

## EDITORIAL FOREWORD

### SAJEMS 25 YEAR ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL EDITION

#### Introduction

The year 2013 was a major milestone in the history of the South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences (SAJEMS). It was the year in which we commemorated SAJEMS' 25 years of publishing high-quality academic research. It is one of the few South African *accredited* journals covering the broader economic and managerial sciences. As an interdisciplinary publication, SAJEMS addresses a wide spectrum of topics, with a focus on consumers, firms and/or regulators. This spectrum includes contemplation of the philosophical presuppositions of scientific disciplines on the one hand, through to qualitative and quantitative research, across a wide spectrum of methodologies and scientific world views.

It was therefore a decision of the editorial board to commemorate this milestone with a special edition focusing on a multi-disciplinary topic that embodies the integrated nature of the management sciences. As such the focus of this edition is on linking project-based production and project management, which is from a disciplinary point of view combining engineering (project) and management sciences. The status of SAJEMS is confirmed by the fact that it is a refereed scientific journal, which enjoys international recognition by being indexed in i) Thomson Reuters' Social Sciences Citation Index, ii) in EconLit (the electronic database of the Journal of Economic Literature) and Australian Business Deans Council list. Furthermore, SAJEMS is also accredited by the South African Department of Higher Education and Training (DoHET) as journal in which South African universities qualify for subsidisation.

#### South African research environment

A number of factors shape and affect the South African research environment. A key characteristic of this evolving environment is the increasing pressure on academics to publish in peer-reviewed and/or accredited journals. The two institutions driving this process are the DoHET and the National Research Foundation (NRF).

- The DoHET announced in 2003 that South African universities would qualify for subsidies for research outputs if the outlet in which an article appeared featured either in the SSCI or IBSS indices, or alternatively the special DHET-South African approved list.
- The NRF on the other hand encourages researchers to obtain a *rating* via its Researcher Evaluation and Rating initiative, which promotes research excellence while ensuring that top researchers are easily identifiable. The publication of articles in peer-reviewed journals is a key component of this initiative.

#### Historic overview

Since its inception in 1988, SAJEMS has maintained its identity and solidity as an academic mouthpiece. An important decision early on in the journal's life was that the journal would not be 'semi-official publication' of its home institution of the University of Pretoria, but that it would rather be governed by an editorial board, hence retaining its independence. This requirement gained importance in the course of the South African academic research environment in the 1990s, as conditions for academic journals became more stringent in view of the impending system of journal accreditation, leading to stricter measures for academic publications across all the tertiary institutions in the country. The basic university funding formula of the time changed considerably, as academic journals now had a different form of revenue, namely page fees payable by authors and the local universities benefiting in terms of subsidy for publications by staff members in such journals.

Over the years SAJEMS has also published several special editions, including:

- Globalisation Issue NS vol 4 no 3 September 2001.
- Environmental Issue NS vol 5 no 2 June 2002.
- Symposium on competition law and economics, NS vol 11 no 3 September 2008.
- The 5<sup>th</sup> annual international conference of organisational innovation, NS vol 16 no 5 2013.

The journal has over the course of its existence had a wide variety of editors. Some of the brief highlights and objectives of the editors are as follows:

- The founding editor was Prof Geert de Wet, *Department of Economics, University of Pretoria* (1988 – 1997).
- Prof AB Boshoff, *Graduate School of Business, University of Pretoria* (1997 – 1998) took over the Journal when there was no one to succeed Prof De Wet when he passed away. He tried to encourage management submissions, as economics submissions were by far in the majority.
- Prof ML Truu, *Department of Economics, University of Pretoria* (Sept 1998 – Jun 2001), changed the numbering of the Journal, changed the look and to improve wider exposure, from bilingual to English only. He also endeavoured to increase the circulation, as well as widen submissions to other institutions. He also placed great value on good grammar.
- Dr SM Brink, *Department of Economics, University of Pretoria* (Sept 2001 – Mar 2003) took over the editor role and managed it through difficult times when Prof Truu passed away.
- Prof TI Fenyes, *Department of Economics, Vista University* (Jun 2003 – Dec 2003) increased issues from 3 a year to 4.
- Prof JN Blignaut, *Department of Economics, University of Pretoria* (March 2004 – Dec 2007) invited academics from various SA universities to join the editorial board and serve as section editors. He secured Juta Publishers to publish the Journal with a new professional look. He applied for and secured ISI accreditation and introduced submission fees to improve the quality of submissions and improve the finances of the Journal.
- Prof SF Koch, *Department of Economics, University of Pretoria* (Mar 2008 – Mar 2012) managed to expand the editorial board to include foreign universities. During his tenure the scope was narrowed to a more specific African emphasis, and under his leadership the Journal took the leap to electronic open access publishing away from physical copies.
- Prof P Buys, *School of Accounting Sciences, North-West University* (Jun 2012 – date) made history by being the first non-economist to manage the Journal. He refined the policies and procedures to encourage the academic quality of papers and further emphasised the African integrated business nature.

### **SAJEMS publication view**

When considering research conducted in global research publications, several interesting aspects come to light.

- In line with international trends, the South African research environment seems to indicate a noticeable tendency for articles to be published by multiple authors, with a decrease in single authorship. In a longitudinal context, the ratio fluctuated from as low as 20 per cent to more than 60 per cent for single author articles. Throughout the history of SAJEMS however, single author articles average around 33 per cent of all articles published and around 66 per cent for multi author publications.
- Another inclination identified by several studies, was the prevalence of authors affiliated with a journal's home institution. In the case of SAJEMS, the same trend was found, with the most-represented institution being the University of Pretoria, contributing to around a quarter of all articles published, with no other South African institution contributing more on average than 10 per cent. Notwithstanding, a positive aspect is that the second most-published group in SAJEMS is foreign institutions, contributing to around 15 per cent of our publications.

One of the editorial objectives of SAJEMS is to publish ‘practically useable’ research, which can be applied in the real business environment. One way of promoting this is to encourage practitioners to partake in research endeavours and to publish their findings. Over the recent years, we have been reasonably successful with practitioners contributing from 6 per cent to as much as 21 per cent of annual article publications, with a historical average of around 10 per cent.

Finally, in terms of academic disciplines represented in SAJEMS, history confirms the journal’s interdisciplinary view of the economic and management sciences with economics accounting for an average of 35 to 40 per cent of articles, business between 25 and 30 per cent, while human capital management, accounting and marketing accounted for around 10 per cent respectively.

### **Special edition**

In this commemorative special edition of SAJEMS, the reader can look forward to a wide range of diverse reading material. The contributions range from a macro discussion of projectification of society to decision-making quality within project teams (the micro level). I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the editors of this special edition, Prof Leon Oerlemans of Tilburg University in the Netherlands, and Prof Tinus Pretorius, of the University of Pretoria in South Africa, for the many hours they invested in ensuring that the articles comprising this special edition are of a very high standard. I am confident you will find it an interesting read.

**Prof Pieter Buys**  
**Editor**