Editorial

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This issue contains a number of articles about innovative projects, including a scientific equipment repository and a union catalogue for Indian Space Research Organization, as well as articles about training facilities, information-seeking behaviour, and virtual reality. There is also an overview of ICDL 2019,[2] an event that I have attended since the first conference in 2004. ICDL brings people to New Delhi from all parts of the world. This year 12 countries were represented by 60 international speakers and 653 delegates. As always, it is the interaction that offers particular intellectual stimulation. The common language was English, but a range of Indian, Asian, and European languages could be heard, including German, thanks to a number of German colleagues. Anyone who has not yet attended should consider ICDL in the future.

The article by S. Gond, S. K. Sonker, and F.A. Malik on 'Krishi Vigyan Kendra Libraries in India: Training Implementation Facilities, Services, and Awareness of Library Users' has the goal of analysing the "KVK libraries, in terms of their training programme implementations in India and awareness on the part of farmers about KVK libraries."[3] Farming is an important industry in India and worldwide, and modern farming techniques depend often on reliable information sources. The article concludes by encouraging more inclusivity.

The article on 'Cognitive Factors that Influence Information-seeking Behavioural Process Amongst Postgraduate Students: A Case of Kenyatta University Post-modern Library in Nairobi Kenya' by D. W. Muthee and J. M. Masinde addresses an ongoing issue for libraries. The article builds in part on the work of Carol Kulthau, whose research on the topic goes back to the 1980s. The authors' problem statement is clear: "Many times students avoid consulting the library because of negative past experiences with library staff that lack understanding of cognitive and affective elements of information seeking."[4] The authors conclude: "There is a need for the library to train librarians on user-centred systems. These include improving their competencies in handling resources, users, and subject knowledge."[5]

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[1] Humboldt-Elsevier Advanced Data and Text Centre
[2] International Conference on Digital Landscape 2019
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B. M. Gupta and S. M. Dhawan wrote an article about 'Virtual Reality Research: A Quantitative Analysis of Global Research Output During 1996–2017'. Virtual reality has been a hot topic for decades, and the technical ability to make use of it has grown. The article analysed the "top 15 most productive global organizations and authors … on a series of indicators, such as publication output, citations received, citations per publication, share of international collaborative publications and relative citation index."[6] The authors conclude that "...with the recent product launches of VR devices, this immersive technology could soon become ubiquitous in society."[7] Unfortunately VR has not yet reached libraries in any practical way.

'SpaceCat: Designing an Integrated Library System–Discovery Interface-based Virtual Union Catalogue for Indian Space Research Organization Libraries' is an article by M. N. Alam and P. Mukhopadhyay. The authors propose "...using [an] Integrated Library System–Discovery Interface (ILS–DI) as a standard protocol to interlink front-end search interface that library users interact with, and is often referred to as the 'Online Public Access Catalogue' or OPAC of a union catalogue with back-end of the Koha Integrated Library System (ILS) that is specifically for staff use."[8] The authors make the reasonable claim that "...implementation of the discovery layer

is a promising solution" for creating a union catalogue with the necessary flexibility.[9]

The final article by T. P. Sankar, N. Deepa, P. K. Bhattacharya, and S. Ganguly on 'Digital Access to Scientific Equipment Repository for Research and Innovation: A Study' addresses a problem that affects all research institutions in all countries. My own university has discussed sharing mechanisms intensively over the last two years in preparation for our (successful) German Excellence Initiative proposal, and implementing a catalogue such as the authors describe would make a critical difference for researchers. The authors "...identified a total of 2628 high-valued projects, each costing ₹ 50 lakh and above, sponsored during the study coverage period—2003–04 and 2010–11—for capturing the information on equipment, each costing ₹ 10 lakh and above purchased under these projects."[10] They had a response rate for their data collection of 77%, which is surprisingly good.[11] The authors have worked on a classification scheme, which is essential because small differences in equipment can matter. As the authors conclude: "Fostering a culture of sharing of such scientific assets will lead to greater collaboration between the scientific community and increased efficiency in terms of financial and manpower resources."[12]

I hope you will enjoy reading this issue and will learn from the articles.

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[12] P. 83