

Editorial

*“Kupedza nyota kuenda padziva”
Shona proverb*

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We write with a challenge to African scholars. As we engaged with the manuscripts, there was little to show of research grounded in an African perspective. There is a corpus of writings, manuscripts, articles, and books from Africans, but very few theorise on what they see, experience, practice, and do as practitioners and researchers on this continent or in the Diaspora. Bangura, Obando, Munene, & Shisanya (2019: 33) lament that:

After almost three centuries of employing Eurocentric/Western methodologies, many African communities in the continent and the Diaspora remain marginal. It is obvious that these Western methodologies, which are not indigenous to Africans, have done relatively little good for Africans. Thus, I have proposed in many works that the salvation for Africans in both the continent and the Diaspora hinges upon resuscitating old, employing contemporary, and developing new authentic African-centered methodologies for their use. (Bangura, Obando, Munene, & Shisanya (2019: 33).

We agree. We require theories, theoretical frameworks, and conceptual frameworks grounded and steeped in African philosophies, epistemes, and ontologies. For this we need new methods, methodologies, approaches, concepts, and approaches couched in an African viewpoint. In this Issue some writers have risen to this challenge and advanced viewpoints that reflect the values and aspirations of Africans particularly during these times when we are hit by an avalanche of problems some of which mirror our failures. We need to engage more and challenge contributors to this journal to express Africa's struggles, aspirations, realities and truths to develop African strategies to resolve African problems.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted our failures to deal with unemployment, inequality, poverty, corruption, civil conflict and unrest, and gender equality. We dare say



we have abysmally failed to deal with the issue of gender-based violence, which spiked with the emergence of COVID-19. We have seen the unrelenting marginalisation of the subalterns. We have witnessed women's continued oppression under various patriarchal practices that are anathema to the accordance of the value of what women are to society as mothers, sisters, bearers, and bringers of humankind – simply priceless.

We draw wisdom from the Shona proverb, '*Kupedza nyota kuenda padziva*' which translates - To quench thirst is to go to the stream, and if you need help and information, you should go to an expert or an eyewitness. We are of the view that we have all the information that we need to articulate those lived experiences; the experts are there; the knowledge and know-how are explicit in the communities we live in - the episteme, the ontologies, the theories abound in our communities. We must learn, write, document, preserve, and curate them – that is the challenge we are putting forward to you as African scholars and all contributors to this journal.

In the first article, 'Consolidating Regional Integration through a Free Movement Protocol: The Quest for Collective Development in the SADC' **Mlambo** interrogates whether a free movement protocol in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) can help in consolidating regional integration and development. **Mlambo identifies** the challenges that scupper integration as a lack of political will, borders steeped in colonialism, and competing and conflicting interests of states in the SADC region. **Mlambo** urges for the capacity building of regional institutions and studying the impact of a free movement protocol as the first step in consolidating regional integration.

In the context of growing unemployment, the second article by **Dladla** assesses Public Employment Programmes' role. **Dladla** focused on the Working for Energy (W4E) Programme in the Western Cape of South Africa, which is part of the Government's green jobs initiative. The results show that the programme has recorded some positive results. Some youth who have graduated from the programme have enrolled in formal apprenticeship training, others have found jobs, and some have started their small businesses. **Dladla** suggests that the programme has room for expansion and scaling up, given the positive outcomes achieved so far.

Ile's article interrogates the African Union's Agenda 2063, using a theoretical lens of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) - which focuses on positive outcomes. Aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063 focuses on people-centred development. Because most of Africa's population is made up of women, youth, and children, ILE argues that this group should be at the centre of development within the context of this agenda. **Ile** also argues that empowering this group should be undergirded by existing indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) because IKS

can deliver the realisation of the "Africa we want" if it is re-invigorated by deliberately developing African research capacity and capabilities.

In the fourth article, **Dziva** explores traditional leaders' role in combating the Covid-19 pandemic in Zimbabwe's vulnerable rural communities. **Dziva** argues that as custodians and enforcers of traditional customs and values, traditional leaders play a role in combating the virus's spread, given the powers they have. **Dziva** argues that through their orders, coercive interventions, traditional leaders can play a critical role in community mobilisation, raising awareness, dispelling pandemic rumours and myths, and recalibrating and amending measures, which are incompatible with local traditions, cultural values, and norms. To achieve this, the traditional leaders need resources and apposite capacitation.

The fifth article by **Daka and Madimutsa** tackles the issue of 'collaborative governance and community participation in solid waste management in Lusaka' - an African problem requiring an African solution. Their study, which used both secondary and primary data, found out that a staggering 85% of solid waste in Lusaka City remains uncollected despite the collaboration of many stakeholders. They conclude by suggesting that decision-making should collectively reside with all stakeholders. Further Daka and Madimutsa recommend that the relevant authorities reprimand non-performing private companies and implement *Local Government (Solid Waste Management) Regulations*.

In the sixth article, **Qwatekana and Mazibuko** assess the intersection between community land rights and conservation for tourism. Using a case study design and a qualitative approach, they found out that while co-management is logical, its efficacy remains indeterminate. In their piece, they value post-settlement support, time, and resources as a *sine qua non* for co-management projects' success.

The seventh article by **Onwughalu, Ojakorotu, and Tshidzumba** reflects on political parties as agents of democratisation using Nigeria as the case study. Their study reveals that political parties can distort democratic consolidation due to inadequate constitutional provisions and the ruling class's antics. They suggest a revamp of the relevant constitutional clauses that promote political parties' formation - lest democratic consolidation will remain a pipe dream for Nigeria.

Using secondary data, **Mello** questions the South African Public Service's readiness to adopt Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to capture, record, and use performance information. Mello's found the current ICTs-based PERSAL system to be ineffective and unreliable. Further, he established no documented attempt to modernise



the performance management and development system using ICTs in the South African Public Service. **MELLO** then suggests that the current performance management system needs sprucing up.

Mulindwa, in the ninth article, titled: 'Interstate Border Conflicts and their Effects on Region-Building and Integration of the East African Community,' observes that East African countries loyally adhere to colonial borders created by former masters. **Mulindwa** argues that disputes are affecting the prospects of integration and sustainable development of the region. At the heart of territorial boundary, extensions are natural resources that cut across borderlines of states. Reconsidering the purpose of colonial borders and decolonising them to align with access to natural resources, **Mulindwa** suggests, will help to avoid community's disintegration brought about by interstate border disputes.

In the tenth article, **Yasseen, Stegmann and Crous** investigate how professional accountants and small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) owners experience professional accountants' self-regulation in South African SMEs. They posit that self-regulation posed a significant risk to the public interest and the professional accountant's liability resulting in role confusion. They conceptualise 'implied assurance' that emerges in a self-regulatory environment as one of their critical contributions to knowledge. They excoogitate the structure and functioning of the accounting environment in a developing economy such as South Africa.

In the eleventh article titled 'Challenges of Ethiopian Transition: Breakthrough or Brink of Collapse?', **Aweke**, covers the sequel of events, from street protests culminating to the restoration of Ethio-Eritrean relations, the release of political prisoners and political reforms. **Aweke** argues that the transition to democracy is still work in progress and to realise full democracy will require a resolution of a range of issues. **Aweke** points out historical meddling between identity-based references, feelings of periodic ethnic-power turns, social media populism and adventurism, and local, territorial administrative identity as issues encumbering progress.

We conclude this Editorial under the grip of a second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa and other countries. The country, the continent and the world are in panic mode. Many public hospitals and other public services bear the brunt of years of neglect, maladministration and inadequate planning. Policymakers are concerned that people are not taking the messages of avoiding the transmission seriously. Some of the authors in this Issue of the *African Journal of Governance and Development* make recommendations on consolidating democracy, nurturing cross-border peace and security, promoting effective public sector performance, collaborative governance, and creating small enterprises. All

these are important in building a society that can recover from the pandemic and restore livelihoods while saving lives. Is it time for African scholars to visit the proverbial stream as advised in the Shona proverb? Time to draw on our indigenous knowledge systems and cultural wisdom to find long-lasting solutions?

We can begin by acknowledging that a *true* African-centered research paradigm must first and foremost be built on a sound spiritual basis that highlights those aspects of African spiritual life that have enabled African people worldwide to survive as a human community throughout the centuries. (Bangura, Obando, Munene, & Shisanya (2019: 35). Deploying our tools, techniques, and strategies are suitable for our development as Ikechukwu, (2016) argues, we must be inward-looking in our developmental efforts on the African continent and minimally look outward. As such, the solutions to our problems must come from us Africans. Phenomenology can help us learn from the experiences of Africans in their context and as Ngulube and Ngulube (2017) posit:

Although phenomenology is part and parcel of the classical western research approaches, it has the potential to offer indigenous researchers an approach of investigating the real world without invalidating indigenous voices and worldviews. Phenomenology with its emphasis on understanding and describing the phenomenon based on the human experience provides an opportunity of informing research practice in the field of indigenous knowledge. The phenomenological attitude helps in understanding the ultimate structure and essence of the life-world as experienced by participants without making any judgements or assumptions about their experiences. The participants take the centre-stage in phenomenological research approaches as they are viewed as co-researchers because of their extensive knowledge of an experience and its interpretation.

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