

Editorial: Management, Informatics and Governance

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The article by Matete Lerutla and Renier Steyn is titled ‘Definition of Leadership in Africa within the Twenty-first Century Context: Empirical Research on Leadership in Africa’. Granted that leadership is a widely used construct and there are numerous articles across multiple disciplines that research the ‘leadership’ phenomenon, this research investigates the construct of leadership in Africa. Much of what is written is conceptual, and empirical articles on African leadership remain sparse. The article reports on the findings of a systematic literature review that was conducted on leadership in Africa. It presents a qualitative review of empirical research, highlighting key findings and implications for future research. The research investigation followed the traditional body of knowledge framework of concepts, statements, definitions, and conceptual frameworks to systemize reports on leadership in Africa. Articles were identified, selected and analysed using the systematic literature review methodology. Articles, statements, definitions, models, typologies, theories, and paradigms were explored and interrogated in each article, so as to understand how they are linked to leadership in Africa. A total of 96 articles were extracted and analysed from eight electronic search engines. Following the application of inclusion and exclusion criteria, only thirteen articles met the set criteria – suggesting that little empirical research is conducted on leadership. The findings illustrated the extent of the current paucity of empirical research on leadership in Africa and clearly indicate a definite need to investigate it, and then to build on the understanding of African leadership through empirical research. The published articles showed that the concept of African leadership is seldom defined, measurements are typical of the Western tradition, and that the set hypotheses do not include the African cultural context. Furthermore, no Africa-specific models or theories are present. The

positivist paradigm was most often used in the existing research. The practical implications of the research is that the analysis of the literature review has provided an understanding of the extent of the lack of empirical work around leadership in Africa. There is a definite need for systematic empirical work to explore what leadership means in Africa, and to build the concept of African leadership as a concrete scientific construct. The paper concludes by providing suggestions on how to bridge the gap towards understanding leadership in Africa.

In their, ‘Creating an Environment to Enhance Business Development: The Case of a Developing Country, Lesotho’, Refiloe Khoase and Krishna Govender focus their research on the enhancement of business development in Lesotho. Their starting point is that, like all governments, the Lesotho government too, has to create an environment conducive for business development, which would eventually impact economic development. They explore the perceptions of business owners and managers in Lesotho on the functional interventions by government on infrastructural development, and also identify shortcomings in the current strategy. It became evident from a survey of 219 business owners and managers, that the infrastructure in Lesotho does not fully support business development, therefore, there is limited economic growth and development. However, they did ascertain that the Lesotho government has recognised the need to improve both the quality and delivery of infrastructure services, and has embarked on a series of reforms in inter-alia, the telecommunications, transportation, education and health sectors.

In ‘The Survival of Female-owned Micro Enterprises in the uMkhanyakude District’, Nomfundo N. Nxumalo and Irrshad Kaseeram determined factors that increase the probability of rural female entrepreneurs remaining in business for at least two years or longer. Contemporary development theory asserts that women play a prominent role in uplifting their families and developing their communities. The promotion of entrepreneurship among women in rural communities has been shown to be a formidably successful approach to development. Owing to the paucity of local studies on this topic, this project investigated the causal factors behind female entrepreneurs of the uMkhanyakude district staying in business for two years or more. Primary data were collected from entrepreneurs operating their businesses in the locality. Using the snowball sampling method, a sample of 273 entrepreneurs were interviewed by means of questionnaires. Logistic

regression was used to estimate factors that increased the probability of women staying in business. The study revealed that the higher the levels of business experience, education, business success and hours spent on business, the greater the chances of women staying in business. Financial and input constraints were major restrictions on women staying in business. Marital status, age, competition and marketing constraints were found to be insignificant factors. As most of the entrepreneurs in the uMkhanyakude district depend on stokvels and their savings for financing their businesses, the study suggest that such groups be harnessed by the DTI in the Grameen-bank type programmes manner which offer poor rural women low-cost loans for entrepreneurial purposes.

To cultivate and foster green spaces in South Africa is a very important area of participatory research. In ‘The Significance of Green Space in the Living Environment: A Case of the Bekkersdal Community, Westonaria, South Africa’ Engela P. de Crom and Eric J. Nealer researched the question whehter there is a positive relation between the amount of green space in the living environment of people, and people’s health and their well-being, e.g. ‘Do green spaces matter in this specific socio-economic environment?’ The Bekkersdal Township was founded in 1945 as a mining community. As the mines in the area closed down, unemployment grew and a new informal township was established with the concomitant health, other socio-economic issues and a lack of green space in the immediate environment. The participants consisted of 520 residents of the informal settlement section of Bekkersdal who completed a questionnaire with the assistance of trained fieldworkers. The results revealed that although the residents generally have positive feelings concerning their natural environment, in particular with regard to the vegetable gardens and open areas, environmental risks, i.e. dust, noise, litter and polluted water sources, affect them considerably. Vegetable gardens are popular as they serve as a food source in this underprivileged environment. The participants also showed a great affinity for natural features i.e. trees and open areas. Research from similar surroundings indicated the various positive effects greenspaces have on people in poor living environments. This study suggests that Bekkersdal, although impoverished and plagued with many adversities, has the potential to add value to the living conditions of residents by exploring and cultivating the existing green spaces in addition to that done already. This includes incentive-driven organised environmental activities and initiatives such as clean-up operations, recycling, communal food- and medicinal gar-

dens, and the requisite training to establish and maintain such initiatives.

Vannie Naidoo's 'Analysing University Students' Quality Perceptions and Identifying Strategies in Mapping a Way Forward to Closing the Quality Gaps', engages the matter of how prospective students determine quality education, in their choice of a university. He points out that, as universities vie for the same top students nationally and internationally every year, the main drawcard is to render top quality services to these students. Service quality to a student can mean many things, e.g. by the university being a world-ranked tertiary institution of learning, by it having well-established faculty, by the institution having well-recognised and highly-skilled academics, and an efficient administration staff that have the students' best interests at heart. All these are but a few distinguishing characteristics of high quality services that can set a university apart from others. His research, then, provides a review of service quality with specific reference to service quality at universities. The SERVQUAL instrument was used to measure students' perceptions on service quality at the university of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. The Gaps model formed the foundation for the study. The survey conducted amongst the students at the university, indicated that there was a marked degree of dissatisfaction among students, with the services provided by the university. From the empirical results the researcher provided strategies to the university's management that could close these quality gaps and improve the services rendered to students.

Mark Livingstone and Sam Lubbe's article is titled, 'Including Pervasive Skills in an Accounting Curriculum at a Rural South African University'. As accounting programs at South African universities strive to attain and maintain accreditation with the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA), an important component is incorporating pervasive skills into the curriculum. Their article details how a methodology was identified and adopted in order to incorporate these requirements across the four years of a yet to be accredited professional undergraduate accounting degree. The process commenced by mapping program objectives to individual modules thus facilitating a mapping and scaffolding process of the program. Focus group interviews with discipline leaders resulted in a coherent and coordinated approach to curriculum review that included consideration of the specific needs of students attending a rurally based South African University. The concept of a capstone course was also integrated into the final year of the program in order to compliment and complete concepts encountered earlier.

Future studies subsequent to the adoption of this methodology may develop or evaluate its efficacy.

Desan Iyer focuses his research on nonverbal cues or signs as a means of improving the communication skills of law students and legal practitioners. Pointing out that clients are often intimidated by the legal profession, when they seek help, or, some form of legal assistance, he argues that this is an important area in which law students should be skilled. Moreover, nonverbal communication is a key component in any form of face-to-face communication or interaction event. His research seeks to address this hiatus, in the legal curriculum, and the resultant ignorance of this important area of intellectualisation in the legal profession. His article then provides feedback on his research on this matter, involving all practicing attorneys with legal experience ranging from one to twenty years. From the study, it emerged that the current one-dimensional communicative legal system constituted a challenge to most young attorneys. The study found that an understanding of the different components of nonverbal communication and its sign structures are crucial for attorneys to gain insight into the subjective meanings that emerge during the consultation process. The findings suggest that the study of nonverbal communication amalgamated with traditional legal skills would help remove the deep-seated dichotomy that still exists between theory and practice in the LLB curricula.

Few areas of Psychology have attracted as much controversy as that of intelligence. Some experts argue that intelligence is the most important aspect of individual differences, whereas others doubt its value as a concept (Dearly 2014). Focusing on this matter in their ‘Emotional Intelligence and Academic Performance’, the aim of the research conducted by Sonia Swanepoel and Lucille Britz, was to determine the relationship between general cognitive ability, emotional intelligence and academic performance. This, against the background of ‘emotional intelligence’ (EI) as defined by Salovey and Mayer (1990), and seen as a subset of social intelligence and similar to that of intrapersonal intelligence. The concept involves the individual’s ability to appraise his or her own and other’s feelings and emotions, discriminate among these emotions and use the emotion information to accomplish tasks to reach goals. The instruments utilized were the Learning Potential Computerised Adaptive Test (LPCAT) and Emotional Intelligence Test Body-Mind (Jerabek 1996). The sample comprised of 32 third year students studying Human Resources Management. The results indicated a positive relation between

academic performance and emotional intelligence. Inferential statistics proved that males and females do not differ significantly on the three dependent variables.

‘Management Accounting Tools for Sustainability Information Decision-making and Financial Performance’ is the title of the article by Khatutshelo Matambele and Huibrecht M van der Poll. Many organisations today are still not making use of Management Accounting Tools (MATs) to assist in providing sustainability information for decision-making and the way it influences the financial performance of an organisation. As a result it may negatively impact financial performance of organisations due to a number of errors which may include out-dated cost drivers; erroneous business decisions; inaccurate information; and human errors. Without applying MATs, managers of organisations may find it difficult to improve the day-to-day operations and take decisions to enhance the financial performance of the business. Information was collected using interview schedules, to examine whether MATs can provide sustainability information for decision-making and how it influences the financial performance of an organisation. The research was carried out among listed organisations on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE). It was established that MATs provide strategies that influence decision-making and performance, although decision-making is the responsibility of executives or directors of the organisations. The study also established that financial managers are focusing more on financial statements and the reporting on Management Accounting (MA) tasks. Hence future research should focus on the importance of segregating MA roles from those of financial accountants or managers to enable the organisation to focus on different reports for different outcomes.

Peter Mkhize’s ‘Impact of Change Commitment to Information Systems Change in the South African Construction Industry’ focuses on the fact that business competition and growth in the Information age is fuelled by rapid innovation of Information Systems (IS). In turn, he argues, business leaders demand rapid Information System adaption that would enable all stakeholders – even in the small parts of an organization – to take advantage of innovation. Therefore, organizations continuously upgrade in order to keep abreast with competitors in the global market. In this process, there is also often a lack of commitment to IS change programmes from employees who may even go to the extent of resisting Information Systems change initiatives. The research for this article investigated the associations and impact of IS change

communication and the understanding of the worth of IS change on commitment to IS change in the construction industry using a survey research design. Results indicate that both communicating IS change and the understanding of worth of IS change, are moderately related to commitment to IS change. Moreover, regression analysis results proved that understanding the worth of IS change, is a better predictor for commitment to IS change when compared to communicating IS change.

Since the turn of the century, malicious software, called malware, has been generated to infect not only computer systems but also ‘smart’ mobile phones. This malicious code is designed specifically to infect the mobile devices and disrupt the operation of the device or to send messages or make calls, resulting in financial loss to the user. Brett van Niekerk and Manoj S. Maharaj address this challenge in their ‘Mobile Malware Implications for IT Management’. Their article analyses trends in mobile malware from the listings of the malware descriptions. These trends show the increasing severity of the mobile malware problem, the introduction of new malware types, and the changing focus on the malware objectives; predictions of possible future trends are also made. The implications of these trends for organisational management are discussed, and possible countermeasures to the risks are suggested.

The topic for the research conducted by Lesley Stainbank and Kibra Adagish, is ‘Non-Financial Disclosures in the South African Mining Industry’. The aim of the article, is to analyse the nature and extent of non-financial disclosures in South African mining companies’ annual reports both pre- and post-King III to explore the impact that King III may have had on such disclosures. The research methodology adopted was a content analysis of annual reports prior to the issue of King III and then, in order to provide a second benchmarking period, more recent studies of mining companies’ annual reports after the issue of King III were accessed. These studies also used content analysis allowing for some degree of comparability. The study found that overall, the non-financial disclosures for all mining companies showed an increasing trend for the years leading up to the issue of King III. After the release of King III, the study found that although the extent of disclosures increased further, pointing to King III being the impetus for such an increase, there is still room for improvement in corporate governance disclosures especially with regard to forward looking disclosures and board of directors’ disclosures.

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