



## **Editorial Note**

This Issue (Vol 23, No. 1; 2024) of the Artha Journal of Social Sciences brings to your attention issues relevant to social sciences from different spatial contexts. The first article on the study of the Determinants of Formal Market Access for Indigenous Floral Foods Among Rural Households in Amathole District Municipality of South Africa delves into a crucial aspect of agricultural economics. It explores how indigenous floral foods access formal markets and contribute to the rural household economy. Despite the widespread consumption of indigenous foods in rural households, there is a low level of participation in formal market sales. This gap has been identified as a significant issue in current agricultural research and policy. The research employed open- and closed-ended questionnaires and interviews in rural household areas in Amathole, South Africa to arrive at the findings. The study applied the theoretical framework of Logistic Regression to examine the relationship between the probability of selling indigenous foods within formal markets and factors such as age, gender, and education level of household heads. The study identified barriers to market access for indigenous foods, including low demand, seasonality, and limited awareness among producers and consumers. The analysis concludes an urgent need for collaborative action among researchers, policymakers, and stakeholders to address the systemic barriers hindering the indigenous foods market. According to the study, unlocking the full potential of indigenous foods is crucial for rural development and nutrition security.

The Gukurahundi atrocities have had a profound impact on Zimbabwe, and achieving justice and accountability for the victims has proven to be challenging. The government-established National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) offers a potential avenue for resolution, with its inquiries being overseen by the local chiefs taking a victim-centric approach. The second article on Critical Appraisal of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission on Gukurahundi, examines the unresolved issues surrounding the effectiveness of these efforts and the NPRC's objectives, particularly its aims to promote national unity, healing, and cohesion through forgiveness. While there are optimistic views about "plugging the

epistemic gap" and the notion that "half a loaf is better than nothing," these perspectives warrant careful consideration. The differentiation between 'victims' justice' and 'survivors' justice' further complicates the NPRC's approach. This article adds to the discussion by presenting these optimistic arguments and advocating a cautious approach to achieving justice and reconciliation after Gukurahundi. Ncube assesses this concern from three angles: technical challenges, such as insufficient resources and infrastructure; reconciling justice and objectives; and clarifying the epistemological gap in the argument, which refers to the knowledge and understanding gap of the Gukurahundi atrocities. Additionally, the article critically evaluates the NPRC's victim-centered approach, revealing a disconnect between its assertion of prioritising 'victims' justice' and its actual focus on 'survivors' justice'. This differentiation is significant and highlights the complexity of the NPRC's mandate.

In the third article, the ongoing issue relating to rural communities in Zambia is further explored in the article on Determinants of Adoption Decisions in Drought Risk Reduction Initiatives: A Case Study of Gwembe Rural Communities. This article offers valuable insights into the factors influencing household adoption decisions concerning drought risk reduction strategies in rural Gwembe. This qualitative research engaged 140 participants through in-depth interviews, focusing on the socio-economic, environmental, and institutional determinants that influence decisions regarding disaster risk management. The article by Mwanza et al. enriches the conversation on disaster risk management by examining household decision-making dynamics surrounding drought risk reduction strategies.

The pervasive issue of xenophobia in Africa, particularly in South Africa, has reached a critical point, significantly impacting human rights, development, and governance. Despite ongoing efforts from governments, the African Union (AU), and NGOs, interventions are proving insufficient. United Nations Assembly must mandate the AU to refuse cooperation with states that fail to address xenophobia. The AU should lead regional dialogues and create model policies, while the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights should develop comprehensive immigration guidelines. ECOSOCC should play a pivotal role in engaging

stakeholders to discuss and devise strategies for combating xenophobia. Oyelana, the author of the fourth article on the role of governments, international organisations, and non-governmental organisations in xenophobia in South Africa, critically analyses South Africa's three government tiers, international organisations, and NGOs in combatting xenophobia. Utilising a qualitative historical design, the study drew on secondary sources such as books and journals. It revealed that despite efforts for economic and social stability, xenophobia persists in South Africa and other African countries. Governments must enhance security in xenophobia-prone areas. The study aims to inform government programs and the efforts of IOs and NGOs to alleviate poverty and reduce hostility towards foreign nationals, highlighting the need for unified campaigns, improved service delivery, and extensive use of social media to educate citizens about xenophobia's dangers. These combined insights emphasise the necessity for coordinated, robust responses to combat xenophobia across Africa effectively.

My deep gratitude goes to all the authors, reviewers, and assistants to the editor - Aneetta Alexander, and Albeena Stephen, who have been key to publishing this issue. We would also like to appreciate and place on record the support received from Dr Malavika Menon, Coordinator, and Mr Jery Mathew, Administrative Assistant, Centre for Publications, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), in the publication of this issue.

L T Om Prakash, PhD

**Editor**