

Editorial: Policy analysis, political issues, sustainable development and more

The PAP journal was first published in 1992 and has been published online in open access on the Emerald Insight Platform since 2018. This year marks the 31st anniversary of its first launch and 6th anniversary of its online publication with Emerald. It now publishes three issues with at least one special issue and around twenty-five articles per year.

PAP attracted 150 article submissions from authors over 40 countries and the accepting ratio was 22% in 2022. Its articles were widely read and cited all over the world in recent years. PAP has obtained the 2022 Journal Impact Factor (JIF) of 1.4 as released by Clarivate, being abstracted and indexed by Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI). The Scopus/WoS Citations were 152 and 83 respectively in 2022 while the current Scopus CiteScore index is of 2.3.

Under SJR (SCImago Journal Rank) Citations 2022, PAP is in Q2 under the categories of (1) Geography, Planning and Development; and (2) Sociology and Political Science. It is in Q3 of (3) Health (social science); and (4) Public Administration.

In summary, PAP is abstracted and indexed by: Scopus, Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI), CrossRef, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), EBSCO Discovery Service, Google Scholar, Health Research Premium Collection (ProQuest), Healthcare Administration Database (ProQuest), ProQuest Central, ProQuest Central Basic (Korea), ProQuest Central Essentials, ProQuest Central Student, Publicly Available Content Database (ProQuest), Summons (ProQuest), WorldCat and The British Library.

Academics and practitioners in public administration, management, public policy, and related fields are welcome to contribute papers to this journal.

Summary of articles

This third issue of 2023 consists of nine articles, with three related to policy analysis on health-related issues in the United States, France, and Hong Kong, two on political issues in India and Tanzania, two on city or district level sustainable development in Shanghai and Indonesia, two on Public-Private Partnership on education and culture of state-owned enterprises. A brief introduction of these articles is given below.

The first article on “Evaluating the policy response to curb the opioid prescribing behaviour of physicians in the United States” by Roshni Das is the first detailed policy evaluation on a specific and time-sensitive aspect of physician over-prescription of opioid, within the larger opioid abuse problem in the United States. Through a critical review and synthesis of academic literature, government policy documents at both states and national levels, and articles in the popular press, the author asserted that over-prescription is a legal problem because it inevitably leads to diversion of these substances for non-medical usage. The Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) laws have been passed by all 50 states



and the main policy responses are covered. However, there are hindrances to their effectiveness, which have to be addressed. Two state level policy alternatives are discussed as potential solutions - PDMP mandates and Pain Management Clinic Laws (PMCLs). After a comparative evaluation, it is recommended that all states should pass the mandatory PDMP review and usage laws urgently.

The second article is "Citizens' trust and digital attitudes: evidence from city digital transformation in Shanghai, China" by Yang Zhang. Based on the theory of trust and cost-benefit perspective, it examines the relationship between citizens' trust and their digital attitudes by considering the mediating effects of performance expectancy and perceived risk, as well as the moderating effect of media use. The digital transformation in Shanghai is chosen as a case study where 466 questionnaires were collected in a survey. The findings reveal that citizens' trust of government and trust of technology has no significant direct effect on their digital attitudes. However, performance expectancy mediates between the trust of government and digital attitudes, and perceived risk mediates the effect of trust of technology on attitudes. The use of social media significantly moderates the association between trust of technology and citizens' attitudes.

The third article is "Agencification, policy reversal and the reforms of the French health care system" by Daniel Simonet. Often linked to the New Public Management doctrines, agencification has been on the priority list of policy makers for over two decades. The author analyses the role of agencies in the French health system and the impact of government agency reform on physicians and the public. It discusses the perceived implementation of a re-concentration of decision-making powers within public agencies as the declared goal of agencification at the French health care system, specifically primary care providers and hospitals. The findings reveal that decentralization in France and the subsequent rise of public health care agencies had outcomes below expectations. Hence, a re-concentration of decision-making powers within the larger Regional Health Agencies; a streamlining of the public administration; and a re-appropriation of decision-making powers by the Ministry of Health are needed.

The fourth article on "Is constitutional democracy in India in crisis?" by Krishna K. Tummala examines the decline of the largest working parliamentary democracy in India on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Centre. Original constitution, along with commentaries, are studied. News outlets, government pronouncements, journal articles, and other electronic and print media are also sourced. The findings show how three important features in democracy - elections and their outcomes, control of information, and suppression of dissent are widely used to undermine constitutional democracy. The author concluded that democracy can be undermined without altering the Constitution itself. It also explains the irony of Modi's popularity, given the undemocratic practices. As he may continue in office for some time to come, commanding a log-rolling majority, the need of the hour is a united, constructive and effective opposition to ensure a healthy working democracy.

The fifth article is "Systematic child abuse incidents in a children's residential home in Hong Kong: regulatory and criminal law reform proposals" by Wing-hong Chui, Henry Kao and Aaron H.L. Wong. After reviewing the summary of investigation report and news reports on the abuse incidents in a children's residential home, the authors used Routine Activity Theory as the framework to identify the causes. The findings uncover systematic failures such as workload issues, inadequate supervision, and the absence of continuing professional development (CPD). The regulations governing the operation of childcare centres and criminal laws against child abuse are long overdue. This article recommends enacting regulations that mandate CPD, lower the staff-to-child ratio, and strengthen the Social Welfare Department's supervisory powers over childcare centres. From the criminal law perspective, it recommends that "reasonable chastisement" be abolished as a defence of

corporal punishment, and there should be new offences for failure to report suspected child abuse incidents and causing or allowing the death/serious harm of a child.

The sixth article on “Critical success factors of Public-Private Partnerships in the education sector” by Sajida and Bevaola Kusumasari aims to identify the factors affecting the implementation of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in the education sector. Extracted from Scopus, this systematic literature review examined 21 articles on PPPs in the education sector. Content analysis is adopted to identify research gaps and provide information on critical issues in the cases. The findings have identified the critical success factors of PPPs in the education sector in 12 countries, revealing varying degrees of success and implementation challenges. They reflect the importance of clear objectives, effective communication, and robust partnerships between the public and private sectors to achieve success. These insights contribute to an in-depth understanding of PPP implementation in education, which can guide future projects. The critical success factors identified in PPPs implementation in education across various countries may provide a comprehensive worldwide perspective for researchers, practitioners and policy makers.

The seventh article is “A stakeholder analysis for sustainable development of Maritime Village in Semarang coastal community, Indonesia” by Kismartini Kismartini, Ali Roziqin and Naila Authori. This article aims to examine the role of stakeholders and their interconnected relationships based on power and interests in realising sustainable development in coastal areas using the Maritime Village program in Tambaklorok, Semarang City, Indonesia as a case study. Data were collected from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with stakeholders, observations, as well as online news, and official government reports, followed by taxonomic analysis. The results showed the four categories of stakeholders, namely players, context setters, subjects, and crowd. The Ministry of Public Works and Housing, Regional Development Planning Agency of Semarang City, Spatial Planning Agency of Semarang City, and the Fisheries Office of Semarang City were found to be key players with a role in the success of the program. PT Pelindo was identified as a context setter with low interests but high power, acting as an accelerator in the development program.

The eighth article is “Political decentralisation and political-administrative relation in the local councils in Tanzania” by Wilfred Uronu Lameck. This article analyses the degree of political decentralisation and its relation to the local councils in Tanzania. It explores the institutional and political set-up of the local councils originating from the degree of political decentralisation and how it influences the tension between the bureaucrats and local politicians. A comparative case study is adopted to investigate the phenomenon in two local governments in Tanzania. The findings indicate that the two local governments are subjected to a similar political system guided by similar rules and guidelines from the central government bureaucracy for implementing the party manifesto and central government priorities. Thus, the local politicians have little room for negotiation in adopting local agenda to reflect the preferences of the local community. Any attempt to challenge this status quo creates political tensions between bureaucrats and the administrators.

The ninth article is “Indigenous cultures and employee efficiency: the moderating effect of cronyism in state-owned enterprises in Ghana” by Fred Awaah and Morounkeji Olanrewaju. This article examines the relationship between indigenous cultures and employee efficiency and how cronyism strengthens or weakens the relationship in the Ghanaian state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in response to the employee efficiency. This study employs a quantitative approach to collect data from 400 workers in ten SOEs in Ghana. The findings indicate that showing gratitude is the predominant indigenous culture in these enterprises while irregularity (absenteeism) is not dominant. Moreover, the practice of cronyism is high. It reveals that the indigenous cultures, except for respect for the elderly, relate negatively to employee efficiency, and cronyism strengthens the relationship between indigenous cultures and employee efficiency.

I wish to thank all the authors for contributing their papers to this issue and the reviewers for their critical but constructive comments in helping the authors to improve their papers. Finally, I thank Emerald and our editorial team as well as the members of both Asia Pacific Editorial Board and International Editorial Advisory Board for their contributions in making the successful publication of this issue possible. We hope these papers will enhance the understanding of various issues on policy analysis, political-administrative and sustainable development issues across the Asia Pacific, America, Europe and Africa regions.

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About the Editor-in-Chief

Professor Peter K.W. Fong, PhD (New York University), is President of Hong Kong Public Administration Association and Editor-in-Chief of PAP Journal. He teaches strategic management and supervises DBA students' dissertations of University of Wales TSD. He was appointed as Advisory/Visiting Professors by Tongji, Tsinghua, Renmin, and Tianjin universities in Mainland China, Chinese University of HK and HK Polytechnic University. He holds memberships of HK Institute of Planners & Planning Institute Australia. He was a Teaching Fellow of Judge Business School, University of Cambridge; Director of EMBA programme, HKU Business School; Associate Professor, Department of Urban Planning and Urban Design, HKU; Executive Vice President of City University of Macau; Honorary Professor, China Training Centre for Senior Civil Servants in Beijing; Studies Director, Civil Service Training & Development Institute, HKSAR Government; Visiting Scholar, MIT; and Consultants, the World Bank and Delta Asia Bank. Peter K.W. Fong can be contacted at: fongpeter@netvigator.com