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Editorial: Management scholarship responding to a changing world

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The 2026 volume of *Acta Commercii* presents a compelling snapshot of contemporary management scholarship. The articles published in 2026 reveal a strong orientation towards organisational adaptability, sustainability, digital transformation, entrepreneurship, employability, leadership and socio-economic development. These themes mirror many of the challenges currently confronting organisations, governments and communities across Africa and the world at large. Perhaps the most striking feature of the 2026 volume is the prominence of technology-related and future-oriented research. Articles addressing digital transformation in retail, blockchain adoption and food traceability, ethical frameworks for emerging digital technologies, TikTok marketing, innovation in higher education and organisational adaptation in increasingly complex environments demonstrate the extent to which digitalisation has become entrenched in the contemporary management discourse. These topics closely reflect global trends associated with the Fourth Industrial Revolution, artificial intelligence, platform economies and data-driven decision-making. A second dominant theme is sustainability. Research addressing corporate sustainability, sustainable strategic management, sustainable retail leadership, corporate social responsibility and the challenges faced by recycled entrepreneurs illustrates the growing integration of environmental and social concerns into management research. This reflects heightened global attention to sustainability reporting, Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) considerations, responsible leadership and the societal role of organisations. Rather than treating sustainability as a specialised topic, many contributions position it as a central strategic concern. Entrepreneurship and small business development remain topical, as they have been for some time in *Acta Commercii*. Studies on social entrepreneurship, graduate entrepreneurship, family business succession, high-growth entrepreneurship, Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) financing constraints and business incubation reflect the continued importance of entrepreneurship as a vehicle for economic growth, employment creation and social development within developing economies. As would be expected in a developing context, many of these studies are motivated by practical socio-economic challenges such as unemployment, poverty alleviation and economic inclusion. This emphasises the journal's enduring relevance to issues relating to African development. The 2026 volume demonstrates considerable methodological diversity, although positivist approaches remain slightly dominant. Several studies employ survey-based designs, correlational analysis, regression modelling and hypothesis testing to investigate organisational and entrepreneurial phenomena. At the same time, qualitative methodologies are strongly represented. Interpretive phenomenological analysis, semi-structured interviews, document analysis and case-study approaches appear in studies examining leadership education, family businesses, governance mechanisms and organisational practices. This demonstrates an increasing appreciation for context-sensitive and experience-based forms of inquiry. Most notably, there is a growing presence of evidence-synthesis methodologies. Systematic reviews, scoping reviews, bibliometric analyses and conceptual framework development feature prominently. Studies on employability and entrepreneurship, sustainability and emerging technologies illustrate the journal's increasing engagement with knowledge integration and theory building. The geographical and institutional origins of the published articles also reveal important patterns. South Africa remains the dominant contributor, but the volume displays a distinctly African and increasingly international character. Research contexts include Zimbabwe, Uganda, Botswana, Nigeria and broader sub-Saharan Africa, while authors are affiliated with institutions across Southern and Eastern Africa and, in some cases, beyond the continent. This diversity supports the journal's stated mission of promoting African-international dialogue in management research and demonstrates its growing role as a platform for scholarship addressing emerging-market realities. Overall, *Acta Commercii* volume 26 reflects a management discipline which is responding actively to contemporary societal and organisational challenges. Not only is *Acta Commercii* a mirror of contemporary management challenges, but it is also a meaningful contributor in the search for practical, contextually relevant solutions.