

Dear SAJLIS Readers,

I wish to present to you SAJLIS 72(3), comprising nine research articles and general contributions that include one article and five book reviews. This was election year for LIASA, and saw the selection of new office bearers and a new SAJLIS Journal Management Team. We welcome and congratulate the new office bearers and JMT appointees.

This issue presents articles focusing on a number of themes: information seeking, collection development, information literacy, disaster management in libraries, mergers, professional association, history of books, bibliometrics, library management, and information audit; most by South African researchers and scholars.

In informing a study, research requires strong conceptual frameworks. The first article, entitled 'information seeking behavior: a conceptual framework', is by Robert Ikoja-Odongo, a professor at Makerere University, Uganda, and Janneke Mostert, a senior lecturer at the University of Zululand, South Africa. The authors analyse the concepts information, information needs, information seeking and information use, and contextualise them within their PhD research themes, completed in 2002 and 2004 respectively. These concepts have undergone significant evolution, and information seeking and retrieval studies focus on them in different ways. The second paper focuses on collection development. Carol van Zijl, a researcher at the University of South Africa, Elizabeth Gericke, LIS Lecturer at UNISA, and Myrna Machet, LIS professor at UNISA, in their paper 'Developing library collections at universities of technology: comparing practices in New Zealand and in South Africa', compare collection development practices and policies at universities of technology in Auckland, New Zealand and in South Africa. Both countries have recently upgraded polytechnics/technikons to universities of technology. Unless considerable funding is allocated to the libraries, they will be unable to support the information needs of their academics and researchers and fail to rise to their new status. The third article, by Genevieve Hart, senior lecturer at the University of Western Cape, 'Public Librarians and Information Literacy Education: Views from Mpumalanga Province', reports on whether public libraries are ready for information literacy education, given the shortage of school libraries. Information literacy is ill understood by public librarians, and this limits the role of public libraries to promote information literacy. She notes the existence of an ambivalence towards an enhanced educational role for public libraries, caused by contradictions between the heavy daily demands of learners and popular beliefs about the role of a public library.

The fourth article is by Patrick Ngulube, associate professor at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and Lindiwe Magazi, a lecturer at the same University. In 'Protecting documents against disasters and theft: the challenge before the public libraries in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa', the authors concede that all forms of documentation are prone to disaster and theft, and therefore security and disaster management are keys to the protection of library materials. The study revealed that public libraries are not adequately prepared for protecting documents, as most of the libraries do not have disaster plans, adequate procedures for disaster response and recovery, satisfactory theft management strategies and sufficient staff with disaster management knowledge and skills. The fifth article, by Nicky Muller, Deputy Director, Durban University of Technology Library, focuses on mergers within the transformation of higher education in South Africa. 'Mergers and managers: what's needed for both to work?: Reflections on a merger of two higher education libraries in KwaZulu-Natal' provides a conceptual framework on mergers, and the various cycles mergers take, highlighting the stresses mergers place on employees. The paper draws on the experiences of the Durban Institute of Technology library during its merger process.

The sixth article is 'The feasibility of unionizing LIS workers: a case study of the tertiary education sector in South Africa'. Reggie Raju, Librarian at the University of KwaZulu Natal, Christine Stilwell and Athol Leach, the former a Professor and the latter a Lecturer in the same university, report on the findings of a study on the feasibility of unionising LIS workers, with special reference to the tertiary education sector in South Africa. In the seventh article, Carol Steyn, a lecturer at the University of Pretoria, writes on 'The first edition of Burney's *General History of Music* (1776 – 1789) in South African Libraries' and concludes that the physical appearance of books is a source of information on printing, publishing and binding practices of the 18th century. The eighth article dwells on bibliometrics/informetrics. In this article, Dennis Ocholla, a professor at the University of Zululand and Bosire Onyancha, a PhD student at the same University, write on 'The Nature and Trends of Agricultural Research Development in Africa. An Informetric Study'. The original was presented at the International Workshop on Informetrics, Webometrics and Scientometrics and seventh CollNet Meeting in Nancy, France, in May 2006. The study recognises Agriculture as the mainstay of most economies in Africa, and analyses the research nature and trends in the discipline by using largely descriptive informetrics focusing on seven indicators, and using the AGRICOLA and ISI-E databases from 1991 to 2005. Research output in the discipline is much higher in South Africa and Kenya, research collaboration is greater than non-collaborative research output and collaboration is significantly less between African countries. The most popular research domains were found to be environmental science, soil science, plant/crop production and [agricultural] economics. The ninth article is by Murat Yilmaz, a lecturer at Istanbul University in Turkey. 'How to use fuzzy set theory to select a Library Manager' describes the process and explains how the theory assists with the selection of the most desirable candidate.

General contributions include 'Testing the viability of Henczel's information audit methodology in practice' by Lufuno Raliphada, Deputy Director PSR, OGCIO/ DPSA and Deonie Botha, a Lecturer at the University of Pretoria, on Henczel's methodology, with recommendations for its implementation and use. There are book reviews by Celia Walter, UCT; Yvonne Blomkamp, UCT; Luyanda Dube, UZ; Robert Pearce, UNISA; Sally Witbooi, UWC and Tanya Barben, UCT.

I wish to express our appreciation to SAJLIS reviewers for their remarkable and generous work, and thank our readers, the National Lotto Development Trust Fund and the SALI Trust Fund, among others, for their support. We would like to rely on such support in 2007 as well.

Enjoy your reading and the festivities.

Dennis N. Ocholla,

Editor-in-Chief, SAJLIS