1. Issues and challenges of managing registration at the University of Zululand

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Abstract

This article attempts to uncover the challenges of managing registration at the University of Zululand. The University of Liverpool defines academic registration as the process of collecting and confirming students' personal and academic information upon joining an institution (http://www.liv.ac.uk). A student is fully registered at a university once he or she has fulfilled both financial and academic registration requirements. In the context of the chaos generally experienced during registration at the University of Zululand, the researcher attempts to illustrate the flaws and challenges that are prevalent and that exist on campus using both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Recommendations are provided that outline an optimal plan that could be employed by the University of Zululand to better manage the registration process.

2. The uses of online databases at the University of Zululand: A literature review

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Abstract.

The paper's aim is to review how students and staff use databases in their academic work. A database is a collection of information that is organized so that it can be easily accessed, managed, and updated. There are various types of databases that cater for various user groups, e.g. full text databases, bibliographic databases, and online journals. The paper will evaluate how academics and students benefit from using these databases and outline what challenges they face when accessing information from databases, and also determine whether these databases provide relevant information for academic purposes.

3. Factors influencing the adoption of open access scholarly communication in Tanzanian public universities.

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Abstract

Open access (OA) - a platform offering free scholarly content on the Internet - is an emerging opportunity for wider and unlimited access to scholarly literature. Scholarly communication is mainly achieved through OA journals and self-archiving, which are the two main approaches to open access publication. However, this mode of scholarly communication is not widely used in developing countries such as Tanzania. This paper, which is based on a recently completed study, discusses the factors that influence

the slow adoption of OA for scholarly communication in Tanzanian public universities. A survey questionnaire targeted 544 researchers selected through stratified random sampling from a population of 1088 university researchers at six public universities in Tanzania. 69 policy makers from the six universities were also interviewed. It was evident from the findings that most policy makers and researchers were aware of open access. However, most of the researchers accessed free online content more (62%) than they disseminated their scholarly content (20%) through open access. Researchers' Internet usage skills and self-efficacy, social influence, performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and the respondents' general perceptions about open access were identified as the positive factors likely to facilitate open access adoption in Tanzanian public universities. The current poor research conditions and researchers' low Internet self-efficacy, such as inadequate information seeking skills and lack of awareness, were cited as the main hindrances to the researchers' use of OA outlets to access scholarly content. Inadequate online publishing skills, slow Internet connectivity, publication charges by some open access publishers, uncertainties about the long term preservation of open access material and fear of plagiarism were the main issues that deterred researchers from disseminating their research findings via OA outlets.

The paper recommends that institutional policies on scholarly communication should be revised to incorporate the use of OA publishing. Furthermore, universities should accelerate the establishment of institutional repositories; initiate advocacy campaigns and training directed at researchers, policy makers, readers and information managers of scholarly content; and improve Internet speed at universities through subscription to greater bandwidth to meet the growing demands of the scholarly community.

Keywords: Institutional repositories, open access publishing, scholarly communication, Tanzania, public

4. The diffusion and impact of mobile phones on the informal sector in Kenya

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Abstract

Mobile phones have been quickly and widely adopted over the last decade by populations in both developed and developing countries. As rightly captured by Kalba (2008:632), "Mobile phones are spreading ubiquitously across the planet and are the latest phase of globalization, … mobile phones have out-diffused virtually every prior technology, whether TV sets, radios, wrist watches, fixed phones, computers, Internet, etc.'' This observation is validated by current statistics from the Communication Commission of Kenya (CCK) [as of March 2010], which shows that the four mobile phone operators in Kenya, namely Safaricom, Zain, Orange and Yu, have a combined subscriber base of close to 20 million. The rapid spread of mobile phone technology has also had a major impact at local level, unlike other types of technology such as the computer, the Internet and the fixed line telephone. The local penetration rate of 49.7 for mobile phones compares closely to the world rate of 49.8 per 100 inhabitants (ITU World Development Index, 2009), but compares poorly to the low diffusion of other ICTs, most notably the computer and the Internet.

The rapid diffusion of the mobile phone can be explained by, among other things, the drop in the price of mobile handsets to within reach of those with low incomes and the drop in mobile tariffs as a result of stiff competition between the four mobile phone operators, as well as the low cost of prepaid calling cards (CCK, 2010). Mobile phones also require only basic literacy to use and this makes them accessible to a larger proportion of the population, particularly low-income, small business traders. They are easy to use and adaptable - for those without electricity, phone–charging kiosks have quickly come up in small towns and shopping centers while solar-powered phones have also been introduced onto the market.

The relatively high user-friendliness and affordability of mobile phones have made it possible for low income micro and small enterprise (MSE) traders, who are also referred to as the informal or 'Jua Kali' sector in Kenya, to adopt and use them widely. As in most other developing countries, MSEs make up the primary source of income and employment and are the main forms of livelihood for the majority of Kenyans. The rapid adoption of mobile phones in the country has had positive effects on the running of MSEs by saving time and money because they replace travel with telephone calls and facilitate instant feedback, thus speeding up the exchange of information and decision making. They can also be used to reach more customers for the selling of goods and services and for obtaining raw materials. Many MSE traders, such as taxi drivers, mechanics, carpenters, curio sellers, retail traders and other trades people, now rely on the mobile phone to run their businesses.

Mobile phones have also been used to speed up the financial transactions of Kenyans from all walks of life through the highly successful 'Mpesa' financial transaction medium, a mobile banking service which was introduced in Kenya by the mobile phone operator Safaricom in 2007, and which signed up over six million users in its first two years of operation (Mas and Morawczynski, 2009). The main competitor Zain followed suit with 'Zap' in mobile banking and 'Yu Cash' for the YU mobile phone operator. The objective of mobile banking is to improve the efficiency of microfinance by using mobile technology to make transactions faster, cheaper and more secure (Geach, 2007:4).

This paper examines the rapid diffusion of mobile phones in Kenya and how this is being used to improve business in the informal sector. It is based on an on-going research study on "The diffusion of ICTs in informal sector enterprises in Kenya".

Keywords: ICTs, diffusion, informal sector enterprises, Kenya, mobile telephones

5. Beneath the bandwidth: Exploring Africa's information divide

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Abstract

This paper uses the metaphor "beneath the bandwidth" to explore Africa's information exclusion in the face of new information-related innovations. As these innovations keep evolving, providing greater comfort, sophistication, speed and ease of access, and as new technologies grow smaller, the digital divide simultaneously keeps widening in Africa. The question is, what can and should Africa do?

Keywords: Africa, digital divide, information divide

6. Demystifying bibliometrics, scientometrics, informetrics and webometrics

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Abstract

Of the many statistical analyses of scientific publications, bibliometrics holds a privileged place as a sub-field concerned with measuring the output of scientific publications. Bibliometrics owes much of its systematic development to the works of its founders, VV Naliv, DJD Price and Eugene Garfield in the 1950s. Since 1958, Bibliometrics has evolved as a field in many Information Science schools when it emerged as a tool for scientific evaluation for a number of research groups around the world. This process was made possible by the work of Eugene Garfield and his Science Citation Index. Castell, an American psychologist, was credited with launching scientometrics when he produced statistics on a number of scientists and their geographical distribution, and ranked the scientists according to their performance. He introduced two dimensions into the measurement of science, namely quantity and quality. The term 'informetrics' was introduced by Blackert, Siegel and Nacke (1979) but gained popularity with the launch of international informetrics conferences in 1987. A recent development in informetrics, referred to as webometrics or cybermetrics, has become very much a part of mainstream library and information science research activities. The term 'webometrics' refers to the quantitative study of the nature of scientific communication over the Internet and its impact on the diffusion of ideas and information. This paper reviews the evolution of bibliometrics and its fast growing offshoots, i.e. scientometrics, informetrics and webometrics.

Keywords: Scientometrics, Informetrics, bibliometrics, webometrics

7. Patron 2.0: Characterization of the dotcom library user

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Abstract

Many studies have demonstrated that the environment in which library services are offered has changed drastically. One of the elements of this change has been the emergence of a new type of information-seeking behaviour that involves a kind of skimming activity, where patrons peruse just one or two pages from an online resource or site before 'bouncing' out, perhaps never to return. With this new information-seeking behaviour has also emerged a new brand of library user referred to as Patron 2.0, who generally finds it easier to "Google" than drive to a library. Since some studies are indicating that many such users are reducing their level of use of traditional library services, it is important for librarians to continue to work to understand the information-seeking behaviour of their patrons in order to be able to satisfy their information needs and keep them as users and encourage a stronger recognition of the "added-value" to be gained from using a library. Through documentary analysis, the authors highlight the characteristics of these emerging users and relate them to the Web 2.0/Library 2.0 debate.

Keywords

Library 2.0, Patron 2.0, information seeking behaviour

8. The attitude and use of electronic information sources by postgraduate students : A literature review

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Abstract

The paper investigates the attitude and use of electronic resources by postgraduate students at the University of Zululand. It focuses on information sources, types of information providers and their roles and importance; discusses electronic information providers (Internet age, web information); investigates postgraduates and their information use; and discusses the challenges facing the use of electronic resources. Recommendations are provided on the salient issues that discussed in the paper.

Keywords: Eletronic information sources, information sources, postgraduate students

9. A study of the awareness of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and ways and strategies that can be used to reduce the spread of STDs among students at the University of Zululand (Preliminary Study)

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Abstract

This paper reports on the preliminary findings of a study on students' awareness of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and ways and strategies that can be used to reduce the spread of STDs among students at the University of Zululand.

The study's aim was to investigate students' awareness of these diseases and the strategies that can be used to reduce the spread of STD infection among students. The study used both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The results of the study would suggest that the student population at the University of Zululand has a high rate of STD infection. The study finds that students are more involved in sexual activities and substance abuse (e.g. alcohol and drugs) and as a result are more likely to transmit STDs. Efforts to prevent STD infection are not likely to be successful unless students receive appropriate STD-related services.

The paper's recommendation to students is that they should abstain from practicing unsafe sex. Lecturers are also requested to discuss STD-related issues openly or have the issues appear in their tutorials.

Keywords: Sexually transmitted diseases, STDs, students and STDs, University of Zululand

10. Institutional repositories: Issues and challenges

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Abstract

The establishment of institutional repositories (IR) is currently high on the agenda of many institutions of higher learning as they fall under the scope of information management tools that organize, preserve and disseminate research output. In the case of Africa, this is seen as a method of making the world aware of what research is taking place on the continent. IR also provides certain advantages in the case of both institution and researcher, e.g. the status of the institution is improved and the researcher's contribution is made known to a wider public, both of which bring recognition and improve networking possibilities.

To develop and maintain an IR requires resolving a number of challenges, such as securing funding, gaining support from both library and research staff, metadata issues, and managing legal complications. All of these need to be addressed to ensure the continuation of an IR. Failing this, an IR project has all the potential of a redundant white elephant.

The paper will concentrate on the development of the Unizul IR and also refer to issues and problems experienced by other established IRs in Southern Africa. The paper also provides recommendations and ways to solve these issues and challenges.

Keywords: Institutional repositories, repositories,

11. The challenges and opportunities of records management at the University of Zululand

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Abstract

Records management is the process of using organizational resources to achieve specific goals through the functions of planning, organizing, leading and controlling records. The aim of this paper is to examine records management opportunities and challenges at the University of Zululand. The Unive rsity of Zululand appears to as yet not have a system in place to manage records properly. Some student records are incomplete, or even missing. There is no evidence that the records management sector has qualified staff or that it functions properly. The paper discusses, with the help of a literature review, the challenges of records management facing academic institutions before highlighting opportunities and providing recommendations for improvement.

Keywords: Records management, University of Zululand

12. What are the changes in Internet access and its use by staff and students at the University of Zululand between 2002 and 2009?

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Abstract

The use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in institutions of education and higher education in particular has had a major effect on teaching and learning processes. Academics have adopted new methods of delivering lectures, with the chalkboard almost a thing of the past in many institutions. The information behaviour of teaching staff has shifted from the traditional visit to the library to electronic access from the office. Communication among academics and publishers has also been influenced by these new technologies. Students have not been spared by these changes. Today you hear terms like Google, downloading and Skype in their vocabulary. Although the library still maintains its role as the custodian of information, students and staff are increasing turning to other sources of information. Even libraries' acquisition policies are being influenced by the "just in time" policy compared to the "just in case" acquisition drive. E-learning is a new phenomenon which has come about because of the introduction of ICTs in higher education. Students and lecturers now communicate electronically for assignment submission, lecture notices, etc. All these developments have been made possible because of the Internet.

The two studies presented in this paper were carried out separately for the submission of MA theses in Library and Information Science and were themselves comparative studies with other institutions in Zimbabwe and South Africa. The purpose of this paper is to note changes that have taken place across the timeline of the two studies. These include changes in infrastructure, hardware, access, and the adoption of the Internet and Intranet in teaching, research and learning.

Keywords: Internet access, internet use, students, staff, University of Zululand

13. Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) by postgraduate students and academic staff for teaching and learning at the University of KwaZulu-Natal

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Abstract

The application and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) is changing the organization and delivery methods of higher education. The main pedagogical and socio-economic forces that have driven higher learning institutions to adopt and incorporate ICTs in teaching and learning are greater information access and better communication and learning. ICTs are being used to support pedagogical practices that create learning environments that are more learner-, knowledge- and assessment-centered. Universities are thus responding to the many changes and adjusting to new demands and advancements through the incorporation of ICTs in various aspects of their operations.

In light of the above, the proposed study will investigate the use of ICTs (computers, wireless communication and the Internet) by postgraduate students and academic staff for teaching and learning at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) - an academic research institution which, as with many others, is making increasing investments in ICTs. The study's conceptual framework will be drawn from the constructivist theory of learning by Vygotsky, which suggests learning is achieved by the active construction of knowledge supported by various perspectives within meaningful contexts (Vygotsky 1978). It is anticipated that the proposed study will be significant in terms of raising awareness of various aspects of ICT usage by post-graduate students and academic staff at the institution.

The proposed study will use both qualitative and quantitative methods to collect data. The former will be achieved through a survey. A questionnaire, administered by researcher, will be used as the main data collection technique and will contain both close- and open-ended questions. In addition to the questionnaire, a focus group interview with postgraduate students will be used to collect qualitative data. To increase the reliability and validity of the research, the researcher will pre-test the questionnaire before final distribution to the target population. Simple random stratified sampling will be used for the survey and purposive sampling will be used for the focus group interviews. The target population for this study will be academic staff and postgraduate students selected from the Faculty of Humanity, Development and Social Sciences (HDSS).

Data from the survey questionnaires will be analyzed using the SPSS version 15.0, for Windows. Thematic analysis will be the main method of data analysis for the open-ended questions obtained from the focus group interviews.

Keywords: Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), teaching and learning technologies, higher learning institutions, University of Kwazulu Natal

14. **Deploying development informatics in bridging the digital divide: Challenges and opportunities**

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Abstract

The paper discusses the inextricable link between ICT and development and suggests that 'development informatics' has the potential to bridge the digital divide in developing countries. Current approaches of bridging the digital divide, especially in third world countries, have failed to yield the intended outcomes, presumably because technology has been thrust onto communities without being integrated into their socio-cultural and economic milieu. The objectives addressed in this paper are twofold, namely to demonstrate the inextricable link between ICT and development and propose a development informatics model for bridging the digital divide.

Keywords: Development informatics, ICT4D, digital divide, economic development, participatory processes

15. The status and challenges of access and use of wireless technologies at the University of Zululand

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Abstract

This study was set to investigate the status and challenges of access and use of wireless technologies at the University of Zululand, prompted by students' complaints about internet accessibility around campus buildings, e.g. student centers, residences, etc. The researcher seeks to establish the necessity of accessing information through wireless connections at the University of Zululand. A set of questionnaires will be distributed to students selectively through the use of a purposive sample. The questionnaire will be both close- and open-ended. Data will be analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The study hopes to improve access to the Internet in and around all sites at the University of Zululand.

Keywords: wireless technologies access, wireless technologies use, university of Zululand

16. What is the feasibility of establishing a Library and Information Science school in Swaziland?

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ABSTRACT

This paper is the culmination of a study that investigated the feasibility of providing Library and Information management education and training locally in Swaziland. It was observed that Swaziland is still over-dependant on foreign LIS education, training and qualifications that are increasingly expensive for a country that could establish its own LIS education programmes. The study investigated LIS education needs, resources, potential, the employment market, and the higher education institutions likely to host local education and training in LIS. Both qualitative and quantitative research approaches were used through surveys, newspaper scanning, content analysis and observation. Tentative results show that there is feasibility in establishing a LIS school in the country and plans to achieve this need to be put in place. Logistics and suggestions on how to do this are provided.

Keywords: Library and information education, library and information school, Swaziland

17. The realities of web information seeking behavior among students and academic staff: A case study of the University of Zululand and the Durban University of Technology

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Abstract

Electronic access to information has literally added a new dimension to information seeking activities. Many people today immediately associate information seeking with the World Wide Web. This association partly prompted this study on the web information seeking behavior of students and staff at the University of Zululand (Unizul) and the Durban University of Technology (DUT). Web information seeking generally raises new challenges within academic dispensations in different settings. The selected institutions are presently at different levels of development because of the country's (apartheid) history. Unizul is rural-based and DUT urban-based, and this may also affect the uptake of ICTs. The survey research design was used with questionnaires as the main research instrument, supported by limited interviews and observation.

The findings were that the web is a platform that people in academia have come to rely on, although only a few of its numerous channels are used significantly. An overhaul in the pattern of use from reliance on traditional information providers to this new medium was not evident; but, the old and the new appear to coexist. A number of challenges were identified, chief among them being connectivity problems. Bandwidth was particularly problematic and made worse by the two institutions' large student populations. Relevant infrastructure (computer laboratories, computers, etc.) seemed available, although inadequate. The results shed light on the general retrieval difficulties students' face. Most of these appeared to stem from poor training or skills. Many users, students in particular, appeared to be familiar with how web technology works but not with how to use the technology to achieve results. The study

recommends comprehensive training programs that address the skills' deficiencies noted. It is also necessary to institute mechanisms that improve both physical and intellectual access to web resources.

 Keywords; Web information seeking, information seeking behaviour, University of Zululand, Durban University of Technology

18. Aspects of Information and Communication Technologies' (ICTs) access and use among civil servants in South Africa

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Abstract

Social informatics is a field of study concentrating on the social aspects of ICT utilization. Researchers in the field concentrate on factors such as human interaction with ICTs, the effect of certain hardware and software on utilization, and the impact that the use of ICTs has on the daily lives of people in society. One of the areas where the use of ICTs could make a huge impact is on governmental service delivery, where these tools can be used to speed up processes, beef up security, provide access to and improve the dissemination of information, and be used in virtually all government departments to provide more effective and efficient services to all people.

The aim of the study was to examine the use, impact and interaction of ICTs for service delivery among civil servants in the uMhlatuze area. The study was carried out using both qualitative and quantitative methods through survey research. The objectives of the study were: i) To determine the nature of the services rendered in the three targeted Departments (i.e. Education, Health and Social Development), ii) To establish the types of ICTs currently in use by civil servants in the uMhlatuze area, iii) To explore how civil servants interact with ICTs in the municipality, iv) To explore the impact of the civil servants' interaction with ICTs, v) To determine the training needs of civil servants (as far as effective ICT utilization is concerned), vi) To determine users' level of satisfaction with the standard of service delivery, and vii) To outline the challenges faced in service provision.

Data was collected via questionnaires that were submitted to the three departments by the researcher. Interviews were also conducted with both civil servants and their clients. The aim of the interviews was to obtain personal opinions on the problems facing service provision. The number of responses from the distributed questionnaires varied, i.e.: Education (21), Health (9), and Social Development (5). Managers from the three departments were interviewed to understand the types of services they offer to clients, the clients' level of satisfaction with the services on offer, the use of computers in providing services, the civil servants' computer literacy levels, difficulties experienced when providing services to clients, and the effect of computer availability on providing and improving service delivery.

The study revealed that not all ICT tools are generally available and/or used by civil servants in the uMhlatuze municipality. It was also found that most new technologies were neither used nor available or could not be accessed by civil servants in the departments, e.g. the Internet, laptop computers, databases, video cameras, video recorders, sound/tape recorders, overhead projectors, and information systems. The

government also doesn't appear to make much use of radio and television which are the most popular communication channels in South Africa. The study recommends that the government should ensure that each civil servant has a computer with Internet access on his or her table. All available ICT tools should also be provided to the different departments because they deal with different social needs everyday that may require different solutions. A lack of skills to operate a number of ICTs, especially computers, was identified as a serious impediment to effective service delivery. Therefore it was recommended that the Departments of Education, Health and Social Development should send their staff for training, specifically computer related training. It was further recommended that computer literacy courses and refresher courses be offered on a continuous basis in order to elevate the level of computer literacy among the civil servants, especially for programmes such as Word processing, Excel and PowerPoint which are used almost daily in the public service sector.

Keywords: Information and Communication Technologies, civil servants, uMhlathuze, South Africa, ICT access, ICT use, social informatics, community informatics

19. Thinking e-scholarship. How far can we go?

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Abstract

This paper uses a blend of theory, practice and the experiential knowledge of the author to discuss publishing concepts, scholarly publishing, peer review, and common errors in scholarly publishing, and uses case studies from experiences of publishing in LIS peer-refereed journals, publishing in dissertations, and electronic publishing for open access through institutional repositories, in order to illustrate scholarly publishing challenges and opportunities.

Keywords: e-scholarship, research, publishing, scholarly publishing, information studies, library science, Information Science

20. The changing landscape of the LIS job market in Africa: Is South Africa keeping up with the pace?

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to explore and discuss, through an analytical literature review, the LIS job market in Africa by using a South African case study primarily based on scanning recent newspapers for LIS jobs in the country. The paper is divided into four parts: i) An overview of LIS Education in Africa; ii) A reflection on the LIS job market in Africa; iii) Discussion of the job trends in South Africa; and iv) The challenges and opportunities in the current LIS job market. Suggestions for further studies are provided.

Keywords: LIS job market, library and information jobs, LIS employment market, Africa, South Africa

21. An Exploratory study of infopreneurship as a job option for Library and Information Science students: A literature review

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Abstract

This paper reviews literature covering infopreneurship. The paper defines infopreneurship, discusses its importance and areas of infopreneurship, and explores its future. It further discusses how students can be motivated to be infopreneurs, the suitability of a curriculum for infopreneurship, and the challenges facing infopreneurship.

Keywords: Inforpreneurship, economics of information, information brokerage, information consultancy, Library and Information Science , LIS jobs.

22. Scholarly publishing in African universities - the present and future influence on research

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ABSTRACT

This paper will address issues touching on the publication of research outputs in African universities. It will look at various ways researchers have used to disseminate their findings. While scholarly publishing in Africa is still struggling to keep pace with the rest of the world, major progress has already been made. Many universities in Africa are seriously engaged in scholarly publication in both print and electronic formats. The output of research is constantly disseminated through universities that plan and hold conferences and seminars, with the presentations then published as proceedings or in peer-refereed scholarly journals. The various initiatives of universities and departments in African universities have provided researchers with opportunities to present their findings in various scholarly journals that are published in universities or through collaborations with various publishing houses. Scholarly publishing is an indispensible avenue for the dissemination of research findings from Africa, adding significantly to a vast body of knowledge whose main contributors are predominantly of western origin. The advent of electronic publishing has widened the scope for African researchers to publish their work. Most African universities maintain some pages on their websites that upload research findings, albeit with a number of problems. Scholarly journal publishing hence has the potential to encourage research in Africa.

Key words: Scholarly publishing, Africa, universities, scholarly journals

23. A proposal for the adoption and use of cloud computing in secondary education in South Africa

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Abstract

The use of cloud-based computing, be it software-as-a-service (SaaS), infrastructure-as-a-service (IaaS) or platform-as-a-service (PaaS) in secondary education, is a relatively new concept that holds significant promises for the future development and delivery of resources to secondary (basic) education in South Africa, especially in view of the recent announcement by the Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga[1], that Outcomes Based Education (OBE) - introduced in 1998 by the then Minister of Education Kader Asmal - is to be scrapped. In its stead comes a new education plan entitled "Schooling 2025"[2], the details of which are still to be announced, but which hopefully will take cognizance of the role and future of cloud computing in secondary education.

The aim of this paper is to briefly examine the extent to which cloud computing applications and services currently used by secondary education systems around the world can be used to help breach the digital divide that currently exists in the secondary (Basic) education sector in South Africa.

Keywords: Cloud computing, Secondary Education, K12, Google Docs, Digital divide.

24. Can mobile phones be used for knowledge management?

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Abstract

The world has moved into what many scholars refer to as the knowledge era, the idea being that knowledge, as with capital, is vital for economic growth. This notion has led to organizations and individuals' attempts to manage the knowledge assets (both tacit and explicit) at their disposal. Knowledge management involves the creation, storage, transfer and use of knowledge, commonly achieved with the help of ICTs. One ICT device that may prove especially useful in future transactions is the mobile phone. New models of mobile phones are capable of playing many important roles in the knowledge management process. This paper conceptualizes knowledge management and discusses the role of modern wireless technology, specifically mobile phones, in managing knowledge. Three case studies based on recent research conducted at the University of Cape Town and the University of Zululand are used to discuss and explain this phenomenon. These case studies reveal that mobile phones are indeed being used to manage knowledge.

Keywords: Mobile phones, knowledge management

25. An investigation into the status and challenges of records management at the University of Zululand

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Abstract

The study aimed to determine whether the University of Zululand has a functional records management system in place and a formal policy governing it. There is a lack of records management in many institutions due to the lack of the awareness of its importance. A literature review was applied focusing on the concept of records management, reasons for records management, electronic records management, records management system software, and records management policy. The University of Zululand falls below requirements when it comes to the maintenance of records that document its functions. It must therefore develop and implement a policy framework for a records management system and ensure that there is a consistent way of checking compliance and evaluating the performance of the system through records management system audits.

Keywords:Records management, University of Zululand

26. Examining the causes of the digital divide among students of the University of Zululand

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Abstract

This paper explores the type of digital divide that exists among students, focusing mainly on access and the use of ICT's. Tavani (2003:n.p) defines the digital divide as the disparity that exists between those who have access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and those who do not. Thus, it is the gap that exists between those who have access to "information tools" and the ability to use those

tools and those who do not. Conclusions and recommendations for understanding the challenges of the digital divide are provided.

Keywords: Digital divide, digital divide causes, students, University of Zululand

27 How efficient and effective is the records management system used by the government of Swaziland?

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ABSTRACT

An effective records management system is a structural arrangement that tracks the lifecycle of records in an organization. A records management system enables the organization to know when a record was created, what function it serves, how long it is considered useful by the agency that created it, what parameters exist for maintaining it and for how long, and what legal authority monitors its lifecycle (creation and destruction) [R.M Manual, 2003]. The management and preservation of records in an organization helps it achieve greater efficiency, effectiveness and economy.

Records management in the government ministries in Swaziland is undertaken within the framework of the Swaziland National Archives Act. The Swaziland National Archives Act was established by Archives Act no. 5 in 1971. Its mission is to empower Swazi citizens by helping them fully participate in their country's social, political and economic life through the equitable development, preservation and protection of Swazi cultural heritage. Moreover, Swaziland National Archives has a mandate for the records management of government and public sector organizations. However, there has been many an instance when a document being sought by a person (be it a government employee, researcher, journalist or ordinary citizen) that is known or perceived to be in the custody of one of the government's agencies proved impossible to find (Times of Swaziland, 2003). We believe that without proper records management systems, governments cannot be held accountable for their decisions.

The aim of this paper is to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the current records management system used by Swaziland government ministries. One or more of the following research questions were addressed in this paper: (i) How are records generated, used and disposed of in the Swaziland government? (ii) What are the types of records that are generated within the Swaziland government? (iii) How are records organized and retrieved? iv)What are the training needs of the Swaziland government's registry staff? v) What is the attitude of the staff towards records management practices? vi) What is the level of staff awareness with respect to sound records management practices? vii) How suitable are the records' storage facilities? viii) And what are the status and challenges of e-records management in the country?

Both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms and methods were used in the research design. These included the content analysis of relevant records and research reports (presented in the form of a literature review) and the distribution of surveys in the form of questionnaires. The target population consisted of internal records' users (action officers) and established records officers (registry staff) in government ministries in Swaziland. 92 action officers and 29 registry staff represented the target population, i.e. 31 staff members from top management, 31 staff members from middle management, 30 staff members from lower or line management, and 29 staff members from the registries. Data analyses followed the orthodox qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques for the sense making of the study's results.

Preliminary results reveal that government ministries in Swaziland do not practice sound records management as advocated by the Swaziland National Archives Act (No. 5 of 1971). There is no uniformity among the action officers and registry staff with respect to filing methods and the manner in which records are destroyed or deleted. There are no control measures for ensuring the care and safe custody of records. An electronic records management policy, filing procedure manual, and disaster recovery plan do not exist. Action officers are seen managing records on their own and there is no policy or guideline to ensure proper and effective control of records management. The lack of records management practices indirectly affects the information flow within the ministries. The outcome of this study will inform policy on records management in the government of Swaziland. The outcome will also facilitate effective records management in the government, create awareness about sound records management, and help inform a records management training plan.

Keywords: Records management, Swaziland

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