

Dear SAJLIS readers,

This special issue of SAJLIS (73/2), focusing largely on LIS research in South Africa, is dedicated to this year's celebration of LIASA's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, coinciding with our hosting of WLIC/73<sup>rd</sup> IFLA General Conference, the most prestigious event on the Library and Information calendar in the world, in Africa for the second time, since being held in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1984. We are proud to note that Ms Ellen Tise, LIASA's first President, has been elected IFLA's President for 2009. Also, that South Africa won the bid to host the 13<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the International Society for Scientometrics and Informetrics (ISSI) in Durban.

The research section focuses on general aspects of LIS research in Africa and South Africa, and on specific items like knowledge management, information literacy, service learning, parliamentary libraries and integrated library systems. In the general section, information is provided on LIS theory, a report on the ISSI conference in Spain (Madrid) in 2007, and book reviews.

Two articles, originally reported in the proceedings of the 73<sup>rd</sup> IFLA conference, using informetric techniques, analyse and report on aspects of LIS research in Africa and South Africa. The first, by Bosire Onyancha, 'LIS research in Africa: how much is it worth? A citation analysis of the literature, 1986-2006', examines LIS literature produced and published in Africa to establish the productivity and impact of LIS research in the region. South Africa currently leads in terms of research output and citations; Nigeria and South Africa account for over 70% of Africa's publications and citations. The second article, 'Research in Library and Information Science in South Africa: an analysis of journal research output from 1993-2006', by Dennis Ocholla and Lyudmilla Ocholla, reflects the overall research output in LIS in South Africa, based on a publication count and analysis of peer refereed articles indexed in the LISA and Thompson Scientific (formerly ISI) Web of Science databases from 1993-2006. Articles report on specific aspects of LIS research, beginning with 'Competency Profile for Librarians Teaching Information Literacy' by Daisy Selematsela and Adelaide du Toit. They note that librarians as 'educators' are faced with challenges that affect their teaching role, and propose a competency framework as a management tool for designing key performance areas in the instruction of librarians.

The fourth article, 'Rowing upstream: promoting and disseminating LIS research in Sub Saharan Africa', is by Patrick Ngulube, who demonstrates that research findings must be promoted and disseminated to be of use to society, and cautions that publishing thematically in journals may inhibit publishing research outside the scope of a given theme. He recommends open access and institutional repositories to help researchers in sub-Saharan Africa promote and disseminate their findings. Fifth is an article by Ezra Ondari-Okemwa and Mabel Minishi-Majanja on 'Knowledge Management Education in the Department of Library/Information Science in South Africa'. The article focuses on the role of the departments of Library and/or Information Science (L/IS) in South African universities in the training of KM competencies, and observes that the choice of subjects taught is not necessarily what any manager would require *per se*, but rather what an information manager would need to be successfully integrated into a business management setup. Fiona Bell supplies the sixth article, 'South African service-learning research in Library and Information Studies: with particular reference to the University of KwaZulu-Natal Inadi initiative'. She gives an overview of service-learning research in LIS in South Africa since 2000, concluding that research and practice by students in a real-life situation informs both the information needs of a community and the need to build up a body of service-learning research unique to South Africa. Janneke Mostert notes in the seventh article that parliamentary libraries are crucial in the provision of information services to parliamentarians and need to be well developed and sensitive to changing information needs and access requirements of legislators. 'Parliamentary library services in South Africa' aims to determine the role of parliamentary libraries as information providers in South Africa. Jenneke concludes that the 10 libraries studied offered: a number of services to parliamentarians; variety within library collections; access to computers; and innovative methods to inform users about available services. The last article in this section co-authored. In 'The migration of integrated library systems with special reference to the rollout of Unicorn in the province of KZN' Reggie Raju, Sagren Moodley, Omesh Jagarnath, Sashni Chetty, Bongwiwe Shongwe and Jaya Raju recognise that new technological advances have significantly influenced the development of integrated library systems (ILS), and identify, through a literature review, factors influencing the selection of an ILS and the implementation of the migration process. They recommend that there should be an investigation into developing a South African ILS product to ensure the retention of financial resources within the country, the creation of job opportunities for local communities, and the generation of local know-how and expertise in this area.

The general section opens with an article by Fanie de Beer, who is well known for interesting philosophical insights. In 'An Acritical Philosophy of Information', he argues that the acritical philosophy of information is nothing but a defense of the need for the philosophical in our cognitive, epistemic, and informational endeavors, and simultaneously a manner of refuting the formalist, criticist or ideological marginalisation of the philosophical; and proposes that only when Information Science is understood as an interscience that operates in a multifaceted and interconceptual, and even interdiscursive way, as suggested here, will it meet the challenges. Other papers include a report on the 11<sup>th</sup> ISSI Conference in Spain in June, and four book reviews, by Caroline Dean, Celia Walter, Jean-Maree Uys and Sally Witbooi.

On behalf of my colleagues in the JMT, I wish to thank the sponsors and the reviewers of this issue, and to congratulate LIASA on its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary and on bringing IFLA to South Africa.

Enjoy

Dennis N. Ocholla

Editor-in-Chief, SAJLIS