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Table of Contents

Editorial

vii

ARTICLES

S Lubinga and H G van Dijk

Planning and organising challenges in the management of universal primary education

Experiences in Uganda

1

E Traebert Cavalini and D J Fourie

Offset agreements in the defence arena

International practices and South African legislation and policies

13

T T Rakepa and F M Uys

A critical evaluation of an employee health and wellness programme of the Department of Education

A case study of the Motheo District in the Free State Province

24

E P Ababio and K Asmah-Andoh

Decentralisation or Devolution

An analysis of local government effectiveness

38

M Subban and B Qwabe

Research and knowledge management in transforming South Africa

Trends and analysis

54

C Thornhill

The African state

An administrative dilemma

67

A Banjo

Leadership Crisis in the Parliament of Nigeria

The Case of the Senate in the Fourth Republic

80

J Cedras and J O Kuye

**The impact of tripartite politics on the leadership function
in public administration**

97

Dialogue between the ANC, COSATU and the SACP in South Africa

E A Mantzaris and P Pillay

Towards a conceptualisation of the Marxist theory of corruption **112**

The South African case

S B Koma

Local economic development in the developing countries **129**

Issues, trends and options

W Mupindu and D R Thakhathi

Research findings **144**

Revisiting water utility subsidy in the City of Harare, Zimbabwe



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Editorial

The Republic of South Africa is inextricably part of the African diaspora. As such, Government has to take note of the political turmoil in the DRC, Somalia, Kenya, Central African Republic, Nigeria and Egypt. These uprisings and terrorist attacks are symptomatic of tensions among factions within a country, or even factions residing in adjacent countries. South Africa is currently experiencing a relatively stable political situation. But we must recognise that the price of stability is eternal vigilance. The tensions which may exist within the ruling alliance are being contained. However, it should be stated that some occurrences such as the *Marikana* debacle in South Africa, the strikes that damaged South Africa's international trading image could result in more job losses. This could lead to more marches turning violent and requiring the state to intervene. It is important for Government to take pre-emptive steps by way of clear policy guidelines and decisive actions to promote the country's role in the international arena. Furthermore, the BRICS accord also requires Government to become and remain an equal partner in the economic and political actions envisaged. The recent strikes in the Sudan over oil subsidies indicate the complex nature of national economic stability.

The African and international developments pose serious challenges for the public administration of the country. Peace keeping forces have to be deployed. This alone demand extra expenditure, logistics and diplomatic arrangements. Public officials have to be sensitised to this situation to be able to deal with periods of uncertainty as it is not always possible to budget for unknown demands on the fiscus. It is also difficult to predict the effects of African and international occurrences on the leadership in South Africa. Therefore, it is imperative for the public sector to develop systems which could adapt to changed conditions in the shortest possible time. This will tax the administrative and managerial capacity of the senior management cadre to the fullest. South Africa plays a significant role in Africa and could only retain this position if it obtains and maintains a stable well qualified management team in the national, provincial and local spheres of government.

The recent diplomatic dialogue between South Africa and France shows the need for international co-operation in the preservation of viable democracies continentally.

In this issue of the Journal ten articles and one research finding have been selected to illustrate the diversity of issues concerning public administration and its relevance to politics. Lubinga and Van Dijk relate the challenges facing primary education in Uganda. This is followed by Traebert-Cavalini and Fourie considering the complexities of offset agreements in defence procurement. Rakepa and Uys highlight the value of wellness programmes in human resource management. Ababio and Asmah-Andoh devote their article to the organisational dilemma of devolution versus decentralisation in a local government context. Subban and Qwabe then follow with the question of research and knowledge management in South Africa. Thornhill addresses the dilemma of administering the public sector in countries with unstable governments. Banjo examines the leadership crisis under the Fourth Republic of Nigeria after fifty-three years of independence from Britain. On a more political note Cedras and Kuye investigate the complex political environment within which the South African governing alliance has to perform. The next to last article by Mantzaris and Pillar evaluate

Marxist theory in relation to the presence of this phenomenon. The last article by Koma deals with local economic development making use of South Africa and Hungary to illustrate the administrative effects. The last contribution is in the form of *Research findings* based on research concerning Harare's potable water supply dilemma

This issue contains a potpourri of articles and one research finding. The contributions vary considerably, but have one issue in common i.e. the public sector's diverse character affects the lives of the total population as well as many citizens for other countries finding themselves in Africa or dependent on the country or other countries on the continent. The struggle for intellectual equanimity continues.

J O Kuye
Chief Editor

