

Editorial

The fifteen articles in this volume of the *Fountain Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* (Vol.7, Issue No. 1, Nov/Dec 2023) may be divided into four broad categories, namely, those relating to, (a) business management, leadership, communication, and development; (b) education; (c) gender and human rights, and (d) theology and spirituality. Thus, the three articles by Paul Nemashakwe, Queen Mpofo and Joseph Kayawe focus on leadership as the critical component in the survival of businesses and organizations especially in what has been described as a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous (VUCA) operating environment. They argue that appropriate leadership could play a critical role in harnessing the opportunities presented by the fourth industrial revolution (4IR), and in running the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) which now occupy a significant space in Zimbabwe's economic landscape - at a time when many large corporations relocated to other countries following the land reform program of the late 1990s and early 2000s. Rugare Chaita and Nyasha Kaseke focus on the survival strategies employed by the highly taxed, regulated, and politically controlled petroleum industry in Zimbabwe. He paints a picture of a growing industry in which competitive advantage and survival are contingent upon adopting the Cost Leadership Strategy. Edmore Muchineripi Chijoko and Priscille Hassa Malandji review literature on intercultural communication problems encountered in business organisations and discuss the implications on organisational performance. They draw from experiences of business conferences in Angola where Portuguese is effectively the language of business rather than English. Claybough Mapfumo examines the sustainability perspectives of beneficiaries and benefactors in the non-governmental organisation (NGO) aided community-based projects in the Masvingo province of Zimbabwe.

In the second category of articles, the authors explore areas relating to education and care of the young. Lenzeni Kamwendo advocates for a transition from the institutional dormitory system to the home system of care for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs) while Vimbisai Nhundu analyses Zimbabwe's early childhood education pre-school system and Clifford Gomba warns of rampant academic dishonesty in higher education through a case study of two universities in Zimbabwe.

On gender and human rights, Tapiwa Musasa attempts to argue that the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) of 1948 'was never meant for everyone, but rather, it was a patriarchal document designed to further the interests of grown-up men to the detriment and exclusion of women and children.' She argues that the language used is particularly revealing, courtesy of its gender insensitivity. On the same theme, Promise Zvavahera argues that Higher Education (HE) in Zimbabwe is yet to achieve gender parity at all levels. And, from a literary studies perspective, Majahana Lunga, interrogates not just feminism but feminisms. He applies a feminist literary theory, *stiwanism*, to a text, *The Purple Violet of Oshaantu*, 'to understand the meaning of this

text, and in the process advance feminist criticism. He argues that while feminism's primary objective is for women and girls to have the same rights and opportunities as men and boys, some feminisms, for example *lesbianism* and *raunchism*, are so radical that they obscure the fight against patriarchy'.

Finally, in the category of theology and spirituality, Joshua Chakawa, Rudolf Nyandoro and Simplicio Musemburi revisit Zimbabwe's war of liberation by bringing up a much-overlooked theme, the destruction of religious objects and symbols considered sacred by the Church. From their perspective, sacrilege was used as a weapon of war. Beyond their research in Masvingo, the desecration of sacred places, objects, symbols, and persons as a weapon of war is commonplace in war zones. Boroma Mission in the Tete Province of Mozambique experienced this phenomenon in the 1970s. Blasio Manobo speaks of African ecological spirituality, viewing the incarnation as an all-encompassing event for the whole of creation and not just humans, thereby evoking the African spirituality that views trees, mountains, rivers and indeed nature as such, as sacred and hence to be treated with due respect. And finally, the article by Yvonne Sanyanga and Emmanuel Maziti on 'The lived experiences of the Catholic religious sisters who contracted Covid-19 at a convent in Mutare diocese, Zimbabwe' graphically illustrates the feelings and thoughts of the survivors during their convalescence. Their recommendations point to the need for training in better disaster preparedness and management even for those who 'walk by faith' such as these nuns. Writing an editorial for such diversity is as daunting a task as trying to reconcile the divergent views and yet this is what this journal is about, a platform for plurality and multiplicity, with of course, the occasional single theme special editions.

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Chief Editor