<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial No</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author 1</td>
<td>OMEKWU, Obiora Charles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Managing a Professional Library and Information Science Journal in Africa: Issues, Innovations and Imperatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keywords</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Managing a Professional Library and Information Science Journal in Africa: Issues, Innovations and Imperatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher</td>
<td>Emerald Group Publishing Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication Date</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Signature | Digitally signed by Dr Chinwe Nwogo Ezeani
DN: CN = Dr Chinwe Nwogo Ezeani, C = NG, O = University of Nigeria, Nsukka, OU = University Library
Reason: I have reviewed this document
Date: 2008.08.23 11:02:15 +07'00' |

|
Managing a professional library and information science journal in Africa: issues, innovations and imperatives

Charles O. Omekwu
Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, University of Lagos, Nigeria
Library Review aims to provide an international communication link between researchers, educators and library professionals in academic, public, company and other libraries. It publishes papers which have been reviewed by the Editor and one or more reviewers, which may be accepted as is, revised or rejected.

EDITOR
David McMenemy
Library, Glasgow Caledonian University, 34 Richmond Street, Glasgow G1, UK
Tel: 0141 246 4061; Fax: 0141 246 4076
E-mail: david.mcmenemy@cis.strath.ac.uk

ANTAEUS COLUMN
Nicholas Joint
Reference and Information, Andersonian Library, University of Strathclyde, UK

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Helen Bartlett
Copyright Manager, Heron - a division of Ingenta, Oxford, UK
George Macgregor
Department of Computer and Information Science, University of Strathclyde, UK
Alan Poulter
Department of Computer and Information Science, University of Strathclyde, UK

REVIEWS EDITOR
Stuart Hannabuss
School of Information Management, Aberdeen Business School, Robert Gordon University, UK

PUBLISHER
Eileen Breen
Email: ebreen@emeraldinsight.com

ISSN 0024-2535
© 2007 Emerald Group Publishing Limited

Awarded in recognition of Emerald’s production department’s adherence to quality systems and processes when preparing scholarly journals for print

Library Review is indexed and abstracted in:
- Bulletin des Bibliothéques de France
- Current Awareness Abstracts
- Information: An International Journal of Libraries
- Information Science
- Information Science & Technology Abstracts
- INSPEC
- Information Retrieval: Theory and Practice
- The Informed Librarian

Library Review is also available online at:
Journal information: www.emeraldinsight.com/lr.htm
Table of contents: www.emeraldinsight.com/0024-2535.htm

This journal is also available worldwide at:
www.emeraldinsight.com
Managing a professional library and information science journal in Africa

Issues, innovations and imperatives

Charles O. Omekwu
Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, University of Lagos, Nigeria

Abstract

Purpose - The main objective of this paper is to highlight and discuss issues, innovations and imperatives related to the management of professional library and information science (LIS) journals in Africa.

Design/methodology/approach - The strategy adopted was to preface the concerns about the quality of journals from Africa and then synthesise managerial issues that must be resolved to enhance quality. The next approach was to draw up a ten-step plan of innovative ways to enhance the quality of LIS journals in Africa. Finally, the paper discusses eight critical imperatives related to effective management of African LIS journals.

Findings - The major concerns are that the continent's LIS journals are substandard, suffer high mortality and hardly appear regularly. Issues to be addressed to stem this tide of affairs include increased subscription spread, revenue base and the development of scholarly content. The paper argues that African LIS journals will continue to die young if innovative strategies are not injected to rejuvenate them.

Practical implications - The developments in the foreground indicate a better and brighter future for African professional LIS journals. African LIS journal managers must work towards financial independence, introduce or continue the review process, design scholarly content and strive for international competitiveness.

Originality/value - Probably the most comprehensive articulation of the challenges and opportunities facing LIS journal publishing in Africa.

Keywords Africa, Library and information science, Library management, Publications

Paper type General review

Introduction

It is both a challenge and an opportunity to manage a professional library and information science (LIS) journal in Africa. The challenge perspective arises from the complex network of relationships, which the manager has to contend with. Firstly, the manager is answerable to the executives of the professional association and by extension, to the Association. Secondly, he has to carry along the members of the editorial board/advisers. Thirdly, he has to manage his most critical constituency - the authors; because the quality of the authorship invariably translates to the standard of the articles in the journal. Fourthly, the Editor-in-chief has to manage the peer review and the journal production processes. These challenges notwithstanding, it is indeed a privilege to manage a professional journal in Africa. It is an opportunity to serve and contribute to the intellectual development of the association. One gets to know more people, learn from the challenges of journal production in a developing country and innovate to enhance both the intellectual content and total packaging of the journal. The goal of this paper is to highlight and discuss critical issues of managing a professional LIS journal in Africa.

It is hope that an understanding of these issues will help managers/editors of LIS
journals to wade through the complex labyrinth of journal production. The paper further examines how LIS editors can innovate to improve the standard of a LIS journal funded by a library association. It considers the imperatives of sustainability of LIS journals in Africa. This discourse is situated in the context of lessons from the author’s management of the *Lagos Journal of Library and Information Science* (LAJLIS). The LAJLIS is the official journal of the Nigerian Library Association, Lagos State Chapter. It is appropriate to first examine concerns related to the quality of LIS journals in Africa.

**Concerns about quality control and improvement**

The International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications and African Journal of Library, Archival and Information Studies recently organized a very vital workshop. The title was: "Improving the quality of Library and Information Science Journals in West Africa. A stakeholders conference". The title suggests the need for critical evaluation of the state of LIS journals by those who are involved in their production and use. It calls into question the quality of these journals against professional and international standards. It was an auspicious conference, but it was not the first. Issues of quality control have engaged the attention of institutions and individuals in the very recent and not too distant past. In 1992 (29-30 January), the African Library Science Journal Workshop was held at the Bayero University, Kano. The IFLA Round Table of Editors of Library Journals and the International Group of the Library Association, UK, jointly sponsored it. According to Zahradeen (1992), "The purpose of this unusual and significant workshop is to consider the factors that pose difficulties to the publication of professional journals in the field of library and information science in the African Continent". Sadiq (1992) discussed the struggle for survival of the Nigerian Periodical Index (NPI). His citation of the introduction to NPI captures critical issues of journal publishing in Nigeria.

In many of the entries, a considerable degree of instability, which characterized periodical publishing in Nigeria during the period is noticeable. Some titles started with high hopes and sound promises only to fall away for a long time or cease altogether, unannounced after the appearance of one or two issues. This type of situation often increases acquisition problems for subscribers; and it indeed proves a formidable undertaking for this library to be able to determine the current status of many of these fugitive publications.

Four critical issues are raised in the above observation.

1. unstable publication schedules;
2. high mortality rate;
3. subscription problems; and
4. fugitiveness.

Scholarly and professional journals should never be classified or described as fugitive publications. They are by their very distinctive attributes expected to be current, visible and regular vehicles of professional, scholarly, research and development information. With specific reference to NPI, Sadiq (1992) states further that funding, generating raw indexes, editing and availability of journals for coverage and distribution were all key factors for survival.
Ouma (1992) of the Kenya Library Association (KLA) presented a complex scenario of issues involved in managing a professional LIS journal in Africa. Maktaba was the official bi-annually journal of KLA, and she highlights the issues thus:

Since the first issue came out in 1974, the journal has completed 11 volumes; this means that we are behind schedule by seven volumes. If my calculations are right, when I published volume 11, no 2, 1989, I ought to have taken to the press volume 18, no 2. These lapses have created a problem in the numbering. Attempts have been made to bridge the gaps with little success. In 1981, with the publication of volume 6, no 2, we tried to renumber as follows: Vol 6, no 2 1979 (1981). This continued with Vol 7 up to Vol 10, no 2 1983 (1987). In 1988 we did not go to the press. This meant another lapse. In 1989, we realized that we were not solving any problem and reverted to normal numbering with Vol 11, no 1, 1989.

It is understandable if the numbering rearrangement created subscription problems. To assign 1979 and 1981 to Vol. 6, No. 2 for instance raised the question of what happened to 1980 volume and issues. The anxiety will not only be for subscribers but also for scholars who would like to update their holdings with specific reference to this journal. The editor of this journal situates the whole problem on three key issues:

(1) lack of articles;
(2) lack of funds; and
(3) editorial workload.

In Nigeria however, Nzotta (1992) indicates that the level of articles is not a critical issue. The reason is not far-fetched because the majority of librarians in Nigeria work in academic, special and similar libraries where advancement depends a great deal on publishing ability. Academic status implies that, for promotion, librarians, like their teaching counterparts, have to be assessed partly on the basis of their publications. Therefore they do struggle to get published. He adds rather quickly on the other hand, that there is a great dearth of quality and scholarly manuscripts. Factors responsible for lack of qualitative manuscripts include:

(1) most manuscripts are not empirical;
(2) they are not “well-written theoretical papers making original contribution to knowledge or thought”;
(3) the literature reviews are not comprehensive;
(4) only few authors take the pains to ensure the grammatical and technical correctness of their manuscripts; and
(5) authors do not care to read the notes to contributors with as many paper having as many different referencing styles.

In the end editors have to contend with “what is available not necessarily what is desirable”. Thirteen years later, the seven questions posed by Nzotta are still relevant today:

(1) How many library science journals do we need in Nigeria or Africa?
(2) What is the best way to fund the journals?
(3) What type of editors do the journals require?
(4) How would the journals attract quality manuscripts in sufficient numbers?
(5) What would be done to attract adequate foreign and local subscriptions?
In “Overview of the state of Nigerian library journal publishing”, Ifidon (1992) examined 19 library journals published by Associations, Societies and Libraries for institutions. Evaluation indices included life span and mortality rate, organization set-up and factors that might be responsible for high mortality rate. His findings indicated that:

1. The average life span is about two years.
2. Within two years of their establishment over 50 per cent of the journals fold up.
3. Those that, plod on for more than two years fail to maintain their frequency policy; merge two or more issues and eventually cease publication.
4. Organizational set-up is somewhat uniform; they all have Editorial Boards, Managing Editors and Assistant Editors; they all assess their manuscripts using their editorial policies as a measure of standardization and most of them are published twice a year.
5. Major factors that inhibit regularity or that lead to the folding up of the journals are short-term goals; poor financial base; very low subscriptions; inadequate promotional strategies; high cost of production particularly arising from government fiscal policies, undeveloped state of Nigerian paper industries, inflation and devaluation of local currency, mode of production; lack of appreciation of the place of journals in the dissemination of information and the poor reading habit of Nigerian librarians.

The late Bankole (1992) highlights a publisher’s viewpoint to “Organization of journal publishing in Africa”. Issues to be addressed are:

1. Lack or dearth of experienced editors; the few available are usually fully stretched on their daily employment.
2. Lack of sufficient suitable articles. Most articles require copies of editing or at times re-writing.
3. Too many mushroom journals.
4. Insufficient financial support by publishers.
5. Insufficient subscription due to lack of funds by libraries and individuates or inadequate promotion and advertisement.
6. Inability of printers to meet dates.
7. Ever increasing cost of production, especially as very limited number of copies are usually published.
8. Lack of local subscription agents to aid in distribution.
9. Unreliable postal services resulting in loss and claims.
10. Some referees do not reply promptly. Some require that they be paid.

Although the Nigerian postal system has improved significantly in recent times, it seems that the other issues are yet unresolved. Aina (1992), however, discussed the
"Prospects of reducing the High Mortality Rate of African Library Science Journals". Measures that will contribute to this reduction include:

1. Broadening of revenue base.
2. Joint partnership with a commercial publisher.
3. Cooperation with a publisher.
4. Sponsorship by national or international bodies or wealthy individuals.
5. Availability of quality manuscripts.
6. Good editorial board members.
7. Marketing and distribution of the journal.

Banjo (1992) and Olden (1992) and Wise (1992) all made useful contributions to the Bayero University Workshop. The African Journal of Library Archives and Information Science (AJLAIS) and the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications, Oxford, UK, have followed up the 1992 conference with two vital training courses. Nearly ten years later, "A training course on research and writing skills for Library, Archives and Information Science authors" was held at the University of Baghdad, 7-11 October 2002. The course was to address the issues of substandard manuscripts of LIS journals. In 2003, 30 June-5 July 2003, both organizations sponsored "A training course on sustenance of Library, Archives and Information Science Journals". It was directed to editors of LIS journals. The improvement of authors' writing skills and the competencies of editors of LIS journals will ideally translate to high quality journals.

What then are management issues that can be synthesized for a professional LIS journal in Africa?

Managerial issues for professional LIS journals in Africa

Professional library associations are major contributors to the publication of LIS journals in Africa. For instance, nine out of the 16 prominent LIS journals listed by Aina (1992) in his study were published by professional associations. This implies that issues relating to the survival of African LIS journals must relate to the welfare of members of professional associations.

Okwilagwe (2002) has observed that "the designing and production of journals need adequate knowledge, careful planning and practical skills". Journal editors and the sponsoring professional associations must address the following management issues in order to ensure that LIS journals are not only sustainable but also of a very high standard.

Management issue 1: finance

As can be seen from comments of stakeholders in LIS journals production, finance appears to be the most critical variable. Journal production is capital intensive. Before starting any new LIS journal, it is important for the parenting professional association to cost the short, medium and long-term financial implication of doing so. The cost of volume and issues for each year must be budgeted for. The source of funds for subsequent issues must be known. Financial management issues will consider:

1. Cost of printing depending on the print run.
2. Subscriptions maintenance.
Manuscripts postage to:
(a) Peer reviewers;
(b) Authors for correction.
(4) Journal marketing.
(5) Journal postage to authors and members of the editorial boards.
(6) Electronic access and communication.
(7) Stationery.

Management issue 2: sustainability
Regular appearance, quality control, expanded revenue base, visibility are key indices in the sustainability equation. If LIS journals are not managed so as to be sustained, they will continue to suffer a high mortality rate.

Management issue 3: quality of manuscripts
A critical management issue for an LIS journal is how to ensure the steady flow of high quality articles. The quality of LIS journals in Africa is directly related to the quality of articles they publish. The quality of manuscripts can be improved through managerial skills that combine the reviewer's comments with the editor's articulation of steps that an author can take to re-work his/her manuscript.

Management issue 4: review process
Peer review is a veritable way of assessing the suitability or otherwise of all articles for publication. All papers should ideally pass through the peer review process. But sometimes that process can become a graveyard for many potentially good manuscripts. Ways and means must be devised to ensure that good manuscripts are not lost in the review process.

Management issue 5: author relationship
LIS journal managers must have a good relationship with their constituency. They must identify scholarly authors, respond to queries of authors about the status of their manuscript and provide them with copies of the journals containing their published works.

Management issue 6: subscription
Subscription (especially foreign) is one of the ways of expanding the revenue base of a journal. But a subscription drive hardly occupies a high profile position among LIS journal managers. The need to maintain a subscription database is hardly emphasized or pursued. Managing individual, institutional, local and foreign subscriptions is an issue that LIS journal managers must address.

Management issue 7: printing
A bad printer can mess up the content of a good journal. Effective management of the printing process will ensure that printers do not cut corners, that quality materials are used, that colour separation is appropriate, that camera ready versions are scrutinized and that the finishing is of a very high standard and that deadlines are met.

Management issue 8: editorial
Aina (1992) indicates that issues related to editorial management include:

- having a clear cut editorial policy;
LR 56,2

• choice of effective leadership for the journal; and
• stability of the editorial board and secretarial support.

These are all situations that impinge on effectiveness of production and quality of the journal.

Management issue 9: spread

The latitude of authorship, readership, subscription and finances will all depend on the coverage of the journal. In Nigeria, for instance, only *Nigerian Libraries* could be said to have a national spread since it is published by the Nigerian Library Association. But local state chapters of NLA also publish their own journals. Examples include:

1. Lagos Journal of Library and Information Science,
2. Gateway Library Journal – Ogun State NLA,
3. Library Focus – Kaduna NLA,
4. Middle Belt Library Journal,
5. Borno Library Journal – Borno NLA,
6. Osun Library Journal,

Professionally however, these journals should not limit their manuscript sources to their local chapters. Doing so will be the surest way to lead to a dearth of articles. This is based partly on the fact that some chapters are educationally, infrastructurally and numerically more vibrant than others. Spread management will ensure that the journal does not only attract manuscripts from near and far but also that its degree of influence is enlarged.

Management issue 10: marketing/advertisement

Marketing and advertising are vital sources of revenue for LIS journals. But they are sources that are not vigorously and strategically pursued. Consequently revenue accruable from these sources is unexploited by many LIS journals.

Management issue 11: information technology

IT provides the appropriate platforms for contact, communication and cooperation between the journal and its critical public or constituencies – authors, reviewers, editorial board, printers and subscribers.

Management issue 12: criticism

Managing a professional LIS journal in Africa is very demanding. The Editor is often a full time employee of his/her institution. So the editorial responsibilities are additional to the official duties. The editor would naturally expect that his/her efforts should be appreciated. But the contrary is often the case. Criticisms do come from different quarters – association members, editorial advisers and association executives. Criticisms – whether negative or positive, should be seen as fertilizer for growth and improvement of the quality of the journal. Managing from that perspective is the best way to move African LIS journals forward.

Perceived positively, criticism can become the seed for innovation and creativity. Managers of LIS journals in Africa need to innovate and partner with their critical
constituencies to improve the journal’s quality. How these were done at the LAJLIS is discussed in the next section.

Innovation for growth and improvement

Innovations are creative new ways of doing things; old things remain the same without innovations. This means that if African LIS journals suffer high mortality rates and nothing is done to stem that tide, they will continue to die young. To innovate therefore means that new strategies must be designed to mitigate those factors that account for high mortality and low quality of LIS journals of African origin. Strategic innovation is the process of identifying the standard or goal to be attained and devising pragmatic means of reaching that standard or goal.

This writer is a great admirer of the *Journal of American Society of Information Science (JASIS)*—now the *Journal of American Society of Information Science and Technology*. The cover design is particularly impressive and colourful. The content is rich, current and critical in conceptual, theoretical and analytical frameworks and applications. About the time of assumption of duties as Editor-in-Chief of LAJLIS, this writer had started writing for the Emerald journals—*Library Review* and *Interlending and Document Supply*. He has earlier written for AJLAIS. It is understandable therefore, that these three leading LIS journals should become standards for LAJLIS. What are then the seeds and steps of innovation that would translate to improvement of quality of LIS journals?

**Step 1: standards**

Standards are yardsticks for measuring performance level. The gap between a standard and a product illustrates how far the product has fallen from the expected quality. A standard is therefore an instrument for quality control. It is the ultimate goal to be attained. To operate without a standard is like a ship that sails with every wind. It will reach no designated shore or harbour. Standards provide aspirations for innovation. For LAJLIS, the three international LIS journals provide the impetus for innovation and quality improvement.

**Step 2: decision**

Decision determines destiny. It is one thing to discover that an LIS journal is below acceptable standard; it is entirely a different thing for the professional association to decide on measures that lead to acceptable standards. Innovations die if decisions are not taken to pursue them. In the case of LAJLIS, decisions were taken by the executives of the association to implement changes that would lead to improved standards.

**Step 3: title change**

The foundation title of the journal was *Lagos Librarian*. The suggestion by the newly appointed Editor-in-Chief (the writer) to change the title to *Lagos Journal of Library and Information Science* was accepted by executive of NLA, Lagos State Chapter. That title change alone has attracted more authors to the journal especially from outside Lagos.

**Step 4: cover design**

The new look journal cover was modeled after JASIST. In fact, a copy of JASIST was given to the printer to work with. When it appeared, it clearly stood out as a standard professional journal.
Stet 5: page design
Foolscap size was adapted as the page design for the journal. Apart from accommodating more papers it provided room to introduce new concepts and contents to the journal.

Step 6: creative content
Good cover and page design and a creative content are like a good meal served in an inviting dish. On the standards set by the three international paradigms for LAJLIS, new and creative content was introduced to the packaging of the journal.

Creative content 1: abstract and keywords. The abstracts and keywords section is situated between the editorial and the first paper in the journal. Those who do not have the time to go through the entire papers can still get a bird's eye view of their content.

Creative content 2: pictures of authors. Pictures of authors are posted just below the titles of their papers. This is in line with the tradition of Interlending and Document Supply. Apart from improving the internal layout of the journal, it effectively relates the paper to their authors in lively way.

Creative content 3: incisive editorial. Each issue of LAJLIS carries an incisive editorial of current professional practice, change or development. The editorial of Vol. 1 No. 1 was on "Change as constant variable". It gave the background to the title change from Lagos Librarian to Lagos Journal of Library and Information Science. But more than background information, it sets new standard for the journal. According to that editorial:

Beyond title change, LAJLIS contents, layout, editorial policy and design will increasingly conform to international standards. The journal will become international standards in circulation and subscription. The current issue will hopefully migrate to electronic format. It will become one journal that the forward-looking professionals will have to work very hard to get published in. That is the aspiration that is attainable. To get published in LAJLIS, librarian and information professionals from all backgrounds are advised to aim for excellence. From the current volume only the best papers are good enough.

Creative content 4: notes for contributors. A detailed notes for contributors was introduced. It covered issues such as copyright, editorial objectives, general principles, the reviewing process and manuscripts requirements. Information on advertisements and final submission was provided.

Creative content 5: subscription form. The former title did not have a detachable subscription form. One was designed and included in subsequent volumes of LAJLIS.

Creative content 6: paper classification. Apart from the abstract and keywords, LAJLIS introduced a novel way to describe each paper in the journal based on their methodology and conceptual framework. Where empirical results are present, the paper is categorized as research paper; where it deals with a current topic, it is described as current theme and where a practice experience is dealt with, it is classified as professional practice. This description gives the reader a clue as to what to find in the paper.

Creative content 7: distinguished information professional column. This is the most recent addition to LAJLIS content. It is a biographical column designed to honour members of the information profession who have made contributions to uplift the profession. The maiden edition featured Dr (Mrs) L. Mabawonku – Associate Professor, the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies at the University Ibadan.
Managing a professional LIS journal

Step 7: editorial management
To affect the current editorial philosophy of excellence LJLIS Editorial Board was reconstituted. Editorial members were chosen based strictly of their contribution to the advancement of the current mission statement. The goal was to provide effective editorial leadership and in the process achieve acceptable level of editorial independence.

Step 8: peer review
One of the concerns highlighted earlier in this paper deals with delays in getting feedback from reviewers. This has also been the experience at managing LJLIS. One approach has seen authors charged a token fee which is sent with the papers for reviewers. However there are reviewers who see the peer review process as a professional and intellectual contribution and are ever ready to assist with reviews without fees.

Step 9: funds generations
We have made overtures to the banking sector for advertisements and financial assistance. A major way of generating funds for the journal has been through the charging of publication fees. Selling the journal at seminars/workshop/conferences has also been another source of income. But on the whole, the executives of the NLA, Lagos chapter have always been generous in funding the production of the journal.

Step 10: encouraging younger professionals
A little encouragement can be all it takes to get younger professional published. The eagerness to publish has often been a strong catalyst for young authors to resubmit a much more improved manuscript when it is rejected.

It is clearly evident that a business-as-usual attitude cannot bring about quality improvement to LIS journals in Africa. Journals of professional tradition can thrive in a sustainable way. Genuine concerns raised by distinguished editors, publishers and scholars must be addressed in pragmatic ways. Professional LIS journals in Africa are vehicles for information, research, development and scholarly communication. Their sustainability is predicated on a number of imperatives. These include:

**Imperative 1: financial independence**
This must be the goal of all LIS journals in Africa. To charge authors publication fee is not the ideal situation. Some authors do (wrongly) think that because they can pay the fees, their papers must be published. While subsidising from the parenting association is always welcome, financial independence would confer on the editorial team a higher degree of authority.

**Imperative 2: improved subscription base**
Foreign subscription is something that professionals LIS journal managers hardly work at. It is an imperative for financial independence and international visibility.

**Imperative 3: international competitiveness**
Professional LIS Journal in Africa must operate on a level playing field with their international counterparts. If library professionals from Africa are to hold their ground
International journals from the continent must not be overshadowed in an international exhibition or libraries of world class universities.

**Imperative 4: International Visibility**

It is time to get out of our local domain and tell the world that professional LIS journals are published in Africa. It is time to get indexed and abstracted by leading services in these areas. It is time to migrate into the electronic superhighway so generously provided by African Journal Online.

**Imperative 5: Scholarly Content**

It is a disservice to give subscribers journals deficient in scholarly content. Content management must become a focal imperative for LIS journal managers in Africa. Professional association members, executives, scholars, researchers and subscribers have a right to get value for their money and time.

**Imperative 6: Issues not for Compromise**

In research and development, facts and figures are sacrosanct. Quality must not be sacrificed on the altar of financial expediency or the preference of the executives of the association. The editorial philosophy must be the yardstick of dealing with authors. Objections from any quarters cannot be reasonable grounds to deprive a properly reviewed paper from being published.

**Imperative 7: Review**

This is a key factor that confers on the journal the quality of being a learned/scholarly publication and journal managers should ensure that authors rework their manuscripts. Those who fail to meet the demands of the reviewer must not be published for whatever reason.

**Imperative 8: Training**

This writer was privileged to participate in the “Training course on the sustenance of Library, Archives and Information Science Journals in West Africa” – earlier mentioned in this paper. That course came just before he assumed the position of Editor-in-Chief of LAJLIS. It was timely and very helpful. It contributed to the improvement of the quality of LAJLIS in no small way. Journal managers need access to skills improvement training programmes and conferences. Improvement in their skills will impact positively on the journals they manage.

**Conclusion**

Journals in Africa have weathered sustainability storms in various frontiers. Professional LIS journals are by no means exceptions. High mortality rate, financial inadequacies, poor quality of manuscripts and thin subscription base are the major concerns and critical issues. African LIS journal managers must innovate in order to change the fortune of the continent’s journals. Innovative ideas and strategies must be injected to expand their subscription base, content quality, international competitiveness and financial independence. African LIS journals have the potential for growth and contribution to the scholarly enterprise. From the present foreground, we can look forward for better and brighter days for African LIS journals. It is time to
address the concerns, resolve the issues, rekindle our innovative capacities and rise to the imperative of effectively managing African professional LIS journals.

References


Further reading


Corresponding author
Charles O. Omekwu can be contacted at: omekwucharles@gmail.com

To purchase reprints of this article please e-mail: reprints@emeraldinsight.com
Or visit our web site for further details: www.emeraldinsight.com/reprints
Manuscripts should be submitted by e-mail (preferably with a Word attachment). As a guide, articles should be between 3-6,000 words in length. A title of not more than eight words should be provided. A brief autobiographical note should be supplied including full name, affiliation, square brackets and listed at the end of the article.

Contributions may comprise: previously unpublished research-based papers; news or reviews of current developments; descriptions of practical projects or innovations; surveys of the documentation systems and trends in the field. Each paper is reviewed by the Editor and one or more reviewers. The paper may be accepted as is, revised or rejected. Where there is a methodology, it should be clearly described under a separate heading. Manuscripts should be submitted by e-mail (preferably with a Word attachment).

The reviewing process

Each paper is reviewed by the Editor and one or more reviewers. The paper may be accepted as is, revised or rejected. Manuscripts should be submitted by e-mail (preferably with a Word attachment). As a guide, articles should be between 3-6,000 words in length. A title of not more than eight words should be provided. A brief autobiographical note should be supplied including full name, affiliation, square brackets and listed at the end of the article.

Contributions may comprise: previously unpublished research-based papers; news or reviews of current developments; descriptions of practical projects or innovations; surveys of the documentation systems and trends in the field. Each paper is reviewed by the Editor and one or more reviewers. The paper may be accepted as is, revised or rejected. Where there is a methodology, it should be clearly described under a separate heading. Manuscripts should be submitted by e-mail (preferably with a Word attachment). As a guide, articles should be between 3-6,000 words in length. A title of not more than eight words should be provided. A brief autobiographical note should be supplied including full name, affiliation, square brackets and listed at the end of the article.

Contributions may comprise: previously unpublished research-based papers; news or reviews of current developments; descriptions of practical projects or innovations; surveys of the documentation systems and trends in the field. Each paper is reviewed by the Editor and one or more reviewers. The paper may be accepted as is, revised or rejected. Where there is a methodology, it should be clearly described under a separate heading. Manuscripts should be submitted by e-mail (preferably with a Word attachment). As a guide, articles should be between 3-6,000 words in length. A title of not more than eight words should be provided. A brief autobiographical note should be supplied including full name, affiliation, square brackets and listed at the end of the article.

Contributions may comprise: previously unpublished research-based papers; news or reviews of current developments; descriptions of practical projects or innovations; surveys of the documentation systems and trends in the field. Each paper is reviewed by the Editor and one or more reviewers. The paper may be accepted as is, revised or rejected. Where there is a methodology, it should be clearly described under a separate heading. Manuscripts should be submitted by e-mail (preferably with a Word attachment). As a guide, articles should be between 3-6,000 words in length. A title of not more than eight words should be provided. A brief autobiographical note should be supplied including full name, affiliation, square brackets and listed at the end of the article.

Contributions may comprise: previously unpublished research-based papers; news or reviews of current developments; descriptions of practical projects or innovations; surveys of the documentation systems and trends in the field. Each paper is reviewed by the Editor and one or more reviewers. The paper may be accepted as is, revised or rejected. Where there is a methodology, it should be clearly described under a separate heading. Manuscripts should be submitted by e-mail (preferably with a Word attachment). As a guide, articles should be between 3-6,000 words in length. A title of not more than eight words should be provided. A brief autobiographical note should be supplied including full name, affiliation, square brackets and listed at the end of the article.

Contributions may comprise: previously unpublished research-based papers; news or reviews of current developments; descriptions of practical projects or innovations; surveys of the documentation systems and trends in the field. Each paper is reviewed by the Editor and one or more reviewers. The paper may be accepted as is, revised or rejected. Where there is a methodology, it should be clearly described under a separate heading. Manuscripts should be submitted by e-mail (preferably with a Word attachment). As a guide, articles should be between 3-6,000 words in length. A title of not more than eight words should be provided. A brief autobiographical note should be supplied including full name, affiliation, square brackets and listed at the end of the article.

Contributions may comprise: previously unpublished research-based papers; news or reviews of current developments; descriptions of practical projects or innovations; surveys of the documentation systems and trends in the field. Each paper is reviewed by the Editor and one or more reviewers. The paper may be accepted as is, revised or rejected. Where there is a methodology, it should be clearly described under a separate heading. Manuscripts should be submitted by e-mail (preferably with a Word attachment). As a guide, articles should be between 3-6,000 words in length. A title of not more than eight words should be provided. A brief autobiographical note should be supplied including full name, affiliation, square brackets and listed at the end of the article.

Contributions may comprise: previously unpublished research-based papers; news or reviews of current developments; descriptions of practical projects or innovations; surveys of the documentation systems and trends in the field. Each paper is reviewed by the Editor and one or more reviewers. The paper may be accepted as is, revised or rejected. Where there is a methodology, it should be clearly described under a separate heading. Manuscripts should be submitted by e-mail (preferably with a Word attachment). As a guide, articles should be between 3-6,000 words in length. A title of not more than eight words should be provided. A brief autobiographical note should be supplied including full name, affiliation, square brackets and listed at the end of the article.

Contributions may comprise: previously unpublished research-based papers; news or reviews of current developments; descriptions of practical projects or innovations; surveys of the documentation systems and trends in the field. Each paper is reviewed by the Editor and one or more reviewers. The paper may be accepted as is, revised or rejected. Where there is a methodology, it should be clearly described under a separate heading. Manuscripts should be submitted by e-mail (preferably with a Word attachment). As a guide, articles should be between 3-6,000 words in length. A title of not more than eight words should be provided. A brief autobiographical note should be supplied including full name, affiliation, square brackets and listed at the end of the article.
Authors’ Charter

Your rights as a contributor to an Emerald journal

Emerald’s copyright principles

Emerald seeks to retain copyright of the articles it publishes, without the authors giving up their rights to republish or reproduce their articles on paper or electronically, subject to acknowledgment of first publication details.

Emerald’s commitment to you

• An innovative publishing service which is timely, efficient, responsive and courteous
• Quality peer reviewed journals with editorial teams of distinction
• A named individual to keep you informed of publication progress
• Complimentary journal copy plus reprints of your paper
• An editorial and production policy which encourages accuracy and reduces submission to publication times
• On-line resources, forums and conferences to assist you with your research
• Responsible rights management to promote and safeguard the integrity of your work, encourage citation and wider dissemination
• Liberal reproduction rights and premium permissions service for yourself and subscribing organizations to serve the interests and needs of the scholarly community
• Additional benefits of Literati Club membership
• Consideration for nomination of the Annual Awards for Excellence to reward outstanding work
• Outstanding Doctoral Research Awards for our author community.

*Emerald - Electronic Management Research Library Database. Emerald is a trading name of WIB-EPIC.

The full text of Emerald’s Authors’ Charter can be found at www.emeraldinsight.com/charter

To discuss any aspect of this charter please contact us by e-mail at literaticlub@emeraldinsight.com

Tel +44(0) 1274 777700 Fax +44 (0) 1274 780700
Literati Club, Emerald, 60/62 Toller Lane, Bradford BD9 9BY, United Kingdom.

www.emeraldinsight.com/charter