vast majority of respondents (ranging from 91.7% to 98%) either agreed or strongly agreed with all the statements pertaining to PD being beneficial. The fact that a minority, albeit a small minority, of respondents (ranging from 2% to 8.6%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the same statements is a cause for concern.

All focus group participants viewed PD in a positive light. They agreed that PD is instrumental in their work. It helps to equip them, for instance, when there are new developments particularly those relating to technology such as data mining and data management. It was also agreed that librarians need to attend training and workshops that will familiarise them with these and other developments, help them keep abreast of what is happening in the library and information field, and ensure that their work remains relevant. Below are some of the verbatim comments made by participants during the session.

SL2: *PD helps us to know what is happening in the field, for instance when there are new things or updates in the library field.*

SL3: *PD assists us in keeping up with the profession, adapting with the technological change for example, the change from using the card catalogue to using the system in retrieving books information.*

SL4: *PD helps us to get out of the office to attend different activities.*

SL6: *PD helps librarians to understand the concepts mentioned by SL1, be relevant in our work and meet the institutional goals.*

4.4.2.2 Importance of professional development

In question 12 (Appendix 7) the respondents were presented with four statements which pointed to how they viewed PD. They had to state whether they agreed or not with the statements and the strength of that agreement or disagreement. The findings from the 48 subject librarians are presented in Table 4.5 below:

Table 4.5: Importance of professional development to subject librarians (N=48)

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
PD is important to executing my duties	-----	1 (2.1%)	22 (45.8%)	25 (52.1%)
PD has enhanced my knowledge and skills	-----	1 (2.1%)	20 (41.7%)	27 (56.3%)
PD has increased my chances for promotion	4 (8.3%)	10 (20.8%)	19 (39.6%)	15 (31.3%)
PD is a strong motivator in doing my work	1 (2.1%)	7 (14.6%)	21 (43.8%)	19 (39.6%)

All four statements elicited high percentages of agreement – in each instance more than 70% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statements. The statements with the most respondents agreeing were “PD has enhanced my knowledge and skills” and “PD is important to executing my duties” with 47 of the 48 respondents (98%) in each instance doing so. The least agreed on statement was “PD has increased my chances for promotion” with 14 (29.1%) respondents indicating their disagreement.

In the focus group, one of the topics discussed was motivating factors for PD. Participants mentioned attending workshops and presenting conference papers as motivating factors. However, most respondents were of the opinion that the institution demotivates staff when it

does not have a budget for staff to attend PD initiatives. One participant said that she once suggested that Skype be used in some of their workshops or meetings but management did not support that idea without giving any reason. A second participant mentioned that the introduction of the performance management system which promotes what is referred to as a “Personal Development Plan”, should support PD because staff members are asked to provide courses they would like to attend. However, the institution does not send staff members to courses suggested by them. Some statements of the participants reflecting what was discussed are given below:

SL1: *Attending conferences, workshops and other training which are work-related, motivate me to keep abreast with the profession. When we are not allowed, we lose focus and feel demotivated.*

SL2: *Presenting papers on conferences motivate me, however, the institution demotivates us when they tell staff to submit abstracts for papers, when papers are accepted, institution does not have funds to pay for the presenter.*

SL3: *I once suggested that we can use Skype with other librarians from other campuses to share our experiences and difficulties. The management just shut that idea before we implemented it. New ideas and suggestions are shut down, this demotivates the staff.*

SL4: *I think performance management system will motivate employees to participate in professional activities since employees are asked to mention the gap in their abilities to perform their duties.*

SL5: *To be given time off motivates me although, sometimes opportunity to participate in PD activities comes when I don't have spare money to pay from my pocket.*

When focus group participants were asked if there was any information that they thought might be useful to both the institution as well as individuals to keep abreast with all the changes within their profession, they indicated that the attitude of both employers and employees towards PD needs to change.

The responses illustrative of this:

SL1: *Yes, the attitudes of both managers and employees must change and they must embrace change.*

SL2: *I have to fetch my kids from school. Professional activities take place until late so I don't participate. Even my husband will not allow me to sleep out or to travel for a long distance for the sake of PD activities.*

SL3: *Most of us are more committed to our households than their profession. The cause might be a lack of support from the management. I cannot take my family's money and pay for PD.*

SL4: *Managers must accept that most things are technologically based, and technology changes now and then. So, the employees must understand that technological changes affect them, they must follow the change so that they will always be relevant in their careers.*

4.4.2.3 Perceived ease of professional development activities

The respondents were presented with a series of statements to determine how they viewed the ease of PD activities. The findings are presented in Table 4.6 below:

Table 4.6: Perceived ease of professional development activities (N=48)

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean
Professional development activities and goals are clear and understandable	1(2.1%)	5(10.4%)	32 (66.7%)	10(20.8%)	3.06
It would be easy for me to become skilled as a subject librarian as a result of professional development	---	5 (10.4%)	20 (41.7%)	23(47.9%)	3.38
I would find professional development useful to my career/work	---	---	26 (54.2%)	22(45.8%)	3.46
I find existing or available professional development activities easy to enrol in	3 (6.3%)	15 (31.3%)	26(54.2%)	4 (8.3%)	2.65
Average weighted mean					3.13

The findings in Table 4.6 on the perceived ease of PD activities revealed a weighted average and the estimated mean of 3.13, which was less than the expected mean of 3.42. (Considering that the expected mean is the sum of the two (2) middle mean values divided by 2). The findings indicated that respondents have low perceived ease of PD activities.

The respondents were mainly in agreement with the various statements reflected in Table 4.6. The statement “I would find professional development useful to my career or work” did, in fact, elicit 100% agreement from the respondents reflecting the positive perceptions that the subject librarians have of PD. The finding that a rather large minority (37.4%) of the respondents did not find it easy to enrol in existing activities is a cause for concern and links in with the challenges experienced which are reported on later.

4.4.2.4 Behavioural intention towards professional development

The respondents were asked whether they agreed or not with three statements reflecting their intention to participate in PD in the future. The findings from the 48 subject librarians are presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Behavioural intention towards professional development (N=48)

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean
I intend to participate in professional development activities in the future	---	1 (2.1%)	27 (56.3%)	20 (41.7%)	3.40
I predict I would take part in professional development activities in the future	---	1(2.1%)	30 (62.5%)	17 (35.4%)	3.33
I plan to participate in professional development in the future (even if at personal expense)	---	8 (16.7%)	25 (52.1%)	15(31.3%)	3.15
Average weighted mean					3.29

The findings in Table 4.7 related to their behavioural intention towards PD revealed a weighted average estimated mean of 3.29, which was less than the expected mean of 3.33. Considering that the expected mean is the sum of the two (2) middle mean values divided by 2. For instance, the majority of the respondents (47 or 98%, $X = 3.40$) agreed with the statement that they intended to participate in PD activities in the near future.

The overwhelming majority (97.9%) of the respondents either intended or predicted that they would take part in PD activities in the future underscoring their generally positive perceptions of such activities. However, and understandably, they were less keen to participate in PD activities that would be at their own expense. The personal expense was assumed to refer to financial costs and eight (83.4%) of the respondents indicated their disagreement with participation should they be financially liable for the cost involved.

In the focus group discussion, the eight subject librarians all agreed that they always participated in the in-house training and workshops which are organised and paid for by management. They gave as an example the EndNote training and training for new databases, where the vendors provided in-house training to the librarians. It was also evident during the discussion that participants were positively predisposed to future PD initiatives. One participant mentioned that when *“I attended a conference last year, the institution gave me special leave, and I paid for the rest of the costs out of my own pocket”*. Two statements reflecting the aforementioned sentiments are presented:

SL1: *Most training that I am attending is in-house training where my organisation pays for only the facilitator.*

SL2: *Last year (2018) I attended the conference in Johannesburg, I paid from my pocket, and my employer only gave me the special leave.*

4.4.2.5 Commitment of the subject librarians

The respondents were asked to indicate their agreement or not with various statements relating to their commitment to their place of work and whether the PD challenges were their “own”. The findings are reflected in Table 4.8:

Table 4.8: Commitment of subject librarians (N=48)

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this university library after attending professional development activities	2 (4.2%)	14 (29.2%)	15 (31.3%)	17 (35.4%)	2.98
I feel as if the professional development challenges in this university library are my own	4 (8.3%)	24 (50%)	17 (35.4%)	3 (6.3%)	2.40
I feel a strong sense of belonging to this university library	5 (10.4%)	8 (16.7%)	24 (50%)	11 (22.9%)	2.85
I feel like a part of the family in this university library	5 (10.4%)	12 (25%)	18(37.5%)	13 (27.1%)	2.81
Average weighted mean					2.76

The findings in Table 4.8 revealed a weighted average estimated mean of 2.76, which was greater than the expected mean of 2.62. This affirmed the commitment of subject librarians in PD. The commitment of the subject librarians to their place of work was evident although not as strong as management would possibly have liked. For example one third, 16 (33.4%) of the respondents disagreed that they would be “pleased to spend the rest of their career in the university library after attending PD activities” while just over a third disagreed with the statement “I feel like a part of the family in this university library”. More to the point with regard to PD was the majority of respondents albeit not a large majority, that is, 58.3% who disagreed with the statement concerning PD activities belonging to the respondents.

The findings from the focus group discussion suggest that the participants were not as committed to their PD as one would expect. The issue of funding appeared to be a factor in this regard as per following the verbatim responses below:

SL5 and SL6: *We will not pay from our pocket; we would rather not participate in those PD activities.*

SL7: *I expect that my institution pays for me when participating in PD activities, but it is not the case that is why I am always in the office and not attending workshops and training.*

SL8: *When requesting fund from the employer, it is always not easy and demotivating even to participate in PD activities.*

4.4.3 Professional development needs of the subject librarians

The third research question (Chapter one, Section 1.6) sought to determine what the PD needs of the subject librarians were. The findings are presented in Tables 4.9 to 4.11:

4.4.3.1 Areas of greatest professional development need

The respondents were asked to indicate the areas they had the greatest PD need. Once again, they were asked to respond to a list of possible areas or items indicating whether they agreed or not. Table 4.9 reflects the findings:

Table 4.9: Area of greatest professional development need (N=48)

Area	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
ICT skills	1 (2.1%)	1 (2.1%)	27 (56.3%)	19 (39.6%)
Marketing skills	1 (2.1%)	5 (10.4%)	22 (45.8%)	20 (41.7%)
Teaching and training	-----	3 (6.3%)	28 (58.3%)	17 (35.4%)
Presentation skills	1 (2.1%)	3 (6.3%)	26 (54.2%)	18 (37.5%)
Information literacy	1 (2.1%)	7 (14.6%)	25 (52.1%)	15 (31.3%)
Interpersonal skills	1 (2.1%)	16 (33.3%)	22 (45.8%)	9 (18.8%)
Customer service skills	1 (2.1%)	12 (25%)	23 (47.9%)	12 (25%)
Information evaluation skills	-----	11 (22.9%)	21 (43.8%)	16 (33.3%)
Information management skills		2 (4.2%)	27 (56.3%)	19 (39.6%)
Online communication skills	-----	6 (12.5%)	24 (50%)	18 (37.5%)
User education	1 (2.1%)	7 (14.6%)	22 (45.8%)	18 (37.5%)

The findings revealed that 46 (95.9%) respondents agreed that ICT and information management skills were the areas of greatest need in their PD. This was closely followed by the area of teaching and training with 45 (93.7%) respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing that it was their greatest PD need. Other areas which elicited high levels of agreement were presentation skills (44; 91.7%), marketing (42; 87.5%), and online communication skills (42; 87.5%). While there was a high level of agreement on most of the areas, the three areas where more than 20% of respondents disagreed were interpersonal skills (35.4%), customer service skills (27.1%) and information evaluation skills (22.9%).

All the participants in the focus group agreed that ICT skills were fundamental, as nowadays everything is technological. One participant mentioned that when she started working as a librarian, the card-catalogue system was still used but then they needed to gain new skills to use the new automated system. Participants also mentioned that if they do not obtain these skills, they the subject librarians will become irrelevant to their work. Participants were of the opinion that they do not receive enough training in marketing skills and emphasised that their

institutions need to send them on marketing skills training more regularly. Verbatim comments from the participants are given:

SL1: *Participating in the workshops is very important in this professional field, for instance, the ICT workshop is much important since everything in the library automated. Catalogues of all library resources are retrieved from the system, and there is no more card catalogue. Systems are ever-changing.*

SL2: *The afore-mentioned skills are fundamental, without them, the librarians will become irrelevant to their work.*

SL3: *Marketing skills are very important but seem to be ignored by the management, when librarians need to attend marketing skills workshop. Management is always pointing out that marketing is not a library-related. However, librarians are expected to market the services and resources of the library.*

SL4: *Marketing skill is similar to the presentation skills; they are always taken for granted but needed when librarians are doing library instruction. Management is not encouraging librarians to participate in these workshops.*

SL5: *Teaching and training are also important for conducting user education programme.*

SL6: *Presentation, teaching and training skills are the most important skills required in this field, especially in conducting user education.*

All participants agreed that presentation skills are important, as this would help them with user education.

4.4.3.2 Activities considered ideal for professional development

The respondents were provided with a list of PD activities and asked to indicate, in terms of agreement or disagreement, which they considered being ideal in their area of work. The findings from the 48 subject librarians who participated in the survey are presented in Table 4.10:

Table 4.10: Activities considered ideal for professional development (N=48)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Mentorship or coaching	2 (4.2%)	4 (8.3%)	24 (50%)	18 (37.5%)
Self-paced learning	1 (2.1%)	4 (8.3%)	27 (56.3%)	16 (33.3%)
Webinars	-----	1 (2.1%)	27 (56.3%)	20 (41.7%)
Workshops or meetings	-----	-----	27 (56.3%)	21 (43.8%)
Conferences-physical-attendance	-----	1 (2.1%)	17 (35.4%)	30 (62.5%)
Online conference participation	1 (2.1%)	5 (10.4%)	25 (52.1%)	17 (35.4%)
Internal training	-----	2 (4.2%)	29 (60.4%)	17 (35.4%)
External training	-----	-----	27 (56.3%)	21 (43.8%)

Two activities had 100% agreement from the respondents in terms of being ideal for PD in their work. These were “workshops or meetings” and “external training”. They were very closely followed by “webinars” with 47 (98.1%) of the respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing. A similar number indicated that physical attendance at conferences was ideal. A small minority of respondents were in disagreement with some of the statements.

Focus group participants were asked if training, workshops or conferences attended had been relevant to their daily work. The participants were split in this regard – 50% regarded the workshops given as being irrelevant and unnecessary for their daily work whereas the other 50% were of the opinion that the workshops had been relevant and necessary. Responses provided by participants are provided:

SL1: *I think most of the workshops that we are attending are not necessary and relevant to the work that we are doing. For instance, we are not given the opportunity to suggest where we want to be developed.*

SL2: *Some workshops are necessary for the working environment but not the profession of a librarian. I was invited to attend the workshop on social cohesion and social diversity which are not related to our profession.*

SL4: *They are not relevant because we are not choosing them. Sometimes we participate in these workshops but our working conditions are not changing.*

SL5: *Training and workshops are relevant and they are required.*

Participants' unhappiness with not being given what they considered required skills such as marketing while they are expected to market the library services and resources, once again emerged. Not having a say in what PD activities were offered also emerged as an issue.

4.4.3.3 Form of professional development in the library

In question 16 (Appendix 7) the respondents were asked to indicate what form PD in their libraries took. The findings are presented in Table 4.11:

Table 4.11: Form professional development takes in the library (N=48)

Form of PD	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
On job training	3 (6.3%)	6 (12.5%)	29 (60.4%)	10 (20.8%)
Attending short courses	1 (2.1%)	11 (22.9%)	29 (60.4%)	7 (14.6%)
Attending workshop or conferences	1 (2.1%)	3 (6.3%)	33 (68.8%)	11 (22.9%)
Attending formal education	-----	12 (25.0%)	25 (52.1%)	11 (22.9%)
Coaching or mentoring	4 (8.3%)	22 (45.8%)	19 (39.6%)	3 (6.3%)
Webinars	-----	8 (16.7%)	30 (62.5%)	10 (20.8%)
Videos and sound clips	1 (2.1%)	19 (39.6%)	24 (50.0%)	4 (8.3%)
Formal or informal coursework	-----	15 (31.3%)	30 (62.5%)	3 (6.3%)

The most agreed on form that professional development took in libraries was “Attending workshops or conferences” mentioned by 44 (91.7%) of the subject librarians. The other forms of PD with which more than 80% of respondents were in agreement were “Webinars” (83.3%) and “On job training” (81.2%). Forms of PD that more than a third of respondents disagreed with taking place in their libraries were “Coaching or mentoring” (54.2%) and “Videos and sound clips” (41.7%).

When the focus group participants were asked to share the professional activities available in their institution, they mentioned workshops and conferences. However, the participants felt that with some workshops or conferences, they were not supported by management. As one participant put it:

SL2: Workshops exist but, in most cases, you need to pay from your pocket.

The preference was for in-house training where fees were paid by management.

In this regard one participant referred to:

SL3: In-house training where management invites vendors to come and train. For instance, a person from Cape Town came to train us on EndNote programme.

4.4.4 Challenges associated with professional development of subject librarians

The fourth research question (Chapter one, Section 1.6) examined the challenges or barriers associated with PD in academic libraries. The findings from three questions in the survey questionnaire are reported. The first question (no.17) was a direct one in which 12 possible barriers were listed and the 48 subject librarians were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with each and, as per the previous questions, the strength of the agreement or disagreement. The remaining two questions were less direct. Question 13 determined what the participants' institutions had in place (plans) to support PD and question 14 queried whether managerial support for PD was available. The reason for including both questions under challenges to PD is that having mechanisms in place and managerial support could be considered crucial in terms of PD of employees and their absence, similarly, be seen as significant challenges.

4.4.4.1 Barriers to participation in professional development activities

The findings relating to the first of the three questions are presented in Table 4.12 below:

Table 4.12: Barriers to participation in professional development activities (N=48)

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
No finance support	1 (2.1%)	13 (27.1%)	20 (41.7%)	14 (29.2%)
No policies	1 (2.1%)	19 (39.6%)	16 (33.3%)	12 (25.0%)
No time given	1 (2.1%)	24 (50.0%)	18 (37.5%)	5 (10.4%)
Short staffed	-----	25 (52.1%)	17 (35.4%)	6 (12.5%)
Low perceptions of the need for PD	2 (4.2%)	20 (41.7%)	22 (45.8%)	4 (8.3%)
It is difficult to enrol for DP	2 (4.2%)	34 (70.8%)	8 (16.7%)	4 (8.3%)
It is periodic as I have to wait for a year or after probation	5 (10.4%)	27 (56.3%)	13 (27.1%)	3 (6.3%)
Management does not encourage it	6 (12.5%)	25 (52.1%)	13 (27.1%)	4 (8.3%)
Low or no motivation	4 (8.3%)	17 (35.4%)	22 (45.8%)	5 (10.4%)
A lack of ICT skills	3 (6.3%)	34 (70.8%)	7 (14.6%)	4 (8.3%)
Individual factors e.g. age, gender	4 (8.3%)	26 (54.2%)	11 (22.9%)	7 (14.6%)
Organisational factors e.g. policy, preference for highly skilled workers, staff on probation are not considered for PD	3 (6.3%)	25 (52.1%)	18 (37.5%)	2 (4.2%)

The findings revealed that there were five challenges which 62.5% or more of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with. These were (in order from highest to lowest): “A lack of ICT skills” (77.1%); “It is difficult to enrol for PD” (75%); “It is periodic as I have to wait for a year/after probation” (66.7%); “Management does not encourage it” (64.6%); and “Individual factors e.g. age, gender (62.5%). In terms of agreement, the challenge of “No finance support” is perhaps of most concern being mentioned by 34 (70.9%) of respondents. Just over half (56.3%) of the subject librarians agreed with “Low or no motivation” being a barrier to participation in PD activities.

Focus group participants were asked what challenges they faced in terms of PD. The analysis of the focus group discussion shows that participants had many challenges. All respondents

mentioned that they were always being “thrown in the deep end”. An example of this was having to do user education, that is, train users on how to use library resources, but never having received such training themselves. The challenge that was most mentioned and discussed was a lack of funds. The point was made that very little, if anything, could be initiated without finance. Giving credence to the “low or no motivation” challenge mentioned by the respondents to the survey questionnaire, participants said “We felt demotivated to participate in PD activities since they are always told that there is no money to pay for registration, travelling costs or accommodation”. Some participants’ comments are given:

SL1: *We are always thrown in the deep end, for instance, we are expected to do library instruction but we were never trained on teaching.*

SL2: *We are expected to market the services and resources of the library, but we are never trained in marketing skills.*

SL3: *The lack of funds is the most challenge; we are not able to pay fees for attending PD activities available.*

SL4: *We cannot initiate anything on PD that can involve finance.*

SL5: *I feel that my family is more important, I cannot go very far for PD activity. After work, I fetch my children from school. If I have to pay from my pocket, my salary is not enough to pay for workshops.*

SL6: *Attending PD activities does not make any difference, no promotion, no salary raise and no recognition or appreciation from the management. I am not interested in participating in PD activities, for me, it is a waste of time.*

SL7: *The fact that I have to pay from my pocket. I am not interested in participating in PD activities. If management can pay for me, I can participate in all workshops and trainings.*

SL8: *I do not mind paying from my pocket; the problem is sometimes I do not hear about the workshops. Management hide some of the workshops and training, they do not publicise them which make it difficult for us to know about it.*

4.4.4.2 Professional development plans in place for staff (updating climate)

In the second question in the questionnaire relating to challenges, the subject librarians were asked, via a series of statements, what plans their institutions have in place to support PD. Findings are presented in Table 4.13:

Table 4.13: Professional development plans in place for staff (N=48)

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Access to career progress is available	4 (8.3%)	18 (37.5%)	21 (43.8%)	5 (10.4%)
Specific career goals are clear and communicated	5 (10.4%)	19 (39.6%)	19 (39.6%)	5 (10.4%)
Evaluation of my professional skills are periodically conducted	3 (6.3%)	20 (41.7%)	20 (41.7%)	5 (10.4%)
Staff professional development budget exists in my institution	7 (14.6%)	9 (18.8%)	28 (58.3%)	4 (8.3%)
Special leave for attending professional activities exists in my institution	3 (6.3%)	4 (8.3%)	29 (60.4%)	12 (25.0%)

The findings revealed that there were three statements which either half of slightly less than half of the respondents disagreed with. Twenty-four (50%) respondents did not agree with the statement that career goals are clear and communicated; 23 (47.9%) disagreed that the evaluation of their professional skills is regularly conducted; and 22 (45.8%) did not agree with the statement that access to progression in their careers is available. The statement with the highest number of respondents in agreement was special leave to attend professional activities being allowed with 41 (85.4%) of the respondents agreeing that this was indeed the case.

Most focus group participants agreed that they did not know of any policy which talked about PD. However, one participant pointed out that the PD policy is included with the university's performance management system, which looks at the performance of an individual and helps to uplift skills when this is required. Participants mentioned that they usually hear about PD activities through friends and colleagues who are members of a professional association and are on its mailing list. Relevant statements from the focus group session are:

SL1: I do not know any policy which talks about PD.

SL2: *I think there is a policy but hidden on the performance management system, where individuals are helped to uplift their skills if necessary.*

SL3: *I always get the awareness of the PD activities from the LIASA emails and News.*

SL4: *I do not know any policy that talks about PD. I think like SL2 who says it is in the performance management system but it is not clear. I would say we do not have any policy in this institution.*

SL5: *We do not have a policy which talks about PD. If it is there, everyone was going to be supported, since it was going to guide the process. There is favouritism where some subject librarians are encouraged to participate in PD and others are not. Managers can be guided by the policy if it is available.*

SL6: *Challenge in getting the awareness of PD is the funding because if you are not the LIASA member, you are not getting any emails and newsletters. Even the managers are not passing the information since there are academic libraries affiliating to LIASA. They do not cascade down the information.*

4.4.4.3 Availability of managerial support for professional development

Respondents to the questionnaire survey were asked about their agreement or not with statements reflecting various forms of support for PD that management could provide. The findings are presented in Table 4.14:

Table 4.14: Managerial support available for professional development (N=48)

Support	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Financial support	5 (10.4%)	12 (25.0%)	26 (54.2%)	5 (10.4%)
Time off	2 (4.2%)	6 (12.5%)	33 (68.8%)	7 (14.6%)
Equipment such as computers with the Internet	2 (4.2%)	1 (2.1%)	33 (68.8%)	12 (25.0%)
Mentors or coaches	3 (6.3%)	27 (56.3%)	18 (37.5%)	-----
Videos and sound clips	3 (6.3%)	22 (45.8%)	22 (45.8%)	1 (2.1%)
Reading materials	2 (4.2%)	11 (22.9%)	32 (66.7%)	3 (6.3%)
Training modules	4 (8.3%)	20 (41.7%)	20 (41.7%)	4 (8.3%)
Motivation	3 (6.3%)	19 (39.6%)	23 (47.9%)	3 (6.3%)
Encouragement – words or moral support from line manager (s)	3 (6.3%)	16 (33.3%)	22 (45.8%)	7 (14.6%)

The two types of managerial support with the highest number of respondents in agreement were “Equipment such as computers with the Internet” and “Time off” agreed with by 45 (93.8%) and 40 (83.3%) respondents respectively. The two types of support which had the most disagreement were the availability of “Mentors or coaches” mentioned by 30 (62.5%) of respondents and “Videos and sound clips” mentioned by 25 (52.1%) respondents. Interestingly, 31 (64.6%) of respondents agreed that they were getting financial support from management. Of concern, was the minority of respondents who pointed to a lack of motivation (45.9%) and encouragement (39.6%) from management.

Focus group participants were asked what support they were getting from their academic libraries towards PD. All participants agreed that in-house training and workshops are organised and paid for by management. (The example they provided was the already mentioned EndNote training and training for new databases.) However, participants felt that although the academic library provides them with equipment such as computers and Internet access, it could do more.

4.4.5 Role the professional association plays in the professional development of the subject librarians

The fifth research question (Chapter one, Section 1.6) examined the role played by the professional association in terms of the subject librarians’ PD. The findings from the questionnaire are reflected in Figure 4.5 and Tables 4.15 and 4.16:

4.4.5.1 Membership of a professional library association

The 48 subject librarians were asked if they were members of any professional association. The findings are presented in Figure 4.5:

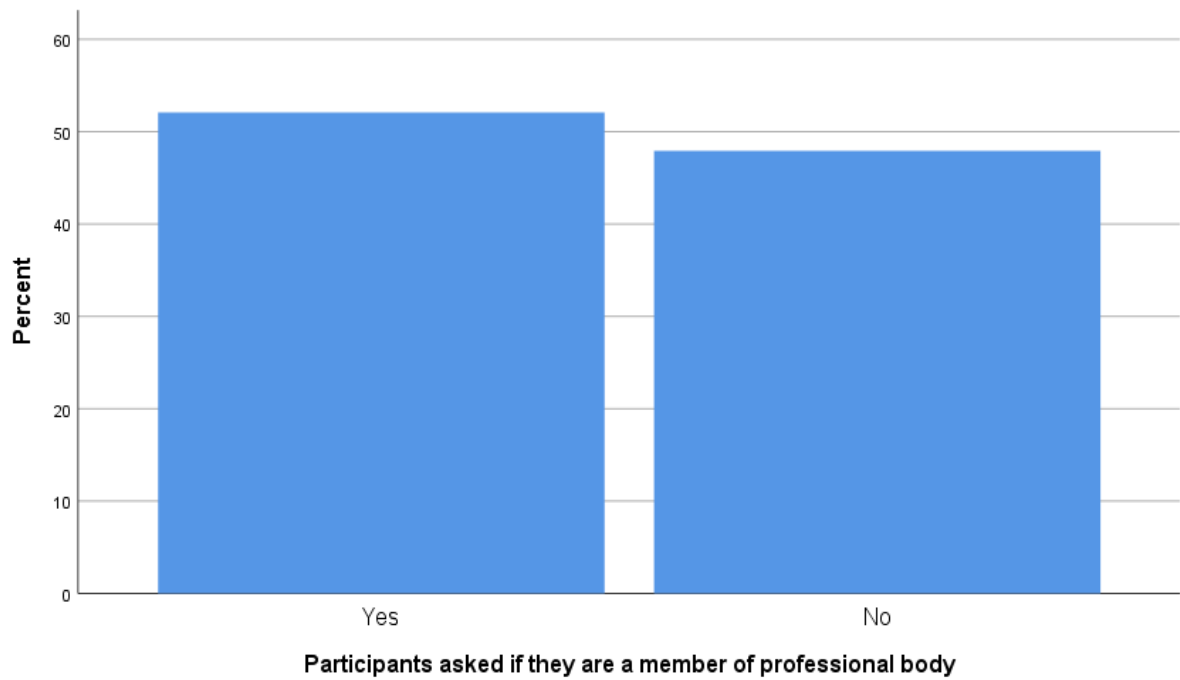


Figure 4.5: Membership of a professional library association (N=48)

Just over half, 25 (52.1%), of the respondents indicated that they were members of a professional library association.

4.4.5.2 Role played by the professional association in professional development

The respondents were then presented with various roles played by a professional association and asked to state whether they agreed or disagreed with these roles in terms of their own PD. The findings are presented in Table 4.15:

Note: While this and the following question were directed at the respondents who were members of an association, all 48 answered the questions. The researcher was of the opinion that despite not being members of an association, their input was still valuable and their responses were thus included in the analysis.

Table 4.15: Role played by the professional association in professional development (N=48)

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Provides platform for librarians to share knowledge and experiences	-----	3 (6.3%)	32 (66.7%)	13 (27.1%)
Organises and conducts conferences or workshops	-----	4 (8.3%)	31 (64.6%)	13 (27.1%)
Organises webinars and online learning	-----	5 (10.4%)	30 (62.5%)	13 (27.1%)

In general, the vast majority of respondents were of the opinion that the professional association does play a number of roles in PD. The role that most respondents (45; 93.8%) were in agreement with was that the association provides a platform for the sharing of knowledge and experiences. The least (but still significant) agreement was with the association organising and conducting conferences or workshops pointed to by 43 (89.6%) respondents.

In the focus group discussion on the role of a professional association in PD, one participant mentioned that an association provides awareness of different events that are taking place around the world, for instance, Library Week where different platforms are available to talk about those events. Some of the responses relating to the professional association are:

SL2: *LIASA provides awareness of different events that are taking place around the world of information. For instance, the library week, information literacy week.*

SL3: *Professional association provides platforms such as workshops, conferences and seminars where most information workers meet and discuss issues.*

SL4: *Professional association normally waive the registration fees for those members who are assisting on a voluntary basis when conducting conferences. However, the members are given a discount on fees.*

SL5: *Professional association provides a platform for open discussion, webinars and allow people to write articles on some issues or themes.*

4.4.5.3 Professional development activities offered by a professional association In

Survey questionnaire respondents were given a list of activities offered by professional associations and asked whether they agreed or not as to whether their professional association offered these activities. The findings from the 48 subject librarians are presented in Table 4.16:

Table 4.16: Professional development activities offered by the professional association (N=48)

Activity	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Conferences	-----	2 (4.2%)	28 (58.3%)	18 (37.5%)
Workshops	-----	2 (4.2%)	30 (62.5%)	16 (33.3%)
Seminars	-----	3 (6.3%)	30 (62.5%)	15 (31.3%)
Symposiums	-----	7 (14.6%)	28 (58.3%)	13 (27.1%)
Group discussion	1 (2.1%)	7 (14.6%)	27 (56.3%)	13 (27.1%)
Branch workshops	-----	2 (4.2%)	31 (64.6%)	15 (31.3%)
Interest group's Annual General Meetings	-----	2 (4.2%)	29 (60.4%)	17 (35.4%)

As with the previous findings regarding the role played by a professional association the vast majority of respondents agreed that the association offers the activities listed. The only activities where there was disagreement with them being offered by more than 10% of the respondents were symposiums (14.6%) and group discussions (16.7%). In all the other activities offered by the professional association, disagreement was by 6.3% of the respondents or less.

During the focus group discussion, it emerged that some participants were unhappy with the role played by the professional association (LIASA) in PD. When asked what aspects they were unhappy with some participants referred to cost, while one participant felt that LIASA had little impact on the profession. Two comments illustrating these points are provided below:

SL1: *Membership is very expensive; I cannot join the association. Non-members are not getting any correspondences from the association.*

SL2: *I do not think LIASA has an impact on the profession, most people in the profession are not the members which means they can survive the profession without the association.*

4.5 SUMMARY

This chapter presented the findings of the study. Data were collected through a questionnaire-based survey directed at 48 subject librarians employed by four academic libraries in KZN Province. Qualitative data were collected via a focus group discussion with eight subject librarians from the Pietermaritzburg Campus of the UKZN. Quantitative findings were presented in the form of tables and figures, while qualitative findings were presented in text form. The five research objectives underpinning the study served as headings under which the findings were presented. The chapter began with an overview of the response rate achieved and this was followed by demographic information regarding the subject librarians who participated in the study.

The explanation and discussion of the findings are in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses and interprets the findings of the study that were presented in the previous chapter. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2016), discussing the findings means relating the findings to the original research problem and specific research questions and objectives. Furthermore, it also means relating the findings to the literature, concepts and theories and determining whether the findings are significant (Levac, Colquhoun and O'Brien, 2010). As has been pointed out previously, the literature relating to LibQUAL+TM in the public library sector is meagre, and this is reflected in the limited discussion of the findings in relation to the literature. Where appropriate, findings from the academic library sector are incorporated into the discussion.

The discussion is structured around the core findings that address the purpose, research objectives and the research questions of the study. As noted above, where apposite, the findings are discussed in the light of the relevant literature and the conceptual framework, namely, the Maintaining Professional Competence Model by Chan and Auster (2003).

The purpose of the study was to investigate the PD of subject librarians in selected academic institutions in the KwaZulu-Natal Province. To achieve the purpose five research questions were put forward, namely,

5.1.1 What form does professional development of subject librarians in the selected academic institutions take?

5.1.2 How do the subject librarians perceive their professional development?

5.1.3 What are the professional development needs of the subject librarians?

5.1.4 What are the challenges associated with the professional development of the subject librarians?

5.1.5 What role does the professional association play in the professional development of the subject librarians?

5.2 DISCUSSION

The research questions listed above provide the structure for the discussion. To begin with, however, some salient points concerning the demographic profile of the subject librarians who participated in the study are made.

5.2.1 Demographics

Of the 48 subject librarians who took part in the study, the majority (70%) were female and this possibly does reflect the gender distribution of the LIS profession in general and arguably the distribution of subject librarians in tertiary institutions in SA. In terms of age, all participants were over the age of 30 years and a large majority (75%) over the age of 40. The subject librarians could generally (and also arguably) be described as “mature”. Only 27.1% of participants had five years or less work experience making for a group of participants who could be classed as “experienced” in terms of their work. Finally, all participants were suitably qualified with 68.8% having an honours degree or more. Given the above, it can be concluded that the majority of the subject librarians participating in the study were well-positioned to make valid comments concerning their PD.

5.2.2 Forms of professional development

Research question one determined the forms of PD each institution has. Attendance at workshops, conferences and furthering studies were shown to be the leading forms of PD opportunities offered at the institutions and the leading forms of PD activities participated in – mentioned by 70% or more of the respondents in each instance. Furthering studies was clearly evident given, as pointed to above, the large percentage (68.8%) of respondents having an honours degree or more. These findings are in agreement with Desimone (2011) who argued that PD can come in the form of workshops, local and international conferences and college courses. Of concern, however, was the revelation by half of the focus group participants that most workshops they attended were not relevant to their daily work and duties. In other words, the findings imply a misalignment in terms of subject librarians’ perception of what they need and the institutions’ perception of what they consider is needed. In this regard, Collin, Van der Heijden and Lewis (2012) highlight the problem of others, particularly employers who may be operating within a framework laid down by the government, defining what PD needs are. Megginson and Whitaker (2017: 6) emphasise that

individuals are responsible for controlling and managing their PD, and they should decide what their learning needs are and how to fulfil those learning needs.

It is evident that more could be done by the institutions to allow for more input from the subject librarians concerning their PD needs. The need for training in marketing, for example, was cited as a need ignored by one of the institutions. This example clearly underscores the problem of employers defining what is needed in terms of PD pointed to by Collin, Van der Heijden and Lewis (2012) above.

The study revealed that management provides computers with the Internet as support for PD. However, only 35% of the participants indicated that they use online courses. The reasons for not making more formal use of the Internet are not known but the result implies that individual motivation is low. Matthew, Baby and Pillai (2015) do, however, remind one of the more informal PD activities facilitated by the Internet and these could include blogging, journal subscriptions, reading relevant literature, following relevant people on Twitter, blogs, and social networks. Consequently, investments in the Internet by the institutions need to continue and social media-led PD could be investigated and possibly promoted as an alternative approach to the more traditional forms of PD for subject librarians in KZN.

What emerged strongly from the focus group was the support given by all the participants to in-house training and workshops as a PD activity. An example of in-house training is where management invites vendors to come and train the staff. In this regard, participants pointed to a representative from EndNote in Cape Town being invited to facilitate training for subject librarians at UKZN. Alawadhi (2015) agrees with this approach pointing out that continuing low-cost PD activities such as inviting speakers from other academic libraries and offering in-house workshops should be regularly offered to all staff. This is in line with Haneefa and Shyni (2015) who in their study of subject librarians in Kerala revealed that the majority of the library professionals were engaged in workplace learning to keep them up-to-date with their profession. However, Shelley (2014) in examining PD opportunities for academic subject librarians suggested PD in the future will move into the virtual realm and away from physical face-to-face meetings. Keeping in mind the cost factor Collin, Van der Heijden and Lewis (2012) identified mentoring as the easiest and cheapest form of training and development but noted that it needs to include high-level skilled professionals if it is to contribute to the organisation. While only 38% of respondents mentioned mentoring as a

professional development activity they had engaged in, it is evident that more attention could be given by their institutions to mentoring as a form of PD.

While it is apparent that the dominant PD activities (and opportunities) such as workshop and conference attendance as well as further studies are likely to continue to be offered, it is evident that management needs to consider other forms as well. These could include in-house training and mentoring which have the added advantage of also being cost-effective.

The Maintaining Professional Competence Model which provided the conceptual framework for the study refers to an “updating climate” being needed in an organisation as far as its policies and plans support the PD of staff. What is apparent in terms of the study is the adequate provision of computers and access to the Internet for staff by their institutions. It can thus be argued that for any Internet-based PD activity, the infrastructure to facilitate such activity is in place.

5.2.3 Subject librarians’ perceptions of professional development

The second research question assessed the perceptions of KZN subject librarians towards their PD. This research question was “tackled” by a number of questions in the survey questionnaire (see Tables 4.4 to 4.8) and the focus group and while the findings generally indicated extremely positive perceptions there were instances where this was less so. A brief highlighting of the significant findings relating to subject librarians’ perceptions of PD follows:

An overwhelming majority (91.7% to 98%) of respondents in the survey expressed agreement with various statements pertaining to PD being beneficial. In fact, one statement “I would find professional development useful to my career/work” elicited a 100% agreement (46% of whom strongly agreed) from the respondents. All focus group participants also viewed PD in a positive light. While only a very small minority disagreed (or even strongly disagreed) with it being beneficial it is difficult to understand their negative views and the negativity may well have something to do with their past experiences in this regard. Concerning the importance of PD, again a significant majority (between 71% and 98%) of respondents agreed with four statements relating to its importance. Interestingly, 29% of respondents did not view PD increasing their chances for promotion. In terms of perceived ease of PD activities, 37.6% of respondents did not find such activities easy to enrol in

suggesting that this might be an area for management intervention and could be classed as a “challenge”. Again, the vast majority of respondents (between 83.4% and 98%) in the survey were positively predisposed towards participating in PD activities in the future and this was confirmed by participants in the focus group. Finally, in terms of commitment, the one statement disagreed with by more than half of the respondents (58.3%) concerned PD challenges in their library being their own. This finding does perhaps link in with the point made earlier concerning lack of input by the subject librarians themselves concerning their PD.

There was little in the literature either supporting or contradicting the above findings and this is perhaps indicative of the fact that PD is, in general, universally viewed in a positive light. The findings are in line with Idoko, Ugwuanyi and Osadebe (2016) who stated that PD is perceived as the continuing process of acquiring new knowledge and skills that relate to one’s profession, job responsibilities or work environment. Where negative attitudes to PD emerged, this might be attributed to the lack of incentives such as the provision of financial support. This did emerge in the focus group discussion with participants being demotivated by the institution not having a budget to attend PD activities. Venturella and Breland (2019) and Robinson (2019) agree that a lack of incentives might account for a negative attitude towards PD participation.

The Maintaining Professional Competence Model refers to the individual needing to be motivated to participate in PD activities. It is evident that the subject librarians not only viewed PD in a positive light but were also positively predisposed toward participating in future PD activities. The motivation referred to in the model was thus present in the participants. To what extent this motivation is intrinsic (personal satisfaction) or extrinsic (better pay or promotion) is unclear. However, as stated above, it is interesting to note that slightly less than a third of the respondents did not see PD increasing their chances of promotion which suggests, for these respondents at least, intrinsic motivation was at the forefront. It is also important to point out that the subject librarians in the focus group were demotivated with regard to PD due to the lack of financial support – what the model would refer to as a “barrier to participation”. This is elaborated on below where findings are supportive of this lack of motivation on the part of the participants in the study.

5.2.4 Professional development needs of subject librarians

In terms of the third research question, the subject librarians were asked to indicate the areas they had the greatest PD need. All the areas listed were regarded as areas of PD need by a majority and, in some instances, a significant majority of respondents. Two areas which elicited a 95.9% response in terms of being needed were ICT skills and information management skills. This is in line with Myeza (2010) in Makhathini (2015) who pointed to a policy in the USA which required subject librarians having an IT qualification in addition to a library qualification. This was in response to subject librarians experiencing challenges transferring relevant skills to academic staff and students. In similar vein Venable (2010) and Korjonen and Barratt (2019) revealed some areas in which subject librarians as professionals are expected to use technology to assist students by understanding the individual differences of students through bridging the digital divide, and by having the ability to evaluate different technologies and make choices in this regard that will benefit users by meeting their needs. Ocholla and Shongwe (2013) in their study of the LIS job market in South Africa stated that IT skills are only required by senior and middle positions in the LIS sector. One could now argue, given their fundamental importance, that ICT skills are a prerequisite of most, if not all, LIS positions.

Also identified by respondents as an area of greatest PD need was marketing skills (87.5%). Subject librarians saw the need for marketing skills as they market their facilities and services every day and focus group participants were of the opinion that their institution needed to send them on marketing skills training more regularly, implying that these skills need to be updated on a regular basis. Given the fast-changing context in which subject librarians work this is perhaps not surprising. However, as noted earlier, some participants stated that marketing skills workshops were not part of their institutions' PD agenda or plan thus pointing to the above-mentioned disconnect between PD needs as perceived by the subject librarians and those perceived by their institutions. Of interest, Chanesta and Ngulube (2017) in their study entitled "*Qualifications and Skills of Subject Librarians in Selected African Countries*" regarded marketing as one of a number of functions performed by subject librarians. Teaching and training skills were also listed as a significant area of PD needs mentioned by a very high 93.7% of respondents. It is well known that subject librarians are increasingly being involved in teaching and training activities (particularly with regard to information and digital literacy) and it is understandable that skills are needed in this regard.

This has been noted in other contexts as well. For example, Moselen and Wang (2014) in research conducted in Auckland University in New Zealand found that many of their subject librarians were uncertain about how to promote the integration of information literacy to academic staff and students and felt that they lacked the pedagogic knowledge and skills to do so.

However, Sputore, Humphries, and Steiner (2017) in a study of Australian libraries revealed that the skills necessary for being a successful practitioner during the library 2.0 movement were quite generic, and focus should rather be on attitudes and traits rather than technical and technological skills. Some of the traits identified were interpersonal communication, change management, information management and leadership skills. Being innovative, adaptable and being an active learner were also included. It is evident that these types of “soft skills” are important and some (interpersonal, customer service and online communication skills) were recognised as such by a majority of the respondents in the current study.

As part of determining needs, respondents were asked what activities they considered ideal for PD. While all the forms of activities elicited strong support, two had 100% agreement from respondents, namely, workshops or meetings and external training. These were closely followed by webinars (98.1%). It does seem that traditional forms of PD are still popular and needed. In the study by Sputore, Humphries, and Steiner (2017) all the participants (100%) still considered workshops/conferences and meetings as being ideals for PD. The use of webinars has emerged with the development of the Internet and, as will be shown below, is a common form of PD activity in respondents’ libraries.

In the final question linking in with needs, respondents were asked what forms PD in their libraries take. In line with previous responses attending workshops/conferences was the most mentioned (91.7%) followed by the above-mentioned webinars (83.3%) and on-job training (81.2%). With the exception of webinars these can be seen as traditional forms of PD. There is a need for coaching or mentoring (54.2%) given that, as mentioned, they are forms of PD with no direct financial cost implications.

As noted, the Maintaining Professional Competence Model refers to both “barriers to participation” and the need for an “updating organisational climate” with regard to PD. What emerges from the discussion is that the mismatch between what is deemed important by the

subject librarians in terms of PD as opposed to what the institutions consider important, could be considered both a barrier and a negative element in the organisational climate impacting on subject librarians' motivation to participate in PD activities. In order to remove or reduce the barrier and positively influence the updating climate, it is arguably contingent on the institutions to respond to the identified needs of the subject librarians and these needs have been made identified and discussed above.

5.2.5 Challenges associated with the professional development of the subject librarians

Identifying the challenges associated with professional development comprised the fourth research question. (*Note* that the term “barriers” was also used in the questionnaire and interview schedule and these terms are used interchangeably.) Various challenges were identified by the subject librarians and these are presented and discussed below.

5.2.5.1 Lack of funds

What emerged in both the survey and focus group was the lack of financial support provided for PD. Of the survey respondents, 70.9% cited it as a barrier to their participation in PD activities. As pointed out by the participants in the focus group, very little, if anything, could be initiated without finance. Other studies such as those of Corcoran and McGuinness (2014) cited in Alawadhi (2015) mentioned financial constraints as a challenge to PD. Locally, Moonasar and Underwood (2018) in their study conducted at the Durban University of Technology, also mentioned a lack of funds as a challenge as well as staff getting time off. Lack of financial support was thus a problem and Alawadhi's (2015) suggestion of low-cost activities such as inviting speakers to do in-house training workshops and Attebury's (2016) suggestion of arranging in-house courses and workshops offered by educational institutions or by professional associations, need to be considered by management. The earlier point concerning coaching and mentoring is also applicable here. Contradicting to some extent the financial barrier mentioned above was the 64.6% of respondents indicating that they got financial support from their management. One could perhaps argue that this support was not sufficient.

5.2.5.2 Lack of managerial encouragement

Corcoran and McGuinness (2014) cited in Alawadhi (2015) mentioned the lack of employer encouragement as a challenge. With regard to the latter, what is particularly worrying in the current study was the more than one third (35.4%) of respondents were of the view that

“Management does not encourage it”. This is particularly difficult to comprehend given the positive role that PD can play in improving organisational performance. This is further discussed below. In similar vein and collaborating the worrying lack of encouragement by management for PD, was the 45.9% of respondents who indicated that no support in the form of motivation was provided by management and the 39.6% of respondents who said there was no encouragement in the form of words/moral support from their line managers.

However, the two types of managerial support with the highest number of respondents in agreement were “Equipment like computers with internet” and “Time off” agreed with by 93.8% and 83.3% of respondents respectively. It is patently evident that equipment in the form of computers and access to the Internet are not perceived as barriers by the respondents although, surprisingly, the focus group participants felt that their institution could do more in this regard.

5.2.5.3 Lack of motivation

Also of concern was the 56.2% of respondents who identified low or no motivation as a barrier. Giving credence to this was the focus group participants stating that they felt demotivated to participate in PD activities since they are always told that there is no money to pay for registration, travelling costs or accommodation. Thus, financial constraints not only negatively impacted on the offering of PD activities, but also on the subject librarians’ motivation to participate in these activities.

5.2.5.4 Age

Moonasar and Underwood (2018) in their study conducted at the Durban University of Technology, mentioned the issue of age with regard to PD. They pointed out that some of the CPD activities side-lined experienced staff and management showed more interest in investing in the younger generation. As mentioned, in the current study 75% of the respondents were 40 years or older. While no correlations were made in the study, the age of the subject librarians may have played a role in accounting for the lack of managerial support and encouragement for PD mentioned by a minority, but significant minority, of respondents. This surmise is reinforced by the finding that 37.5% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that “Individual factors e.g. age, gender” were barriers in PD.

5.2.5.5 Lack of policy with regard to professional development

Lack of policy was the second most mentioned barrier with 58.3% of respondents indicating this. The importance of policy underpinning PD (or at least having plans or guidelines in place) is emphasised in the literature. To what extent the barriers or problems being experienced can be attributed to not having a policy in place is not known but it could, arguably, be a factor. Maesaroh and Genoni (2010) in their study conducted in Southern Asia found that over 40 per cent of the libraries surveyed either do not have a staff development plan or are unaware if they have such a plan. As a consequence, neither management nor staff were “guided” with regard to PD. Sankey and Machin (2014) state that a plan or guideline will assist in the engagement of specific behaviours, for instance, setting goals, seeking support and ensuring what is learned during PD is put into practice when back in the work environment. However, if there is no mandate for PD, the employee is not under obligation to share information learned, and the employer is not bound to support the employee either financially or emotionally (Sankey and Machin, 2014).

When given a series of statements relating to PD plans in place for staff in their institution, with the exception of one statement (that concerning special leave being in place), more than a third and sometimes more than half of the respondents indicated a lack of planning. For example, 48% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement “Evaluation of my professional skills are periodically conducted” and this can be seen as a barrier to PD in their institutions.

5.2.6 Theoretical implications of the findings

The findings above link in with the Maintaining Professional Competence conceptual framework in three instances:

Firstly, the conceptual framework refers to the need for “management support” for employees in their updating (that is, PD) efforts. In terms of the model “Managers and supervisors in the organisation actively support employees in their updating or professional development efforts.” It is evident from the findings above that this is not always the case particularly with regard to management offering encouragement. While it is acknowledged that managers do not necessarily have control of finances their lack of financial support for PD is of concern.

However, managerial support for subject librarians can be seen in granting time off and, as mentioned, access to computers and the Internet.

Secondly, linking in with the lack of support is the issue of age. The model states that “Age also contributes to the interest in participating in PD activities from both the individual and the organisational perspective.” The majority of participants were over the age of 40 and while not specifically examined there is the suggestion that this may have accounted (to some extent) for subject librarians being demotivated with regard to participation in PD activities. It may also account (again to some extent) for management’s lack of encouragement due to not wanting to invest in the PD of older employees or employees who are about to retire.

Finally, as mentioned, the model refers to an “updating climate” and this includes “the organisation’s policy and plans related to updating skills and the qualifications of staff.” It is evident from earlier findings that the institutions’ all have policies in place facilitating further studies on the part of the subject librarians (and it is evident that a number of them have taken advantage of this). However, there is the suggestion that more could be done by the institutions in terms of policy relating to PD generally given that over half of the respondents maintained that a lack of policy was a barrier to their PD.

5.2.7 Role played by the professional association in professional development

The fifth (and final) research question concerned the role played by the professional association in PD. While the findings revealed that only 52.1% of participants were members of the South African professional association, LIASA, (membership is optional) all the participants provided input. In this regard, it was evident that respondents were well-informed of the various roles played by LIASA in terms of PD. For example, 93.7% of the subject librarians knew that the professional association provides a platform for librarians to share their knowledge and experiences. The respondents were equally knowledgeable about the specific PD activities offered by a professional association and these included conferences, workshops and seminars. The only activities where there was disagreement with them being offered by more than 10% of respondents were symposiums (14.6%) and group discussions (16.7%). Corcoran (2013) points out that the role the professional organisation plays in facilitating, supporting and promoting CPD varies from country to country. Corcoran (2013) further notes that in the Republic of Ireland CPD is not compulsory, but strongly recommended.

It is apparent that while respondents were aware of what LIASA could offer in terms of PD, the fact that just under half were not members indicated that they were not receiving the full benefit of what the organisation could offer. While they could, for example, attend conferences this would be at a higher cost and they would not receive any correspondence. As pointed out by Dorner, Campbell-Meier, and Seto (2017), LIASA provides South African librarians with opportunities to make vital connections with colleagues; training and skills development programmes; advocacy; and the promotion of the image of library workers. Some subject librarians complained about high membership fees being a deterrent to becoming a member while others viewed the association negatively. Employers may well consider subsidising membership fees, but in the light of the current economic climate and the strict financial constraints academic libraries and universities are operating under, this is unlikely to happen.

5.3 SUMMARY

The chapter comprised the discussion of the findings obtained the questionnaire survey of, and the focus group discussion with, the subject librarians in the four academic libraries in KZN regarding PD. The chapter began with a brief discussion of the demographic characteristics of the subject librarians and then went on to discuss the findings as they related to each of the research questions underpinning the study. The core of the discussion can be summarised as follows:

Attendance at workshops and conferences and furthering studies were the main forms the PD took in the four institutions and the leading forms participated in by the subject librarians.

PD was perceived in a positive light by the subject librarians and they had a positive attitude to participating in such development in the future.

ICT, information management and teaching and training skills were identified as those most needed by the subject librarians.

The most important challenge identified was the lack of financial support for PD.

The subject librarians were aware of the role played by the professional association despite just under half not being members of the association.

Chapter Six provides a summary of the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER SIX

MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the study was to investigate the professional development of subject librarians at the selected academic libraries in the KZN Province. The objectives of the study were to:

6.1.1 Establish the form that professional development of subject librarians in the selected academic institutions takes;

6.1.2 Determine the perceptions of the subject librarians with regard to their professional development;

6.1.3 Ascertain what the professional development needs of the subject librarians are;

6.1.4 Identify the challenges associated with the professional development of the subject librarians; and

6.1.5 Determine the role/s played by the professional association in the professional development of subject librarians.

The study was grounded on a pragmatic paradigm and supported by the Maintaining Professional Competence Model taken from the research done by Chan and Auster (2003) on the relationship between participation in updating activities and individual characteristics on the one hand and organisational factors on the other.

Chapter Six begins with a summary of the study by chapter. It then provides a summary of the main findings, the conclusions arrived at and recommendations which emerge from the findings and conclusions. The chapter ends with some suggestions for further research.

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Chapter One began with the background to the study. It provided a brief introduction to the roles and PD of subject librarians, an outline of the current state of academic libraries in South Africa and a description of the four public academic libraries in KZN from which the subject librarians were drawn. The statement of the problem, the purpose of the study,

research objectives, research questions and the justification for the study were provided. The conceptual framework and research methodology employed were briefly introduced and this was followed by the definitions of relevant terms used in the study. The chapter ended with an outline, by chapter, of the remainder of the study.

Chapter Two comprised the literature review. Issues central to the study introduced in Chapter One were elaborated on. These included the role of subject librarians in academic institutions, the concept of PD and PD for subject librarians, PD activities, challenges to the PD of subject librarians and, lastly, the role of professional associations with regard to PD. The chapter ended with a discussion in more detail of the conceptual framework underpinning the study, namely, the Maintaining Professional Competence Model and the linkages between it and the research questions of the study.

Chapter Three comprised the research methodology. In this chapter various aspects relating to the methodology used in the study were outlined and discussed. These were the research paradigm (pragmatic), research approach (both qualitative and quantitative), design (survey), the population and sampling method (census, that is, all the subject librarians in the four academic libraries), the data collection methods (questionnaire and focus group discussion) and their reliability and validity, and the analysis (both quantitative and qualitative) of the collected data. Finally, the ethical considerations relating to the study were described.

In Chapter Four the findings from both the questionnaire survey and the focus group discussion were integrated and presented. Quantitative findings were presented in the form of tables and figures while qualitative findings were presented in text form. The chapter began with a discussion of the response rate achieved and a description of the demographic characteristics of the study participants.

Chapter Five discussed the findings of the study as presented in the previous chapter. The significant findings were discussed in light of the relevant literature on PD and with reference to the conceptual framework underpinning the study. The chapter began with a discussion of the demographic characteristics of the participants and ended with the role played by the professional association in PD. The research questions posed in Chapter One provided the basis for the discussion.

6.3 MAIN FINDINGS

The key findings derived from the study are summarised below. As has been done in previous chapters, the research questions serve as useful “pegs” on which to “hang” the main findings.

6.3.1 Forms of professional development in place

- Attendance of workshops and conferences and furthering studies were shown to be the leading forms of PD opportunities offered by the academic libraries and the leading forms of PD activities participated in – mentioned by 70% or more of the respondents in each instance.
- Half of the participants were of the opinion that most of the workshops they attended were not relevant to their daily work and duties.
- Use of computers and the Internet for PD activities was relatively low. Strong support was given to in-house training and workshops as forms of PD activities.

6.3.2 Subject librarians’ perceptions of professional development

- PD was perceived in a positive light by the vast majority of respondents.
- The subject librarians were positively predisposed towards participating in PD activities in the future thus affirming their commitment to such development.

6.3.3 Professional development needs of subject librarians

- Most (95%) subject librarians considered ICT and information management skills as the most important needs in their daily work. Information management skills are fundamental to the profession and link in strongly with ICT skills.
- A vast majority of respondents identified the need for marketing skills. It does appear that this view was not shared by management.
- Teaching and training skills were also listed as a significant area of PD needs mentioned by over 90% of respondents.
- What could be considered as “soft skills”, namely, interpersonal, customer service and online communication skills were recognised as needed by a majority of the respondents.
- The activities considered ideal for PD were workshops/meetings and external training (100% of respondents) and webinars (98.1%). There is a need for coaching or

mentoring (54.2% of respondents) given that they are forms of professional development with no direct financial cost implications.

6.3.4 Challenges associated with the professional development of subject librarians

- The lack of finance to support PD emerged as the most cited challenge.
- The second most mentioned challenge (more than half of the respondents) was the lack of policy with regard to PD.
- A significant minority (35.4%) of respondents pointed to the lack of encouragement for PD provided by management. This was corroborated by the 45.9% of respondents who indicated that management provided no motivation and the 39.6% who were of the view that there was no encouragement in the form of words/moral support from their line managers.
- A significant minority of respondents (37.5%) agreed with the statement that individual factors such as age and gender constituted barriers to PD.
- All subject librarians in the focus group agreed that they were always been “thrown into the deep end” by management without adequate training. Examples provided illustrating this were user education and marketing.

6.3.5 Role played by professional association in professional development

- While just over half of the respondents were members of the professional association (LIASA) the vast majority were aware of the role played by the association in such development including the provision of a platform for librarians to share their knowledge and experiences and to organise and conduct conferences/workshops.

6.4 CONCLUSIONS

These conclusions are drawn from the main findings highlighted and are given in point form. As with the main findings above, the conclusions follow the sequence of the research questions posed.

In terms of the forms of PD in place in each institution, it can be concluded that:

- Attendance at workshops, conferences and furthering studies were main forms of PD opportunities offered at the institutions.

- There is a possible mismatch, in certain instances (for example, marketing skills), between what the subject librarians deem important in terms of PD and what their employers or management consider important.
- While adequate support in terms of access to computers and the Internet is provided their use for PD activities was relatively low.
- Increasing use will be made of Internet or “virtual realm” driven PD activities given the cost-saving this could result in and the fact that use of webinars was overwhelmingly viewed by participants as an ideal PD activity.
- There is strong support for PD taking the form of in-house training and workshops.

In terms of how the subject librarians perceived PD, it can be concluded that:

- PD was perceived in a positive light, being seen as both important and beneficial.
- The subject librarians were positively predisposed towards participating in PD activities in the future thus affirming their commitment to such development.
- PD challenges were not perceived as their own by the subject librarians, giving further support to the mismatch already pointed to.

In terms of the PD needs of the subject librarians, it can be concluded that:

- Skills in ICT and information management were the most needed by the subject librarians; this was followed by teaching and training skills which underscore the increasing teaching and training roles the subject librarians are having to assume.
- “Soft skills” in the form of interpersonal, customer service and on-line communication skills remain important for the subject librarians.
- Workshops or meetings and external training as PD activities continue to be needed by the subject librarians suggesting that traditional approaches to PD remain crucial.
- The strong support for the use of webinars as a form of PD activity underscores the importance of this approach in the future.
- More attention needs to be paid to coaching and mentoring as approaches given that there are no direct financial cost implications.

In terms of the challenges being faced with regard to the PD of subject librarians, it can be concluded that:

- The lack of funds to support the PD of the subject librarians remains as the most identified challenge.
- There is a perceived lack of policy relating to the PD of subject librarians.
- Subject librarians were not receiving adequate support in the form of encouragement and motivation from management to develop themselves professionally.
- The majority of the subject librarians were over the age of 40 (and female) and many of these considered individual factors such as age and gender, as challenges (or barriers) to their PD.
- There are subject librarians who consider themselves as inadequately trained via PD for certain tasks and, as a consequence, “thrown into the deep end” by management.

In terms of the role played by the professional association (LIASA) in the PD of the subject librarians, it can be concluded that:

- The subject librarians were familiar with the roles the professional association plays with regard to PD.

Finally, as outlined and discussed previously, the Maintaining Professional Competence Model provided the conceptual framework for the study. As described in Chapter Two, the model is premised on PD being about two parties – the individual and the organisation – and identifies factors that can affect individuals’ participation in updating activities. While no tests as such were conducted, the findings of the study suggest that there is a relationship between these factors and participation in PD. At an individual level, for example, subject librarians’ motivation to participate in PD was influenced by cost factors while at the organisational level management support (or lack of support) for PD also played a role in subject librarians’ participation. Thus, in the light of the findings of the study and their discussion, it can be concluded that the model is a relevant one in terms of providing a framework for studying the PD of subject librarians.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Various recommendations emerge from the study as a whole and more specifically from the findings and conclusions. The researcher feels that these should be of interest to university

library management as far as PD of their subject librarians is concerned. The recommendations listed below are not given in any particular order or in order of importance.

- Given that PD is crucial for, and recognised as such by the subject librarians in the study, management need to pay it the attention that it deserves and, in doing so, give thought to the extent that they are encouraging subject librarians in their PD.
- Increasing use needs to be made of the Internet for PD. There are various reasons for doing so. Not only is the infrastructure in terms of access to computers and the Internet considered adequate but doing so will be a saving in terms of direct financial costs (for example, travel, accommodation and sustenance). Importantly, the subject librarians themselves consider the use of webinars as an ideal PD activity.
- In the light of financial constraints (the challenge mentioned by most subject librarians) management need to consider “cheaper” forms of PD. Webinars mentioned above are one such example. Mentoring and coaching are another example which, when conducted by senior members of staff, will have no financial implications apart from time. Other forms of PD such as in-house training and workshops can be done cost-effectively and, again importantly, there is strong support on the part of the subject librarians for these forms of development.
- Management needs to be alert to what appears to be a tendency on their part to “throw subject librarians in the deep end” with regard to certain tasks without the necessary training. In particular, it appears that the subject librarians are required to conduct teaching and training without been given the necessary skills.
- Management needs to be sensitive to age and possibly gender issues as well in terms of PD. They need to ensure that there is no bias on their part when it comes to the age of subject librarians being a factor in being allowed to participate, or being encouraged to participate, in PD activities.
- It is recommended that management consider providing PD in the form of teaching and training skills to subject librarians (given the increased emphasis on teaching and training in their jobs). This is not only in the light of the fourth recommendation above but also in terms of what the subject librarians themselves consider needed.
- It is further recommended that management provide similar consideration to the development of ICT and information management skills – both regarded as most needed by the subject librarians.

- In the light of the apparent lack of specific policy guiding the PD of subject librarians, management in the institutions need to consider the development of such policy.
- The ninth recommendation concerns policy and planning. The tertiary institutions and their libraries in KZN should revisit their policies, see if they deal with PD, put plans in place and market these to the employees.
- It is recommended that management gives attention to assisting subject librarians take advantage of the benefits that the professional association provides to members with regard to PD (see suggestions for further research below). It is acknowledged that while subsidisation of membership fees is unlikely to occur, alternatives need to be available.
- Penultimately, management needs to bear in mind (or be reminded) that interpersonal, customer service and on-line communication skills remain important to a majority of the subject librarians and need to be included in PD initiatives.
- Finally, it does appear that there is a disjuncture between what subject librarians deem as important for PD as opposed to what management considers important. A case in point here concerns the need (or not) for marketing skills. In order to resolve this issue, it is recommended that management conduct periodic needs analyses to determine what the subject librarians consider to be PD priorities. Communication skills mentioned above and listening skills on the part of management do also perhaps come to the fore here in order to help resolve this disjuncture.

6.6 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- The study examined the PD of subject librarians in KZN. The study was limited to the four tertiary institutions. It is suggested that further studies be conducted on the PD of all qualified library staff not only in academic libraries but extending to public and other library sectors as well and not only in the Province of KZN.
- There is a need for further research to focus on policies in place for PD in tertiary libraries. Policies remain important mechanisms in guiding PD in an organisation and impacting on the behaviour of both the employer and employee towards PD participation.

- Finally, it is suggested that research be done on the role of the professional association in PD including whether membership of the association is beneficial to its members in terms of PD, and if so to what extent.

6.7 SUMMARY

Chapter Six provided a brief summary by chapter of the preceding content of the study. This was followed by another summary, in this instance, of the main findings of the study as obtained via the questionnaire survey and the focus group discussion. Conclusions were drawn and recommendations made. It was anticipated that the latter would be of interest to the management of the various libraries involved in the study. The chapter ended with some suggestions for further research.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Ethical clearance



7 March 2018

Mr Mbangiseni Eric Mchunu 961006765
School of Social Sciences
Howard College Campus

Dear Mr Mchunu

Protocol reference number: HSS/0061/018M

Project title: Professional development for subjects librarians in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN)

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received on: 25 January 2018, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor: Dr Gbolahan Olatina
cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Maheshvari Naidu
cc School Administrator: Mr R. Mkhoma

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Appendix 2: Permission to conduct research at DUT



Directorate for Research and Postgraduate Support
Durban University of Technology
Tromso Annexe, Steve Biko Campus
P.O. Box 1334, Durban 4000
Tel.: 031-3732578/7
Fax: 031-3732948

14th June 2018

Mr Mbangiseni Mchunu
c/o School of Humanities and Social Sciences
University of Kwa-Zulu Natal

Dear Mr Mchunu

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE DUT

Your email correspondence in respect of the above refers. I am pleased to inform you that the Institutional Research and Innovation Committee (IRIC) has granted Provisional permission for you to conduct your research "Professional development of academic librarian in Kwa-Zulu Natal" at the Durban University of Technology.

The DUT may impose any other condition it deems appropriate in the circumstances having regard to nature and extent of access to and use of information requested.

We would be grateful if a summary of your key research findings can be submitted to the IRIC on completion of your studies.

Kindest regards.
Yours sincerely

PROF CARIN NAPIER
DIRECTOR (ACTING): RESEARCH AND POSTGRADUATE SUPPORT DIRECORATE

Appendix 3: Permission to conduct research at MUT



**Mangosuthu
University of Technology**

UMLAZI - KWAZULU NATAL

P.O. Box 12360 Jacobs 4020 Durban Tel: 031 867 7111 Fax: 031 867 2582

7 June 2018

Dear Mr MC Mchunu

Title: Professional development for academic librarians in KwaZulu-Natal Ref: ME 6/18/05

The Interim MUT Ethics Committee considered and noted your application for the proposed study at their meeting held on 7th March 2018. The study was approved.

Your acceptance of this approval denotes your commitment to comply with the South African National Research Ethics Guidelines of 2004 as amended, South African Good Clinical Practice Guidelines (2006) as amended, and the MUT Research Ethics Policy, Procedures and Guidelines. The approval is valid for one year, (01 June 2018 to 30th June 2019).

Your reference is ME 6/18/05.

Furthermore, permission to conduct the project is granted on the condition that any changes to the project must be brought to the attention of the MUT Research Ethics Committee as soon as possible.

Good luck with your research.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Z.L. Kwtshana'.

Dr Z.L. Kwtshana
Interim Chairperson
Ethics Committee
Mangosuthu University of Technology

Tel: 031 8189273; Email: kwtshana@mut.ac.za; Skype: Zingile.Kwtshana

Appendix 4: Permission to conduct research at UZ



University of Zululand, Private Bag X1001, KwaDlangezwa, 3886

W: www.unizulu.ac.za

T: +27 35 902 6731 E: DlaminiA@unizulu.ac.za

Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Innovation Office

Mr ME Mchunu
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Nelson Mandela School of Medicine Library
031 260 4372
Durban
4001
Per email: MchunuMZ@ukzn.ac.za

22 February 2018

Dear Mr ME Mchunu

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT UNIZULU: "PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS IN KWAZULU-NATAL".

Your letter to me, refers.

I hereby grant approval for you to conduct part of your research at UNIZULU, as per the methodologies stated in your research proposal and in terms of the data collection instruments that you have submitted. I note also that the University of KwaZulu Natal, has issued an ethical clearance certificate and having read the documentation, I am happy to accept that certificate.

You may use this letter as authorization when you approach the appropriate persons. Please note that permission is based on the documentation that you have submitted. Should you revise your research instruments, or use additional instruments, you must submit those to us as well.

I wish you well in your research.

Yours sincerely,


Professor Gideon De Wet
Chairperson: University of Zululand Research Ethics Committee
Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Innovation
cc: Mr. O Van Rensburg- Registrar
cc: Mr. M Kheswa - Deputy Registrar Secretariat & Policy Development



Appendix 5: Permission to conduct research at UKZN



13 September 2017

Mr Mbangiseni Eric Mchunu (SN 961086765)
School of Social Sciences
College of Humanities
Pietermaritzburg Campus
UKZN
Email: mchunum2@ukzn.ac.za OlasinaG@ukzn.ac.za

Dear Mr Mchunu

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Gatekeeper's permission is hereby granted for you to conduct research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), towards your postgraduate studies, provided Ethical clearance has been obtained. We note the title of your research project is:

"Professional development for academic librarians in KwaZulu-Natal".

It is noted that you will be constituting your sample as follows:

- by performing interviews with Academic Librarians.
- with a request for responses on the website. The questionnaire must be placed on the notice system <http://notices.ukzn.ac.za>. A copy of this letter (Gatekeeper's approval) must be simultaneously sent to (govenderlog@ukzn.ac.za) or (ramkissoob@ukzn.ac.za).

Please ensure that the following appears on your questionnaire/attached to your notice:

- Ethical clearance number;
- Research title and details of the research, the researcher and the supervisor;
- Consent form is attached to the notice/questionnaire and to be signed by user before he/she fills in questionnaire;
- gatekeepers approval by the Registrar.

You are not authorized to contact staff and students using 'Microsoft Outlook' address book. Identity numbers and email addresses of individuals are not a matter of public record and are protected according to Section 14 of the South African Constitution, as well as the Protection of Public Information Act.

Office of the Registrar

Postal Address: Private Bag X54201, Durban, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 8005/2204 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 7824/2204 Email: mqstmr@ukzn.ac.za
Website: www.ukzn.ac.za



Francis Combe - Red - Economic - Howard Colson - Yellow - Madadi School - Green - Pietermaritzburg - Blue - Watville

Appendix 6: Informed consent letter

Dear Participant,

My name is Mbangiseni Eric Mchunu (961086765). I am a Masters candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus. The title of my research is *Professional development of academic librarians in KwaZulu-Natal*. The aim of the study is to contribute towards a better understanding of how professional development is tackled in academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal. In terms of achieving the aim I would be grateful if you could complete the accompanying questionnaire so as to share your experiences and observations on the subject matter.

Please note that:

- The information that you provide will be used for scholarly research only.
- Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have a choice to participate, not to participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- Your views in this survey will be presented anonymously. Neither your name nor identity will be disclosed in any form in the study.
- The questionnaire will take about 10 minutes to complete.
- The questionnaire as well as any other item associated with your participation will be held in a password-protected file accessible only to my supervisor and myself. After a period of 5 years, in line with the rules of the university, the digital file will be deleted and should there be a hardcopy this will be disposed by shredding and burning.
- If you agree to participate please sign the declaration attached to this statement (a separate sheet will be provided for signatures).

I can be contacted at School of Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg. Email: MchunuM2@ukzn.ac.za
Cell: 0825889051

My supervisor is Dr Gbolahan Olasina who is located at the School of Social Sciences, Pietermaritzburg Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: email OlasinaG@ukzn.ac.za. Phone number: 033-2605285.

The Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee contact details are as follows: Ms Phumelele Ximba, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Research Office, Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za, Phone number +27312603587.

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

I..... (*full names of participant*) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire. I understand the intention of the research. I hereby agree to participate.

I consent / do not consent to have this interview recorded (if applicable)

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

7	Internal courses	
8	Internal job exchanges	
9	External courses	
10	Formal Learning	
11	Informal Learning	
12	Internships	
13	Industrial attachments	
14	Online courses	
15	Video/ Sound Learning	
16	Research	
17	Participation in professional bodies	
18	Skill based training	
19	Continuing education	

Part 3

Under this section, show the extent to which you agree with each of the statements by ticking the best alternative of your choice. Tick only one box per item (7-20)

7. Perceptions of professional development

	item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I find professional development useful to my work				
2	Professional development will enable me to accomplish my work goals more quickly				
3	Professional development activities or participation will increase my job outcomes				
4	Professional development allows me to access more knowledge and skills for my job				

8. Perceived ease of professional development activities

	item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Professional development activities and goals are clear and understandable				
2	It would be easy for me to become skilled as a subject librarian as a result of professional development				
3	I would find professional development useful to my career/work				
4	I find existing or available professional development activities easy to enrol in				

9. Behavioural intention towards professional development

	item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I intend to participate in professional development activities in the future				
2	I predict I would take part in professional development activities in the future				
3	I plan to participate in professional development in the future (even if at personal expense)				

10. Commitment of subject librarians

	item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I would be very happy to				

	spend the rest of my career in this university/library after attending professional development activities				
2	I really feel as if the professional development challenges in this university library are my own				
3	I feel a strong sense of belonging to this University library				
4	I feel as part of the family in this University library				

11. For your professional development needs, indicate in the items listed the areas in which you have the greatest need?

	item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	ICT skills				
2	Marketing skills				
3	Teaching and training				
4	Presentation skills				
5	Information literacy				
6	Interpersonal skills				
7	Customer service skills				
8	Information evaluation skills				
9	Information Management skills				
10	Online communication skills				
11	User education				

12. Which of the following statements do you agree with?

PD below means professional development

	item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	PD is important to executing my duties				
2	PD has enhanced my knowledge and skills				
3	PD has increased my chances for promotion				
4	PD is a strong motivator in doing my work				

13. Does your institution have any of these professional development plans in place for staff? (Updating climate)

	item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Assess to career progress is available				
2	Specific career goals are clear and communicated				
3	Evaluation of my professional skills are periodically conducted				
4	Staff professional development budget exists in my institution				
5	Special leave for attending professional activities exists in my institution				

14. What managerial support is available for professional development in your institution?

	item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Financial support				
2	Time-off				
3	Equipment like computers with internet				
4	Mentors/coaches				
5	Videos and sound clips				
6	Reading materials				
7	Training modules				
8	Motivation				
9	Encouragement – words/moral support from line manager(s)				

15. What would you consider ideal for your professional development in your area of work?

	item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Mentorship/coaching				
2	Self-paced learning				
3	Webinars				
4	Workshops/Meetings				

5	Conferences – physical attendance				
6	Online conference participation				
7	Internal training				
8	External training				

16. What form does professional development in your library take?

	item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	On job training				
2	Attending short courses				
3	Attending workshops/Conferences				
4	Attending formal education				
5	Coaching/Mentoring				
6	Webinars				
7	Videos and sound clips				
8	Formal/ informal coursework				

17. What are the barriers to participation in professional development activities

	item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	No finance support				
2	No policies				
3	No time given				
4	Short staffed				
5	Low perception of the need for <u>PD</u>				
6	It is difficult to enrol for PD				
7	It is periodic as I have to wait for a year/after probation				
8	Management does not encourage it				
9	Low or no motivation				
10	A lack of ICT skills				
11	Individual factors				

	e.g. age, gender				
12	Organisational factors e.g. policy, preference for highly skilled workers, staff on probation are not considered for PD				

18. Are you a member of any library professional body? *Please tick*

Yes [] No []

19. Does the membership of professional association play any role in your professional development?

	item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Provide platform for librarians to share knowledge and experiences				
2	Organise and conduct conferences/ workshops				
3	Organise Webinars and Online learning				

20. Does your professional association offer any of the professional development activities?

	item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Conferences				
2	Workshops				
3	Seminars				
4	Symposiums				
5	Group discussion				
6	Branch workshop				
7	Interest Group AGMs				

Appendix 8: Focus group guide

Focus Group Guide on “professional development for academic librarians in KwaZulu-Natal at UKZN PMB campus

(PD is professional development)

1. How do you find professional development useful to your work?

(Solving problems, or adding problems)

2. Why do you think professional development will enable you to accomplish your work goals more quickly? (Servicing more users than before, attending more online queries then before)

3. Do you think attending ICT skills, Marketing skills-teaching and training, presentation skills workshops professional development activities can increase your job outcomes? And how?

4. What support are you getting from your institution in terms of professional development? – such as financial, technical, logistical support for PD

5. If you have attended a professional development event, who paid for your training or workshops? What did the funding or sponsorship involve? Was it easy to process or access? Can you share your experience?

6. What motivates you to keep abreast of trendy practices in your profession? Can you explain some of the motivation factors? What are some of the de-motivating factors?

7. Is there any information that you think might be added or useful to both institution as well as individuals to keep abreast with all changes within your profession?

8. Explain your awareness of any policy/ guidelines in your institution, which talk(s) about your professional development. How did you become aware of the policies? – (staff orientation, internal communication, from a colleague, accidentally, training, workshop). How do you think awareness of activities of PD can be enhanced? What do you think are the challenges to staff awareness and interest in PD?

9. Do you think trainings/ workshops/ conferences that you have attended are relevant to your daily work? (Make your duties easier; service more users in short space of time)

10. Can you share some of the professional activities available in your organisation? What professional development-activities would you like to be added? (may be those activities from other institutions)

11. What challenges are you facing in terms of professional development? Explain any institutional barriers (bottleneck, red tape, rigorous application procedure or process for professional development, low budget, no publicity of workshops/seminars, other technical factors). Explain individual barriers (personal preferences, lack of interest, lack of skills, fear, not just interested, low salary, low morale, no recognition even when you seek professional development, no appreciation, etc). Can you explain each of the factors for the barriers?

12. What do you think about your professional association and its contribution to professional development? How can your professional association (LIASA, sub groups on subject librarianship) play a more vibrant role in your professional development? (such as organising workshops, awareness campaigns, roadshows, outreach, orientation, newsletters, discounts on LIASA based conferences/registration fees, etc.

Appendix 9: Summary of focus group report

Summary of focus group analysis (professional development for academic librarians in KwaZulu-Natal at UKZN PMB Campus)

(PD is professional development)

Eight (8) subject librarians from UKZN PMB campus library were invited to the focus group discussion. The focus group guidelines were distributed to all subject librarians a week before the discussion took place. The discussion was scheduled for one hour long. The session was held in Multi-Media Centre (MMC) at Cecil Renaud Library in UKZN PMB Campus. The venue was already set, since the session took place after the monthly meeting of the subject librarians. Permission to record the discussion was obtained from subject librarians. The researcher encouraged all the participants to participate as much as possible. The coding of the respondents participated in the focus group is as following SL1, SL2, SL3, SL4, SL5, SL6, SL7, and SL8. The following agenda was followed:-

1. Welcome
2. Review of the discussion goal
3. Review of house-rule
4. Introduction

Questions and answers

1. How do you find professional development useful for your work?

(Solving problems, or adding problems)

SL1 PD helps to equip ourselves, for instance there are new terms now like data mining, data management, it helps us to learn more about them.

SL2 PD helps us to know what is happening in the field, for instance when there are new things or updates in the library field.

SL3 PD assists us in keeping up with the profession, adapting with the technological change for example the change from using the card catalogue to using the system in retrieving books information.

SL4 PD helps us to get out of the office to attend different activities.

SL5 Sometime PD shows that we are short staffed, people cannot participate in PD activities because no one will be left in the office.

SL6 PD helps Librarians to understand the concepts mentioned by SL1, be relevant in their work and meet the institutional goals.

SL7-SL8 Agreed with what was said above, nothing to add.

2. Why do you think professional development will enable you to accomplish your work goals more quickly? (Servicing more users than before, attending more online queries than before)

SL1 PD sharpening our skills by giving us more new skills to do our daily duties.

SL2 Learning new ways of dealing with our users, which help us to work together more quickly.

SL3 Provide new technological skills to improve the existing skills.

SL4 Improving new ability to access e-resources in the library and off campus to pass those skills the users.

SL5 PD enables librarians to bench mark their knowledge on the profession, for-instance they can participate in discussion when they are together with librarians of other institutions.

SL6 and SL7 Agreed with SL5.

SL8 PD helps to improve the skills of the librarians in order to fulfil the institutional long-term goals, as changes always take place in their institutions.

3. Do you think attending professional development activities such as ICT skills, marketing skills, teaching and training, presentation skills workshops can increase your job outcomes? And how?

SL1 Participating in these workshops is very important in this professional field, for-instance the ICT workshop is much important since everything in the library nowadays is in technology. Catalogues of all library resources are retrieved from the system, and there are no more card catalogue. Systems are ever changing.

SL2 The above mentioned skills are very important, without them the librarians will become irrelevant to their work.

SL3 Marketing skills are very important but seems to be ignored by the management, when librarians need to attend marketing skills workshop, management always pointing out this is not library related workshop. However librarians are expected to market the services and resources of the library.

SL4 This is similar to the presentation skills, they are always taken for granted but needed when librarians are doing library instruction. Management are not encouraging librarians to participate on these workshops.

SL5 Teaching and training are also important as for conducting the user education, just to get teaching methods.

SL6 Presentation, teaching and training kills are to be the most important skills required in this field especially in conducting user education.

SL7 Since some users are even using their smart phones to access academic information, librarians should go with the changing technology, in order to be relevant in their career.

SL8 The above skills will help librarians to understand the users' ability to access the library resources, and to impart technological skills to the users. For-instance downloading EndNote to the users laptop, show the users how to use EndNote on their academic projects and also to install App on their smart phones etc.

4. What support are you getting from your institution in terms of professional development? – Such as financial, technical, logistical support for PD

SL1 We get financial support since the institution pays vendors to come and train us on facilities that library is buying or subscribing from e.g. training us on the updates of EndNote, and Databases.

SL2 Institutions do not fund big activities, such as national and internal conferences, trainings in other provinces and other countries. They always says there is no money to fund such

SL3 Funding shows to be the main challenge, however every activities requires the availability of finances, such as the registration fee, accommodation if it is far and transport. If all these are not provided that means institution is not supporting the professional development.

SL4 The problem is, there is no policy on professional development, managers do as they please. Some are getting funds to attend and others are not getting funds. There is no policy in place which can guide the process.

SL5 Management's attitude also contribute in supporting or not supporting employee to participate on professional development activities. There is favouritism, others are getting support and others are told that there is no budget for the training.

SL6 We are given time off, when participating in professional development activities, we are applying for the special leave. We are supported in that regard.

SL7 When the workshop or training is closer, the institution hires a vehicle to attend such workshop. For example when the workshop is in Durban, we use the hired car to participate.

SL8 Professional development is not directly funded by the institutions, and the management are choosing which PD activities to be attended and by whom. They support if a person want to attend the one they choose for him/her. For instance if staff wants to attend the marketing skills workshop they will tell you it is not in line with your work.

5. If you have attended a professional development event, who paid for your training or workshops? What did the funding or sponsorship involve? Was it easy to process or access? Can you share your experience?

SL1 Most training that I am attending are in-house trainings where my organisation pays for only the facilitator.

SL2 The institution always invite vendors to come train us and pay everything for them. For instance a guy from Cape Town came and trained us on EndNote.

SL3 If you are a LIASA member, LIASA is also not doing enough to support their members financial, because each member needs to pay the portion of the workshop fee.

SL4 Last year (2018) I attended the conference in Johannesburg, I paid from my own pocket, and my employer only gave me the special leave.

SL5 and SL6 We will not pay from our own pocket; we rather not participate on that professional development activities.

SL7 I expect that my institution pays for me when participating to PD activities, but it is not the case that is why I am always in the office and not attending workshops and trainings.

SL8 When requesting fund from the employer, it is always not easy and demotivating even to participate on PD activities.

6. What motivates you to keep abreast of trendy practices in your profession? Can you explain some of the motivation factors? What are some of the de-motivating factors?

SL1 Attending conferences, workshops and other trainings which are work related, motivate me to keep abreast with profession, when we are not allowed we lose focus and feel demotivated.

SL2 Presenting papers on conferences motivate me, however the institution demotivates us when they tell staff to submit abstract for papers, when papers are accepted institution does not have funds to pay for the presenter.

SL3 I once suggested that, we can use Skype with other librarians from other campuses to share our experiences and difficulties, etc. The management just shut that idea before we implemented it. New ideas and suggestions are shut down, this demotivate the staff.

SL4 I think performance management system will motivate employees to participate in professional activities, since employees are asked to mentioned the gap in their abilities to perform their duties.

SL5 To be given time off motivate me although, sometimes opportunity to participate on professional development activities comes when I don't have spare money to pay from my own pocket.

SL6 If I can get funding all the time, I can participate in all PD activities.

SL7 I don't feel motivated at all.

SL8 I want to be relevant all the time that is why I want to be abreast with the trend and practice of the profession.

7. Is there any information that you think might be added or useful to both institution as well as individuals to keep abreast with all changes within your profession?

SL1 Yes, attitude of both managers and employees must change and they must embrace change.

SL2 I have to fetch my kids from school, professional activities take place until late so I don't participate. Even my husband will not allow me to sleep out or to travel for a long distance for the sake of professional development activities.

SL3 Most of us are more committed to their household then their profession. The cause might be lack of support from the management. I cannot take my family's money and pay for professional development.

SL4 Managers must accept that most things are technological based, and technology changes now and then. So the employees must understand that technological changes affect them, they must follow the change so that they will always be relevant in their career.

SL5-SL8 Change in both parties is important to ensure that change is embraced.

8. Explain your awareness of any policy/ guidelines in your institution, which talk(s) about your professional development. How did you become aware of the policies? – (staff orientation, internal communication, from a colleague, accidentally, training, workshop). How do you think awareness of activities of PD can be enhanced? What do you think are the challenges to staff awareness and interest in PD?

SL1 I do not know any policy which talks about professional development.

SL2 I think there is a policy but hidden on the performance management system, where individuals are helped to uplift their skills if necessary.

SL I always get awareness of the professional development activities from the LIASA emails and News.

SL4 I do not know any policies that talk about professional development. I think like SL2 says it is in the performance management system but it is not clear. I would just say we do not have any policy in this institution.

SL5 We do not have policy which talks about professional development, if it is there everyone was going to be supported, since it was going to guide the process. There is favouritism where others are supported to participate on professional development and others are not. Managers can be guided by this policy if it is available.

SL6 Challenge in getting awareness of PD is the funding because if you are not the LIASA member you are not getting any emails and newsletters. Even the managers are not passing the information since there is an institutional membership. They do not cascade down the information.

SL7 – SL8 There is no policy that I know, except that supervisors or managers use their discretion to allow or not to allow employee to participate in professional development activities.

9. Do you think trainings/ workshops/ conferences that you have attended are relevant to your daily work? (Make your duties easier; service more users in short space of time)

SL1 I think most of the workshops that we are attending are not necessary and relevant to the work that we are doing. For instance we are not given opportunity to suggest where we want to be developed.

SL2 Some workshops are necessary for the working environment but not the profession of librarian. I was invited to attend the workshop on social cohesion and social diversity which are not related to our profession.

SL3 Management are doing choices for employees to attend professional development, for instance if there is a marketing skills workshop, librarians are told not to attend because it is not a library related course, whereas librarians are expected to market the library services and resources.

SL4 They are not relevant because we are not choosing them. Sometimes we participate on these workshops but our working conditions are not changing.

SL5 Training and workshops are relevant, but are required.

SL6 I also feel that those training are important, for example training on diversity showed me that if we can stop concentrating on our differences, we could do more.

SL7 I agree with SL6, some are relevant to our work.

SL8 Beside that HR and Management are choosing trainings and workshops, they see the need for those trainings/workshops.

10. Can you share some of the professional activities available in your organisation? What professional development-activities would you suggest that they are added? (may be those activities from other institutions)

SL1 In-house training and to attend workshops.

SL2 Workshops exist but in most cases you need to pay from your own pocket.

SL3 In-house training where management invite vendors to come and train us. For instance, a person from Cape Town came to train us on EndNote programme.

SL4 Further studies, staff are given remission fee to further their studies.

SL5 Given computers with internet they can engage with the online learning by using YouTube, webinars etc.

SL6 I would like to add Skype as the online learning tool, where librarians use to discuss issues on the profession with other librarians from other institutions.

SL7-SL8 I would like our institution to have exchange programmes, where librarians can go to other institution and see how are they performing some of their duties.

11. What challenges are you facing in terms of professional development? Explain any institutional barriers (bottleneck, red tape, rigorous application procedure or process for professional development, low budget, no publicity of workshops/seminars, other technical factors). Explain individual barriers (personal preferences, lack of interest, lack of skills, fear, not just interested, low salary, low morale, no recognition even when you seek professional development, no appreciation, etc). Can you explain each of the factors for the barriers?

SL1 We are always thrown in the deep end, for-instance we are expected to do library instruction but we were never trained on teaching.

SL2 We are expected to market the services and resources of the library, but we are never trained on marketing skills.

SL3 The lack of funds is the most challenge, we are not able to pay fees of attending professional development activities available.

SL4 We cannot initiate anything on professional development that can involve finance.

SL5 I feel that my family is more important, I cannot go very far for professional development activity. After work I fetch my children from school. If I have to pay from my pocket, my salary is not enough to pay for workshops.

SL6 Attending professional development activity does not do any different, no promotion, no salary raise and no recognition or appreciation from management. I am not interested in participating in PD activities, for me it is a waste of time.

SL7. The fact that I have to pay from my own pocket I am not interested in participating on professional development activity. If management can pay for me I can participate in all workshops and trainings

SL8 I do not mind paying from my own pocket, the problem is sometimes I do not hear about the workshops. Management hides some of the workshops and training, they do not publicise them which make it difficult to know about it.

12. What do you think about your professional association and its contribution to professional development? How can your professional association (LIASA, sub groups on subject librarianship) play a more vibrant role in your professional development? (such as organising workshops, awareness campaigns, roadshows, outreach, orientation, newsletters, discounts on LIASA based conferences/registration fees, etc.

SL1 LIASA provides the platform where librarians meet and share their knowledge and experiences.

SL2 LIASA provides awareness of different events that are taking place around the world of information. For instance the library week, information literacy week etc.

SL3 Professional association provides platforms like workshops, conferences and seminars where most information workers meet and discuss issues.

SL4 Profession association normal wave the registration fees for those members who are assisting on voluntary bases when conducting conferences. However, the members are given discount on fees.

SL5 Professional association provide platform for open discussion, webinars and allow people to write articles on some issues or themes.

SL6 Membership is very expensive I cannot join the association. Non-members are not getting any correspondences from the association.

SL7 Members are allowed to pay their membership fee in terms.

SL8 I do not think LIASA has an impact on the profession, most people in the profession are not the members which means they can survive the profession without the association.

Annexure 10: Proof of editing

Athol Leach (Proofreading and Editing)



31 Park Rd
Fisherhaven
Hermanus 7200
Email: atholleach@gmail.com Cell: 0846667799

15 October 2019

To Whom It May Concern

This letter serves to confirm that I have edited the following short dissertation:

Professional development for subject librarians in KwaZulu-Natal by Mbangiseni Eric Mchunu

The document was edited in terms of grammar, spelling, punctuation and overall style. In doing so use was made of MS Word's "Track changes" facility thus providing the student with the opportunity to reject or accept each change. Please note that while I have checked for consistency of referencing in terms of format (both in-text and in the list of references) I have not checked the veracity of the sources themselves. Nor have I checked for possible plagiarism.

The tracked document is on file.

Sincerely



Athol Leach

(MIS, Natal)