



# LATN Survey of Indigenous library services in selected university libraries in Australia, New Zealand and Canada

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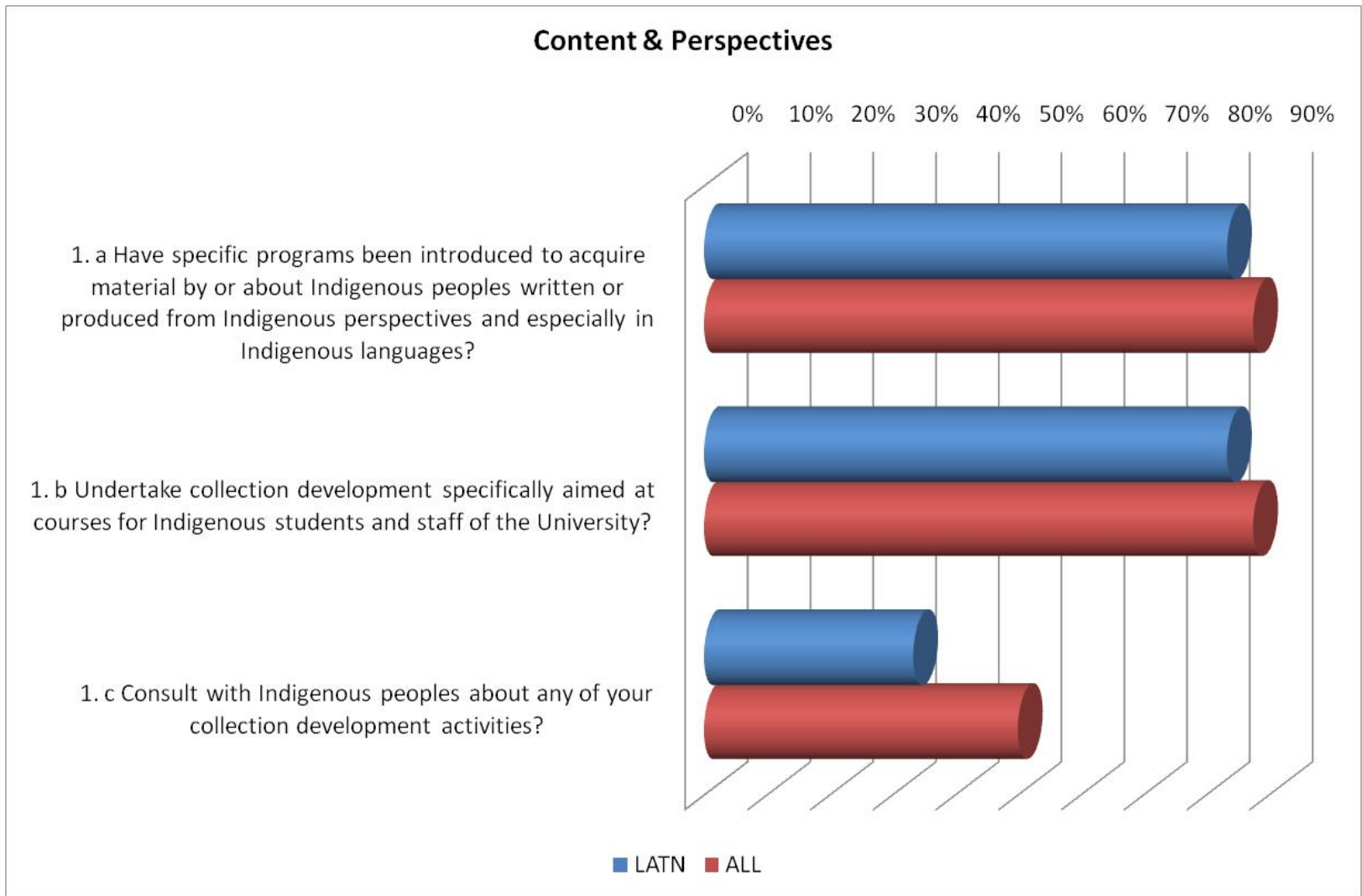
- Conducted during the last quarter of 2009 by Lynne Vautier (Curtin), Jemima McDonald (UTS) and Alex Byrne (UTS) to benchmark support for Indigenous students and communities against the framework of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library and Information Resources Network Protocols (ATSILIRN Protocols) across 8 university libraries:
- *LATN Members*
  - ❑ University of South Australia (UniSA)
  - ❑ Auckland University of Technology (AUT)
  - ❑ Curtin University of Technology (Curtin)
  - ❑ Queensland University of Technology (QUT)
  - ❑ Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University (RMIT)
  - ❑ University of Technology, Sydney (UTS)
- *Partner Libraries*
  - ❑ University of British Columbia (UBC)
  - ❑ Charles Darwin University (CDU)

# Overview of findings

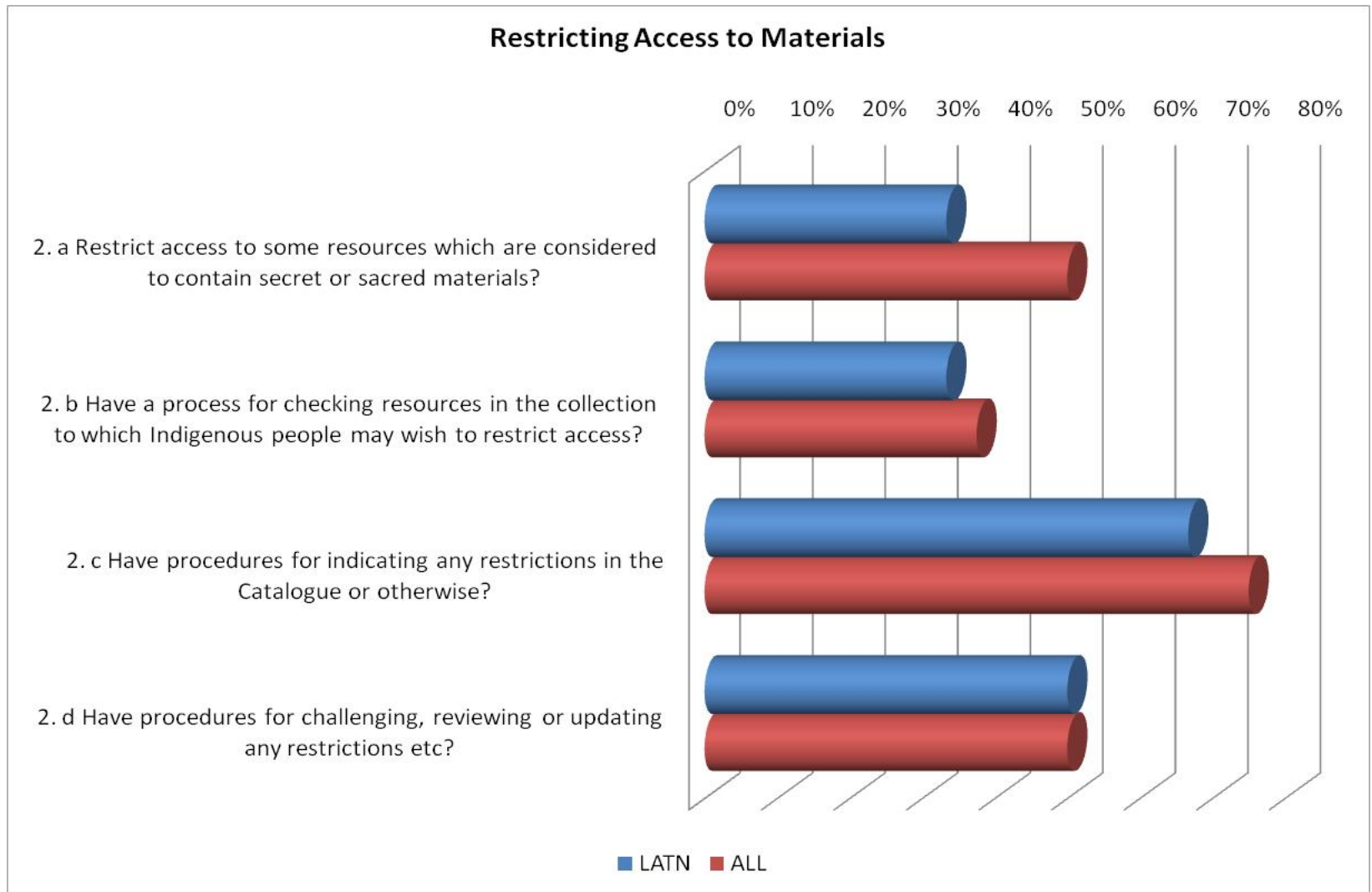
- Strong support for Indigenous students and staff, their communities and their needs. All reported a relationship with their university's Indigenous studies centre or equivalent and almost all undertook outreach activities to students, staff or communities.
- Only a third of LATN members and half of all respondents took special measures to enhance geographic, language and cultural identifies or subject headings in their catalogues. A minority consulted with Indigenous peoples in regard to collection development.
- The libraries took a broad view of their roles by embracing responsibility to promote awareness and use of their Indigenous-related collections.
- All of the libraries had Indigenous staff but only half specifically promoted employment to Indigenous people.

1. Share policies and procedures generally and particularly in regard to awareness raising activities
2. Promote membership of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library and Information Research Network (ATSILIRN) and equivalents to share experience and build peer support, especially for Indigenous library staff.
3. The major area of difficulty which could benefit from a collaborative initiative is in regard to dealing with sensitive and potentially offensive materials, an area in which the handling of such sensitivities and potentially restricting access to some materials must be balanced set against the core commitment to open access to scholarly information.

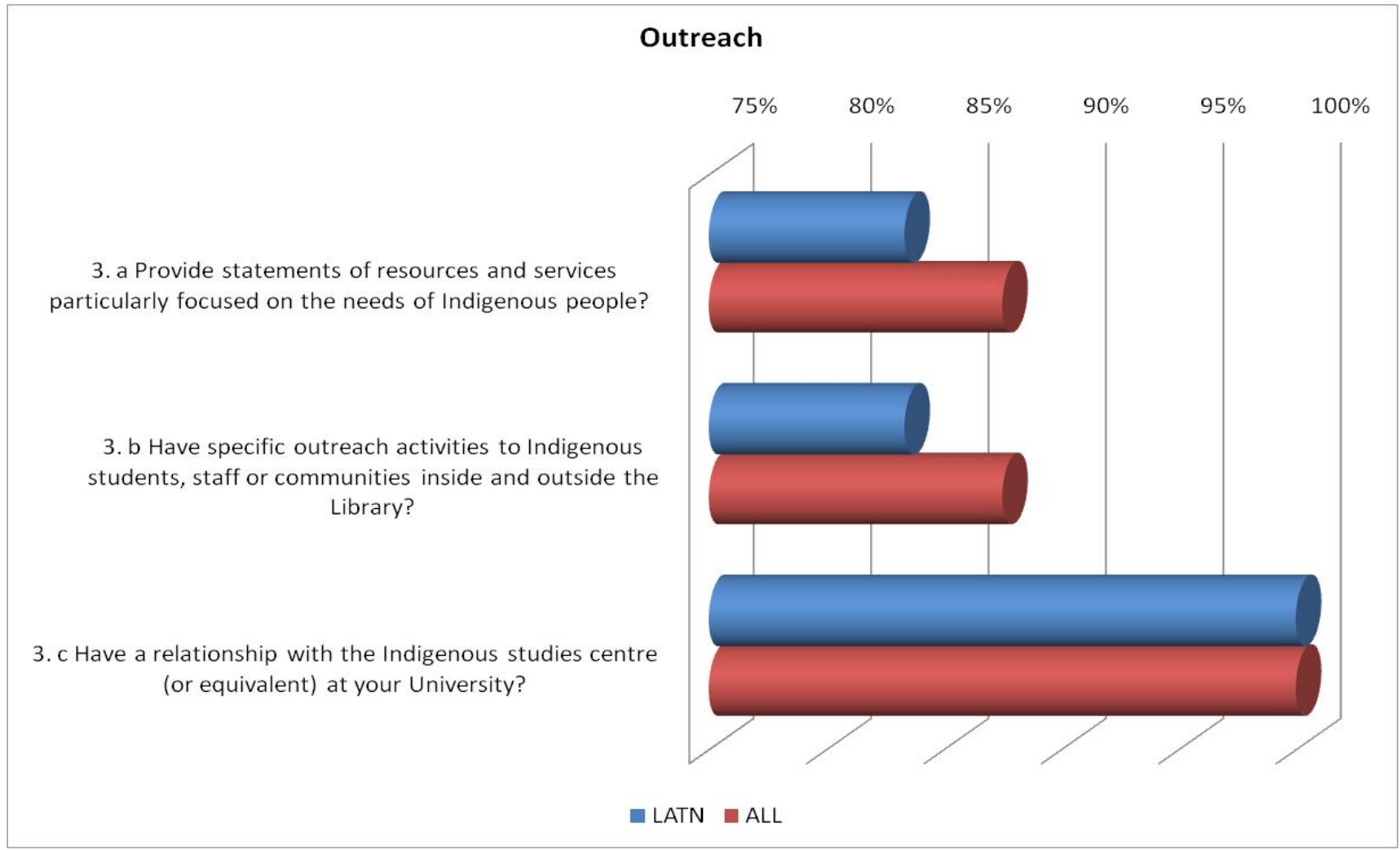
# 1. Content & Perspectives



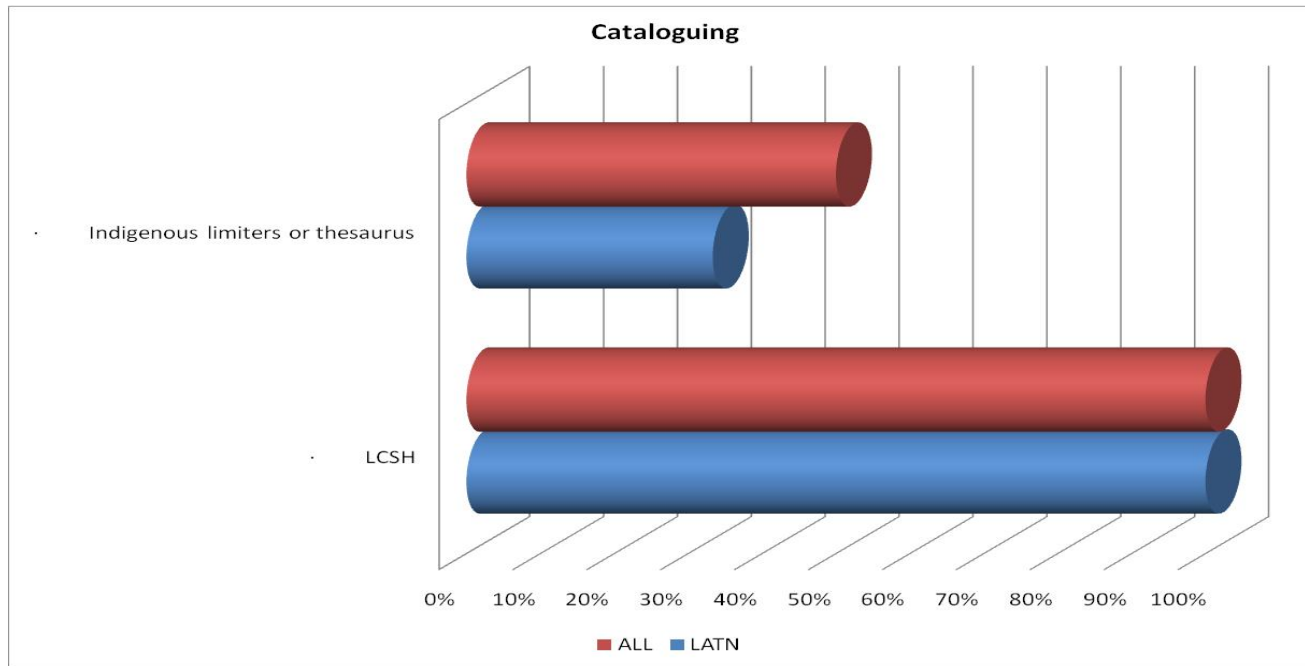
## 2. Restricting Access to Materials



# 3. Accessibility and Use

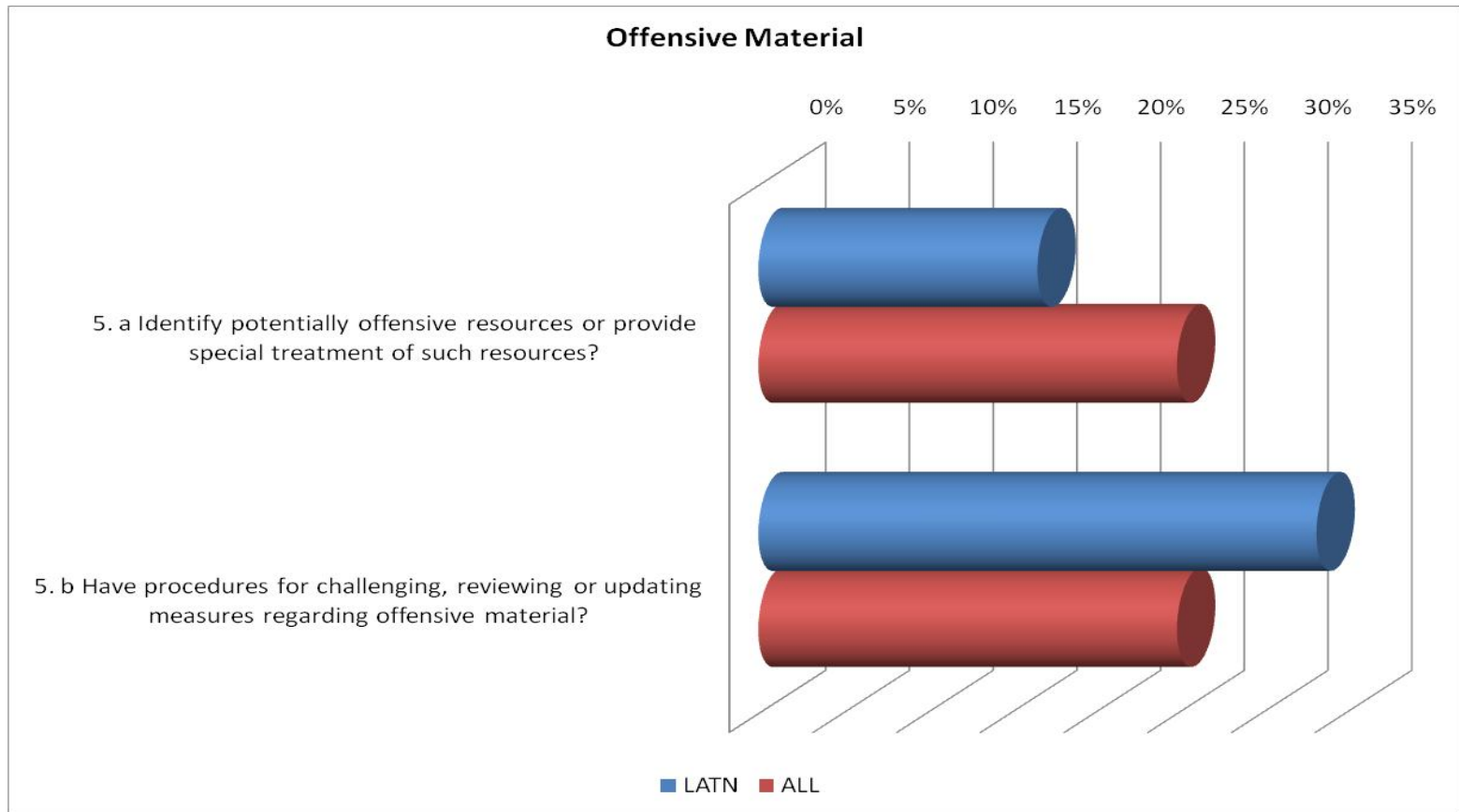


## 4. Description and Classification



- CDU uses the ATSLIRN Thesaurus, UBC the Brian Deer classification scheme, UniSA the Australian extension to LCSH and AUT the Māori Language Subject Headings extension to LCSH.
- The Xwi7xwa library at UBC is planning to research name authorities using terms that Indigenous communities use for themselves, their places, languages and cultural concepts.

# 5. Offensive Material



- Anecdotal reports indicate that there are some challenges but that they are not frequent.

## 6. Governance and Management

- Participation in governance of the libraries through Indigenous membership of boards or other advisory structures was identified by the Protocols as a way of ensuring that Indigenous issues and concerns would be addressed.
- Three of the six LATN respondents and five of the eight overall have Indigenous representation on Library committees.
- CDU and UBC had the most extensive involvement in advisory or reference groups including the Directors or equivalent of Indigenous academic units.

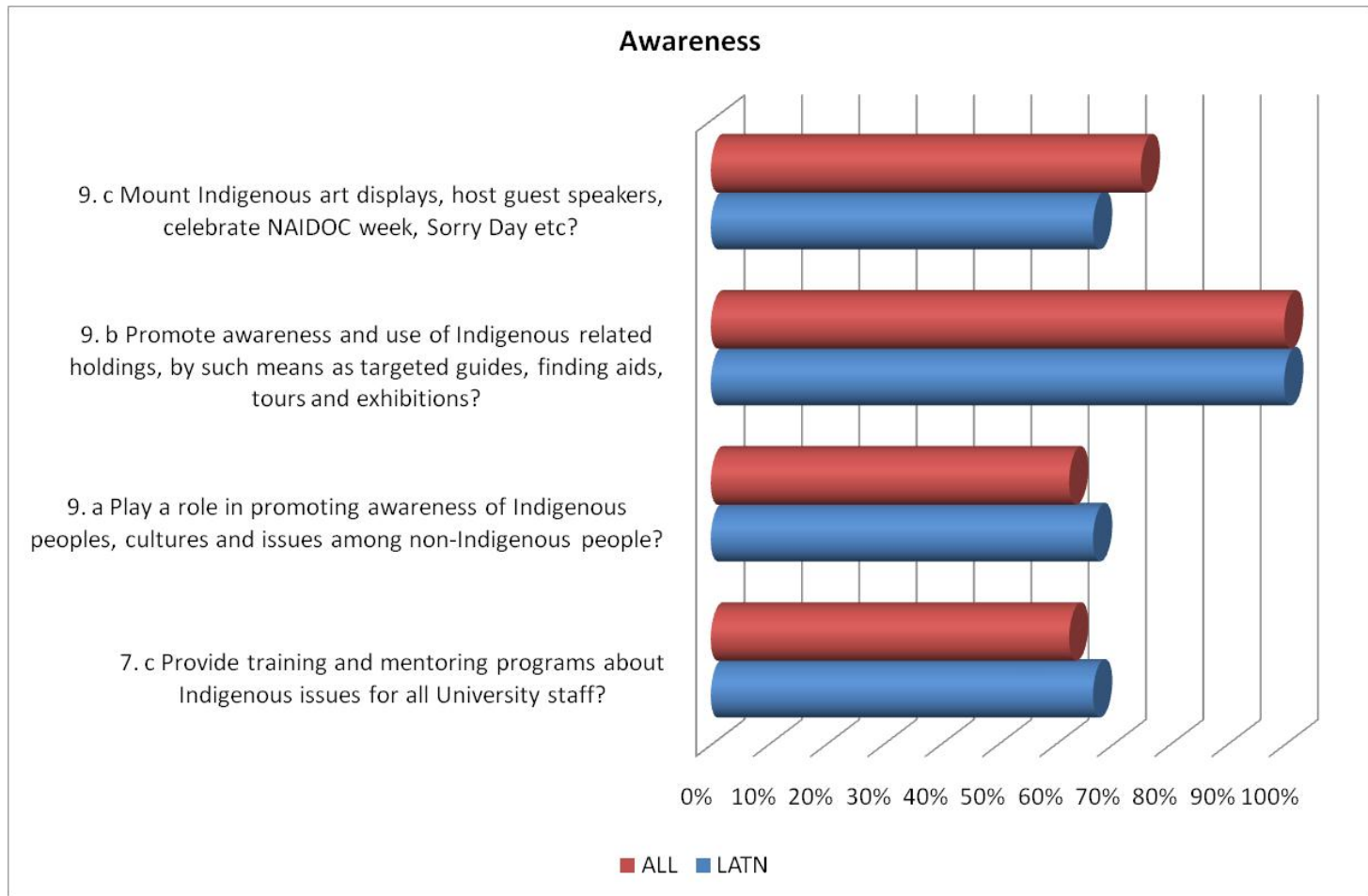
## 7. Staffing

- All the respondent libraries have Indigenous people on staff but most are at library assistant levels with two reporting Indigenous staff members at managerial levels.
- Some positions have been identified to be held by Indigenous appointees but appear to have largely been discontinued for budgetary reasons and the paucity of suitable applicants.
- Cultural awareness training is provided at orientation and other times for Library staff. CDU requires all new staff to attend cultural awareness training before being confirmed in their positions.

## 8. Education and Training for Professional Practice

- Three of the LATN member libraries and both partner libraries provide practicums or work experience for Indigenous library studies students.
- UBC prefers Indigenous students for student assistant positions.
- Several have participated in Indigenous employment initiatives.

# 9. Awareness of Indigenous Peoples and Issues



- Displays of library materials and Indigenous culture and experience, guest speakers and other events usually in conjunction with dates and events of importance to Indigenous peoples including NAIDOC week and Sorry Day in Australia, and Matariki (New Year) and Māori Language Week in New Zealand.
- Curtin displayed an Aboriginal Photographic Exhibition on ideas about Identity during 2008.
- The Irving K. Barber Learning Centre at UBC is currently working with the Musqueam First Nation on a public art commission by a Musqueam artist for an installation in the Centre.
- QUT offers library tours to Indigenous school students and has hosted a local elders yarning circle and offered its members library membership.

# 10. Copying and Repatriation of Records

- Only UBC operates an Indigenous community document keeping place and it also provides an Indigenous resource copy service.
- None of the libraries hold original documents that might be the subject of requests for repatriation but UTS is becoming involved in repatriation of research data through its initiative since 2008 to create a national trusted repository for Indigenous digital research data, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Data Archive (ATSIDA).

# 11. Digitisation and the Internet



- Half of the respondents have undertaken digitisation of Indigenous library resources and are considering further projects:
  - The most significant digitisation project is the Koori Mail newspaper by UniSA in conjunction with the State Library of New South Wales.
  - UBC and CDU are also involved in collaborative digitisation projects.
  - Other projects include digitisation of theses, an Aboriginal Language Dictionary (Curtin) and conversion or replacement of Indigenous film and sound resources in obsolescent formats.
  - The UTS project to develop a national trusted Indigenous digital archive is particularly significant and challenging.