

Dear SAJLIS Readers,

During LIASA's conference in Polokwane a new team of LIASA office bearers were elected. We wish to congratulate Tommy Matthee (new LIASA President) and his team for their election to lead LIASA for the next term. We also wish to convey our deep condolences to the bereaved family of the late Christie Theron of UNISA, whom we all miss in the LIS profession in South Africa. The previous issues of SAJLIS have received positive feedback. According to a study by Darch and Underwood, where a list of journals included in the ISI/DOE and IBSS ranked by indexing intensity/citation count is represented, SAJLIS is ranked number 42 of 100 journals. There are of course several factors influencing this ranking, e.g. quality of publications, number of research articles/issues annually, readership, and the legacy of previous volumes of SAJLIS. This large issue, of eight research papers and four articles under General Contributions, focuses on evaluation of research quality in LIS, information retrieval, website development, public libraries, parliamentary information services, human resources management in libraries, LIS education and training, and mergers of higher education institutions and how they affect information services in the research section. Under general contributions is an article by the late Christie Theron and also three book reviews.

The first article, written by Colin Darch and Peter Underwood of the University of Cape Town, entitled 'Are pre-compiled citation indexes of peer-reviewed journals an adequate control for research quality? A case study of library and information science' looks at the South African Department of Education's new recommendations for the evaluation of higher education research in South Africa, and examines two primary aspects: the use of pre-compiled journal lists from overseas, and the apparent reliance on peer review as a guarantee of quality. They present an analysis of library and information science publications in the chosen lists and point to the weakness of the selection of titles in this discipline. The second paper is entitled 'FOIOTI: An implementation of the conceptualist approach to internet information retrieval'. In this article, Melius Weideman from Cape Peninsula University of Technology evaluates methodologies used by undergraduate learners in searching for academic information. Their failure/success, methodology and a number of other factors were measured, and an instrument was designed to overcome problems. N Sonderling and Theo Bothma, both from the University of Pretoria, do a rare study focusing on the police services in the third article. The article, 'Developing the SAPS website for optimal service delivery' discusses a study undertaken to enhance online service delivery by the South African Police Service (SAPS) by means of its website to improve the delivery of public services by recognising e-Governance methods in the study. The assessment of possible shortcomings of the SAPS website and recommendations for enhancing online service delivery and e-Governance by the study are set out.

Public libraries invite a lot of attention in this journal largely because of the underutilisation of their potential for providing information services to all categories of library and information users. Karin de Jager and Mary Nassimbeni, both from UCT, write the fourth article titled 'Towards measuring the performance of public libraries in South Africa'. The paper describes the process of arriving at a joint understanding of the aims and objectives of measuring performance in the South African public library system and concludes with suggestions of future steps to be taken to fulfil the tasks of public libraries. Janneke Mostert, based at the University of Zululand, writes the fifth article. Jenneke's paper titled 'Parliamentary information sources, systems and services in South Africa to map the parliamentary information sector in South Africa' provides excellent reading on the parliamentary information service potential in South Africa and suggests an effective information service model for legislators. The sixth article, written by Solomon Bopape, based at Limpopo University library, is entitled 'Management development needs of library managers in South African university libraries regarding human resources management activities and tasks'. In the article, using the Graham and Mohall model, Solomon recognises the changing political, social and economic environments in South Africa and the challenging opportunities for the management of human resources in most organisations, including libraries, where managers have received little or no training in human resources management. In 'LIS education and training in South Africa: a historical review', Jayaran Raju, from the Durban Institute of Technology, provides a comprehensive historical overview of LIS education and training in South Africa that includes new changes affecting LIS and the higher education sector in the country. The last article is written by Adriaan Swanepoel, based at Tshwane University of Technology library. The article, 'Lessons learned from library mergers at colleges of higher education in Flanders', dwells on a challenging issue affecting many institutions in South Africa that have been compelled to merge as a result of transformation of higher education in the country. This article links well with that reported by Jayaram in SAJLIS in 2003.

Under general contributions there is an article written by the late Christie Theron titled 'The role of the South African Online User Group (SAOUG) in the informatisation of society'. Christie investigated the concept of 'informatisation', its meaning, history and influence on contemporary society and described the role the South African Online User Group (SAOUG) can play in the informatisation of the South African society. There are also interesting book reviews, done by Ms Moshoeshoe from Swaziland as well as Peter Underwood and Jennie Underwood, both from UCT, that will definitely assist in reading and book selection. We wish you fulfilling reading and a prosperous year ahead.

Best regards

Dennis Ocholla

Editor-in-Chief SAJLIS