

## **The Convergence of ISM and LIS in 2026 Bridging the Global Knowledge Gap**

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As we navigate the complexities of 2026, the boundaries between Information Science and Management (ISM) and Library and Information Science (LIS) have effectively dissolved. For the *International Journal of Information Science and Management (IJISM)*, this integration represents a transformative shift: we are no longer just managing data or cataloging books; we are architecting the Global Knowledge Commons (Hess & Ostrom, 2007). The latest achievements in these fields offer a unique opportunity for developing nations to leapfrog traditional infrastructure hurdles through "intelligent" information ecosystems (Floridi, 2025).

### **Latest achievements: Agentic systems and the new librarianship**

The past year has seen several milestones that have moved from theoretical research into practical, life-changing implementation:

1. From Search to Synthesis: Traditional LIS retrieval has evolved into Generative Discovery. Librarians are now using AI-driven synthesis tools that not only point to a document but also extract, summarize, and translate complex research into local dialects in real time.
2. The Rise of Agentic AI in Management (Rowan, Mittal, Patwari & Burns, 2025): 2025 marked the maturity of Autonomous Management Agents. These systems now execute complex workflows, such as optimizing library supply chains or managing routine administrative tasks in government sectors with minimal human intervention.
3. Democratized Information Architecture: The emergence of "Low-Code/No-Code" LIS platforms (Ajimat, Carroll & Maher, 2025) has empowered local information professionals in emerging markets to build custom digital repositories and community archives without needing specialized software engineering teams.

### **A focus on developing countries: The "Four Cs" framework**

For developing economies, the challenge is to harness these 2026 advancements without deepening the digital divide. IJISM prioritizes research that addresses the "Four Cs" of inclusive growth:

1. Connectivity and Cloud-Native Libraries (CNCF, 2026): Innovations in low-cost satellite internet are turning rural community centers into high-speed digital libraries, bypassing the need for physical cable infrastructure.
2. Compute at the Edge: The shift toward Edge Computing (Karami & Karami, 2025; Seyed, 2026) enables complex information processing to occur locally on mobile devices, ensuring that data-intensive library services remain accessible even in areas with intermittent power.

3. Context-Aware Metadata: There is a surge in the use of Domain-Specific Language Models (Gartner, 2026) trained on local datasets. This ensures that LIS systems recognize regional languages, oral histories, and cultural nuances that global models often overlook.
4. Competency and Human-Centred AI: The focus is shifting from basic digital literacy to Information Curation (Zhao et al., 2024). We observe success stories in which librarians serve as "Human-in-the-Loop" supervisors, auditing AI-generated information for accuracy and bias.

### **Future outlook: Sovereignty and sustainable knowledge**

Looking toward 2027, the research agenda must tackle the concept of Information Sovereignty (World Economic Forum, 2026). For developing nations, this means maintaining control over their cultural heritage and the algorithms that govern their access to knowledge. We at IJISM anticipate a surge in research regarding:

1. Digital Provenance: Using blockchain and advanced watermarking to ensure the integrity of academic and historical records in an era of deepfakes.
2. Green LIS: Managing data centers and digital libraries with a focus on Sustainable Compute, reducing the carbon footprint of digital preservation.
3. Preemptive Governance: Developing frameworks that protect intellectual property rights for local creators while ensuring open access to essential scientific information.

### **Conclusion**

The mission of IJISM is to serve as a bridge. We at IJISM invite scholars to submit research that not only showcases "the latest tech" but also demonstrates how that tech functions in resource-constrained environments. The future of information and management is intelligent, but it must, above all, be equitable.

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