



College road south
Soshanguve South
0152

Tel: (012) 382 9769
Fax: (012) 382 9042

E-mail: SAAPAM@tut.ac.za
Website: www.saapam.co.za

Private Bag X 14257
Hatfield
0028
039-162-NPO

JOURNAL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Concept Note:

THE TIPPING SCALE OF GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS DURING AND POST COVID-19 **JOPA – Special Issue, December 2020**

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in a Wuhan city in China has brought abrupt changes in the way government functions have been considered for many decades. It has brought in a *tip the scale* epoch which ushers increased computerised, innovative and sophisticated environment. This means that the government requires in own functions, policies and processes during and post COVID-19 period to maintain public services despite the reality of a public health crisis and risks associated with it. Accordingly, the unmitigated spread of COVID-19 would usher enormous costs on the state resources. It is clear that the COVID-19 has brought a litmus test of public sector disaster management's efficiency in various dimensions, which affect *inter alia*, the national government, provincial government, local government and state owned entities with varying degrees of repercussions¹. The South African government intervention considered the setting up of the South African COVID-19 Command Council that was tasked to provide an advisory service to the President and his Executive. Other strategic measures include a lock down which introduced a curfew and economic shutdown as of 26 March 2020. On the one hand this meant that curtailing of business activities, prohibiting consumption of certain products and limiting social behavioural patterns, among others. On the other hand, the provision of relief funds for individuals and businesses, building of emergency hospitals, purchase of personal protective equipment's for workers as well as resettlement and feeding schemes for the homeless people became urgent need during the COVID-19 health crisis.

While these interventions were considered plausible for South Africa since the high projected infection rate was mitigated, the COVID-19 pandemic ushered a 'new normal' in government functioning. The infection projections were placed at three million with 40 000 deaths. However, by end of September 2020, infections were less than 700 000 with a moderate death toll of below 18 000. The new normal is the essence of *tip the scale* government functions which require

¹ Mazzucato, M., & Kattel, R. (2020). COVID-19 and Public-sector Capacity. *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7499771/>

adaptations on interventions, models and processes to realise a continuation and enhancement of service delivery provisions on health, education, housing, international relations and science and technology, among others.

Furthermore, there has been ubiquitous allegations about government venality on COVID-19 related supply chain² across the board. Despite the diverse public sector implications of the COVID-19, there is a need to reimagine a *tip the scale* government functions during and post COVID-19 pandemic. This reimagination should serve to consider shifts in which government and society are required to interact in the optimisation of quality public service provision.

The Journal of Public Administration invites submission of research papers, which are aimed at public sector repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a thematic guide, papers dealing with some of the following sub-themes are invited for submission before the 15 December 2020.

- Government functions and services during and post COVID-19
- Innovative measures on public sector approaches during and post COVID-19
- The role of state owned entities during and post COVID-19 pandemic
- Government tenders and supply chain processes during COVID-19
- Public sector risk management and communication in the phase of COVID-19
- Public sector budgetary pressure implications of COVID-19 pandemic
- Separating or linking political party membership and access to state resources

Important dates:

Abstract submission:

Due date

01 November 2020

Full article submission

15 December 2020

Contacts

Guest editor

Prof Siphon Mokoena

University of Limpopo

Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership

mokoenask328@gmail.com

Deputy editor

Kedibone Phago

Email: phagokedibone5@gmail.com

² Business Day (2020) Government mulls setting up special courts to tackle Covid-19 graft. <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/national/2020-08-27-government-mulls-setting-up-special-courts-to-tackle-covid-19-graft/>