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Editorial

V Jarbandhan

Chief Editor

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Preparing postgraduate students in higher institutions of learning in South Africa remains a challenge. This becomes evident when looking at the high recorded dropout rate. According to Mutula (2011 in Hunyane 2015), there was a 60% postgraduate dropout rate recorded by the Southern Africa Regional Universities Association in 2008.

Postgraduate Public Administration and Management education also faces challenges. Recent statistical reports in most South African universities have revealed that the number of postgraduate qualifications conferred on students in this discipline did not increase substantially in the past decade.

In *'Assessing the level of preparedness in research-based qualifications of postgraduate students in Public Administration'*, Barry Hanyane investigates to what extent postgraduate students are prepared for a career in Public Administration and Management.

This article reflects on the level of preparedness of postgraduate students at the Department of Public Administration and Management at the University of South Africa (UNISA). The period under review is from 2013 to 2014. A manageable sample of 20 respondents was used out of a potential research population of 150 students enrolled for a master's or doctoral degree in the aforementioned department.

The core focus of the research is on the writing and research ability of postgraduate students and their efforts to understand the research structure of their postgraduate research proposals. The study found that the majority of these postgraduate students struggled during the initial phase of their enrollment to prepare for their research proposals. Furthermore, the results of the study show an over-reliance on the qualitative research methods, as opposed to quantitative methods.

Hanyane states that strategic methods and approaches need to be implemented to prepare students for their research-based postgraduate qualification. "This requires exposure and grounding in research methodology and techniques, the understanding of practical research assignments allocated to postgraduate students to provide them with the necessary practical knowledge and experimental or 'clinical-based' learning opportunities", he notes.

Whether it is in an academic or corporate environment, employees display differing approaches and preferences to their work, which result in certain noticeable work behavioural styles.

In *The influence of work behavioural styles on teaching and learning approaches. The Case of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus*, Luni Vermeulen explores academic employees' behavioural styles within the workplace. By applying Thomas International's DISC-factors, the author investigates academics' teaching and learning approaches to 21st century pedagogical tools such as technology. Teaching and learning epistemologies such as constructivism and objectivism, which also strongly influence these approaches, are also explored.

More specifically, the article aims to determine the relation between academics' approaches to and perceptions of teaching and learning, particularly with regard to their use of technology and innovative teaching methods, and their work behavioural style.

Through a literature study and empirical results obtained from the questionnaire and focus-group discussions, it becomes clear that academics' work behavioural style influences their teaching and learning approaches, which are embedded in particular teaching and learning philosophies.

The author concludes by stating that academics, irrespective of their work behavioural style, should be committed to provide for the needs and preferences of the 21st century learner. "In this regard, it is necessary to provide relevant training to academics. Training should include the use of innovative teaching and learning approaches and an understanding of the characteristics of Generation Y learners".

The Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality (MMM) has developed several rural development strategies. However, the question is whether these strategies advance rural development in the context of the new rural paradigm.

'Advancing rural development through network and cluster approaches: The Case of Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality' by Maréve Biljohn explores the network and cluster approaches as innovative rural development approaches towards facilitating economic opportunities for rural communities in the MMM.

By following a qualitative research approach, the author explores the old and new rural development paradigms as a basis for undertaking rural development. Firstly, the article includes a study of scholarly models and theoretical perspectives, such as positioning network and cluster approaches in the old and new rural development paradigm. Secondly, the author reviews strategic documents such as the *MMM IDP Review of 2013/2014*, the *Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan for 2012/2013* and the IDP for 2012-2016.

Through a GAP analysis of strategic documents, the author explores rural development undertaken by the MMM within the framework of the rural development paradigms, as well as theoretical perspectives and models on network and cluster approaches. The third component proposes how cluster and network approaches, as a rural development strategy by the MMM, can be positioned within the existing innovation system in the Free State.

Based on a case study of the MMM, the author states that the network and cluster approaches could be considered as an innovative rural development approach by the MMM. This article makes various recommendations towards the implementation of the network and cluster approaches to rural development by the MMM.

Accountability should be enhanced to ensure that citizens' needs are acknowledged and that policy implementation and the achievement of goals could be justified for every action by an individual i.e. a political office-bearer or appointed official, in an authoritative position. The article '*Accountability: A constitutional imperative*' by Chris Thornhill, investigates the nature of accountability in the complex contemporary state in its various guises and discusses the requirement that the elected political office-bearers and their appointed officials should act in such a way that society could be assured that their best interests are paramount in any governmentally related decision and action. The role of state institutions and mechanisms supporting accountability in terms of the Public Protector, the Auditor-General, codes of conduct and professionalism, administrative and managerial requirements, information, performance monitoring and evaluation is highlighted as well as certain factors inhibiting accountability in terms of unethical conduct, ignorance of citizens, corruption, unproductiveness, failure by the legislature and misgovernment.

In South Africa public administrators have to adhere to constitutional and legislative prescriptions. Despite this, public administrators and political office-bearers continue to make themselves guilty of maladministration and misgovernment. In '*Public administrators and maladministration: A negation of just administrative action*', Willem Erasmus investigates the proper conduct of public administrators. The author endeavours to examine the scientific field of Public Administration in order to arrive at its current locus and focus; the physical environment *in which* public administrators must operate, and the focal point of academic deliberation. Certain administrative law principles are subsequently linked to *how* public administrators should act in their administrative capacity.

Importantly, the article evaluates whether public administrators and political office-bearers' actions can be linked to non-compliance with the established requirements in cases where they are suspected or accused of maladministration and misgovernment. The evaluation criteria was developed from the inherent and objective administrative law principles of just administrative action, and are depicted under the three pillars of lawfulness, procedural fairness and substantive fairness.

The article highlights that the manifestation of maladministration and misgovernment can *inter alia* be attributed to a disregard for the administrative law principles of just administrative action. The author states that, "Public administrators and political office bearers make themselves guilty of maladministration and

misgovernment by not adhering to the administrative law guidelines on just administrative action”.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has committed itself to ensuring that women participate in regional, national and grassroots politics and policy-making. Despite these efforts, at the onset of 2015, a year where millennium development goals (MDGs) were planned to be realised, concerns still arise regarding: What is the enormity of gender-awareness in policy and political-based decision-making processes? Are there any initiatives in place to capacitate women in order for them to partake in policy-making and political processes?

In *‘Gender mainstreaming in policy and political contexts: The case of South African Local Government’*, Shikha Vyas-Doorgapersad sets out to find the answers to these concerns. By utilising qualitative, descriptive and analytical approaches, the author’s case study traces the status of gender mainstreaming in both policy and political contexts in South African local government.

The article aims to explore the situation in a country-specific scenario and utilises the empowerment approach (an aspect of feminist theory) as a hypothetical base for the study that could lead to “transformation of gender relations into gender planning” (Wieringa 1994:830), required in South African local government.

The article proposes a model for improvement called Gender-based Representation in Local government (G-bRLG). The model highlights the significant elements that require vital consideration to realise the empowerment approach. The author concludes by calling for further research to “...gather more dimensions, varied perspectives and comparative best practices to comprehensively incorporate gender-based indicators in varied streams of policy-making and political decision-making processes”.

In *‘Leadership development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)’*, Michel Tshiyoyo states that the notion of leadership development has emerged as an important theoretical and practical stream of management. “As an area of higher learning, leadership draws from numerous academic fields and real life sources and therefore requires integration of knowledge with experience,” states the author.

A qualitative research approach is followed using descriptive and prescriptive research methods to investigate the current status quo of leadership in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). According to Morrow (1975:49-50) descriptive and prescriptive theories are by no means incompatible. Hence, in examining the nature of public administration as a socio-political phenomenon, it is possible to describe what actually transpires within administrative agencies and postulate possible causes for such behaviour. As such, relevant literature sources pertaining to leadership, governance and development were accessed in order to put the subject of discourse within its context.

This article provides an overview of leadership and governance issues in order to demonstrate the extent to which those issues influence leadership development

in a country such as the DRC. The country has been and is still going through a profound leadership crisis that has orchestrated the state's collapse and minimised the country's prospects for economic development.

The author argues that Africa needs effective leaders because strong leaders committed to change are one of the key drivers to progress. However, leadership effectiveness is determined by leaders' ability to overcome the challenges they are faced with in their direct settings. The author argues that strong leaders need to be developed in order to overcome the challenges the DRC is facing.

The author concludes by stating that the most important aims of the DRC must find expression in the country's desire to create a balance between the strategic and personal qualities of its leadership.

Globally, captains of industry, political leaders and public administrators justify politics, projects and initiatives in terms of the contribution they make towards sustainable development. It would seem that the concept of sustainable development has become fluid and ambiguous in nature.

In *'Sustainable Development: An interrogation of the concept'*, Damian Ukwandu states that the concept of sustainable development is problematic and ambiguous, as its language and definitions vary based on the intellectual and ideological disposition of the person or groups advocating for the term. For this reason, many definitions have been proposed and used in literature.

The author implements Ruttan's (1994:211) theory of establishment appropriation to explain the reason for the fluidity and ambiguity in the understanding and meaning of sustainable development. To help trace the source of this ambiguity, the article investigates the various processes which have led to this concept's rise in global prominence.

The author discusses three of these definitions and draws certain correlations. According to Ukwandu, "By their very nature the definitions of sustainable development suggest, firstly, that economic growth constitutes development in its own right and, secondly, that economic growth is unquestionably sustainable." However, he states that all three definitions fail to show in what way economic growth is related to human wellbeing. Furthermore, neither definition makes an explicit reference to the natural resource base that sustains economic activity.

Ukwandu concludes with a recommendation of what sustainable development should entail whenever it is used in relation to the developing parts of the world such as sub-Saharan Africa.

Differentiation can be seen as a tool to try to focus the support from national and provincial government and associated institutions to local government toward ensuring functional, performing municipalities that deliver their services adequately. In *'A differentiated approach to Local Government'* Sandra Greyling and Christelle Auriacombe explore the current policy debate on differentiation in terms of differentiation as contained in legislation, concepts relevant to differentiation in

local government in terms of segmentation and support models, powers and functions, financial resources, the urban-rural divide and institutional systems.

Differentiation in practice in SA local government is discussed with due reflection on segmentation models of the National Treasury, the Municipal Infrastructure Investment Framework (MIIF), the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB), municipalities segmented according to audit performance and the DCoG's spatially vulnerable municipalities' segmentation model. The article provides a proposed approach towards differentiation in local government.

Not much scholarly work has been done on how undergraduate and postgraduate students should be introduced to the 'philosophy of science debate'. In *Teaching the philosophy of science to Public Administration students in South African universities*, N Breakfast, G Bradshaw and Richard Haines set out to fill this gap by investigating social sciences and the relationship between ontology, epistemology and methodology within the domain of Public Administration.

The authors argue that social-scientific research within the field of Public Administration should focus on participatory/action research, as opposed to positivism. In South Africa, postgraduate students in this field tend to conduct positivist-inclined empirical research. "This is informed by the thinking that quantitative research methodology is more scientific than the qualitative approach," state the authors. However, as an academic discipline, Public Administration falls under the value-driven 'applied social sciences' banner.

"As such, undergraduate and postgraduate students need to understand the fundamentals of social science research", stress the authors. "It is therefore vital that the university training of practitioners in Public Administration provide such skills so that the public servant of the future is well-prepared to help find solutions for the challenges facing the public sector", state the authors.

In order to understand the philosophical underpinnings of research methodology, the authors also examine the relationship between ontology, epistemology and methodology. They postulate that these research tools can help shed more light on the current challenges facing the South African Public Administration sector.

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Assessing the level of preparedness in research-based qualifications of postgraduate students in Public Administration and Management

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ABSTRACT

Preparing postgraduate students in higher institutions of learning in South Africa in research related studies remains a challenge in view of the high recorded rate of dropouts. According to Mutula (2011:187), there was a 60% postgraduate dropout rate recorded by the Southern Africa Regional Universities Association in 2008. The number of postgraduate qualifications conferred on students in the discipline of Public Administration and Management has not increased substantially in the past decade as revealed by recent statistical reports at most universities in South Africa. Despite the recorded success in attracting a considerable number of students for postgraduate research-based qualifications, strategic methods and approaches need to be implemented to prepare the students for their research-based postgraduate qualifications. This requires exposure and grounding in research methodology and techniques, the understanding of practical research assignments allocated to postgraduate students to provide them with the necessary practical knowledge, and experimental or “clinical-based” learning opportunities. This article reflects on the level of preparedness of postgraduate students at the Department of Public Administration and Management at the University of South Africa (hereafter referred to as UNISA). The period under review is from 2013 to 2014. A manageable sample of 20 respondents was used out of a potential research population of 150 students enrolled for a master’s or

doctoral degree in the aforementioned Department. The majority of these postgraduate students struggled at the initial phase of their enrollment to prepare for their research proposals for consideration by the Department's higher degrees committee for approval and supervisor allocation.

INTRODUCTION

Measuring or assessing the level of preparedness of postgraduate students enrolled in a research-based qualification in the discipline of Public Administration and Management at South African universities remains a crucial functional area of concern. This article aims to observe such functional responsibilities. A case study which comprised approximately 150 registered research-based master's and doctoral candidates during the 2013-2014 academic year in the aforementioned discipline at the UNISA was analysed. The sample comprised 20 postgraduate students from the postgraduate student population of approximately 150 registered candidates. The primary aim of the study was to establish whether these postgraduate students had been prepared to deal with issues such as methodological tools and relevant methods, appropriate choice of research tools and methods, choice of appropriate theories, relevant research designs, application of literature review, general progress with their postgraduate studies and other related matters. In essence, the study focused on the writing and research ability of postgraduate students and their efforts at understanding the research structure of their postgraduate research proposals. Three sections were designed with a specific focus on the biographical details of the respondents, epistemological questions or knowledge of the science of Public Administration and Management and research-related questions. The findings are categorised and discussed in the section below.

BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

In each academic year at the UNISA's Department of Public Administration and Management academic staff members set aside a designated day for a student colloquium where students at master's and doctoral level have an opportunity to engage discipline specific and non-discipline staff members on matters of mutual academic and research related matters. In 2013, a colloquium was held at the main campus in Pretoria hosted by the Department of Public Administration and Management (hereinafter the Department). On completion

of this article, plans were put in place to hold the 2014 colloquium. A total of 26 postgraduate students were present. Staff members from the Department and several other staff members from various departments (for instance Library Services) of the University presented their contributions aimed at sharing knowledge and general sharing of relevant information on research proposal writing. In 2013 more than 100 research proposals were received. Less than 40 of the proposals were accepted, due to poor quality mainly in research design of most submissions, although no official records were kept for verification.

The research proposals which were accepted were further scrutinised by the allocated supervisor(s) in an attempt to improve and ensure an acceptable scientific document. The researcher had observed over a specific time-frame that most of the students struggled at this stage. Notably, most research topics proposed by the students did not align with the central research problem, research questions and the hypothesis (where applicable); insufficient knowledge of the area being investigated; lack of understanding of the scientific principles and theories applicable to the study; no attempt to critique current research in order to advance scholarship; lack of undertaking of the relevance of an independent literature review and limited judgment in leading advanced scientific thinking in the discipline.

Methodological challenges observed by the researcher span from the inability to reflect on understanding the basics of research methods in the discipline; lack of applying basic research techniques, including statistical software and instruments, and technologies to address pertinent research problems in the study. An in-depth study and categorisation of these challenges faced by the postgraduate students at UNISA requires an independent study and investigation. Given these enormous perceived challenges, the researcher fit to conduct a random survey in determining whether such challenges exist. The findings discussed hereunder reflect on the aforementioned discussion. Notwithstanding the above challenges and problems, Brynard (2005:364-376) in his study on the same topic of postgraduate research management at UNISA, identified what appears to be administrative challenges in relation to the subject under discussion in this article. Issues such as the lack of postgraduate training of students, high levels of dropout rate, early termination of registration, poor management of the progression rate from the honours level to the master's and doctoral levels, and poor undergraduate training in research methods also warrant attention (Mouton 2001:6). As much as Brynard's article (2005:364-376) focused on the administrative issues related to this topic, an attempt is made to identify probable shortcomings of the methodological challenges in respect of the issue(s) discussed in this article. The researcher holds the view that an in-depth analysis of these methodological challenges should be researched as well. For example, the article seems to focus on issues such as the selection process of prospective

students, role of the higher degrees committee, appointment of supervisors and the concomitant quality issues of supervision (Brynard 2005:365-374). Brynard's (2005) article was based on the qualitative approach, with emphasis on the methodology selected by the postgraduate candidates.

PRAGMATISM AS A THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Intervention research design in qualitative research methodology remains a critical research approach in the discipline of Public Administration. Conveniently used to provide solutions to existing problems related to the discipline of Public Administration, intervention research design further takes different forms of structure and type. For instance, some intervention research methods are used to assess the quality of studies, be it postgraduate research degrees or research reviews (Bryman 2012:104). The basis of such possible research review, in the case of this article and the level of preparedness of postgraduate students in the discipline of Public Administration, lends itself to the theory of *pragmatism*. According to Shields (1998:195-225), *pragmatism* as a theory and philosophy of science promotes three important components or tools of analysis. These tools are: (a) sense of purposive scientific inquiry (b) recognition and (c) doubt; as characteristics of the principle of common sense as a basis of *pragmatism*. Purposive scientific inquiry is an important stimulus of intervention research, providing the initiative to be resourceful in starting a research project or research inquiry into an existing research problem. Such a research inquiry is usually directed at establishing a scientific and satisfactory solution to existing scientific and social problem(s). As Shields (1998:197) contends "...the consequences of social research are used to determine the results of a particular research action". In the case of this study and article, poor or lack of research methodology-preparedness for postgraduate students at UNISA is perceived as a consequence reflective of the poor research proposals (results). In terms of the tools of recognition and doubt used in the theory of pragmatism, postgraduate students at UNISA are assessed and given feedback. Such feedback exposes research proposals that are often teamed with poor conceptual analysis, incoherent literature review, ill-conceived research questions, data results poorly presented and misplaced methodological approaches. In her study, Shield (1998:200) came to the same conclusions. These poor results were observed in the period designated in this study and provided a reason for the researcher to conduct this study without encouraging unstructured investigation and analysis into the problem.

Public Administration as a discipline and the concomitant field of practice have ideally promoted the approach and principle of advancing a strong science in order to promote morally acceptable public service conduct, accountability

and proper governance systems. Shield (1998:199) emphasises this belief and goes further to argue that such endeavours require a pragmatic approach in order to yield good results and remain relevant to scientific knowledge production. The primary practice of public administration according to Hess (2002:68) is to produce knowledge. Thus for the discipline of Public Administration to thrive, creative and innovative techniques and methods of improving the quality of research outputs, including research proposals at master's and doctoral levels, must be established and introduced. Shield (1998:200-201) created and introduced the "Notebook method" to assist MPA registered students at the Southwest Texas University during her tenure at that institution. At that particular period MPA students were struggling with their research questions due to poor literature review and poorly conceptualised research proposals. This situation in turn led to poor operationalised research proposals. In an attempt to address the aforementioned anomalies, Shield (1998:201) applied five principles as a concerted effort to help MPA students improve their research proposals. These five principles were early literature review, organising relevant study material, establishing a to-do-list that was project-based, infusing analytical skills and eliminating practices of plagiarism. The Table below provides a summary list of the five principles as proposed by Shield (1998:201) constituting the notebook approach.

Table 1: Notebook table checklist

Principle/variable	Present (including notes)	Absent or non-applicable (including notes)
Literature review	Comprehensive.	Non-existent.
Organising relevant literature (matrix)	Draw a well-structured matrix through a notebook system or approach.	None-existent or poorly organised literature study.
Project-based to-do-list	Step-by-step list of research activities.	No proper scientific approach or tools such as to-do-list.
Analysis	Rigorous analysis of the subject matter.	No scientific analysis.
Ethics with emphasis on plagiarism	All ethical research requirements such as honesty, disclosure of information, and subject permission must be promoted.	Lack of adherence to ethical standards and/or requirements.

Source: adapted from Shield (1998:201).

In the second and third column of the Table above students are expected to confirm whether or not these principles were or are included in their research proposals. In

relation to the study undertaken with UNISA postgraduate students, culminating in the writing this article, a questionnaire as discussed elsewhere in this article was used. Questions asked in that questionnaire also focused on issues related to the significance and usage of literature review, a strong research methodology (ontology) and theory (epistemology) often used in the discipline of Public Administration. These questions and areas of scientific study are observed on the assumption that the preliminary research topic(s) is sound and already accepted by the faculty and/or departmental committee on postgraduate research at UNISA.

Chaos and quantum theories in observing research practice

The researcher holds the conviction that behaviourist theories such as Chaos and Quantum theories (Newtonian theories) can be applied in understanding the behaviour and realities of postgraduate students undertaking their postgraduate studies. Chaos theory, discussed in this article, emphasises research complexity and dynamism and can be utilised to analyse and explain phenomena (Overman 1996:487). In order to overcome and make sense of the “chaotic nature” of compiling and writing a research proposal, postgraduate students must establish “order” in their presentations. This means adopting what Shields (1998:195-225) refers to as the “notebook method” as explained above. As a result the application of chaos theory implies the adoption of a relatively modern yet sophisticated approach to undertaking research at postgraduate level. If consensus among Public Administration scholars exists around the issue of perceiving research first as a chaotic picture (metaphorically), then as an ordered reality, good postgraduate research proposals become the result and/or product of a structured scientific process. To achieve the stated relative order certain behavioural activities must take place. These behavioural activities are summarised in the Table 2.

In summary, chaos theory provides intellectual space characterised by the principles of appreciation, a path towards ordering thought yet offering a certain degree of uncertainty and demanding experiences (academic and intellectual pressure) in postgraduate research undertakings. The postgraduate students at UNISA and other universities must be exposed to the realities discussed above. The misplaced enthusiasm of registering and “wanting to complete” in the same year by most postgraduate students remains a misconception. Efforts must be made to control such ill-informed beliefs and expectations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teachings in the discipline of Public Administration (and Management or Public Management and Administration) remain a complex process. A science

Table 2: Chaos activities promoting research-related order

Chaos activity (characteristic and type)	Chaos description
Far-from-equilibrium	High energy flows (enthusiasm) expressed during the registration of the postgraduate qualification, be it a master's or doctoral degree. Sometimes setting unrealistic research-related goals.
Self-organisation or "Autopoiesis"	After receiving research counselling and guidance and real expectations and requirements are set, the true picture of the work-load is explained. Student research contract is signed spelling out the roles and responsibilities of the postgraduate student and the supervisor once the research proposal is approved.
Dissipative structures	After receiving the research counselling and guidance, the postgraduate student may be challenged by lack of understanding theory, methodology, basics of research and analytical skills.
Bifurcations	This stage presents a moment of "choice". Postgraduate students may decide to abandon their studies due to incapacity and/or ill-preparedness. Committed students are likely to struggle through till they "find their feet".
Irreducibility	"Knowing a system is not knowing its element" (Overman 1996:488). Postgraduate students still have a lot to learn in their research journey.
Irreversibility	This stage reflects progress as well as non-repetitive routines. Students begin to master the techniques of conceptualising, analysing, writing skills, ordering of facts (argumentative) in a scientific way and are on their way to be accepted as true apprentices in postgraduate research.
Periodicity	Time spent between the period of chaos to order serves as an opportunity of personal academic growth and reflection.
Fractals and strange attractors	New knowledge is sought in order to encourage order from chaos. This situation allows the postgraduate student to be a reader, analyst and a critic of his or her discipline.
Perspective-offering	A postgraduate student will mentally and psychologically undergo change as part of his or her intellectual growth. This stage is sometimes referred to as "the road to completion".

Source: (Adapted from Overman 1996:488).

discipline born out of influences from other disciplines (Van Dijk and Thornhill 2011:3) such as Political Science, Sociology, Business Management, Economics and other sciences, offers a multidisciplinary context. Specialised areas of teachings in local economic development, local government, public sector economics, municipal finance and public financial management, development

studies and human settlement studies, are some of the specialised focus areas which have developed over time. These and other specialised areas of study in the discipline require specific approaches which in turn, necessitates specific research methods and designs. Wessels (2011:76-95) argues for a case study method approach, albeit with the emphasis on the undergraduate level in the context of distance learning. Such exposure is necessary for building a solid foundation for students in preparing them for life after undergraduate studies. Reference to the case study approach is imperative in undertaking research studies at postgraduate level.

For comparative purposes case studies are an integral part of postgraduate research. Wessels (2011:79) quotes Rogers (in Christensen 1987:135) to support the case study methodology in the teachings of Public Administration and Management. Wessels (2011) makes reference to the utilitarian values of self-discovery and self-appropriation as virtues of case study learning. These two values are critical in research. The researcher is of the view that if research is a personal journey travelled by a researcher in discovering new knowledge, then self-discovery becomes the necessary condition that a researcher must achieve. This experience could be equated with knowledge self-empowerment. While self-appropriation is equated with self-affirmation, it can also be described as a state of achieving self-confidence in the knowledge that the researcher can master research skills in acquiring, conserving and applying research knowledge. Teachings of Public Administration and Management must also prepare students for the labour market demands. Dorasamy and Pillay (2009:98-114) and Kuye (2005:532) argue for the establishment of sustainable partnerships between higher education institutions and public sector institutions. This approach is further amplified by Van Dijk *et al.* (2011:11) and Kuye (2005:525, 529) in calling for the establishment of a balanced relationship between theory (higher education) and practice (public sector). In Kuye's (2005) article, the emphasis is placed on moving away from traditional approaches in the teachings of Public Administration towards a transformative and collaborative approach. Hendricks (2011:61) also cautions against the dogmatic dependency on the traditional approaches in teaching and training of students in the discipline on general theories, principles, concepts and values with little or no emphasis on practical skills. Training in research ethics is also important for postgraduate students (Van Heerden and Thani 2011:48-60). Hendricks (2011) however warns that the situation described above, is unable to satisfy the demands of the modern sophisticated labour market. Based on the argument advanced by Hendricks (2011:61-75), proper training skills (including research skills) must be part of the curriculum for undergraduate students. The intention is to prepare students for the labour market. The researcher is of the view that research skills should form part of such an undergraduate preparatory curriculum.

A comprehensive preparatory curriculum should respond to postgraduate research demands such as preparing a research topic, research proposal (protocol), mastering research methods and techniques and the independent execution of the research project under professional supervision. For example, the current curriculum prescribed for second-year undergraduate courses in Fundamentals of Research (FOR201P and PUB2618) at UNISA's Department of Public Administration and Management introduces undergraduate students to the aspects mentioned above. The module, "Theory of Science and Public Administration: Methods of Public Administration – a selection" (HFILPAK) offers postgraduate students an opportunity to complement their postgraduate skills and knowledge at honours level with philosophical knowledge and skills. The administrative role of the Higher Degrees Committee of the Department of Public Administration and Management at UNISA has a major role to play. Such a committee is manned by senior academics whose experience in the supervision of postgraduate candidates creates a platform to make sound judgments on matters relating to, but not limited to the scientific rigour in research proposals, feasibility of research proposals, process of adjudication of research proposals, allocation of supervisors, supervisor-candidate dispute resolution and other related administrative responsibilities. In the process of selecting research proposals of an acceptable standard, allocating supervisors and contributing to playing a mentoring role, the Higher Degrees Committee's role cannot be undermined (Brynard 2005:368). A departmental brochure detailing the technical information on the compilation of research proposals is also provided to prospective students upon registration.

Research outputs of the master's dissertations (including theses at the doctoral level) in Public Administration and Management are also important facets of postgraduate research undertakings. According to Lues (2009:20-35), research publications from master's dissertations produced by postgraduate students in the discipline are an ideal source of research outputs. The researcher believes that well written and structured chapters from successfully completed dissertations can be selected and given "life" and character as a publishable article in an accredited journal. Mutula (2011:184) observes the growing trend in some African countries such as Ghana where postgraduate students are awarded their doctoral degrees on the basis of evaluating the candidate's publication and research record. In this instance, a collection of a specified number of research outputs including articles in accredited journals are considered.

Strategies must be put in place to achieve and sustain this culture of assisting postgraduate students in producing master's research-based outputs (publications in accredited journals). This reality, according to the researcher is a milestone to the research profile of postgraduate students in the discipline.

The first hurdle in writing and submitting postgraduate research proposals is mastering the required skills and techniques in postgraduate research undertakings and outputs.

Wessels (2011:80) in Thani (2012:33) contends that there is an increasing pertinent bias towards particular research topics by postgraduate students in the discipline, especially master's and doctoral students towards particular topics or thematic research areas. The topics dominant in the areas of research in Public Administration are service delivery and human resource management in the public sector/service. To broaden the scope of research in the discipline, Thani (2012:33) calls for the inclusion and application of phenomenology as a distinct research methodology worthy of consideration by researchers in the discipline. A different view is espoused by Van der Waldt (2012:96-106) in his analysis of the significance of the "big five questions" in the discipline of Public Administration. In his analysis, Van der Waldt (2012) argues that there are "five big questions" in the discipline, namely; what is the nature of the (South African) state; what is the nature of a (South African) university; what is the nature of the discipline (Public Administration); what is the nature of paradigmatic developments in the discipline (Public Administration); and what is the nature of the science-issues in the discipline (Public Administration). These, according to Van der Waldt (2012), are important questions to be answered in an attempt to provide impetus in the curriculum of the subject content of the discipline. It is inferred that Van der Waldt's analysis lacks dedicated focus on the importance of research development (as the sixth possible fundamental question) for the discipline.

Without a dedicated focus to research development, with the emphasis on the creation, preserving and applying of new knowledge, a function of research in any discipline, no discipline can grow and flourish. Thus proper training of students at undergraduate level is imperative to prepare them for a probable future at the postgraduate level. Another identified challenge is the lack of achieving return-in-investment on public funds spent by universities in South Africa on conducting basic research (Madue 2009:533). Therefore, universities in South Africa must ensure that research outputs are commensurate with the financial investment that government invests in promoting high-quality research. At the core of this fundamental research enterprise is adequate financial resources, quality research infrastructure and institutional support, well-trained academics in research supervision, a research curriculum that informs students at undergraduate level, and prepares them for postgraduate level and a strong postgraduate research culture in all South African universities. This point is further emphasised by Kuye (2005:535) in his understanding of the importance of multidisciplinary collaborative efforts by research bodies to sponsor research initiatives.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A sample of 20 questionnaires was distributed to students enrolled for the master's and doctoral degrees in the Department of Public Administration and Management at UNISA during the 2013-2014 academic year. The sample was not manipulated, that is, using variables such as year(s) of enrollment, gender, age, prior research experience, number of previous qualifications and other possible variables. A purposive sampling design (known as non-probability sampling) was adopted and used for the survey. Sarantakos (2005:164) writes that researchers who purposely select research subjects based on their discretion (judgment, hence this sampling method is also known as judgmental sampling) and the principles of fitness and appropriateness to a relevant research project, apply purposive sampling research design. The researcher adopted the same design for this article. In this instance, only students who had (a) enrolled for a postgraduate degree, either at the master's or doctoral level, were engaged, (b) most of the students had passed the research proposal stage, either the chapter one stage or subsequent chapters, and (c) were able to attend the organised research colloquium (2013).

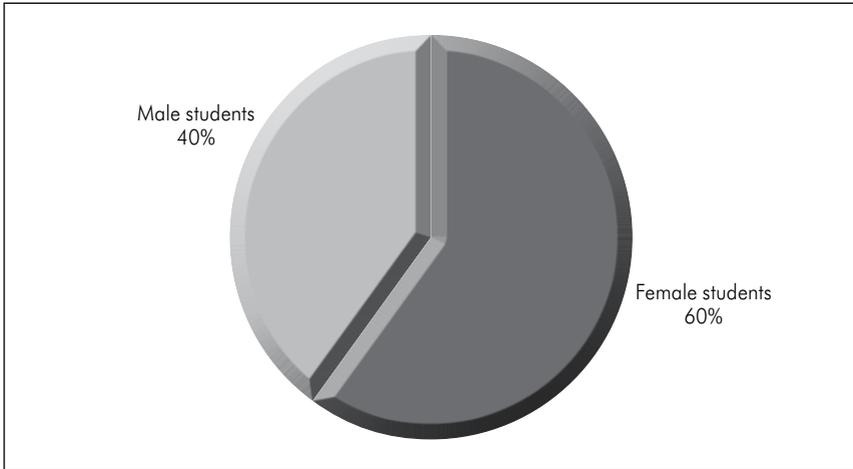
The Head of the Department of Statistics at the North West University, Dr Ellis, assigned one of the staff members to analyse the questionnaires submitted during August 2014. Below is a summary of data which emanated from the empirical survey. Statistics were used to analyse the data with a specific focus on measuring each variable in the questionnaire to determine the frequency distribution. The data was analysed using the SPSS (version 13) software package to calculate the data formulation.

FINDINGS AND REFLECTION

Below is the summary of the findings from the postgraduate student survey conducted in the Department of Public Administration and Management at the University of South Africa in 2013. Each graph presented is complemented with a short narrative of the respective finding.

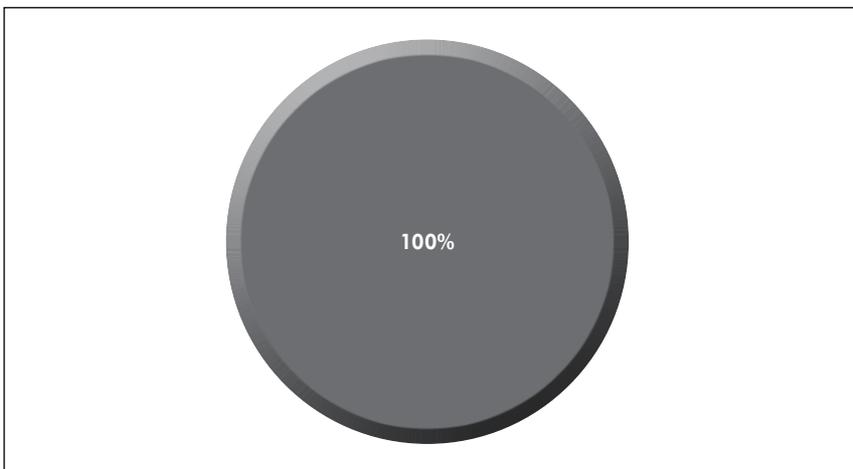
According to the survey results, given the sample interviewed, 60% of the respondents were female students. The remaining 40% of the respondents were male students. This finding is important in view of the increasing number of registered female students in higher institutions of learning in South Africa. UNISA is no exception to the reality that in most South African universities female students outnumber their male counterparts. Any future intervention aimed at improving the quality of research tuition at the postgraduate level, especially in the Department of Public Administration and Management of the aforementioned

Figure 1: Gender composition of the respondents



university must respond to the reality of catering for more female students registered at postgraduate level. Whether the female group of students has or will have specific needs in relation to their level of preparedness in dealing with challenges of postgraduate studies remains uncertain at this stage. For instance, the perception and sometimes the reality that some postgraduate female students have family commitments which may have a negative influence on their studies. In this instance female postgraduate students may find themselves with limited time

Figure 2: Proof of registration

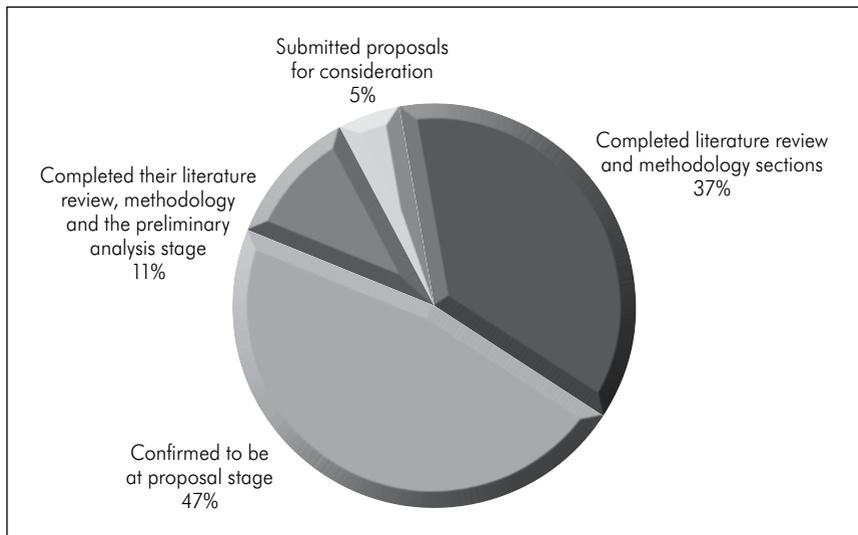


to study, while their male counterparts may enjoy more time and opportunity to study. The aforementioned aspect may also offer another possible research scope within the subject of assessing the levels of preparedness of postgraduate students in their research-based master's and doctoral studies.

Postgraduate students in Public Administration and Management were asked if they were registered for the 2013 academic year. All postgraduate students in the Department of Public Administration at UNISA must first register before academic tuition and support is provided to them. Thereafter, it is expected that the registered students submit their research proposals. The Higher Degrees Committee of the Department will deliberate on matters such as the allocation of submitted research proposals, adjudication of research proposals, allocation of research supervisors, administrative matters of the committee and any other matter deemed to be within the jurisdiction of the committee. Registration of postgraduate students is the first step in offering access to writing and submitting research proposals. Without proof of registration no admission to postgraduate studies is offered. Thus postgraduate registration is the first administrative step towards preparing postgraduate students in their research-based master's and doctoral studies. In the case of the survey conducted all postgraduate students were registered since only registered students were invited to the colloquium. Figure 2 confirms that all postgraduate students that were surveyed were fully registered students.

The postgraduate students were required to present their submissions in a colloquia in April 2013. Approximately 47% of the students interviewed

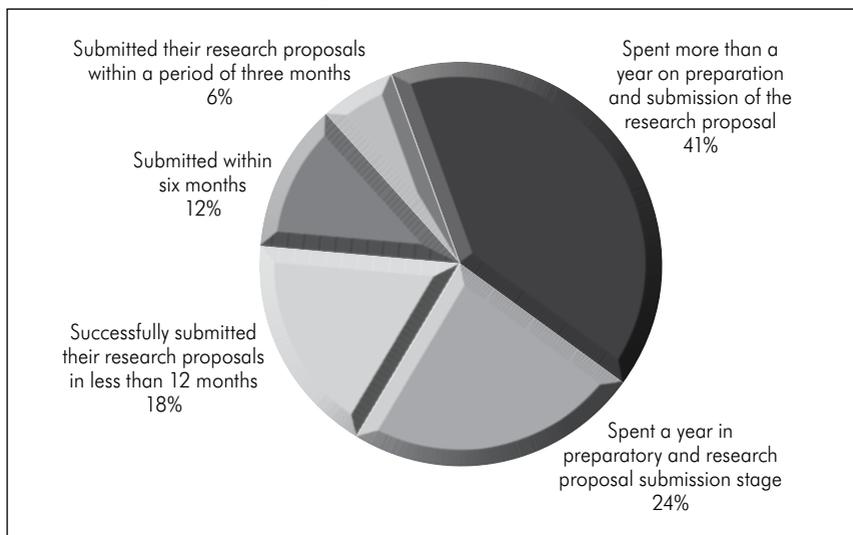
Figure 3: Level of postgraduate study



were confirmed to be at the proposal stage. At this stage most postgraduate students have only received an instructional pamphlet explaining the technical instructions of writing and compiling a research proposal. It is at this stage that most postgraduate students struggle to prepare an acceptable research proposal. Approximately 37% of the postgraduate students had completed their literature review and methodology sections while 11% of the respondents interviewed had completed their literature review, methodology and the preliminary analysis stage. About 5% of the respondents confirmed that they had submitted their proposals to the Department’s Higher Degrees Committee for consideration. The significance of this finding could be interpreted as a reflection on the numerous challenges that postgraduate students face in an attempt to complete their research proposal preparations and timeous submission. Traditionally, postgraduate students in the Department are permitted a period of between three to six months and even a year or longer depending on their circumstances to submit their research proposals (Brynard 2005:366). This practice was observed at the time of writing this article. During that period, the students were afforded an opportunity to improve their research proposals after receiving feedback from the reviewers prior to their research proposals being formally accepted. Thereafter, the students are considered officially registered (Brynard 2005:366–367) as postgraduates.

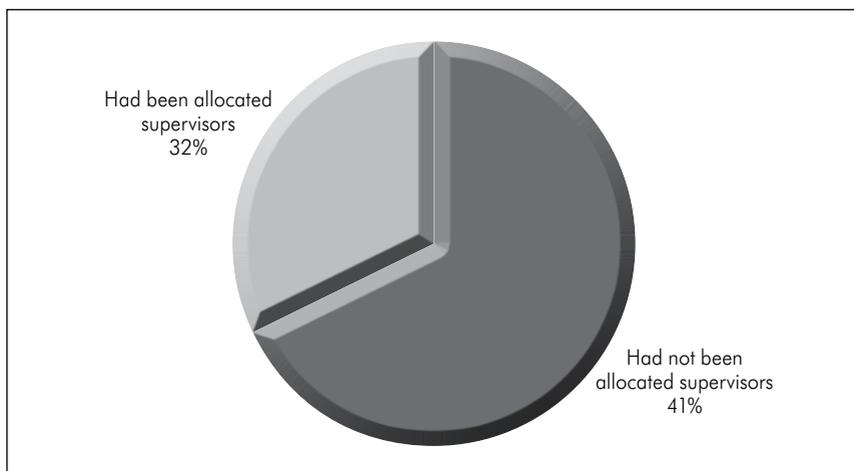
The postgraduate students who were surveyed were also asked about the length of time (months) spent during their registration phase. This phase

Figure 4: Period since first registration



concentrated on the research proposal preparation and submission as discussed elsewhere in this article, feedback from reviewers and formal allocation of supervisors to the respective postgraduate students. About 41% of the postgraduate students surveyed confirmed that they spent more than a year on the preparation and submission of the research proposal. About 24% confirmed to have spent a year in the preparatory and research proposal submission stage. Interestingly, about 18% of the postgraduate interviewed, stated they had successfully submitted their research proposals in less than 12 months, whilst 12% of the postgraduate students submitted within six months. The remaining 6% confirmed they had submitted their research proposals within a period of three months. This finding is significant in indicating that few postgraduate students actually succeed in preparing and submitting their research proposals 'timeously' (three months is considered 'record time' in this study). Approximately a total of 42% and 14% of the postgraduate students surveyed successfully submitted their research proposals within the 12 months of the academic year. Thus 56% of postgraduate students that were surveyed were able to submit their research proposal within a year of their study during the year under review. The remaining 44% would struggle to submit their research proposal within a year of registration. It is the last percentage mentioned that presents a worrying picture in relation to assessing the level of preparedness among postgraduate research students in the Department. Arguably the success rate of postgraduate intake is dependent on receiving and achieving an estimated above 80%. This reality also warrants immediate intervention from all stakeholders concerned.

Figure 5: Allocation of research supervisor or mentor



According to the survey results, about 68% of the students surveyed confirmed that they had not been allocated supervisors. Reasons for not allocating supervisors would vary from one case to the other. The remaining 32% of the postgraduate students had been allocated supervisors. This served as an indication that the majority of the postgraduate students were still struggling with the initial phase of their research studies. It is the researcher's view that administrative and academic problems were the main reasons for the delay in appointing supervisors. For instance, some postgraduate students would delay re-registering the following year, administrative delays in processing applications were likely to be experienced and capacity-related problems in appointing supervisors were also experienced. Although external supervisors would be appointed to assist full-time employed members of the said Department, dealing with big enrollment numbers remained a challenge. The latter further confirms the findings in Figure 3 and 4.

In this instance postgraduate students who were surveyed were asked about their knowledge and understanding of dominant schools of thought in Public Administration. About 59% of the postgraduate students confirmed that they had some knowledge of the dominant philosophical schools of thought while the remaining 41% held the view that they were not in a position to know which dominant schools of thought are popular in the discipline. Since this question was part of section B (Epistemological questions), question B2 required postgraduate students to mention the proponents of the dominant schools of thought (if stated in question B1). The results revealed confirmed the findings in Figure 6. The postgraduate students surveyed were also asked whether Public

Figure 6: Dominant schools of thought in Public Administration

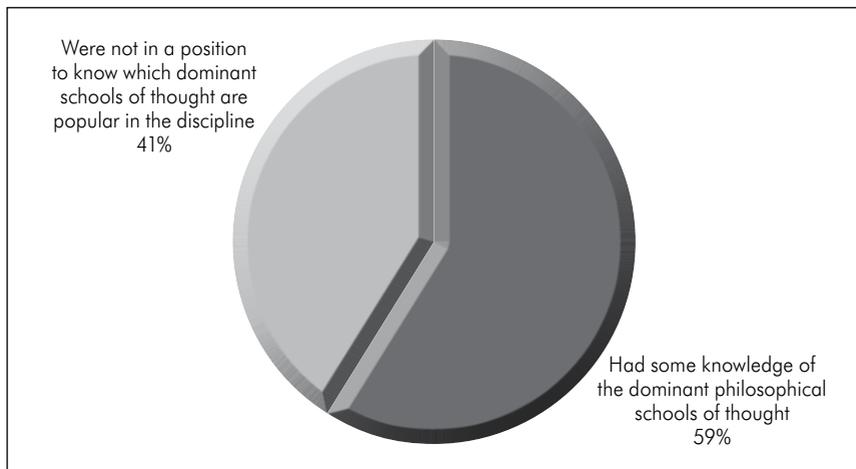
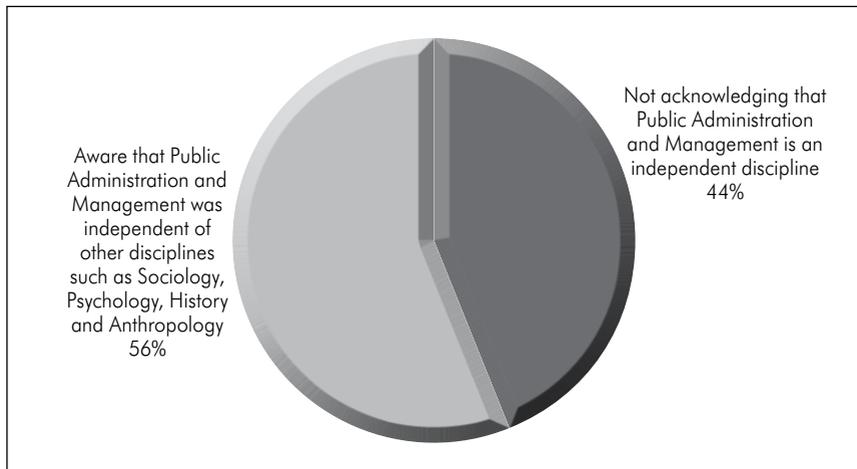


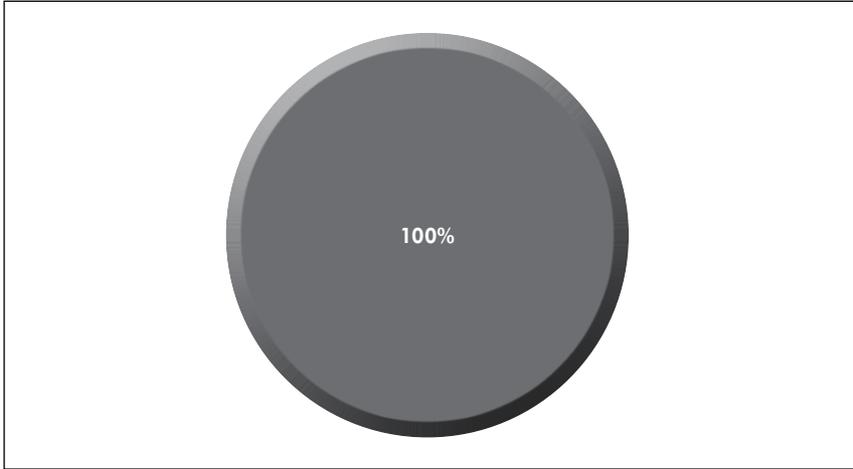
Figure 7: Relationship between Public Administration and Management and other disciplines



Administration and Management as a discipline was and still is independent of other disciplines such as Sociology, Psychology, History, and Anthropology. This question was important because of the inherent relationship between these disciplines and the epistemological influence in the discipline of Public Administration. Most theories used in Public Administration are “borrowed” from the aforementioned disciplines and other disciplines not mentioned in this article. Knowledge of such theories allows postgraduate students to better understand the theoretical grounding of the discipline of Public Administration. Such exposure to theories from other disciplines allows postgraduate students to be better prepared to deal with theoretical problems in their studies. The table below discusses the respective findings.

Approximately 56% of the postgraduate students responded that they were aware that Public Administration and Management was independent of other disciplines such as Sociology, Psychology, History and Anthropology. Reasons for selecting either ‘yes’ or ‘no’ required an explanation. The remaining 44% of the postgraduate students responded by not acknowledging that Public Administration and Management is an independent discipline. The reasons for the latter response were inadequate. The postgraduate students surveyed were also asked about the importance of theories in the establishment and sustenance of a discipline such as Public Administration and Management. The postgraduate students surveyed suggested that they were aware of theories (they had been taught at undergraduate levels) used in Public Administration and Management.

Figure 8: Importance of theories in Public Administration and Management



These results had an implication for inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary studies as a core approach in advancing knowledge production in Public Administration and Management. The results shown also revealed the lack of common understanding of the foci and locus of the discipline of Public Administration in the context of complementing and competing disciplines, especially at postgraduate level. The researcher holds the view that exposing postgraduate students to theories from other complementing disciplines allows them to be ready to deal with inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary challenges such as the correct application of alternative theories in the discipline of Public Administration and Management. Figure 8 confirms the research results in this respect.

Since theory-building is an essential ingredient for building a strong scientific research problem, a question was posed in this respect. From the researcher's subjective, personal observation, few postgraduate students apply theories in their research proposals both at the master's and doctoral level. Lack of theory application in research proposals requires urgent attention, and research supervisors should address this shortcoming to ensure quality research dissertations and theses. Knowledge building, application and sustainability are dependent upon this cardinal function. The continued existence of the discipline is dependent on knowledge creation and proper knowledge application. The implication of the findings in this regard suggests awareness of postgraduate students about the importance of theories, but not necessarily the importance of theory application. Since few postgraduate students apply theories in their research proposals, the indication is that attention in establishing efforts

to expose postgraduate students to this exercise remains critical. It is the researcher’s view that workshops on the subject of theorising in the discipline, aimed at equipping postgraduate students in the discipline, must be organised. Such workshops are likely to contribute to preparing postgraduate students to deal with theory application in their research proposals.

Postgraduate students were also asked to identify the order of occurrence in relation to dominant schools or paradigms in the discipline (see Figure 9) between 1924 to 2013. This categorisation is provided below;

- B.6 Tick the correct order of the paradigms or dominant school of thought in Public Administration and Management since 1924.
- B.6.1 Renaissance (1887–1926) – Principles of Administration (1927–1937) – “identity crisis” (1948–1970)–Public Administration to Public Management (1970–early 1990) –
 - B.6.2 Politics-administrative dichotomy (1887–1926) – principles of Administration (1927–1937) – “identity crisis” (1948–1970) – Public Administration to Public Management (1970–early 1990) -
 - B.6.3 Politics-administrative dichotomy (1887–1926) – principles of Administration (1927–1937) – “identity crisis” (1948–1970) – Public Administration to Public Management (1970–early 1990) – Public Management to Governance leading to so-called New Governance (early 1990 to date).

(Source: Questionnaire 2013:3).

About 76% of the postgraduate students surveyed were able to correctly identify the correct ordering of paradigms. In contrast only 12% of the postgraduate students surveyed chose the incorrect ordering of paradigms, while the same

Figure 9: Order of paradigms or schools of thought in PAM

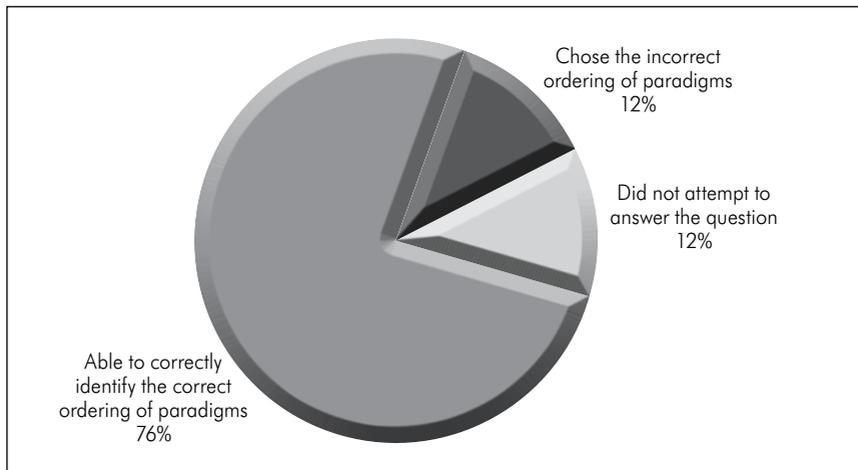
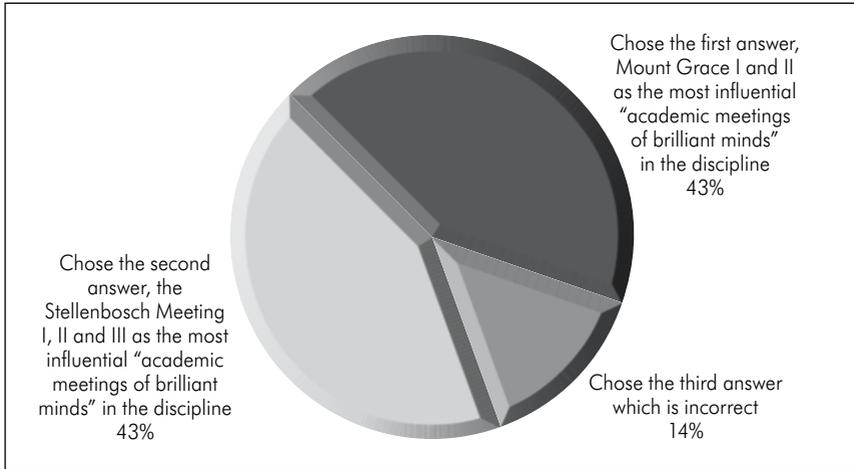


Figure 10: Important academic conferences that shaped the teaching of PAM

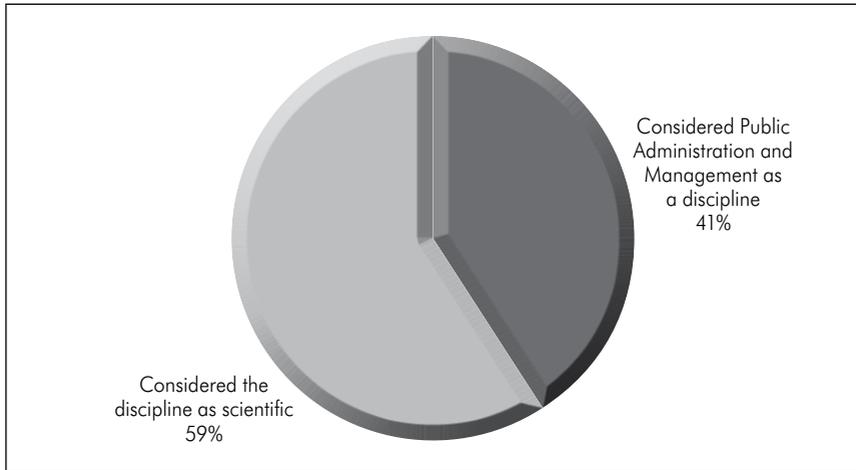


remaining percentage did not attempt to answer the question. This result was the most positive outcome in the survey given the poor results achieved in other sections of the questionnaire. It is the researcher's view that for any workshop on preparing postgraduate students on their research proposal to be successful, these findings should be used as a foundation for dealing with issues such as theorising, research design formulation, data collection methods, data analysis and other related areas of postgraduate research capacity.

In addition to the categorisation of paradigms in the discipline, the postgraduate students were asked about intellectual conferences that shaped the development and teaching of the discipline. Postgraduate students were given a choice between; a) Mount Grace I and II; b) Stellenbosch Meeting I, II and II and c) The Kempton Park Convention of 1993. The results are reflected in Figure 10.

Interestingly two equal groups of postgraduate students at 43% each chose the first and second answers, that is, Mount Grace I and II and the Stellenbosch Meeting I, II and III as the most influential "academic meetings of brilliant minds" in the discipline. The researcher's expectation was a biased response towards the first answer of Mount Grace I and II. The prospect of a Mount Grace III Conference has been touted and one would expect the postgraduate students to read about it from different sources such as research papers and articles, academic presentations, workshops and conferences on the future of the discipline. Only 14% of the respondents chose the third answer which is incorrect. The relevance of this question was to trace any knowledge, awareness and understanding of the activities, developments and trends related to the development of the discipline through intellectual engagements such

Figure 11: Is Public Administration a science or discipline?



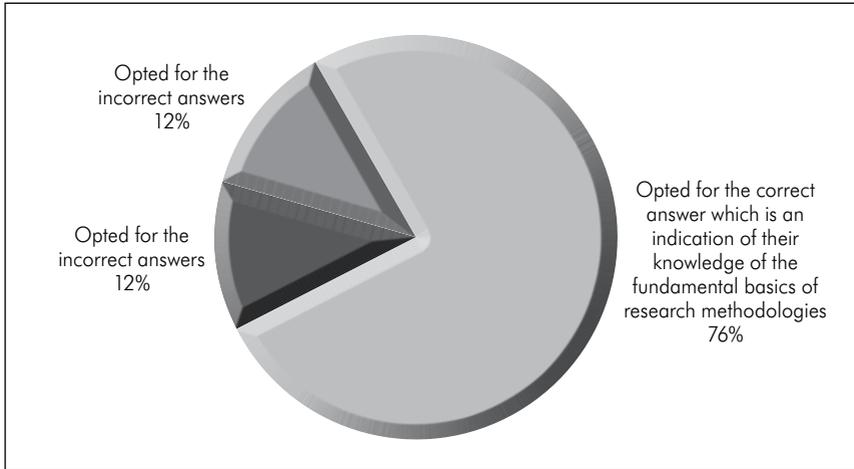
as conferences, think-tanks and any ongoing exchange of intellectual ideas. Observing the trends mentioned above allows postgraduate students to reflect and explore intellectual developments in the discipline through their own postgraduate research proposals.

The postgraduate students surveyed were also asked whether Public Administration and Management was a science or a discipline and to provide reasons for their response. Approximately 41% of the respondents considered Public Administration and Management as a discipline, while 59% of the respondents considered the discipline as scientific. Figure 11 shows the results.

The postgraduate students at UNISA were also asked what constitutes qualitative research methodology as a dominant research method in the discipline. Four probable answers were given: a) C2.1 mathematical calculations; b) C2.2 meaning and interpretation; c) C2.3 probability analysis; and c) 2.4 none-of-the-above. About 76% of the respondents selected number C2.2 which was the correct answer which is an indication of their knowledge of the fundamental basics of research methodologies. This finding is crucial in understanding the level of bias in the choice of research methods likely to be used by postgraduate students in their research proposals. Recent calls for alternative research methods have been made as discussed below in this article. Any intervention to encourage postgraduate students to adopt alternative research methods will be informed by this finding. About 12% of the remaining two sets of respondents opted for the incorrect answers in C2.1, C2.3 and C2.4 respectively. These results are depicted in Figure 12.

The respondents were also asked about the qualitative and quantitative research methods being dominant research methods in Public Administration

Figure 12: Components of qualitative research methodology

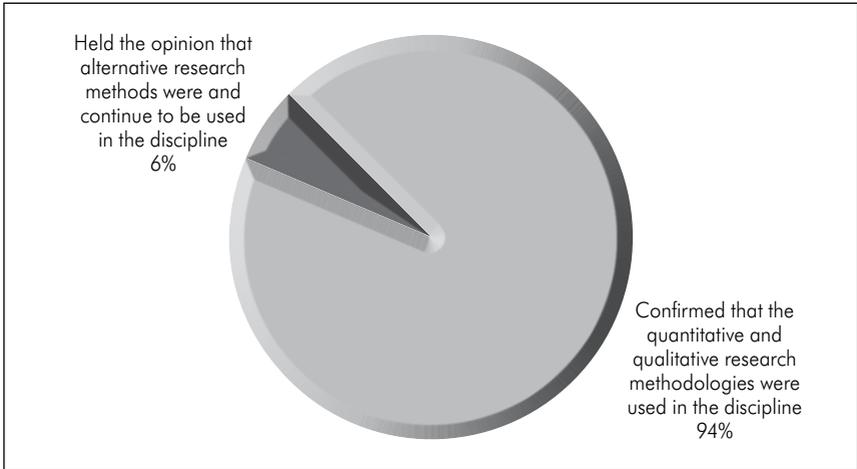


and Management. The respondents were required to substantiate their response. The results revealed a bias response confirming the predominant utilisation of both research methods in the discipline. About 94% of the respondents, the highest percentage of the individual and collective findings, revealed the use of either research methodologies. The latter was observed as a reflection that most of the postgraduate respondents were aware of these dominant methodologies. Thani (2012), however, cautions about the exaggerated use of these two methodologies. Thani (2005:27) calls for the spread usage of diverse research designs in a form of phenomenology as a qualitative research method to be used by researchers in Public Administration and Management. Webb and Auriacombe (2006:591) recommend that other research designs in qualitative research methodology should also be used such as grounded theory, evaluation research, biography, ethnographic studies, case studies and phenomenological studies. Cloete (2006:682) in Thani (2012:29) further propagates for the use of evaluation research in Public Administration and Management.

According to the survey results, approximately 94% of the respondents confirmed that the quantitative and qualitative research methodologies were used in the discipline. The researcher suggests that various research methods and designs should be employed to improve the quality of research in the discipline. Figure 13 further suggests that 6% of the postgraduate students surveyed held the opinion that alternative research methods were and continue to be used in the discipline.

Postgraduate research students also suggested that other research methods and designs such as phenomenology, grounded theory and critical theory/

Figure 13: Dominant research methodologies in PAM



analysis should be used in conducting research in the discipline. The same results were achieved as in Figure 13. This result was consistent with the previous question on the utilisation of dominant research methods in the discipline. In this instance, the postgraduate students were given the option of a “yes” or “no” response. 94% of the respondents (postgraduate students) opted for the “yes” response while only 6% opted for the “no” response as reflected in Figure 14.

Figure 14: Types of research methods and designs

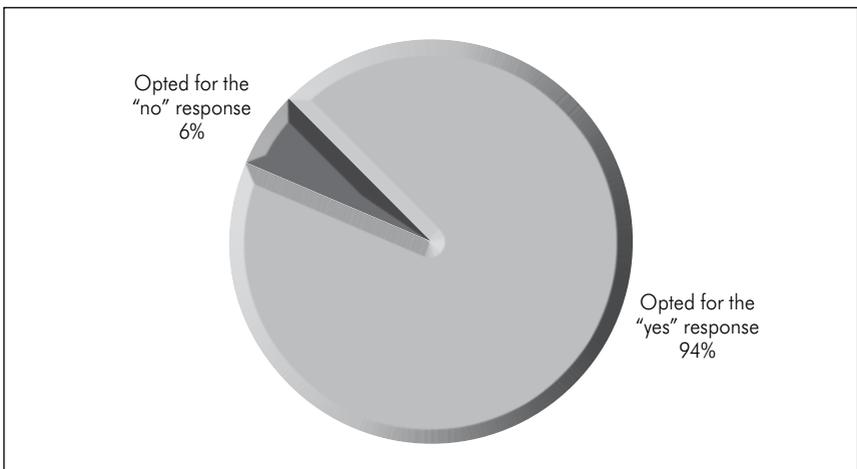
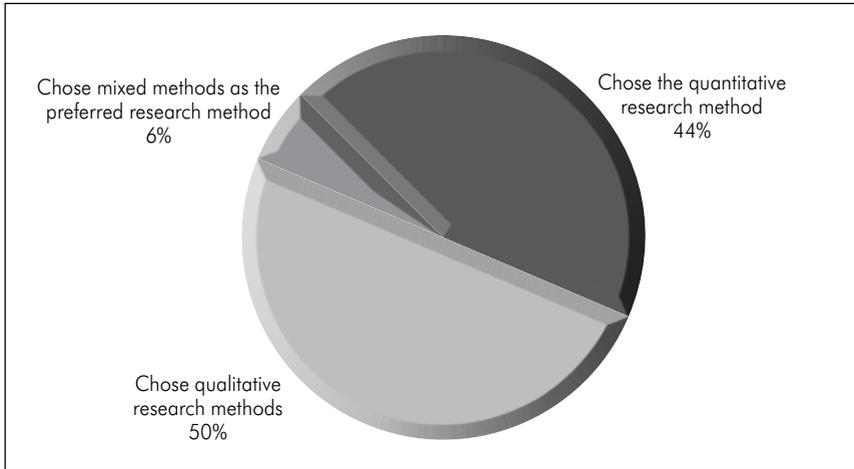


Figure 15: Personal preference of postgraduate students between quantitative, qualitative and mixed research methods



The final results obtained in the survey focused on the subjective preference of postgraduate students in relation to selecting between the qualitative research method, quantitative research method or mixed research methods as the research method of choice. Half (50%) of the respondents (postgraduate students) chose qualitative research methods, while 44% of the respondents (postgraduate students) chose the quantitative research method. Only 6% of the respondents or postgraduate students chose mixed methods as the preferred research method. The significance of this finding lies in the argument presented in the previous paragraph, that postgraduate students must be encouraged to spread their methodology choice as wide as possible. This recommendation is aimed at promoting a more creative approach to research design related to postgraduate research and to advance knowledge creation. The results mentioned in this paragraph are demonstrated in Figure 15 which closely match the findings of Murtonen (2007) in a study titled *“University student’s research orientations: Do negative attitudes exist toward quantitative methods?”* conducted at the University of Turku in Finland in 2005.

This study was preceded by a similar study conducted by Murtonen and Lehtinen (2003) which focused specifically on students in the social sciences (Murtonen 2005:263-264). In the same study about 42% of the Finnish and United States of America students interviewed were found to have a negative orientation towards quantitative research methods. The significance of this finding suggests a strong global connection between students in other countries and disciplines with those in South Africa studying Public Administration and

Management. Comparisons were drawn since the postgraduate students in the Department of Public Administration at UNISA were utilised as a “South African sample” in the study. Perhaps a growing or constant trend in relation to the main topic of the study in this article is the common negative orientation by postgraduate students towards quantitative methods.

CONCLUSION

The findings reflected in the study undertaken at UNISA’s Department of Public Administration and Management in 2013 yielded interesting results as reflected in the discussion above. Specific gaps on issues of an epistemological nature in relation to the level of preparedness of postgraduate students in the Department should be addressed. Notwithstanding such epistemological gaps, the postgraduate student sample deserves to be better prepared for their obligation and commitment at postgraduate level in producing dissertations and theses of an acceptable national and international standard. The results of the study revealed an over-reliance on the qualitative research methods over the quantitative methods and research approaches such as phenomenology, critical theory or analysis and grounded theory. The gender gap between female postgraduate students and their male counterparts has grown significantly. The researcher proposes for care and caution to be exercised in this instance, working towards consciously responding to gender-sensitive research-related needs. For example, female postgraduate students may have to make a choice to take maternity leave from their studies. Would supervisors in the discipline and faculty (be it Arts or Economic and Management Sciences at various South African universities), be sensitive to such discipline-oriented needs?

Proper undergraduate tuition in research methods in the discipline cannot be understated. Comprehensive exposure to the ontological questions related to the development of the discipline remains a cardinal commitment that scholars must constantly revisit. A better service and support infrastructure to postgraduate students in the discipline (with special interest to similar departments in universities in South Africa), must be established and sustained.

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The influence of work behavioural styles on teaching and learning approaches

The Case of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus

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ABSTRACT

Employees' different approaches to work and their preferences in their workplaces lead to distinct behaviours that influence their work behavioural styles. These work behavioural styles are explored in this article and are based on Thomas International's DISC-factors. The DISC factors are applied to the behavioural work styles of academic employees. These factors influence the choice of approach to teaching and learning and subsequently, the ability to provide for the needs and preferences of the 21st century student. One of the needs of the 21st century student is identified as teaching and learning with technology and for the purpose of this article; the influence of work behavioural styles on teaching and learning approaches are based specifically within the context of teaching and learning with technology. Teaching and learning epistemologies such as constructivism and objectivism are also explored in this article.

The article aims to determine whether academic employees' preferred teaching and learning philosophies and, therefore, their teaching and learning approaches are in relation to their work behavioural styles. The article thus determines how these work behavioural styles influence academics' perceptions of and approach to their use of pedagogical tools such as technology, and their willingness to adapt to 21st century learners and the 21st century teaching and learning environment.

INTRODUCTION

Employees portray different qualities, skills and abilities and prefer various methods to deal with information, to gather knowledge from information, and to apply their knowledge to real-life problem solving (Magoulas & Chen 2006:327). Thus, employees have different approaches and preferences to work, which result in their work behavioural styles. This work behavioural style is likely to differ between employees; for instance, some approach problem solving in a cautious, systematic manner, whereas others favour innovative solutions (Xu & Tuttle 2004:22). Employees' work behavioural styles, therefore, influence their behaviour in their workplaces.

It can be argued that academic employees' (referred to as academics) work behavioural styles influence their perceptions of, and approach to, teaching and learning. This, therefore, influences their choice of pedagogical tools and their willingness to adapt to 21st century learners and the 21st century teaching and learning environment.

The article thus aims to determine the relation between academics' approaches to and perceptions of teaching and learning, particularly with regard to their use of technology and innovative teaching methods, and their work behavioural style. The article concludes on how academics' teaching and learning approaches, based on their work behavioural styles, provide for the needs of the 21st century learner and the 21st century higher education environment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Empirical research was conducted and both quantitative and qualitative approaches were followed. Through the empirical research, the most common work behavioural styles amongst academic employees at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University (NWU) were determined.

The research design was firstly developed in consideration of the purpose of the research, which is to determine the influence of work behavioural styles on teaching and learning approaches of academics at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University (NWU). The study follows an explanatory approach. Explanatory research aims to provide explanations of phenomena (Durrheim 2009:44). In this regard the role of particular work behavioural styles on academics' teaching and learning approaches is explained.

Secondly, the research design was developed in consideration of the interpretive paradigm. The interpretive paradigm sustains the belief that the reality that is studied consists of people's subjective experiences of the external

world (Terre Blanche & Durrheim 2009:7). In this study it is argued that the work behavioural styles of academics, *inter alia*, determine their subjective perceptions of the use of technology in teaching and learning. This notion is supported by the results obtained from a questionnaire and a focus group discussion.

A qualitative method was chosen for data collection in order to explain the subjective reasons and meanings that lie behind teaching and learning perceptions pertaining to the use of technology in teaching and learning, and how perceptions correlate with work behavioural styles. For this purpose, a focus group discussion was used for which the researcher purposefully selected 20 academic of which 10 participated. Participants were selected to include academics who use various approaches to teaching and learning. Further, their availability also played a role in this selection.

The use of technology in teaching and learning was used as the yardstick for academics' willingness to make use of innovative teaching and learning approaches. The focus group included employees who are using technology in teaching and learning with a certain level of e-readiness; those employees who are either not using technology at all or are only using it because they are expected to and are those who are not e-ready and do not understand the advantages of the available technology.

A quantitative method was chosen for data collection. For this purpose, the survey technique was introduced by means of a self-administered questionnaire to collect data and to determine academics' subjective perceptions of the use of technology and/or innovation in teaching and learning. Questions pertaining to Thomas International's DISC-factors were included in the questionnaire to determine the academics' work behavioural styles. The researcher's initial aim with regard to data collection through the questionnaire was to distribute the questionnaire to between 500 and 600 permanent academics on the Potchefstroom Campus of the NWU. It was ultimately distributed to 300 academics from various faculties on the Potchefstroom Campus of the NWU via electronic mail and 85 completed questionnaires were returned. A number of reasons may have caused this low response rate:

- The questionnaire was distributed two weeks before the final annual academic exams. The rationale was that academics would mostly have concluded semester classes and would be scaling down on academic activities. They would also not yet be busy with marking exam scripts which was considered to be a suitable time to complete a questionnaire. The researcher had reached the point of readiness in the research to distribute the questionnaire. However, judging by the feedback this was not the ideal time. Many academics were still busy with last minute academic activities and calculation of semester marks.

- Before the questionnaire was distributed amongst academics of a particular School, the School Directors were contacted to obtain permission for the distribution of the questionnaire. Three School Directors did not grant permission for the questionnaire to be distributed amongst their staff, due to exam preparations and the finalisation of academic matters for the semester. Some School Directors never responded to the request.
- It was evident that the electronic method of distribution of the questionnaire caused a lower than expected feedback return. The researcher chose to distribute the questionnaire via electronic mail for three reasons: Firstly, the delivery of the questionnaire to academics was immediate; secondly, the customary slow and poor response to mail-delivered questionnaires could be avoided; and thirdly, it was appropriate to distribute a questionnaire pertaining to e-learning electronically. In retrospect however probably employees lacking e-readiness to teach online did not complete the questionnaire as it was received in a format they were unfamiliar with. Although the cover letter clearly indicated that hard copies of the questionnaire would be provided if preferred, only five employees made use of this option.
- It can be argued that the low response rate could also be attributed to a tendency of apathy amongst employees, if a matter does not affect them directly, or if it is perceived to not affect them directly. Currently the use of technology in teaching and learning is voluntary and academics that do not make use of e-learning supposedly do not see the need to get involved in a study of this nature and maintain an apathetic stance towards it. This lack of response in itself provides food for thought. The notion of apathy is supported in literature. A research essay on the *My best essays* website explains that apathy is the indifference of an individual or society to the activities and events of the world around them (*cf.* DeFiore & DeFiore 2005; Anon 2009:1; *cf.* McNulty 2009). Apathy is a lack of interest, enthusiasm or concern (Pearsall 2001:75). Apathy is also described as indifference (Webster 2011) to anything that does not directly affect a person or his/her environment and therefore people usually are apathetic towards issues that they feel do not concern them (Anon 2009:1). "In fact, this is one of the major causes of apathy, along with a lack of knowledge of the subject matter, a perceived superfluity and complexity of information and a simple lack of interest" (Anon 2009:1). Helen Keller (sa) once said: "Science may have found a cure for most evils: but it has found no remedy for the worst of them all, the apathy of human beings". Apathy evidently played a role in the feedback to the questionnaire.
- With the literature on the low response to surveys (Cummings, Savitz & Konrad 2001:1348–1349; *cf.* Sax, Gilmartin & Bryant 2003:409–410; Sivo, Saunders, Chang & Jiang 2006) in mind it can be argued that a lack of

e-readiness, and perhaps even a fear of, or resistance to e-learning, may have been responsible for the low response rate to the questionnaire:

- The title of the e-mail, as well as the covering letter indicated the topic and nature of the research. Concepts such as *e-learning* and *e-readiness* itself could be a push factor for employees lacking e-readiness.
- It is likely that an employee, already not comfortable with technology in teaching and learning did not want to complete the questionnaire since it could be supporting the cause of e-learning.
- They may have been under the impression that the questions are of a technical nature.
- They are merely not interested in the topic.

It is interesting to note that the apathetic stance of academics implies that they are under the impression that e-learning does not affect them directly. Academics may hold this belief because the use of technology in teaching and learning is still optional. However, what this is also indicative of is a lack of concern for learners' needs. Judged by the apathy of a significant amount of academics (as reflected in the poor feedback response to the questionnaire), it appears that academics either are not aware of how favourable learners perceive the use of e-learning as part of their academic courses, or they choose to ignore this fact due to their own biases and preferences.

In order to comply with sound research principles and to be able to draw certain deductions and conclusions from the findings, the researcher had to ensure the validity and reliability of the results. According to Van der Riet and Durrheim (2009:90) "validity refers to the degree to which the research conclusions are sound". When research produces credible results that can be used to make certain generalisations, it can be regarded as valid (Van der Riet & Durrheim 2009:90). Results obtained from the questionnaire can be regarded as valid as it produced the occurrence of particular trends. Particular patterns and interrelatedness between academics' work behavioural style and their preferred teaching and learning approaches could be identified. Results obtained from the focus group discussion can also be regarded as valid as the same trends and patterns, identified through the questionnaire, were confirmed through the focus group discussion. Certain deductions and generalisations could therefore be made from these results.

Reliability of research is obtained when a specific technique, applied repetitively to the same object, produces the same result repeatedly (Babbie & Mouton 2004:119; May 2006:92). However, Van der Riet and Durrheim (2009:93) explain that in interpretive research (such as this research) it is acknowledged that the researcher is not investigating a stable and static reality and is therefore not anticipating the same results repeatedly. Interpretive

researchers anticipate that the actions and views of individuals, groups and organisations will alter and vary in changing contexts and these authors propose that dependability can be used as a criterion in the place of reliability (Van der Riet & Durrheim 2009:93). Dependability will be achieved when the reader can be convinced that the findings do in fact arise in the manner in which the researcher indicates and explains (Van der Riet & Durrheim 2009:93). Rich and thorough descriptions that reveal how certain behaviours, beliefs and attitudes are rooted in, and developed out of, contextual interaction, will support and attain dependability of research (Van der Riet & Durrheim 2009:93–94).

During this research it became evident that certain trends and patterns between the work behavioural styles of academics could be identified and could be related to their teaching and learning approach/es. One could argue that once the level of e-readiness is dealt with through training and development interventions, the same results would not be obtained with the same academics, as their level of e-readiness would have improved. Therefore the same results will not be attained repeatedly. One can further argue that even without a training and development intervention, the results will vary in some instances.

A literature study enabled data collection of the most significant variables of the study. Facts do not exist separately from the basis through which they are interpreted (May 2006:28). The literature study thus allowed the researcher to provide an explanation and identify with the findings within a particular conceptual framework that clarifies the data (*cf.* May 2006:29). The literature study on the topic of work behavioural styles outlined the theoretical framework and enabled the researcher to view the empirical results within the context of this framework.

It is argued that academics' work behavioural styles influence their choice of approach to teaching and learning and subsequently, their ability to provide for the needs and preferences of the 21st century student. Teaching and learning epistemologies such as constructivism and objectivism, arguably strong influences on these approaches; were explored through the literature study. The focus group discussion also shed light on academics' teaching and learning approaches.

WORK BEHAVIOURAL STYLE

The literature study revealed that a work behavioural style refers to the characteristic manner in which an employee acts and conducts him/herself, especially with other employees, including managers, in the workplace (Pinnacle 2010: internet source). For the purpose of this article, the **Dominance_**

Influence Steadiness Compliance (**DISC**) factors of Thomas International were used to describe the personal work profile patterns of academics.

DISC is a useful and well-known assessment instrument to determine the attributes that will contribute to an employee's personal work behavioural style (Thomas International 2005: internet source). A DISC profile reports a style or characteristic of behaviour in a work situation. Four dimensions or "typical patterns of interaction" of a person in the working environment are important (Thomas International sa). Everybody has all four behavioural preferences but to varying extents. The relationship of the four preferences to each other constructs a profile pattern, which gives information about a person's probable behavioural responses (Mills 2002: internet source).

Thomas International (2005: internet source) identifies the following four dimensions:

- **Dominance:** The manner in which problems are addressed. Individuals in this category are concerned with results. They are typically competitive, with high performance standards, and focused on achieving goals, solving problems, and accepting challenges.
- **Influence:** The manner in which people are dealt with. Individuals of this category like people and want to be liked in return. They are typically charming, optimistic, and outgoing, and focused on networking, conversation, and working with others.
- **Steadiness:** The manner in which an individual paces him- or herself. Individuals in this category are concerned about relationships. They are typically sympathetic, friendly, good listeners, "finisher completers", and team players that work hard and create a stable environment.
- **Compliance:** The manner in which rules and procedures are followed. Individuals in this category are concerned with accuracy and researching every aspect of a situation, considering each possibility before making a decision (Witt: internet source). They typically have high standards, particularly for themselves; can be perfectionists; and prefer systems, processes and procedures, as well as predictable and consistent outcomes.

An academic displaying a high *dominance* factor profile is likely to be motivated and inspired by a challenging and dynamic environment and enjoys experimenting with new technologies at a fast pace (Vermeulen 2011:115). Such an employee is also unlikely to be motivated by incentives and rewards but will most probably be intrinsically motivated and have an inclination to set challenging goals (Thomas International 2005: internet source). Employees with a high *dominance* factor will typically be innovators who enjoy exploring new ideas and are driven by intrinsic motivators (Zemsky & Massey 2004:9). They

can also be described as individuals who prefer to deal with new challenges and experiences (Honey & Mumford 1982:25).

It can thus be argued that an academic with a high *dominance* factor should embrace new opportunities, including new technologies and innovation in teaching and learning. When an academic portrays a high *dominance* factor and low *steadiness* and *compliance* factors, it can be assumed that the profile of the academic tends to favour the achievement of results irrespective of unfavourable circumstances (Johannes 2007:256). When confronted with new technologies or innovation, these employees will experience high levels of perceived ease of use and perceived enjoyment due to the challenging and innovative nature of their profiles (Vermeulen 2011:116).

An academic with a high *dominance* factor will prefer an unstructured environment, which allows for frameworks and directions to guide people on how to act, tolerate innovative thought, creative problem-solving and independence to act, while not prescribing strict rules and procedures (Thomas International 2005: internet source). The work environment of an academic portraying a high *dominance* factor should then be innovative, exciting and creative with challenging tasks. Academics belonging to this category should adapt to teaching and learning with technology and new innovations in teaching and learning easily and embrace it as part of their teaching and learning approaches.

Academics portraying high *steadiness* and *compliance* factors and a low *dominance* factor, will tend to favour standard operating procedures, a traditional approach and maintaining the status quo (Johannes 2007:256-257). Factors such as attention to detail and ensuring quality and standards are important (Johannes 2007:257). It can be assumed that structure and security within a clearly defined learning environment will appeal to these employees. Academics who portray high *steadiness* and *compliance* factors will, in all likelihood, be individuals who require good structure and sufficient time to explore the relevance between ideas and scenarios; who are analytical and detail-conscious and need to think things through in a logical step-by-step manner (*cf.* Honey & Mumford 1982:28). They may also be individuals who require a link between the activity and the end-result required of them (*cf.* Honey & Mumford 1982:27). It can be argued that their perceived ease of use of new technologies or innovation will initially be negative as it will put their status quo and comfort zones at risk. Likewise, they will not initially perceive new technologies/innovation to be enjoyable and will only change their perceptions over a long period of time (Vermeulen 2011:116).

Employees' personal work profile patterns thus play a significant role in the manner in which they will adapt to technology and innovative teaching and learning approaches. As the article argues that academics' work behavioural style will influence their teaching and learning approaches and preferences, the next section explores constructivism (as opposed to objectivism) as a teaching

and learning epistemology, supporting innovative, learner-centred teaching and learning approaches.

TEACHING AND LEARNING PHILOSOPHIES

It can be argued that academics' teaching and learning philosophies will influence their teaching and learning approaches. The research supports constructivism as a teaching and learning epistemology. Constructivist epistemology is indicative of the interpretivist paradigm (*cf.* Chesney 2007:114), within which the research design for this research was developed.

Constructivism and behaviourism (objectivism) provide the paradigmatic framework¹ for Education. Therefore, for the purpose of this article, the focus is placed on the constructivist and objectivist epistemologies as teaching and learning philosophies.

Constructivism is essentially an epistemology that has affected the way that educators envisaged learning from the early 1990s (Jonassen 2006:43). Dewey (1916) in Huang (2002:29) is of the opinion that "...knowledge is dynamic and is built around the process of discovery". The learning environment is not static, but interaction takes place between learners and their environment (Huang 2002:29; Cubucku 2008:155). Learners understand and construct a reality based on their experiences and interactions with their environment (Gergen: internet source). Therefore, knowledge is based on lively experience and learners can construct new knowledge, founded in past knowledge (Huang 2002:28–29). It is necessary to determine which experiences from the environment, and which surroundings, are likely to encourage experiences that lead to growth (Huang 2002:29).

According to Cubucku (2008:155) a constructivist epistemological approach to teaching and learning requires academics to alter their regular thinking approaches. Should traditional teaching and learning aim to realise a constructivist worldview, different ways of thinking and doing will be required (Cubucku 2008:155). Gulati (2008:184) points out that constructivism is neither a teaching method nor a teaching model, but a philosophy that can contribute to critical assessment and problematising of existing and growing educational practices. Jonassen (2006:43) supports the premise that constructivism is not a theory of learning or a model for designing instruction.

Educationalists and theorists have recognised the constructivist approach as essential for developing learner-centred strategies (Gulati 2008:183). Furthermore, emerging online learning literature often refers to learning as a social constructivist experience (Gulati 2008:184), indicating the preference of the constructivist approach in the online learning environment. When

learners participate in archetypal e-learning activities such as structured online discussions, collaborative online activities, online assessment, and interactive course material, the constructivism in online pedagogy is supported as they are contributing to and constructing their own knowledge (Mason 1998 in Gulati 2008:184). When considering the profile of the majority of undergraduate learners at higher education institutions (HEMIS 2010) belonging to Generation Y², it is evident that a constructivist approach will be most useful with this innovative, technologically driven generation. It is thus necessary that academics change their thinking and approaches pertaining to teaching and learning to accommodate the needs and preferences of Generation Y, currently representing 68,4% of undergraduate learners at the NWU, Potchefstroom campus (NWU 2010). However, in many instances, academics are still embracing the traditional, objectivist epistemological approach.

David H Jonassen, a professor in Educational Psychology and widely respected as an expert on constructivist and objectivist epistemology, describes the suppositions of an objectivist approach to learning (Jonassen 1991:28) by stating that objectivists believe:

- in the existence of consistent, reliable and dependable knowledge about the world;
- that learners should gain this knowledge and educators should transmit it;
- that learners gain the same understanding from what is transmitted by educators;
- that learning consists of understanding that objective reality;
- that the role of education is to help learners learn about the real world;
- that the goal of designers or educators is to interpret events for them; and
- that learners are told about the world and are expected to imitate its content and structure in their thinking.

According to Hanley (1994:3), the objectivist approach is driven by “talk-and-chalk” and strongly depends on textbooks for the structure of a course (cf. Kinchin 2004:302). Objectivists hold the idea that there is a fixed world of knowledge that the learner must come to know, and educators serve as channels through which thoughts and meanings are transferred to the passive learner (Hanley 1994:3).

Whereas the objectivist approach gives emphasis to observable, external behaviours and steers clear of reference to meaning, representation and thought, constructivism follows a more cognitive approach (Gergen: internet source). In the constructivism approach educators are coordinators, facilitators, resource advisors, tutors or coaches (Gergen: internet source). The role of the academic in the constructivist classroom provides a useful vantage point from which to grasp how the theory impacts on practice. According to Murphy

(internet source), the role of the educator in the constructivist classroom has two important elements: Firstly, an educator should introduce new ideas or cultural tools where necessary and provide the support and guidance for learners to make sense of these for themselves; and secondly, the educator must identify the ways in which the instructional activities are being interpreted to inform further action. Teaching from this perspective is also a learning process for the teacher (Murphy sa).

Tu, Shih and Tsai (2008:1143) indicate that people's epistemological beliefs mirror their perceptions about the nature of knowledge and knowing. These perceptions are related to their common learning habits, or their approaches to processing learning tasks (Tu *et al.* 2008:1143). In recent times, educators drew attention to the role of web users' epistemological beliefs in web-based cognitive activities (Hofer 2004 in Tu *et al.* 2008:1143). Users' epistemological beliefs direct their cognitive as well as meta-cognitive activities in web environments. Users with constructivist-oriented epistemological beliefs are inclined to have greater preferences to engage in meta-cognitive thinking in online environments, as opposed to those who do not. Furthermore, research (Braten & Stromso 2006 in Tu *et al.* 2008:1143) has shown that learners who held less sophisticated epistemological beliefs were less likely to engage in web-based discussions and online communication activities. Therefore, people's epistemological beliefs should be regarded as a key factor when observing their activities on the web (Tu *et al.* 2008:1143).

As the implementation of constructivist teaching and learning strategies requires academics to alter their regular thinking approaches and compels them to different ways of thinking and doing, it can be argued that academics who portray a high *dominance* factor will be more likely to embrace the constructivist approach to teaching and learning, as these academics are innovators, like challenges, and will embrace new opportunities. On the other hand, academics who portray high *steadiness* and *compliance* factors will, in all likelihood, not embrace the constructivist approach to teaching and learning as they favour the status quo as well as predictable and consistent outcomes. It can be argued, however, that the 21st century learners' needs and preferences are compatible with the constructivist epistemology, compelling academics to adjust their teaching and learning approaches to provide for this.

THE 21ST CENTURY LEARNER

Traditional learners are usually well developed in linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences and are academically prepared for higher education (Blustein 2001). Traditional learners portray personality traits such as concrete

and logical thinking, rationality, promptness, they are well-organised, function well in a structured environment, and are able to follow rules and procedures (Bluestein 2001). Learners in the 21st century, however, differ from traditional learners (*cf.* EIU 2008:5; Magolda & Terenzini 2010), portrayed by the unique characteristics of Generation Y (Bennet 2002:6–7).

Generation Y

In terms of the *Generation Y and the Workplace Annual Report* (2010) and Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) (2008:5), Generation Y is characterised by a high level of technical literacy (Gen Y Report 2010:7; 17; EIU 2008:5) and some of its commonly used technologies include live virtual classrooms, podcasts, blogs, social networks and collaborative editing (*cf.* Song *et al.* 2004:59; Halse & Mallinson 2008:1; *cf.* EIU 2008:5). Having the right technological platform is pivotal to learners of this generation (*Gen Y Report* 2010:8). This generation considers the internet indispensable to life, learning, work, and leisure (Moore, Moore & Fowler 2011). Their behaviours, approaches, skills and abilities differ from those of other generations as a result of their exposure to technology and, in many instances, the teaching and learning perspectives of Generation Y learners differ considerably from those of university management and academics (Moore *et al.* 2011).

This generation, according to Naidoo (2005), prefers work and learning to be fun and relaxed: a traditional approach to learning does not appeal to them (*cf.* Hansen 2010; *cf.* O'Neill 2010:3). Learners of this generation need to be constantly stimulated to prevent them from getting bored (Rockler-Gladen 2006). They are skilful at multi-tasking, think fast and are passionate and broad-minded (Naidoo 2005; *cf.* O'Neill 2010:8). They are also an innovative generation and seek reinforcement and constant feedback on a regular basis (Naidoo 2005). Learners in this generation are networked, collaborative, and social (*Gen Y Report* 2010:24). The manner in which they use these digital technologies and the way in which they prefer to work with technology is often regarded as challenging for those who do not belong to this generation (*cf.* *Gen Y Report* 2010:24).

These characteristics and technologies preferred and used by Generation Y can shape the way in which academics teach. According to Ramsden (2003:xii), understanding learners' experiences of learning is an ingredient in effective teaching. Milliken and Barnes (2002:225) indicate that this implies that teaching and learning strategies may have to be adapted to focus on the enhancement of learners' learning. The application of new technology can be brought into play to improve both the teaching and learning experience (Milliken & Barnes 2002:226). It is, therefore, clear that making provision for Generation Y's learning

needs will require academics to be flexible in terms of teaching and learning approaches. To expect of these learners to yield the realities of their world by providing them with traditional classroom teaching and learning is to disregard the global role and place of technology (Amirault & Visser 2009:66). However, results obtained from the focus group discussion and the questionnaire revealed that academics, in many instances, are not yet ready or willing to adjust their teaching and learning approaches. The next section discusses these results.

EMPIRICAL RESULTS

The most common work behavioural styles amongst academics at the Potchefstroom campus of the NWU were determined through results obtained from the questionnaire. Further, the relation between their work behavioural style and their approach to teaching and learning was determined through results obtained from the focus group discussion and the questionnaire.

Results obtained from the questionnaire

Results obtained from the questionnaire revealed that the majority of respondents (39%) portray the *compliance* factor of the DISC profile, followed by the *steadiness* factor (31,6%). The *dominance* factor was represented by 18,4% of respondents and the *influence* factor by 11,1%, as indicated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Personal work profile patterns

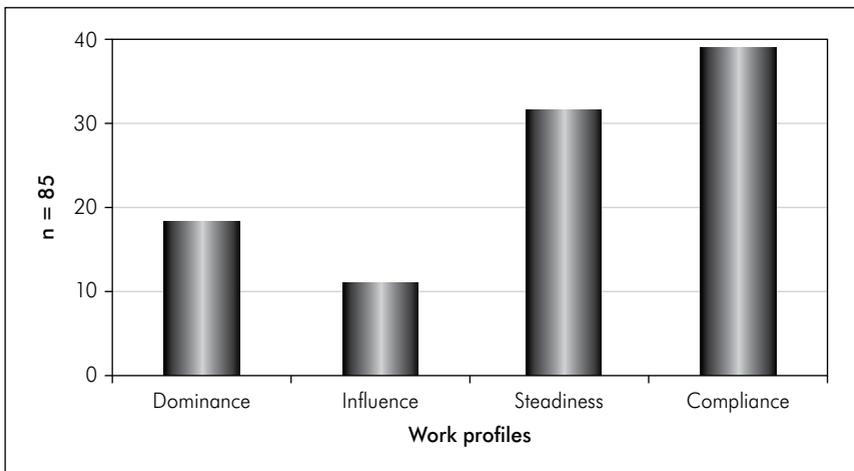
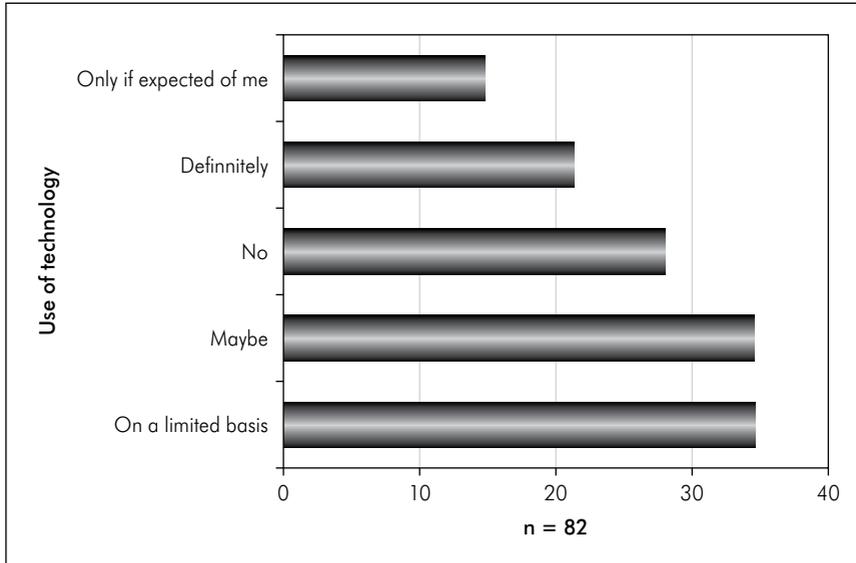


Figure 2: The use of cutting-edge technology



Whereas academics with a high *dominance* factor would be most likely to incorporate innovation and technology in their teaching and learning approaches, the results obtained indicate that the respondents mostly portray high *compliance* and *steadiness* factors, which, in all likelihood, means that they would prefer to maintain the status quo and keep their comfort zones intact, initially resisting change and being slower to adapt to innovative teaching and learning approaches (cf. Thomas International sa; Zemsky & Massey 2004:9). They will need sufficient time to explore the new technologies and it can be assumed that they will not be likely to include cutting-edge technology in their teaching and learning (Zemsky & Massey 2004:10). Figure 2 illustrates respondents' attitude towards and willingness to include cutting-edge technology in teaching and learning.

Only 16% of respondents indicated a definite willingness to include cutting-edge technology in their teaching and learning approaches; 26% indicated that they would include it on a limited basis; 25,9% indicated that they might include it; 11,1% would only include it if it is expected of them and 21% indicated that they are not willing to include it at all. These results confirm that the high *compliance* and *steadiness* factors of academics influence their willingness to use cutting-edge technology. Academics portraying high *steadiness* and *compliance* factors are likely to only change their perceptions over a long period of time and will not jump at the opportunity to use cutting-edge technology in

the same manner as academics portraying a *dominance* factor would do (cf. Thomas International 2005: internet source).

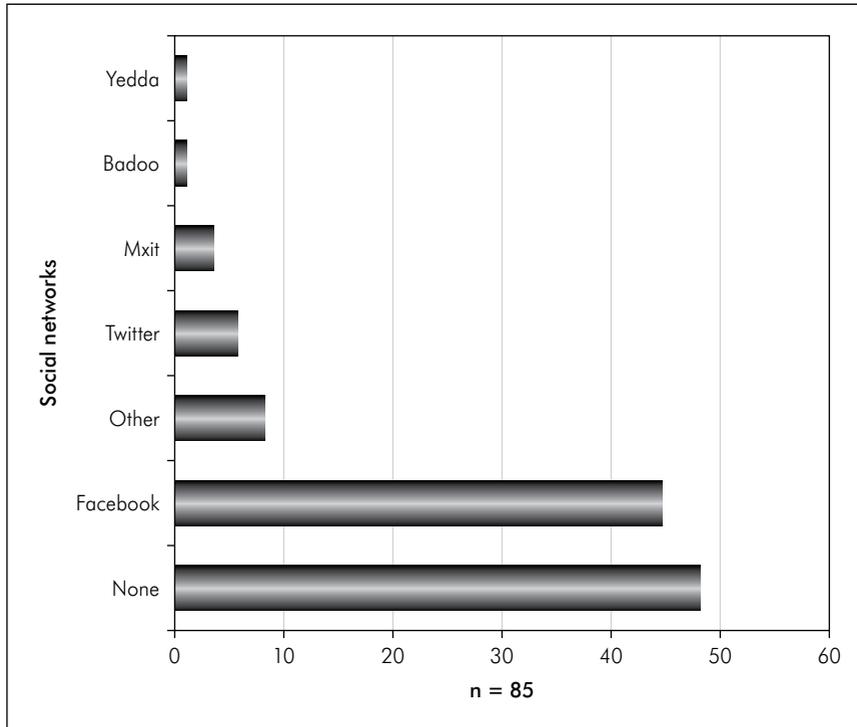
Academics' use of social networks may also be an indication of their openness to the use of technology. Figure 3 indicates the results obtained to support this finding.

It is interesting to note that 48,2% of respondents do not make use of any social media. On the other hand 44,7% do use *Facebook*. This is almost a 50/50 division. Some of the other social networks are used to a smaller extent.

One of the ways to increase interactivity in teaching and learning, an aspect of the constructivist epistemology and outcomes-based education (OBE), is to make use of social media such as *Facebook* and *Twitter* (cf. Bassendowski 2011:1–2). Social media can be used well as a communication tool in teaching and learning (Liu 2010:101–103; Bassendowski 2011:1–2). The use of social media in teaching and learning can be limited to learners enrolled for a specific subject; or learners of various subjects can have access to, for example, a particular *Facebook* page, depending on the need and applicability (cf. Liu 2010:101-103). Learners can share their experiences, ask questions of each other and the facilitator, brainstorm and provide information they have found, all in an open forum, available to all people allowed on the specific *Facebook* page. Through, for example, *Facebook* and *Twitter*, various links to websites with valuable information can be provided. Both facilitators and learners reading relevant information to the subject on, for example, a news network or newspaper website; have the option to share the information with the *Facebook/Twitter*, immediately providing it to all learners on the page. However, if respondents are not using a social network themselves, it is unlikely that they will use it to enhance their learners' learning. Only one respondent indicated that the use of social media can play a positive role in teaching and learning.

One of the open-ended questions of the questionnaire also tested respondents' interactive use of the e-learning platform. Respondents were asked whether they use the e-learning platform interactively and if so, to indicate how this is done. Feedback obtained from this question confirmed that the majority of academics use the e-platform as a distribution mechanism (to post notes, power-point presentations, announcements, etc.) and not as an interactive learning tool. It further showed that in many instances, academics are not aware of what is regarded as interactive learning and do not use it as a teaching approach. The feedback emphasised the need for training in employee development for optimal performance. In order to optimally use e-learning for an enhanced learning experience, training should firstly focus on creating awareness of the philosophy of e-learning and the possibilities of its use, and

Figure 3: The use of social networks



secondly, to provide academics with the skill to do so. Included in the training should be innovative approaches to teaching and learning.

To ensure learners' needs are provided for and that their learning is enhanced through e-learning, it is necessary both to create an awareness of the type of learners and their needs and to train academics in the most suitable methods to service their learners. Considering the fact that the vast majority of academics are not qualified and trained educationalists but subject experts, it is essential that training focuses on teaching approaches (Vermeulen 2011:239). In this regard, the constructivist approach, which is learner centred, can be useful, especially considering the fact that a significant number of academics still prefer the objectivist approach to teaching and learning, which can be linked to the high percentage of *compliance* (39%) and *steadiness* (31,6%) factors in respondents. These statistics bring the total percentage of respondents who are likely to steer clear of the constructivist approach to teaching and learning and support the objectivist approach, to a significant total of 70,6%, which is more than two-thirds of academics.

Another question posed to respondents probed them to indicate their general perceptions of e-learning. It became evident that a number of academics are still under the impression that e-learning is a medium to be used for part-time learners and cannot be used for postgraduate learners. The lack of understanding of the type of learners and their needs is, once again, also emphasised by this perception. It was earlier mentioned that in some instances, a significant gap exists between the expectations of Generation Y learners and the perceptions and/or teaching and learning approaches of academics. It is likely that academics portraying a high *dominance* factor will better provide in the needs of Generation Y learners as they share common characteristics such as creativity, willingness to take on challenges, a love for innovation and a preference for the use of technology (Thomas International sa; cf. Song *et al.* 2004:59; Naidoo 2005; EIU 2008:5; Halse & Mallinson 2008:1; cf. EIU 2008:5; Gen Y Report 2010:7; 17; Moore, Moore & Fowler 2011). On the other hand, academics portraying high *compliance* or *steadiness* factors are more likely to prefer a traditional classroom approach which does not provide for the needs and preferences of Generation Y learners (Thomas International 2005: internet source).

Further comments given by respondents pertaining to their perceptions of e-learning signified their ignorance with regard to the purpose and philosophy of e-learning. Many of the reservations that respondents hold towards e-learning are not based on factual information but perceptions, ignorance and, sometimes fear. Fear is a common reaction to change or challenges in the workplace (Proctor & Doukakis 2003:268; Robbins 2003:559–560). Due to employees' different work behavioural styles, they will not adapt to change in the workplace in the same manner and at the same pace (Hunsaker 2001:380; cf. Robbins 2003:559–560). It became clear that, in many instances, academics who are not e-ready place the focus on the “e” of e-learning, feeding their fear of technology and/or change, as opposed to placing the focus on the “learning” of e-learning. It can be argued that academics portraying a high *dominance* factor will adapt to the use of technology in teaching and learning at a fast pace as they will not fear the new innovation, whereas academics portraying high *compliance* or *steadiness* factors will resist the use of technology in teaching and learning for a period of time due to their focus on the “e” factor in e-learning.

Results obtained from the focus-group discussion

Discussions in the focus group revealed that academics do not realise the role that the use of technology can play in teaching and learning. One of the comments during the discussion, indicating that the university will be a complete virtual campus in a few years, is not a realistic expectation. The NWU

is predominantly a residential and not a distance-learning university. The aim of e-learning should not be to do away with contact sessions; rather, it should be used to enhance the total learning experience and development of particular skills. E-learning is no longer merely linked to distance or remote learning, but has become an element in a conscious decision to use the best and most suitable ways to enhance effective learning (JISC 2009:9). Such misconceptions lead to a continuous use of traditional teaching and learning approaches, especially given the high *compliance* and *steadiness* factors of respondents.

A participant's comment pertaining to the psyche of Generation Y, which indicated that this generation is not interested in personal relationships, is another misconception amongst participants. One of the key characteristics of Generation Y is that they are collaborative, extremely social, and desire to be continually connected to their social networks (*Gen Y Report* 2010:24). This misconception raises concern as to whether academics are aware of their learners' needs and preferences. It certainly explains why e-learning is not used to a greater extent. At some stage during the discussion, participants acknowledged that they are not sure what their learners' needs and preferences are. It can, again, be said that academics portraying a high *dominance* factor are more likely to be aware of the needs of Generation Y learners as they share common characteristics with them as supported by various authors (Thomas International sa; cf. Song et al 2004:59; Naidoo 2005; cf. EIU 2008:5; EIU 2008:5; Halse & Mallinson 2008:1; Gen Y Report 2010:7; 17; Moore, Moore & Fowler 2011).

There is a perception that learners are merely interested in passing a subject/course and are not interested in the underlying philosophies and broader context. This can be related to the under preparedness of learners. On the other hand, it may also be that learners do not find a particular subject interesting or, it may be that the academic's teaching and learning approach does not appeal to learners. Poor class participation can, in all likelihood, be attributed to the academic's teaching style and approach. It has already been mentioned that traditional teaching and learning methods are unlikely to appeal to the 21st century learner or enhance learning in the best possible way (Naidoo 2005; cf. Hansen 2010; cf. O'Neill 2010:3). Academics usually continue to teach in the same manner they always have (Elgort 2005:184). If academics, therefore, believe in the approach of conveying information, they will use e-learning to facilitate this manner of learning, and any tools on the e-learning platform that are not aligned with this approach will be either ignored or misrepresented (Elgort 2005:184). This habit of continuing in a set manner with a preferred teaching and learning approach can, in all likelihood, especially be attributed to academics portraying high *compliance* and *steadiness* factors as they usually

prefer to maintain the status quo and are slow to adapt to changes (Thomas International 2005: internet source; Zemsky & Massey 2004:10).

What was evident during this discussion was that academics are not aware of their learners' characteristics and preferences. A logical deduction to be made is that it is impossible to cater for learners' needs if one is not aware of these needs. According to the researcher, this, to a great extent, explains learners' indifference and apathy in class. If a stimulation of senses is what they need to be interested in their subjects and classes, it is necessary to trigger their senses to keep their attention. Once an interest and understanding of a subject has been developed, the focus can shift to teaching higher-order skills. However, as long as academics persistently lecture in a manner that they most prefer (usually the traditional objectivist teaching and learning approach), learners will remain indifferent. The constructivist approach remains one of the key factors to address and motivate the 21st century learner. Unfortunately, only 18,4% of respondents to the questionnaire portrayed a high *dominance* factor, i.e., will be the most likely to make use of the constructivist approach.

The perceptions amongst focus group participants about OBE not being fully functional in South Africa and that neither learners nor lecturers know how to practice it may signify a truth. As indicated, the majority of academics appear to still be following the behavioural, objectivist approach to teaching and learning, driven by "talk-and-chalk" (Hanley 1994:3). This notion was confirmed by the fact that a suggestion of involving learners to indicate their needs and preferences pertaining to e-learning was opposed by a participant, emphasising unwillingness to compromise and to adjust teaching approaches. It is thus evident that, to a great extent, academics still cling to the behavioural, objectivist approach (teacher-centred teaching and learning). Judging from the feedback obtained from the questionnaire and focus group, a vast number of academics are not willing (or perhaps ready) to embrace the constructivist approach (learner centred teaching and learning).

A correct observation made by participants is that academics are not trained and qualified educators, but rather subject specialists. However, to assume that the subject content suffers when academics make an attempt to improve themselves as educators does not carry weight. It can also be argued that the subject content will not be applied to its fullest extent if approached with a teaching strategy that does not appeal to learners. Ramsden (2003:xii) supports this notion by telling academics that the first step to becoming a good teacher is to understand learners' experiences of learning. Milliken and Barnes (2002:225) indicate that this implies that teaching and learning strategies may have to be adapted to focus on the enhancement of learners' learning. The perception that subject content suffers when academics try to improve themselves as educators may indicate an unwillingness to adjust teaching and learning approaches,

which can be connected to the profile of, especially, the *compliance* factor of the DISC profiles.

It is interesting to note that the essence of the feedback on a question pertaining to the future use of e-learning was merely focused on the expansion of e-learning to be used to a greater extent in future, with the focus of the discussion on technological features (iPads, smart phones, internet, etc). No mention has been made of the adaptation of teaching and learning approaches or the profile of the future learner. It is evident that academics are not informed about the possibilities of e-learning, and are particularly ignorant as to the adaptation of their teaching and learning strategies to accommodate the 21st century learner.

Feedback from the focus group illustrated that widespread ignorance regarding the role and place of e-learning is evident amongst academics. Very few academics are aware of the possibilities of e-learning and its role and purpose in the broader teaching and learning environment. It is further apparent that the focus-group participants did not realise that the crux of the matter is to adjust teaching and learning approaches to adapt to modern learners' needs. It is further evident that a significant number of academics stubbornly want to stick to traditionally known methods. The resistance to threatening of a comfort zone is supported by literature and needs to be addressed by institutional managers and line managers alike. It is evident that academics' work behavioural styles influence their willingness to make use of innovative teaching and learning approaches and provide for the needs and preferences of Generation Y learners. Academics portraying a high *dominance* factor will be more willing to adjust teaching and learning approaches to make provision for Generation Y learners' needs and preferences, as opposed to academics portraying high *compliance* and *steadiness* factors.

As the majority of respondents portrayed high *compliance* or *steadiness* factors, it can be assumed that the majority of respondents will embrace the objectivist teaching and learning approach. They will, in all likelihood, prefer the traditional classroom approach and are likely to make use of teacher-centred strategies. It can be recommended that intensive training be provided to academics, particularly in terms of innovative teaching and learning approaches and should combine the philosophy of teaching and learning with technology. This will provide academics with a better understanding of the use and purpose of teaching and learning with technology and will create an awareness of its benefits. Further, it will eliminate ignorance and resistance to e-learning, which will ultimately enhance the e-readiness of academics. In return, this will result in the optimal use of e-learning as a pedagogical tool, maximising the learning experience for learners and addressing their needs and preferences. It is also

necessary that academics are made aware of the characteristics, needs and preferences of the 21st century learner.

CONCLUSION

Through the literature study and the empirical results obtained with the questionnaire and focus-group discussion, it became clear that academics' work behavioural style influences their teaching and learning approaches, which are embedded in particular teaching and learning philosophies. It became evident that academics portraying a high *dominance* factor, will be likely to embrace the constructivist epistemology of teaching and learning. Further, an academic, portraying a high *dominance* factor, will gladly take on new opportunities and challenges such as innovative teaching and learning approaches and will make use of technology in teaching and learning. These academics will also connect well with 21st century learners and have an understanding of their needs and preferences.

On the other hand, academics portraying high *compliance* and *steadiness* factors will favour the objectivist epistemology to teaching and learning. They are unlikely to embrace new technologies and innovation in teaching and learning and will take time to adapt to new circumstances. They are not likely to cater for the needs and preferences of 21st century learners as they are likely to make use of traditional classroom teaching and learning methods.

It is necessary that academics, irrespective of their work behavioural style, be committed to provide for the needs and preferences of the 21st century learner. In this regard, it is necessary to provide relevant training to academics. Training should include the use of innovative teaching and learning of technology approaches and an understanding of the characteristics of Generation Y learners.

NOTES

- 1 A paradigm is "a theoretical framework, a set of assumptions, an orientation toward specific problem solving practices, and a rule for how these problems should be approached and proposed solutions appraised" (Horner & Westacott 2000:113).
- 2 In the South African context Generation Y refers to those who were born from 1990 to 2000 (cf. Msimang 2008; Steyn, Badenhorst & Kamper 2010:177; 185).

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Advancing rural development through network and cluster approaches

The case of Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the network and cluster approaches as an innovative rural development approach towards facilitating economic opportunities for rural communities in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality (MMM). Based on a case study of the MMM this article concludes that the network and cluster approaches could be considered as an innovative rural development approach by the MMM. This is based on a review of the MMM IDP for 2012-2016, its Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan for the financial year 2012/2013, its IDP review for 2013/2014, other MMM strategic documents, as well as existing projects and initiatives by the MMM and the Free State provincial government. The outcomes of the study point out that the Free State Science and Technology/Innovation Park (FSSTIP) could provide an enabling environment for harnessing partnership synergies and the implementation of the network and cluster approach to rural development by the MMM. It is anticipated that positioning this approach within the FSSTIP could induce and contribute to the sustainability of individual projects as well as rural development by the MMM. Though the network and cluster approach posits the prospects for tangible improvement in economic opportunities for rural communities, the formulation and implementation of a coherent structure by the MMM, as well as adapting its institutional environment, might pose challenges.

Future research regarding the innovation capability and capacity of local authorities therefore becomes critical as indicators, to identify where efforts could be directed to enhance innovative development practices.

INTRODUCTION

The MMM has developed several rural development strategies. However, the question is whether these strategies advance rural development in the context of the new rural paradigm, which requires more innovative approaches such as the cluster and network approaches. Rosenfeld (1998 in Del Castillo, Paton and Saez 2013:2) defines clusters as a representation of companies that, due to their geographical location and their interdependence, can produce synergies that will result in positive externalities such as accumulative economies, leading to enhanced competitiveness of the cluster. According to Cooke (2001 in Del Castillo *et al.* 2013:2), the territory in which these clusters are located may also benefit indirectly from such externalities. Integral to the existence of clusters are networks or extensive networking, which is regarded as one of the most significant principles required for clusters to become competitive (Rosenfeld 2002:8).

According to Porter (1998), Malmberg and Maskell (2002), as well as Martin and Sunley (2003 in Menzel and Fornahl 2009:205), the network and cluster development approaches are regarded as integral to economic development, based on the principles of inclusiveness. Del Castillo and Paton (2012 in Del Castillo *et al.* 2013:3) infer that a direct relationship can be found between the existence of clusters in a specific area and the economic development that takes place in such an area. Premised on utilising spatial integration and local advantages to progress local economies, the development of clusters makes the attraction of similar and complementary enterprises possible due to the advantage of place.

Given its place-based approach, network and cluster approaches could be considered for the advancement of rural communities and for the facilitation of the development in rural economies inclusive to regional and provincial economies, to achieve sustainable rural development. These network and cluster approaches can be regarded as synonymous with identifying suitable strategies through which local resources in rural areas can be used as a competitive advantage for such communities. In turn, such a competitive advantage forms part of interconnected economic opportunities that will lead to greater coherence between the municipality, private sector, communities, educational and research institutions. However, the question is whether network and cluster

approaches can be considered an innovative approach to rural development. The aim of this article is therefore to explore the network and cluster approaches as an innovative rural development approach towards facilitating economic opportunities for rural communities in the MMM. This may highlight whether this approach is regarded as synonymous with innovation.

The research question posed by this article is: Can the network and cluster approaches be considered as an innovative approach to rural development by the MMM?

This will be answered by positioning the way the MMM undertakes rural development within the new and old rural development paradigms. Moreover, the network and cluster approaches will be considered from an innovation perspective. By answering this question this article may highlight whether the MMM could adapt its existing approaches to rural development, and whether the network and cluster approaches are synonymous with innovation.

A qualitative research design was followed. The first component of the study explored the old and new rural development paradigms as a basis for undertaking rural development. Through a study of scholarly models and theoretical perspectives, the positioning of network and cluster approaches in the old and new rural development paradigms forms part of the first component. The second component will encompass a review of strategic documents such as the MMM IDP Review of 2013/2014, the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan for 2012/2013, and the IDP for 2012-2016. Through a GAP analysis of strategic documents, the second component explores rural development undertaken by the MMM within the framework of the rural development paradigms, as well as theoretical perspectives and models on network and cluster approaches. The third component proposes how cluster and network approaches, as a rural development strategy by the MMM, can be positioned within the existing innovation system in the Free State.

The relevance of this article lies in its exploration regarding the appropriateness of the network and cluster approaches as an innovative approach for rural development by the MMM. Conversely, it highlights the rural development paradigm in which the MMM undertakes rural development. This study will thus highlight whether the MMM could undertake a shift in its focus for rural development. It also encourages research into the innovation capacity and capability of municipalities for driving innovation.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

According to Ceglie and Dini (1999:1), the growth of local economies can be enhanced through the development of rural areas. As such, the development of

economic opportunities for communities in rural areas contributes to realising equitable development in municipal areas often characterised by pockets of unequal development. The OECD (2006:3) however, recognises that numerous governance and policy challenges are experienced to promote integrated rural development. In the light of this, the OECD (2006:3) advocates less rigid rural policies and proposes more robust sectoral coordination across the levels of government, and between actors in the private and public sectors, by means of a place-based approach to rural development at the local level (OECD 2006:18). Essential to a place-based approach is a bottom-up approach, the integration of new stakeholders and resources into the development process, as well as the fostering of partnerships between the public and private sectors (OECD 2006:18). Apart from the need to adopt a place-based approach to rural development, exogenous and endogenous factors that influence rural development require consideration.

Exogenous and endogenous factors have been the determining factors for both the old approach to rural development and the new paradigm, by influencing the facilitation of rural development in various localities. Ward and Brown (2009 in Normann and Vasstrom 2012:943) describe one change at the centre of the new rural paradigm as the move from support, through subsidies and redistribution as external factors, to an internal focus composite of an investment-oriented approach and the mobilising of local assets. According to this paradigm shift, a wider institutional and actor involvement is required in rural development. To achieve this, Ward and Brown (2009 in Normann and Vasstrom 2012:943) suggest that such a change in governance infers a change from a sectoral to a territorial policy approach. The OECD (2006:3) supports this notion of investment, as opposed to subsidisation, the latter of which is associated with the old rural development approach. The old rural development approach focused singularly on agriculture, subsidisation and a narrow inclusion of actors. It focused exclusively on agriculture, whereas the new rural paradigm adopts a comprehensive approach to rural development through the inclusion of various sectors of rural economies. The inclusion of various sectors of rural economies allows for broader stakeholder involvement in rural development.

From this it is clear that approaches followed for the implementation of rural development strategies will not only determine the focus of rural development strategies and the sectoral reach, but also the range of actors to be involved. All these factors contribute to defining the type of rural development deliverable by municipalities. The model applied by municipalities for undertaking rural development strategies therefore requires careful consideration, as it determines and defines the extent of rural development, which in turn will impact on the sustainability of rural development initiatives and areas. The question however remains as to which approaches, synonymous with innovation, could advance

the sustainability of rural development initiatives and areas within the context of the new rural paradigm, promoting the inclusion of various sectors of rural economies, as well as broader stakeholder involvement, unlike the old rural development approach. Against this background, it appears that the network and cluster approaches which are synonymous with innovation and smart specialisation may be in line with the requirements of the new rural paradigm (Del Castillo *et al.* 2013:6).

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON NETWORK AND CLUSTER APPROACHES

The specialised nature of regional economies has made the development of clusters essential to economic development strategies and policies. According to Ceglie and Dini (1999:1) these types of clusters refer to the concentration of enterprises, based on their geographical and sectoral location, which has led to growth in sector-specific skills and services due to such concentrations.

Audretsch and Feldman (1996), Baptista and Swann (1998) and Swann, Prevezer and Stout (1998 in Menzel and Fornahl 2009:205) contend that enterprises that form part of a cluster, in comparison to those outside of clusters, are exposed to opportunities for excelling in innovation and robust growth. Menzel and Fornahl (2009:205) are of the opinion that these characteristics attribute to the reasoning behind clusters, as a precondition for regions to be prosperous. Del Castillo and Paton (2012 in Del Castillo *et al.* 2013:3) hold similar views, and contend that countries and regions where the 'cluster phenomena' has been consolidated and integrated with territorial development, have experienced greater competitiveness and innovation of such regions. This in turn contributes to the creation of wealth and employment. Sovell, Lindqvist and Ketels (2003 in Del Castillo *et al.* 2013:4) refer to this as the regional triple helix, as it constitutes linking cluster development to a specific territory, and the involvement of "public administrations, the research community and companies" relative to the activities.

Strong collaboration between the private sector/small businesses, government, and higher education/research community, in a triple helix that functions well, has become requisite for clusters to be successful (Republic of Croatia 2011:19). However, the role of government and municipalities, in taking leadership with regard to steering the development of clusters and exerting influence in the formation of clusters, should not be overlooked. Normann and Vasstrom (2012:946) allude to the network governance approach utilised by government and municipalities, which can be regarded as incorporating the principles of cluster and network development. The varying degrees of

steering and influence that municipalities exert as per the network governance models should therefore also be attributed as driving factors for large clusters (Normann and Vasstrom 2012:948). Rosenfeld (2002:16) states that through the establishment of clusters, governments are in a better position to gain an oversight on how their economies function. Governments and municipalities therefore play an important role in steering the development of functional clusters, which refers to government-induced partnerships. Encouraging networks amongst the private and public sector with shared objectives, functional clusters can be utilised effectively as a catalyst and stimulus for local economic development.

Brusco (1982), Piore and Sabel (1984), and Best (1990 in Ceglie and Dini 1999:1) state that whilst numerous cases of small, medium and micro enterprise clusters that performed well are reported, it is suggested that such collaborations were not essentially spontaneous, but driven by social and environmental influences that affected these small, medium and micro enterprises. The presence of an external catalyst, in the form of a municipality, is thus often required to initiate the development of a cluster and inter-firm collaboration. Such a catalyst will also provide assistance in overcoming challenges experienced by firms in a cluster, as well as reducing it significantly. Compared to clusters, Ceglie and Dini (1999:1) propose that the methodology for network development as a rural development strategy should be structured in terms of the “promotion of networks, restructuring at the firm level, improving the institutional environment and improving dialogue between the private and public sector”. Accordingly, networking, which is the establishment of relationships distinctive to both networks and clusters (Ceglie and Dini 1999:2), is key in forming a collective vision for local development. Furthermore, networking contributes to reinforcing support for collective actions that will augment entrepreneurial strategies. Applied with the principles of rural network governance and entrepreneurial governance, as proposed by Osborne and Gaebler (1992 in Normann and Vasstrom 2012:948), the municipality plays a crucial role in steering the development process and the approach that it takes in terms of influencing development.

NETWORK AND CLUSTER APPROACH FROM AN INNOVATION PERSPECTIVE

According to Schumpeter (1934), Weitzman (1998), and Johansson (2004 in Bloch and Bugge 2013:135), collaboration between actors is essential to the successful implementation of innovation, as innovation cannot take place in isolation. Such collaboration also forms the backbone of the network and

cluster approaches. Synonymous with innovation, clusters are regarded as setting pathways to innovation, as they connect individual researchers, connect the latter to the “right companies, create connectivity between entrepreneurs and collaborative competency and diversity, and connect local and foreign companies to forge global supply chains” (Choe and Roberts 2011:64). Likewise, clusters are considered integral to the systemic nature of innovation, which provides a framework for interaction between various actors in the innovation process and its activities (Bloch and Bugge 2013:135). These interactions and collaborations become tantamount with network governance, which can be implemented through the triple helix approach that is considered integral to innovation. According to Hartley (2005 in Bloch and Bugge 2013:135), the triple helix approach, adopted in public sector innovation approaches, reflects network governance and collaborative innovation, which is considered contributory to the systemic nature of innovation in the public sector. This ability to innovate is highlighted as a prerequisite of successful cluster development (Republic of Croatia 2011:23).

Schumpeter (1934), Weitzman (1998), and Johansson (2004 in Bloch and Bugge 2013:135) state that the ability of clusters to innovate however, requires interaction and collaboration of a broad range of actors who, through their respective resource and knowledge base, can elicit and implement innovation. The triple helix approach, which creates a conducive environment for connections, can thus be regarded as ideal to enhance the performance of clusters, which (if they perform at an optimal level) can lead to better coordination through the creation of links between individuals, skills and funds. These will contribute towards the creation of an innovative environment and the sharing of ‘tacit knowledge’ that will aid in enhancing local economic competitiveness (Choe and Roberts 2011:64). The environment in which the cluster operates should however also be conducive to eliciting innovation.

The success of implementing network and cluster approaches, as an innovative approach to rural development, requires an environment that stimulates innovation, and in which clusters can achieve competitive advantage. Choe and Roberts (2011:65) share the view that features required for the creation of an innovative environment, include the following:

- “A high quality of life;
- A pool of skills and knowledge that provides unique sets of core competencies;
- Vibrant and innovative people with positive business attitudes;
- Responsive and engaged governments and communities;
- Companies, managers, and employees willing to accept change; and
- The ability to respond collectively to threats” (Choe and Roberts 2011:65).

An innovative environment, as a requirement for cluster development, also contributes to smart specialisation. Del Castillo *et al.* (2013:6) relates the theory of cluster development to that of smart specialisation, which is referred to as “a strategic governance process that directs attention to prioritising the diversified specialisation, consistent with historical heritage and capabilities of a region, taking into account constraints and opportunities of the global economy”. This strategic governance occurs within the systemic nature of innovation, and according to Kattel, Cepilovs, Dreschsler, Kalvet, Lember and Tonurist (2013:s.n), government can assume a dual role in innovation by eliciting innovation and as the driver of entrepreneurial innovation.

Consistent with innovation and the cluster approach, smart specialisation confines innovation to the capabilities of regions, as well as endogenous and exogenous opportunities. This can also be duplicated on a smaller scale within clusters, whereby clusters apply smart specialisation. Conversely, it could be argued that by using smart specialisation at a regional level to advance rural development, the competitive advantages of such areas can be converted to areas of specialisation in the context of opportunities and constraints in the regional and provincial economy. This could be applied to innovation, whether driven or called forth by government. Del Castillo *et al.* (2013:7) captures the synergy between smart specialisation and clusters in the following Table.

Table 1: Synergy between smart specialisation and clusters

Clusters linked to smart specialisation		Smart specialisation addressed by clusters
Global context	Progressive formation of global value chains.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Generation of internationally competitive advantages; • Interregional networking under a business model.”
Specialisation patterns	Social capital and intermediary between regional actors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Critical mass (agglomeration economies); • Efficiency and effectiveness of public policies (leverage); • Systemic performance.”
Related variety	Dynamics of inter-cluster collaboration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Exploitation of related variety based on specific priorities; • Spill-over effects and externalities.”

Source: Del Castillo *et al.* (2013:7).

From this Table it can be deduced that clusters linked to smart specialisation present prospects of an international competitive advantage for small enterprises, and could likewise keep them informed of global trends and markets. Interregional networking between enterprises and organisations can

be harnessed through smart specialisation. It also aids in the development of relationships, networks and support which is based on the triple helix. Moreover, smart specialisation linked to clusters enables regions to specialise, ascertain potential and develop a competitive advantage.

DISCUSSION

According to the OECD (nd), challenges in the Free State range from unemployment, poverty, poor health and illiteracy to low educational attainment levels. The MMM faces similar challenges, particularly with regard to a significant decrease in employment (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality 2013a). Strides have however been made with regard to a decrease in illiteracy (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality 2013a:54).

The MMM plays a strategic role in addressing these challenges, which are also inherent to and affects its rural communities. What can be highlighted with regard to existing rural development strategies by the MMM, is the need to optimise the network and cluster approach for the purposes of addressing some rural development challenges, and to use it to pioneer economic opportunities for such communities. The aim of this article was to explore network and cluster development as an innovative approach to rural development by the MMM. In this section, current rural development strategies undertaken by the MMM are discussed within the framework of its IDP for 2012, its Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan for 2012/2013 and its IDP Review for 2013/2014.

Integrated Development Plan and rural development strategies

Strategic documents of the MMM, namely its IDP (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, 2012), Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan 2012/2013 (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, 2013b) and IDP Review 2013/2014 (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, 2013a), formed the basis for scoping examination of the rural development strategies of the municipality.

Rural development is earmarked as the prime strategy of the MMM towards ensuring food security, job creation, revitalising rural economies and fighting poverty. The MMM intends to develop a Rural Development Implementation Plan in line with the National Rural Development Programme (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality 2013a:98). The provision of basic services and projects, with a focus on local economic development and eradicating poverty affecting citizens in rural areas, is inclusive to the endeavours of the MMM to facilitate rural development (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality 2013a:76). The municipality strives to achieve this, and to promote equitable and rapid

rural development through the adoption and implementation of an extensive integrated and sustainable rural development strategy, that will be used to take advantage of prospective synergies from government programmes.

Rural development strategies in the MMM Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan for 2012/2013 include the initiation of small scale agricultural enterprises, and to develop infrastructure at three agri-villages (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality 2013b:26). In its IDP Review (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality 2013a), it reports on the N8 corridor development, which is a transnational development corridor connecting Bloemfontein and Maseru, including the N8 Airport Development Node. Part of the N8 corridor is the development of the Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu development nodes, with an emphasis on the development of industrial and commercial enterprises that contribute significantly to job creation (Magashule 2013).

Rural development challenges identified by communities

Development challenges raised by communities during IDP engagements were consolidated into key development thrusts by the MMM, these include poverty eradication, rural and economic development and job creation (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality 2013a:23). This development thrust also constitutes one of the eight key development priorities of the municipality for the next five years (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality 2013a:97). This source reports that rural development challenges communicated by wards range from food gardens in trusts, conditions of roads from Thaba Nchu, home-based care, dilapidated windmills and dams, ABET education, and the need for RDP houses in Balaclava and other areas (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality 2013a:39).

Within the framework of the existing rural development strategies undertaken by the municipality, it can be deduced that strategies incorporate aspects of the old rural development approach, with specific reference to development and agriculture of small farmers (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality 2013b). It may however also be argued that the predominant commercialised nature of agriculture in the rural areas, leans towards the new rural development paradigm. The reason for this is the fact that agriculture and farming are used from a competitive perspective, and exploited as an economic advantage for local inhabitants. On the other hand, ensuring food security, job creation and the rejuvenation of rural economies expands the focus of the MMM, which is in line with the new rural paradigm. However, it lacks an assessment of local resources within communities that should rather provide the basis for the initiation and creation of local economic development initiatives. By adopting a place-based approach with an internal focus, opportunity exists for scoping local competitive advantages of rural areas, or enhancing the potential of current

inherent resources to become a competitive edge. A competitive advantage can be grown through the provision of existing and proposed skills development initiatives and enterprise creation programmes of the MMM. Such a competitive advantage can turn into tangible local economic opportunities for rural areas.

Should it be established that current resources are not optimal for the exploiting of such opportunities, adjacent areas should be explored to identify new business growth opportunities, interlinked innovation, and entrepreneurial opportunities where the rural community can be adjoined. To this effect, the MMM has already taken the initiative to incorporate the development of rural areas with the N8 corridor development, and to ensure that this initiative spills over into rural communities. This contributes to rural development in the communities of Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu, and leans toward the new rural paradigm. According to Ward and Brown (2009 in Normann and Vasstrom 2012:943), literature reports that the new rural paradigm has an internal focus that is investment oriented, and a market type place-based approach that mobilises local assets. It may be argued that while strategies by the MMM have a place-based approach, they are oriented towards providing infrastructure and developing agricultural enterprises, and have a limited focus in terms of a market type approach to rural development. This also implies that smart specialisation may not be optimally applied.

Smart specialisation, which is linked to the principles of cluster and network development, and interlinked to innovation, does not form the basis for the current rural development agenda of the MMM. Cluster and network approaches are not optimally used to facilitate rural development. It can therefore be deduced that the MMM can explore this as a more innovative approach to rural development, that will lead to enhanced opportunities for rural communities through collaborative approaches. The findings therefore present a positive answer to the research question. Adding to this, positioning the Mangaung area from a competitive perspective, and addressing rural development challenges; requires institutional capacity that is responsive, in order to access, generate, develop and implement new ideas. Such an institutional capacity, and the ability to derive innovation activities, will however only be harnessed if a leadership and management culture exists that is conducive to innovation. This innovation activity will ultimately influence the performance of the municipality. Hence, a limited institutional innovation capacity decreases a municipality's ability to develop innovation activities, which in turn impacts on organisational performance.

A municipality's innovation capability, activities and impact on performance are factors it has control over and can improve upon, unlike the external environment in which the municipality functions, that may hinder or advance innovation. The proposed FSSTIP forms part of the external environment that may enhance or hinder innovation, and has the potential to influence the

innovation capability and activity of the municipality. The municipality can use this initiative to its advantage, enhancing its innovation capability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings, it can be deduced that the current framework created for rural development by the MMM presents an opportunity for a more innovative approach to rural development, which can be facilitated through a cluster and network approach. The article outlines two key recommendations among others in support of advancing rural development through the network and cluster approach. The first recommendation made by this article is a shift in the focus of the MMM with regard to rural development. The second recommendation is that cluster and network approaches, as a rural development strategy, are implemented within the overall system for innovation in the Free State. This will provide an enabling environment.

Table 2: Shift in rural development by Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality

MMM rural development approach		Proposed MMM rural development approach
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public frame • Participatory governance • Top-down policy approach • Sectoral policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market frame • Entrepreneurial governance/entrepreneurial citizenry • Bottom-up policy • Place-based approach • Territorial policies • Ideas and initiatives expressed from bottom up by entrepreneurial citizenry and other stakeholders • Smart specialisation/innovation/cluster and network development
Key sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture • Skills development • Cooperatives • Small enterprise development 	Various sectors of rural economy
Actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture • Food security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government • Universities • Private sector • Small medium enterprises • Rural communities • Free State Science and Technology/ Innovation Park

Proposed Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality rural development approach

To facilitate rural development that will give effect to smart specialisation, a localised competitive edge, and a place-based approach to rural development, Table 2 represents a shift from the current to a proposed rural development approach by the MMM.

This Table proposes a shift in the rural development approach undertaken by the MMM to facilitate the network and cluster approaches in its rural development agenda. Whereas the existing rural development approach includes limited actors, and a top-down policy approach, the new proposed model depicts broader actor participation, and sectoral development in line with place-based opportunities, resources and smart specialisation.

Network and cluster approaches as part of the Free State Science and Technology/Innovation Park

Porter (1998 in Menzel and Fornahl 2009:212) defines clusters as consisting of interconnected companies and institutions. Institutions can include, amongst others, educational and research facilities that may form the basis for human capital and networks for innovation. The development of the FSSTIP (that will facilitate innovation), and its networks in the Free State, can be regarded as an embodiment of this definition of clusters.

The envisaged FSSTIP for the Free State will not only provide facilities for the advancement and innovation of product design, but also collaboration between government, academia, industry and small businesses (University of the Free State and Central University of Technology (UFS and CUT) 2013:9), which is in line with the triple helix (Republic of Croatia 2011:18). Such collaboration will serve as a catalyst for promoting economic development activities and enhancing the competitive advantage of the Free State, through new business creation and knowledge-based jobs, fostering regional wealth and adding value to companies (UFS and CUT 2013:9). According to the UFS and CUT (2013:12), the FSSTIP emulates a “dispersed physical presence” with activities in several locations, rather than restriction to a single physical entity. It therefore provides the ideal enabling environment for cluster and network approaches as a rural development strategy by the MMM.

In line with the six pillars of the Free State Growth and Development Strategy, which includes sustainable rural development (Pillar 4) amongst others, it is ideal to position network and cluster development as a strategy to advance rural development within the framework of the FSSTIP. By aiding in the development of a workable network and cluster approach model to

advance rural development, the FSSTIP provides an enabling environment for the coordination of this initiative, and its incorporation into the broader regional and provincial vision. It also provides for drawing on the existing capacity and expertise of stakeholders. Furthermore, with the innovation cycle proposed for this park, which includes amongst others incubation and acceleration, business development and enterprise creation, the creation and development of networks and clusters can be nurtured. This will harness a market-type focus, which is in line with the network governance model. Thus, interlinked innovation, knowledge and entrepreneurship can become the common denominator for collective local economic development strategies undertaken in rural areas. Conversely, it will enhance the development and existence of competitive clusters.

The existence of competitive clusters is primarily centered on extensive networking amongst public and private sector institutions with a shared objective for local economic development. Such extensive networking can be achieved through an integration of clusters and networks into the FSSTIP that could expand stakeholder involvements, as the latter will provide a broader knowledge base and expertise. It also provides conditions for optimising connections between the community, stakeholders, researchers, expertise and funding opportunities. The FSSTIP thus provides the ideal platform for identifying existing and new business opportunities for enterprises, incubating such enterprises within a cluster, and making available academic, local and provincial government stakeholders and industry expertise that can constitute the network. The FSSTIP and the innovation system in the Free State form part of the external environment that impacts on the innovation capability and activities of the MMM. As such, it may also contribute to enhancing the innovation capability and activities of the MMM, which will in turn impact on its performance. Because it is based on the principle of the triple helix, it will provide a milieu for the municipality to access new ideas that can be used in its development initiatives.

In addition to the two key recommendations, the following recommendations are made:

- Cluster and network development could be incorporated in the municipal policy as a mechanism for achieving economic and wealth creation in rural areas.
- In its rural areas, the MMM could undertake cluster mapping and identification analysis.
- Network and cluster development in rural areas could be undertaken in the broader framework of the pillars of the Free State Growth and Development Strategy, as well as in the regional, provincial and national economy.
- Network and cluster approaches could be positioned as an integral part of the FSSTIP and the overall innovation system in the Free State.

- A place-based approach could be followed for the inclusion of the network and cluster approaches in strategic plans of the municipality, such as its IDP and proposed Rural Development Implementation Plan.

CONCLUSION

The outcomes of this study point out that the FSSTIP could aid in providing an enabling environment for harnessing partnership synergies, and implementing the network and cluster approach to rural development. It is anticipated that positioning the network and cluster approach within the FSSTIP could induce and contribute to rural development by the MMM. Furthermore, the FSSTIP will contribute to strengthening collaboration between various stakeholders and the MMM. The network and cluster approaches should therefore also be explored within the framework of the FSSTIP to advance rural development.

The research question posed by this article was: Can the network and cluster approach be considered as an innovative approach to rural development by the MMM? This question was answered by explaining how the MMM undertakes rural development within the new and old rural development paradigms, and by analysing the network and cluster approach from an innovation perspective. The answer to this question is thus yes, on the basis that although the rural development strategies of the MMM have a place-based approach, its focus is limited in terms of a market type approach to rural development. Conversely, the findings highlight that the MMM could adapt its rural development approaches by incorporating the cluster and network approaches in its current framework.

Moreover, the literature points out that the network and cluster approach is aligned with smart specialisation, and is interlinked with innovation. It could therefore be explored by the MMM as an innovative approach to rural development, that could lead to enhanced opportunities for rural communities through collaborative approaches. Inclusive to this, the findings propose the incorporation of governance, key sectors, and actors that could be considered as part of its new proposed paradigm to rural development. It is recommended that the implementation of the network and cluster approaches, as a rural development strategy, could take place within the overall system for innovation in the Free State. This could aid in providing an enabling environment that will harness the network and cluster approach to rural development, thus facilitating collaboration between the higher education and training institutions, provincial government and the MMM. It could also strengthen existing links and initiatives, and create new ones.

Osborne and Gaebler (1992 in Normann and Vasstrom 2012:948) emphasised that municipalities play a critical role in steering the development

process, and the approach that it takes in terms of influencing development. This article highlighted the fact that rural development approaches adopted by municipalities do not only determine the rural development strategies and sectoral reach, but also the range of actors to be involved. These become contributory factors that define the type of rural development deliverables by municipalities. The model applied by municipalities for undertaking rural development strategies therefore requires careful consideration, as it determines and defines the extent of rural development, which in turn will impact on the sustainability of rural development initiatives and areas.

The aim of this article was to explore the network and cluster approaches as an innovative rural development approach towards facilitating economic opportunities for rural communities in the MMM. The aim was achieved, as this article deduced that, through the process of smart specialisation, which is inherent to the network and cluster approaches and the process of innovation, this approach to rural development could enhance rural development by the MMM. This article therefore contemplates that, in order to achieve sustainable rural development, the MMM could consider a shift in its rural development approaches, and in the role that it plays towards influencing the development process. Coupled with this could be incorporating innovative rural development strategies, such as network and cluster approaches, towards ensuring that rural communities are included in exposure to opportunities in the regional and provincial economies.

Apart from this, the capability and capacities of the MMM are equally crucial in driving network and cluster approaches from an innovation perspective, and the proposed FSSITP could contribute to enhancing this capability and innovation capacity of the MMM. Though this article did not consider the innovation capability of the MMM, it proposes that local authorities in South Africa explore its innovation capabilities by establishing its institutional capacity to drive innovation. This article makes various recommendations towards the implementation of the network and cluster approaches to rural development by the MMM. However, a question that should be considered is the institutional capacity of the MMM to coordinate and drive this approach to rural development.

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Accountability

A constitutional imperative

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the nature of accountability; its various guises and the extent to which it could be enhanced in the complex contemporary state to ensure that citizens' needs are acknowledged and that policy implementation and the achievement of goals could be justified for every action by an individual i.e. a political office-bearer or appointed official, in an authoritative position. The focus will be on the requirement that the elected political office-bearers and their appointed officials should act in such a way that society could be assured that their best interests are paramount in any governmentally related decision and action. The article conceptually clarifies accountability and responsibility, discusses the statutory requirements for responsibility and accountability and the basic values and principles governing public administration. State institutions and mechanisms supporting accountability in terms of the Public Protector, the Auditor-General, codes of conduct and professionalism, administrative and managerial requirements, information, performance monitoring and evaluation are also discussed. Factors inhibiting accountability in terms of unethical conduct, ignorance of citizens, corruption, unproductiveness, failure by the legislature and misgovernment are also highlighted.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Accountability is such an inherent requirement for maintaining democratic and accountable government that particular attention should be devoted to this matter. The notion of accountability requires that the governing body provides reasons to the electorate for their actions (or inactions) and allows a community to express an opinion on their governing ability. It is crucial that public officials

and political office-bearers understand the need for accountability in public management and governance because the behaviour of various public role players directly affects the delivery of public services, and the distinction between right and wrong is not always clear-cut. Hence, ministers and officials in positions of authority have a moral obligation to carry out the responsibilities assigned to them in an ethical manner as expected by society.

It is a serious indictment against democratically elected government structures when they fail to honour the principle of accountable government by failing to give effect to the constitutional requirement of rendering account for their actions or rather failing to honour the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* of 1996 (hereafter referred to as the Constitution of 1996) regarding accountable public administration (cf. Section 195(1) (f) of the Constitution of 1996).

The two terms, 'responsibility' and 'accountability' are like two sides of the same coin. For the purpose of public accountability, reference is usually made to the rendering of account of the actions of the officials and political office-bearers. A dictionary definition for accountability is simply "liable to be called on to explain" (*Webster Universal Dictionary* 1968). In the public sector, an official is responsible for his/her actions and conduct. Ethical and accountable behaviour is for this reason, also linked to the responsibility of officials. Accountability could be considered as one of the prerequisites for democratic government. The second and equally important requirement for the effective operation of democracy is regular (fair and free) elections of representatives to take political decisions on behalf of society. For the purposes of this article attention is not devoted to the need to conduct regular elections affording citizens the opportunity to exercise a choice on who will represent their interests in the legislature or the executive structures.

Because of the complicated nature of public activities, it is not always obvious whether an action is advantageous and which values must be the decisive ones. The responsibility therefore, rests on the political office-bearers and officials to ensure that public activities are carried out without ulterior motives.

It should be noted that functions are allocated; and authority is delegated to public officials to do a specific work or task. It places a responsibility on such an official and such a responsibility includes:

- **consent**, i.e. an agreement to perform the job;
- **obedience**, i.e. submission to the guidance of a higher placed person or authority;
- **accountability**, i.e. to render account (to explain) doing or not doing something; and even
- **liability**, i.e. to be answerable to somebody (Auriacombe and Van der Waldt 2014:67).

Accountability in government can be classified into:

- legal accountability, i.e. responsibility for obeying laws;
- fiscal accountability, i.e. responsibility for public funds;
- procedural accountability, i.e. responsibility for implementing procedures;
- programme accountability, i.e. responsibility for carrying out all programmes;
- and
- outcome accountability, i.e. responsibility to ensure effective results.

Since the advent of public office, whether in the form of the church, monarchy, and city states or later national states the need to render account for actions concerning the people was considered an undisputed requirement. However, the statement does not imply that it was indeed honoured by the church leaders or an authority charged with the promotion of the wellbeing of its members or citizens. Without public accountability the danger exists that rulers may assume powers not envisaged by society and inhibiting citizens' opportunity to call the rulers to explain their decisions, actions or inactions.

Normanton (1966:2) in his seminal work: *The accountability and audit of governments: a comparative study* defined accountability: "as consisting of a statutory obligation to provide for independent and impartial observers holding the right of reporting their findings at the highest levels in the State, any available information about financial administration which they may request". The mystique of formal accounts is a hindrance, not a help, to public accountability in this sense. The accounts themselves are no more than a basic guide for an investigation, hence, an outline map of the whole territory. The outline must be filled in by systematic exploration by obtaining explanations and documentation about the unusual features encountered.

Normanton (1966:3) also states that accountability is perhaps as old as organised government. Even in classical Athens, Demosthenes declared that he had been subject to public audit throughout his life. An important remark by Normanton is the following: "Government is an authoritarian mystery. There is a historical connection between administrative secrecy and the hierarchical state" (1966:3). For the purposes of this discussion it is still relevant as the contemporary state is much more complex and the extent of the administrative and governmental duties are often clouded in mock secrecy. This complicates the function of accountability as the reliability of information is often difficult to ascertain. The principle that a ruler i.e. government in a contemporary sense, must explain its policies and actions to society, forms the cornerstone of the concept of accountable government; and is tantamount to modern day democratic government.

Accountability manifests itself in different dimensions, for instance, political accountability, administrative and managerial accountability, legal accountability, consumer accountability and professional accountability (Cloete 1996:19).

Political accountability requires political office-bearers e.g. the President, ministers, municipal councils and other political executives to render account to the citizens for the manner in which they gave effect to the responsibilities assigned to them. In many cases the Public Protector reported on political office-bearers such as ministers not complying with the norms and standards set for ethical conduct by a representative of society acting in a political post.

Administrative and managerial accountability requires officials in positions of authority to explain their actions. Accountability is also a legal requirement in the contemporary public sector. Accounts, which form the basis of the Auditor-General's report is simply one of the mechanisms enabling the Auditor-General to determine the area within which suspected unacceptable actions were performed. Other information will also be required to determine any possible wrongful action and to establish who has to be held accountable for such action. Consumer accountability requires that the citizens as consumers of products or services have to be satisfied with the quality and the quantity of services and products. Professional accountability requires members of a profession e.g. engineers, medical practitioners or architects to render account to the governing bodies of their respective professions for their actions in their particular profession.

When the problem of accountability is investigated it has to be considered that the function is actually an ingrained component of government and of the public sector. This implies that there is no need to justify the need for accountability hence the crucial questions are to establish how it is applied; what the mechanisms are to enforce accountability; and how to prevent illegal, corrupt or unethical behaviour which could hinder the effects of accountability.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS FOR RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Freedom Charter, adopted by the Congress of the People, Kliptown, 26 June 1995, was the first formal attempt in South Africa to guarantee equal rights for every member of South African society irrespective of race or status. For the purpose of this article the contents need not be repeated, but the Charter is of particular significance in discussing the current state of government's response to the rights of society. The Charter for example stated that everyone shall be equal before the law; that all national groups shall have equal rights; and that the "people shall govern" (African National Congress. s.a. np.) The Charter did not specifically require the rulers (government) to render account to society for their actions, but the rights clearly imply that the people will have the final authority in the State and that government is subject

to the rights contained in the Charter. This Charter also implied that the rulers (government) must honour the rights of society and thus have to justify their actions to the citizens.

The Founding Provisions contained in the Preamble to the Constitution of 1996 echoes the principles of the Freedom Charter by stating *inter alia* that the Constitution as the supreme law lays “the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law” (Constitution of 1996 Preamble). The South African Constitution is more explicit than most other constitutions regarding the rights of members of society contained in the 27 sections of the Bill of Rights (Chapter 2 of the Constitution of 1996). It is important to emphasise the rights guaranteed *inter alia* equality (Section 9); freedom of expression (Section 16); political rights (Section 19); access to information (Section 32); and just administrative action (Section 33). These rights form the cornerstones of South Africa’s democracy and provide the framework within which the governing structures are required to operate to satisfy the expectations of society to qualify as a just and accountable government administration.

The following examples from the Constitution of 1996 and other relevant sources underscore the crucial roles of responsibility and accountability.

Responsibility

- Section 84(2) of the Constitution: “The President is responsible for...”. Then follows a list of functions e.g. assenting to and signing bills; making appointments that the Constitution or legislation requires the President to make; pardoning or reprieving offenders and remitting any fines; and conferring honours.
- Section 92(1) of the Constitution: “The Deputy President and Ministers are responsible for the powers and functions of the executive assigned to them by the President”.
- Section 127(1) of the Constitution assigns similar responsibilities to the premier of a province (e.g. assenting to and signing Bills; referring a Bill to the Constitutional Court; and appointing commissions of inquiry).
- The situation regarding municipalities is somewhat different as the municipal council is both the legislative and executive authority (Section 151(2) Constitution of 1996). Therefore, the responsibility to perform municipal related duties, is vested in council. By implication council can thus also be required to provide reasons for its actions (be accountable).
- Section 96(1) of the Constitution of 1996 requires members of the Cabinet and deputy ministers to act in accordance with a Code of Conduct prescribed in national legislation. It could thus be argued that ministers and officials in

positions of authority have a moral obligation to carry out the responsibilities assigned to them in an ethical manner as expected by society.

From the examples quoted it could be deduced that responsibility refers to being assigned a duty to perform. However, it also implies that it places an obligation on the person assigned the responsibility to act in a reasonable manner and assumes that the individual has the mental capacity to perform the duty assigned while accepting the moral obligation to give effect to the duty (cf. *Webster Universal Dictionary* 1968).

Accountability

The main legal source underlying accountability is found in the Constitution's Bill of Rights (Chapter Two of the Constitution of 1996). Equally important is Section 195 of the Constitution of 1996 to be discussed in the next section.

Basic values and principles governing public administration

Section 195(1) of the Constitution of 1996 concerns the basic values and principles governing public administration. The following examples from Chapter 10 are highlighted to illustrate the Constitution as the source of the principle of accountability:

- A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained requiring that any administrative action must comply with the accepted standards for correct, efficient and effective operations.
- Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted (Section 195(1)(b)) emphasising the need for officials and political office-bearers to operate in such a way that the citizens could be satisfied that all resources had been utilized effectively and efficiently and that results could be accounted for.
- Public administration must be accountable (Section 195(1)(f)) clearly repeats the earlier sections in the Constitution that activities related to policy, organisational structures, staffing, procedures, financial matters and control should be executed in such a manner that reasons could be provided for every action or inaction.
- Transparency must be fostered (Section 195(1)(g)) by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information. This section affirms the requirement that the public is entitled to information they may require to call a political office-bearer to account for his/her action or inaction. It also implies that any public action should be open to public scrutiny thus affording citizens the opportunity to establish the justification for the decisions and actions of political office-bearers and officials.

To highlight accountability in terms of the Constitution of 1996 and thus to discuss the need for accountability in the public service, the following statutory requirements are also provided:

- Section 92(2) of the Constitution of 1996: “Members of Cabinet are accountable collectively and individually to Parliament for the exercise of their powers and the performance of their functions”.
- Section 133(1) of the Constitution of 1996: “Members of the executive council of a province are accountable collectively and individually to the legislature for the exercise of their powers and the performance of their functions”.
- The Constitution of 1996 is silent concerning the matter of where accountability is vested in the case of municipalities. The general responsibilities of mayors are set out in Section 52 of the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003. Section 93 of the same Act vests the accountability for municipal finance in the accounting officer i.e. the municipal manager.
- In the case of the national and provincial spheres of government, the Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999 applies. Section 36 of the Act requires every department and every constitutional institution to have an accounting officer. The responsibilities of the accounting officer are set out in detail in Section 38 including the obligation to ensure that an effective system of financial and risk management, and internal control is established and maintained (Section 38(1)(a)). The accounting officer’s accountability function is clearly stated in Section 38(1)(a)(ii) by requiring that a system of internal audit must be established and to report (Section 38(1)(g)) any unauthorised, irregular or fruitless and wasteful expenditure to the Auditor-General (Section 40).
- In the case of the local sphere of government, municipalities are required to appoint a municipal manager in terms of Section 54A of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 (as amended by Act 7 of 2011). The Act is also quite clear on the accountability function of the municipal manager (*cf.* Section 55(3) of the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003).

It could be argued that once a function has been assigned to a minister or for that matter to any public official, the responsibility to perform that duty vests in that political office-bearer or official. That individual could then be called on to explain how the action was carried out and whether the moral obligation accompanying the function had been honoured as required in the Constitution. It should be emphasised that accountability and responsibility cannot be separated. Once a duty has been assigned to an official or political office-bearer that individual can be called upon to render account i.e. to explain why

an action had not been performed or had not been performed in accordance with the prescribed policy or procedure.

STATE INSTITUTIONS AND MECHANISMS SUPPORTING ACCOUNTABILITY IN A CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY

Although all the sections of the Constitution of 1996 carry equal value, Chapter 9 institutions, created to support democratic government, are probably one of the most important building blocks of the current South African system of government to ensure accountability. Provision is made for seven institutions, but only two will be alluded to for the purposes of the discussion on accountability.

Public Protector

The Public Protector is appointed in terms of Section 183 of the Constitution of 1996, for a non-renewable term of seven years. This provides the Public Protector with independence to carry out the duties assigned to the office without fear of being removed from office or of not being reappointed in case adverse findings are made which could embarrass a governmental institution or even a cabinet minister (including the President). The duties of the Public Protector include the following (Section 182 of the Constitution of 1996):

- to investigate any conduct in state affairs, or in public administration in any sphere of government, that is alleged or suspected to be improper or to result in any impropriety or prejudice;
- to report on that conduct; and
- to take appropriate remedial action.

The Public Protector may not investigate court decisions. Thus the Public Protector's functions concern the administrative implications of the affairs of the State. However, the Public Protector may investigate the actions of a minister if such action is deemed to be unethical or could result in wasteful or unauthorised expenditure. An important condition is also that a report by the Public Protector must be open to the public (Section 182(5) of the Constitution of 1996) unless exceptional circumstances require the report to be kept confidential.

The Public Protector's report entitled: *Secure in comfort* (Public Protector Annual Report No 25 of 2013/14) concerned the alleged "impropriety and unethical conduct relating to the installation and implementation of security and related measures at the private residence of the President of the Republic of South Africa" was compiled after receiving seven complaints from members of the public and a member of Parliament. The Public Protector found that a

number of measures, including buildings and items constructed and installed by the Department of Public Works were beyond what could reasonably be required for the security of the residence. Some of these measures were found to be unlawful, constituting improper conduct and could be classified as maladministration (Public Protector Annual Report No 25 of 2013/14). This case proves the role the Public Protector plays in accountability by identifying e.g. maladministration and found that the President should be ordered to pay at least a reasonable percentage of the cost of the measures that do not relate to security. The President was also called upon to reprimand the ministers involved for the “appalling manner” in which the Nkandla Project was handled (Public Protector Annual Report No 25 2013/14:41).

Notably, the crux of the findings of the report of the Public Protector was that the prescribed procurement processes were compromised and that the Department did not follow due processes. Thus it could be stated that the Department’s administrative system was abused and its managerial functions did not meet the supply chain management prescriptions.

Auditor-General

The Auditor-General is one of the most important bodies added to Parliament to exercise the controlling function of the executive. The Constitution of 1996, provides for the establishment of the Auditor-General in Sections 188 and 189. Section 189 obligates Parliament to appoint an Auditor-General for a fixed, non-renewable term of between five and seven years. It is thus the same principle that applies in the case of the Public Protector, i.e., the appointment is for one term only. This clearly establishes the independence of the Auditor-General implying that his/her findings could and should be totally objective and that a possible further appointment should not be a consideration when reporting to Parliament.

Section 188 of the Constitution of 1996 determines the functions of the Auditor-General. These include *inter alia*:

- an obligation (must) to audit and report on the accounts, financial statements and financial management of national and provincial state departments and administrations, municipalities and any other institution or accounting entity required by national legislation to be audited by the Auditor-General;
- an obligation to report on any institution funded by the National Revenue Fund or by a municipality or any other institution receiving public money for public purposes;
- an obligation to submit audit reports to the relevant legislature (Parliament, provincial legislature or municipal council) or any other authority prescribed by national legislation; and

- an obligation that all reports should be made public (thus ensuring that the financial affairs of public institutions are subject to public scrutiny).

The Auditor-General's reports are newsworthy and receive wide media coverage due to the requirement that they are subject to public intervention and the Auditor-General acts on behalf of Parliament. The Auditor-General has become part of the parliamentary tradition of independence as far as his/her reports are concerned.

One example which illustrates the effects of a political office-bearer's illegal involvement in administrative matters was when the Auditor-General reported on the case requested by National Treasury concerning the involvement of the executive mayor of the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality. The relevant executive mayor illegally entered into a contract on behalf of the municipality with a minor soccer league in Ribeiro Preto, Sao Paulo State in Brazil on 23 July 2008 (Auditor-General 2009-2010a:1). The case reflects the results of illegal action by a political office-bearer, for example, training of soccer players is not a function of a district municipality; the required competitive bidding process was not followed; liability in terms of the contract payable in foreign currency is prohibited in terms of the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003. The example clearly demonstrates that a political appointee, i.e. an executive mayor, does not possess executive powers. Although the executive mayor has political power to give guidance to the executive and to monitor performance no power had been assigned to that office to allow the council to enter into a contract or to spend funds from the municipal budget for a service not budgeted for.

Cases concerning impropriety regarding the manifestation of administrative and managerial accountability are regularly reported on by the Auditor-General. The relevant reports contain the detailed nature of the deficiency resulting in an adverse audit report (i.e. financial statements are fundamentally unreliable because the information on records on which financial statements are based, do not agree with those held by the auditors and is considered highly undesirable (Auditor-General 2012-2013:14). The following serves to illustrate the occurrence of the 'malady'.

The report of the Auditor-General for 2012-2013 contains a number of examples of auditees (institutions audited) that showed a lack of planning and lack of proper reporting according to performance targets. The majority (80%) of the departments of education, health and public works had material findings on their annual performance reports (Auditor-General 2012-2013:33). According to the Auditor-General's report these proved the inability of the relevant departments to adequately plan and manage their performance (Auditor-General 2012-2013:33). The Report also stated that the auditees did not achieve

20% or more of their planned targets as set in their performance reports. This clearly illustrates a major lack of efficiency in the particular institutions.

In the case of municipalities the situation regarding accountability for the performance of their duties is a matter of concern. In his report for 2010-2011 the AG found that 56% of the municipalities did not provide useful information (Auditor-General 2009-2010b:22); 38% provided information that was not reliable and 265 did not even provide the explanations required by the Auditor-General. The majority (83%) of the municipalities revealed unauthorised, irregular as well as fruitless and wasteful expenditure. In 72% of the cases material irregularities were found (Auditor-General 2009-2010b:22).

In his Consolidated General Report on the national and provincial audit outcomes (Auditor-General 2013-2014:14), the Auditor-General raised concerns regarding some financial irregularities in some departments. 51% of audit outcomes of provinces were still classified as “unqualified with findings”. The municipal audits were still being finalised when the Report was printed. However, the 2012-13 report found 41% of municipalities’ reports “unqualified with findings” (Auditor-General 2013-2014:22). He also expressed dissatisfaction that 49% of the auditees were slow in responding to improve their key controls to address risk areas (Auditor-General 2013-2014:28). Lack of leadership as cause for concern was raised in 35% of cases; lack of financial performance, and performance management were reported in 37% of cases in the year under consideration (Auditor-General 2013-2014:22).

These limited examples serve to illustrate the dire state of administrative and managerial competence in various public institutions. It also exemplifies the lack of adherence to prescribed procedures, policies and ethical guidelines by managers in public institutions thus inhibiting public accountability.

Legal accountability demands that appointed officials and political office-bearers must comply with the legal requirements of the duties assigned to them e.g. the Minister of Finance has to submit the annual budget to Parliament before a specific date; or an accounting officer is required to submit financial statements to the Auditor-General within five months after the end of a financial year (Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999 Section 40(1)(d)).

The Auditor-General reported that in the 2010-2011 financial year, 243 of the then 283 municipalities and 57 of the municipal entities submitted their financial statements within the prescribed time limit. This resulted in 14% of the municipalities and 5% of the municipal entities not being audited as required by law (Auditor-General 2011-2012-2011:21).

The Auditor-General stated in 2014 that in 33% of the cases where municipalities did not submit financial statements within the prescribed time limit it was reported that there had been instability in filling key positions. In 32% of the cases there had been “inadequate consequences for poor

performance and transgression” (Auditor-General 2013-2014:28). This clearly indicates that if little or inadequate steps are taken in managing an institution, accountability is not enforced. It also indicates that the legal prescriptions requiring the finalisation of financial reports within two months after the end of a financial year as required in Section 57 of the Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999, are not honoured.

The implication of the reports of the Auditor-General is quite obvious. The municipalities did not comply with the legal requirement by failing to submit the required report by the due date. This omission is a serious transgression of the requirement that a report should be submitted to the Auditor-General as the constitutional body supporting constitutional democracy.

Codes of conduct and professionalisation to ensure accountability

Different arrangements exist for the creation of codes of conduct to serve as guidelines for officials and political office-bearers. Codes of conduct are not legally enforceable rules demanding compliance or being subject to some form of penalty as is the case with a law passed by a legislative authority. However, some codes are contained as Schedules to a specific Act of Parliament. Transgressions of a code of conduct are viewed with the same trepidation by society as a transgression of a law. This implies that the accountable officer (acting as accounting officer) could also be dismissed or sanctioned for any violation of a code of conduct applicable to that particular office.

Schedule 2 of the Constitution of 1996 as a case in point contains the oath or solemn affirmation required when an office-bearer accepts the position of President or Deputy President. In the case of the President he/she has to: “solemnly swear and affirm that I will be faithful to the Republic of South Africa, and will obey, observe, uphold and maintain the Constitution and all other laws of the Republic...” The President also affirms that he/she will do justice to all; and devote him/herself to the wellbeing of the Republic and its people.

The Public Service has opted for a codified set of guidelines authorised by the Public Service Commission (Public Service Commission 2002). The Code is supposed to be made available to every public servant and serve as a guideline to ensure that public activities are not only legally correct, but also ethically sound. The Public Service’s Code of Conduct *inter alia* requires that public servants as employees:

- must be faithful to the Republic and honour the Constitution and abide thereby in the execution of their daily tasks;
- do not abuse their position in the Public Service to promote or prejudice the interests of any political party or interest group; and

- must be honest and accountable in dealing with public funds and uses the Public Service's property and other resources, effectively and efficiently, and only for authorised official purposes (Public Service Commission 2002).

The local sphere of government has also included its Code of Conduct for political office-bearers e.g. mayors, executive mayors, members of the executive committee and members of the mayoral committee in Schedule 1 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000. This Code *inter alia* requires a councillor not to:

- use his/her position for personal gain;
- request, solicit or accept any reward or gift; and
- except if provided by law, interfere in the management or administration of any department, give or purport to give an instruction to any employee, or obstruct the implementation of any decision.

The Code of Conduct for municipal officials is contained in Schedule 2 of the same Act. Significant requirements to be met by municipal officials to honour ethical actions include *inter alia*:

- at all times to execute the lawful policies of the municipal council;
- perform the functions of office in good faith, diligently, honestly and in a transparent manner; and promote and seek to implement the basic values and principles of public administration as contained in Section 195 of the Constitution of 1996; and
- not unduly influence or attempt to influence the council of the municipality.

With the Local Government: Municipal Systems Amendment Act 7 of 2011, an important addition was made to the Code by adding Section 14A, stating that a breach of the Code is grounds for dismissal. This addition clearly emphasises that the Code of Conduct has the power to relieve an official of his/her duties if the ethical prescripts are not followed. The Code of Conduct, therefore, carries the same weight as the legal conditions set in an Act of Parliament regarding corrective measures following the possible abuse of the ethical guidelines.

As noted before, professional accountability requires members of a profession e.g. engineers (for example in road building), medical practitioners or architects, to render account to the governing bodies of their respective professions for the manner in which they conducted their particular activities.

Thornhill and Hanekom (1995:196-197) refer to the following characteristics of a profession:

- An understanding of the worthiness of the public service.
- A conviction to serve society honestly and well.

- Adherence to a code of conduct, the violation of which will result in exclusion from the profession.
- Accumulated knowledge made available to the various members.
- The setting of standards of competence for admission to and promotion in the service and continuous effort to bring about the general acceptance of these standards; and
- Responsibility for the development of training opportunities for present and future members of the profession.

In the case of the public sector various professions are involved. In the case of health: medical practitioners, nurses and physiotherapists are required to set standards for training to protect the public and to perform specific duties to promote the health of patients in public as well as private health facilities. These practitioners have to meet and maintain the standards set by their professional bodies. Hence, the profession regulates its practitioners and calls members to account in cases of suspected misconduct e.g. unethical conduct.

The South African Council for Educators (SACE) is the professional body aimed at enhancing the status of the teaching profession through appropriate registration, management and professional development and the inculcation of a code of ethics for educators. As in the case of the health professions, SACE also regulates the educator's profession; calls members to account in cases of unprofessional conduct and may even suspend a member from practising if found guilty of misconduct in terms of the relevant legislation or the code of ethics.

The Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) was established in terms of the Engineering Profession Act 46 of 2000, as a statutory body for the engineering profession to regulate its practitioners. ECSA promotes a high level of education and training of practitioners, professionalism and the interests of the profession in the country. A member of the profession may be suspended if the code of ethics is transgressed or actions were not in accordance with the set standards.

The examples quoted serve to illustrate that accountability could be obtained by professionalising a specific occupation. The controlling council regulates the practitioners and ensures that users of the service provided by the professionals will meet the set standards. Thus the State actually delegates the accountability function to the profession concerned.

Administrative and managerial requirements for accountability

Various classifications of the functions, which must be performed for determining and promoting the "good life", were developed over the years. In the Journal of the Institute of Public Administration of Ireland (in Auriacombe and Van der

Waldt 2014:85), the functions and processes central to the operation of the public service were listed as follows:

The functions and processes “central to the operation of the public service include:

- identifying and responding to public needs
- setting strategic aims and directions
- deciding on the allocation of resources
- establishing autonomy, devolution and decentralisation
- choosing appropriate organisational structures
- integrating, coordinating and controlling independent units
- ensuring accountability
- aligning the legal framework
- specifying and evaluating performance
- maintaining capacity to adapt and innovate
- implementing change
- recruiting, developing and rewarding the right people
- satisfying customers/users (including government)” (Auriacombe and Van der Waldt 2014:86).

Countries following the British approach to the administration of the public sector make provision for a specific appointed official to be accountable for financial administration and management. This requires the official appointed as head of administration (Director-General) to be the accounting officer. The implication of the abovementioned statutory conditions is that the head of department (or municipal manager) must ensure that proper administrative arrangements are established to obtain effective and efficient service delivery. Thus the head of administration has to ensure that:

- proper administrative policies are established within which the functions of the institution can be performed;
- organisational arrangements are constructed to maintain clear lines of communication and lines of authority among all members of the personnel corps in the institution (department or municipality);
- procedures are codified in such a manner that every official could determine how each function must be performed to be able to render account to the political structure (minister, municipal council) to prove that an action had been performed efficiently and ethically acceptable to the norms of society;
- all human resource related functions are ethically and administratively justifiable;
- financial administration and management can withstand scrutiny by the Auditor-General in its report to the relevant legislative authority; and

- effective control measures are in place to enable the head of administration or a controlling body like the Auditor-General to report on the achievement of the stated objectives through the most effective use of resources.

Ensuring proper administrative arrangements is only one component of the head of administration's responsibilities. The second and equally important function is that of being the accounting officer. This latter function is of particular relevance to the case of accountability. This implies that the accounting officer (Director-General or a municipal manager) can personally be held accountable for any loss in assets or allocated funds due to any deficiency in the administrative or managerial arrangements of the particular institution. It must be emphasised that liability for financial inconsistencies is limited to the possible lack of effective administrative or managerial practices and not to unethical or criminal actions by an appointed official acting outside the parameters of the prescribed system established by the accounting officer (i.e. the head of administration).

Information as a mechanism for ensuring accountability

Information is a primary ingredient required to exercise control. The contemporary state administers and manages a wide variety of functions and data on which information is to be based, scattered across the whole spectrum of public activities involving issues like defence, safety and security, correctional services and pensions (In South Africa there are currently 39 state departments in the national sphere of government alone). To this must be added departments of nine provincial administrations and the departments of 276 municipalities). Information per se is of little value for accountability purposes if it does not relate the input (e.g. money, human resources, equipment and natural resources) to the results achieved to be able to establish whether resources used on behalf of society had been used efficiently. This dilemma has been recognised in most countries and mechanisms developed to measure the performance of public institutions including the performance of the political office-bearer and the appointed head of department.

Two further Acts which must be noted as prerequisites for information for the purpose of obtaining public accountability are:

- Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000; and
- Promotion of Administrative Justice Act 3 of 2000.

The first Act is of particular importance for the purposes of accountability as it compels public institutions to make information of its actions available to interested parties. This in turn enables the questioner to call the particular institution to account for any possible omission or inefficient or unethical right

of access to information. In fact the preamble to the Act states *inter alia* that the Act's purpose includes: "foster(ing) a culture of transparency and accountability in public and private bodies by giving effect to the right of access to information". The Act may be criticised for its various limiting conditions concerning grounds for refusal of access to information (Section 33 and Section 4 Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000). However, it remains one of the strongest legal measures available to any aggrieved party to compel a public institution to reveal information which could be used even in a court of law.

The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act 3 of 2000, is included in this discussion as its purpose is to "give effect to the right to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair" as required in the Bill of Rights (Preamble to the Constitution of 1996). It clearly entitles anyone to just administrative action and to possible remedies (Section 6 and Section 8 Promotion of Administrative Justice Act 3 of 2000) if any decision does not meet those primary requirements. It also clearly establishes the right of an affected party to call the relevant decision maker to account for a decision or even the failure to take a decision (Section 1(v) Promotion of Administrative Justice Act 3 of 2000).

In addition to the above legislation, The Protection of State Information Bill (B6B- 2010) was considered in Parliament but is as yet not signed by the President. The long title of the Bill provides for the protection of certain state information from alteration, deduction and unlawful disclosure and to regulate the manner in which state information may be protected. Clause 34 is of particular importance regarding the disclosure of information. This clause determines that classified information can only be made available in terms of the Promotion of Access to Information Act of 2000 if it has been declassified. Such classification which could be classified by the head of an organ of state (*cf.* Section 239 of the Constitution of 1996) is regulated in terms of clauses 10-14. Should the Bill be passed in its current format it could have a negative effect on the access to information held by the State, once it is classified, as it cannot be accessed unless it is declassified.

As noted before, accountability to the consumer of a product or service regarding the quality and quantity of the service as stated in the relevant policy documents e.g. a response to a citizen requesting information in accordance with the Promotion of Access to Information Act of 2000, implies that society as consumers of public services have to be satisfied with the quality and quantity of services provided. This requires a vigilant society that will react to any inefficient or ineffective service. The recent service delivery protests experienced in various municipalities bear testimony to society's efforts to call government to account for its perceived inability to meet the needs of citizens demanding basic services (water, electricity, refuse removal and sewerage) to every urban dweller.

Performance monitoring and evaluation as mechanisms to ensure accountability

Managerial developments of particular interest to the principle of accountability are the establishment of measures to determine the performance of public institutions. Once a mechanism has been developed to determine the performance of an executive institution it is possible to call the official in charge to account for non-performance.

The Department of Monitoring and Evaluation (DME) was established on 1 January 2010 to set standards for the measuring of the performance of national government departments. The DPME works in close cooperation with the National Planning Commission to set standards for improved outcomes across government (The Presidency 2014). The DPME developed the required standards in 2012 (Department of Monitoring and Evaluation 2013.2). The main purpose of the National Evaluation Policy Framework is to:

- improve policy or programme performance;
- evaluate to facilitate accountability;
- improve decision making should intervention be required; and
- ensure that knowledge could be increased to determine what works.

The final stage in performance evaluation is reporting on the objectives achieved and whether the utilisation of the resources relates positively to those results (Department of Monitoring and Evaluation 2013.10). Monitoring and evaluation as a function to assist in accountability is not discussed in detail. The object is merely to point out that a political office-bearer or head of administration can only be called to account if it can be proven that the required policy goals were not attained effectively and efficiently and to enable government to call an executive institution to account for failure to achieve its stated goals.

FACTORS INHIBITING ACCOUNTABILITY

Public employees are appointed to render services by which the general welfare of the public will be promoted. It can thus be justifiably expected of employees that they act in such a way that the greatest benefit for the public is attained and that they are able to account publicly for their actions. Factors can nevertheless put restraints on public accountability. In terms of public accountability, political office-bearers, chief officials and supervisors have constraints on their decisions and actions, whereby they must render account for their stewardship; and internal norms and values which guide the exercise of their authority, i.e. guide them in carrying out their legal and moral/ethical obligations and duties.

Unethical conduct

Public servants are appointed to provide services impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias (Constitution of 1996 Section 195(1)(d)). As noted before, this requires officials (and by implication politicians) to make decisions and to act in a manner that will be ethically acceptable. Actions complying with this principle would be morally defensible by all members of society. It also implies that honesty and objectivity should prevail and acknowledges the culture of the citizens. In South Africa conduct by officials and political office bearers must honour the contents of the Bill of Rights (Constitution of 1996) and no preferential treatment of family or friends should be tolerated.

Examples of unethical conduct by officials or even preventing accountability are contained in the annual reports of the Auditor-General and the Public Protector as demonstrated above. It is sufficient to prove the occurrence of unethical conduct militating proper accountability as (in)efficiency and (in) effectiveness cannot be proven.

Ignorance of citizens

In democratic states various arrangements have been made to allow citizens to remain in contact with their political representatives and officials in public institutions. However, the success of these contacts will depend on the way in which the citizens make use of the facilities available. In many developing democracies, such as South Africa, the majority of the citizens lack the ability to communicate with their representatives effectively or with the officials responsible for effecting government policy. Some members of society are also ignorant of the sources available and of their rights to demand an acceptable level of services (See Batho Pele principles). It is in particular the illiterate component of society that is often deprived of essential services and who are not able to determine what services they are entitled to, or the quality of the services they are entitled to. Consider in this regard Section 16 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 requiring municipalities to develop a culture of municipal governance that provides for community participation as well as the requirement that ward committees may be established to promote participation for those members of a community that do not directly participate in municipal matters such as women, illiterate people, other disadvantaged groups and the disabled (*cf.* Section 17(3) Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000).

In a well organised society where citizens have access to contemporary technological aids (e.g. computer), internet information concerning the public sector is available in real time. Thus if an unacceptable action is performed by a political office-bearer or public official it is usually reported immediately.

This allows citizens the opportunity to demand that reasons be provided via the printed or electronic news media within a reasonably short period. However, there are still a large number of poor South African citizens who do not have access to the most basic forms the news media (printed and electronic). In many cases these citizens are the most dependent on public services e.g. pension, disability grants, medical services, housing, transport and educational services. If the relevant public institutions fail to deliver those services some of the affected citizens are not even aware that they are entitled to such services. Notably, the case of the failure of the Department of Basic Education to deliver school books to rural schools in the Limpopo Province.

The ultimate demand for an explanation for the non-delivery of school books was initiated by one of the major political parties. The parents of the children involved in the unavailability of school books did not request the Department to provide answers as they had not even been aware that their children were disadvantaged due to managerial inefficiency by officials of the relevant department. This is one clear example of the ignorance of citizens thwarting public accountability.

Apathy of citizens creates the danger of government being allowed to act unethically or inefficiently without being called to account. The dictum still holds: a society gets the government it deserves. This implies that if voters vote a political party into power and they fail to demand that government responds to their concerns, inefficient services should be condoned. Voters as members of society are the gatekeepers. If they fail in their duty through lack of commitment to safeguard society against its own government they only have themselves to blame.

Corruption

In its most basic form corruption means to destroy the integrity of something (*Webster Universal Dictionary* 1968). A corrupt action refers to any action resulting from a person holding a position of authority to provide or to obtain benefits as a result of the position occupied and in conflict with existing policies, laws or other prescripts. This could occur when an official testing the roadworthiness of a vehicle would declare the vehicle roadworthy on the payment of a prearranged sum of money by the owner of the vehicle. The certificate is thus issued fraudulently and does not reflect the real roadworthiness of the vehicle. Corruption has occurred as the owner of the vehicle bribed the official to fraudulently issue a certificate of roadworthiness.

It must be borne in mind that corrupt practices always involve more than one person. There must be at least a potential beneficiary and someone in a particular position of authority that could provide the required certificate or

licence in a fraudulent manner. It is difficult to prove some cases of corruption as evidence must be provided concerning the benefit accrued to the recipient and the unauthorised use of power by an official or political office-bearer.

Corruption subverts political accountability as the bribe taker, becomes beholden to the bribe giver. Normal rules to ensure objectivity, honesty, fairness and reasonableness do not apply. The bribery action is an act of give and take. The principles of public administration (Section 195 Constitution of 1996) are ignored and political connectivity becomes the primary concern. It is argued that “every act of corruption involves a perversion of accountability” (Southern African Catholic Bishop’s Conference 2013:3) and erodes good quality leaders.

The State cannot be criticised for not acknowledging the dangers of corruption. The main issue is, not the mere recognition of the malady. The action or inaction of the State will largely determine the combatting ability and/or recurrence of corrupt activities. The adoption of the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act 12 of 2004, is a valiant effort of government to establish a framework to address corruption and its attendant guises. The Act defines corruption as any action when any person directly or indirectly accepts or agrees to accept any gratification from any other person whether for benefit of himself or herself or the other person (Section 3(a)). The Act also defines corrupt actions relating to members of the legislature (Section 7), judicial officers (Section 8) and members of a prosecuting authority (Section 9). Of particular significance is the fact that corrupt activities are defined in detail in the relevant legislation. It also sets out the procedures to follow in the case of suspected corrupt activities (*cf.* Section 22). Penalties are provided for in Sections 27 and 28. However, the legislation itself is no guarantee that corrupt actions will not occur. Corruption is a basic danger in any public activity, especially as there are numerous possibilities for politicians and officials to succumb to the enticement of giving or accepting favours involving large amounts of money (the so called ‘arms deal’ of a few decades ago bears testimony to this danger).

The problem of corruption and maladministration is widespread in the South African public service. This serves to undermine the effectiveness of public institutions and directly contradicts the principles underlying the spirit of *Batho Pele*. In this respect, citizens must be made aware of mechanisms such as the Anti-Corruption Arm within the Public Service Commission, the Public Protector and the Auditor-General which have been established to tackle this problem. In the interests of democratic accountability, citizens must be able to report instances of corruption or unethical behaviour on the part of public servants without fear of victimisation or reprisal. Hence, accountability remains the primary requirement to ensure that citizens can rest assured that public actions could be justified.

Unproductiveness

An official may be required to issue x number of passports per day. Assuming that the output is the optimum number that can be produced, the establishment will make provision for one official, one desktop computer and a telephone for completion of the assigned number of passports i.e. the maximum that could be produced with the available resources (time, equipment, finance, human resources and other facilities). However, if the particular official only spends four hours per day productively, the required number of passports will not be issued. The question is then how the supervisor could be called to account for the possible delay in issuing passports. It should be obvious that accountability is compromised as any response could assume that the particular official has produced the required number, but that other external factors prevented full productivity such as the lack of equipment, computer failure or incomplete information submitted by the applicant.

In the case of ethical conduct, productiveness assumes that a positive work ethic exists and that each employee is gainfully occupied. It is accepted that every citizen is now entitled to equal services and that the services delivered by the public sector have increased exponentially since democratic government was established in 1994. Considering the increase in public services since 1994, some concerns can be raised.

Failure by the legislature

Parliament is the supreme legislative authority in South Africa. It is thus the responsibility of Parliament to call the executive (Cabinet) to account for the extent to which policies authorised by Parliament had been effected. Should the debates in Parliament during the past 20 years be considered it will become clear that members of the ruling alliance (ANC, SACP and COSATU) without exception defended the actions of the executive. The members of the opposition parties may criticise a minister or other public functionary for unacceptable behaviour/action or inaction, but when a division is called for, the ruling alliance will use its voting power to ensure that no negative decision is taken. The most recent case involves the parliamentary committee that was appointed to investigate the case of the upgrading of the security of Nkandla, the private residence of President Zuma.

The Parliamentary Committee appointed by the Speaker to investigate the justification of the cost of the Nkandla project consisted of 12 members. Seven members were appointed to represent the ruling party alliance. Five members represented opposition parties. When the issue was raised of the procedures and timeframe for the investigation, one of the members representing the ruling

party simply stated as a member of the ANC and he acts in accordance with his mandate. The composition of the committee resulted in the matter not being discussed by Parliament. The committee simply echoed the instructions of the party they represented. Thus Parliament as the supreme legislative authority failed in its duty to call the political office-bearer (in this case President Jacob Zuma) to account for his possible involvement in the upgrading of the security measures at his private homestead. The ruling party simply misused its majority in the committee to thwart any attempts by the opposition members to call the President to account for his alleged involvement in the authorisation of the project.

Misgovernment

Government is required to provide policy directions, guide the implementation of policy; monitor the implementation of policies; and to perform such functions as assigned to it by the President (Constitution of 1996 Section 92(1)). Ministers are also individually and collectively accountable to Parliament for the exercise of their powers and functions. This implies that in the case of a policy failing to achieve its stated objectives the minister as well as Cabinet collectively can be held accountable for the lack of giving effect to a policy authorised by the legislature.

During the period 1994 to 2014 no clear example could be found of a minister being dismissed for a department's failure to attain objectives. Some examples exist of ministers being relieved of their portfolios in a Cabinet reshuffle, but no reasons had been offered by the President that the changes had been due to a minister's inability to reach stated policy objectives.

CONCLUSION

The article explained the notion of accountability in the public sector as a constitutional imperative. Public accountability was explained as a requirement for responsible, open and transparent rendering of account to superiors. It can be justifiably expected of all elected politicians and appointed officials to act in such a way that the greatest benefit for all members of the public is attained and that they are able to account publicly for their actions. Only actions that are ethically acceptable will however be acceptable to the public. Public accountability should thus always be ethically conducted.

The maintenance of the democratic requirement is of public importance in government because in essence, democracy means government for the people, by the people and to the people. The democratic requirement places an obligation on office-bearers and officials to act within the limits of their discretionary powers, not to misuse their authority and to treat all people as equal in the eyes of the law.

In addition to the above, it is also expected of elected political office-bearers and public officials to treat all members of the public in a fair and reasonable manner. The question of what is fair and reasonable, is likewise a value judgement and thus linked to ethical considerations. Actions will be fair and reasonable if laws and decisions are applied justly to all. An action will be regarded as fair and reasonable if decisions are balanced, actions are taken timeously, legally and with thoroughness and the integrity and honesty of political office-bearers and officials are beyond dispute.

Notably, the article highlighted examples where public accountability is not enforced as detailed in the Constitution of 1996 or other relevant legislation. The norm of ethical conduct also seemed no longer to be considered a primary requirement for political office-bearers and officials in positions of authority to exercise their administrative and managerial duties effectively and efficiently.

Public administration and management is facing a crucial dilemma. If the requirement should be promoted that society is the primary beneficiary of any public action then the mechanisms to enforce public accountability must be applied without fear or favour. However if party political survival is the major driving force of any public action and the State is seen as “the place of eating”, Section 195(1) of the Constitution of 1996 could be deleted and the Bill of Rights amended to provide for political expediency. Ethical lapses will continue to plague the management of public affairs. That is the price of human nature. Its excesses can be limited but never eliminated.

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Public administrators and maladministration

A negation of just administrative action

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ABSTRACT

South Africa's new constitutional dispensation changed the world of public administrators two decades ago in the sense that their administrative actions are since 1996 constitutionally, and since 2000, also legislatively prescribed. In spite of this, public administrators (and political office bearers) continue to make themselves guilty of maladministration (and misgovernment). This article commences with a general overview of Public Administration in order to set the milieu in which public administrators must operate, and eventually links the proper conduct and actions of public administrators with selected administrative law principles. The selected administrative law principles are derived from the principles of the constitutionally entrenched right to just administrative action. The article does not address legal interpretations of Administrative Law, but addresses important principles of proper administration obtained from the ambit of the principles of just administrative action. The article shows that the manifestation of maladministration and misgovernment can *inter alia* be attributed to a disregard for the administrative law principles of just administrative action.

INTRODUCTION

Public Administration is the academic discipline that, over the years, has developed around the administrative functions of government. Although it is a distinct field with its own unique locus and focus, it draws from other fields such as Political Science, Business Economics and Public Law.

It is imperative, in the perspective of this article, for public administrators to act within the boundaries of the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act 3 of 2000

(PAJA). However, one needs some background knowledge of Administrative Law, the body of law from which PAJA was developed, in order to properly understand what it communicates to public administrators. The aim of this article is to emphasise the importance of understanding the administrative law principles of just administrative action in curtailing misgovernment and maladministration by political office bearers and public administrators. Administrative Law has adapted with the shift from the previous dispensation, where government ruled with absolute authority, to the new constitutional dispensation, where the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1996 (hereafter referred to as the Constitution) demands that government must justify its decisions and actions.

The hypothesis is that public administrators and political office bearers are either ill-informed or indifferent to the legislative and judicial rules that prescribe their administrative conduct. The methodology was to examine the scientific field of Public Administration in order to arrive at its current locus and focus; the physical environment *in which* public administrators must operate, and the focal point of academic deliberation. Certain administrative law principles, which are recognised as foundational principles of Public Administration, and which are prevalent, especially under the Constitution, are subsequently linked to *how* public administrators should act in their administrative capacity. The article then evaluates whether, in situations where public administrators and political office bearers are suspected or accused of maladministration and misgovernment, their actions can be linked to non-compliance with the established requirements. The criteria for evaluation were developed from the inherent and objective administrative law principles of just administrative action, and are depicted under the three pillars of lawfulness, procedural fairness and substantive fairness. To establish whether there is a link between the criteria for evaluation on the one side and maladministration and misgovernment on the other side, prominent media releases on maladministration were first selected and evaluated against the criteria. Further, to eliminate the presence of subjectivity and to verify the initial results, all the cases captured in the 2014/2015 Investigation Report of the Public Protector up to 1 October 2014 were evaluated against the same criteria. In both instances it was found, without exception, that maladministration and misgovernment by public officials and political office bearers are linked to the non-compliance of the principles of just administrative action.

The purpose of the following section is to place Public Administration and its role in guiding the public sector in perspective.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The theory on Public Administration in this article precedes the theory on selected administrative law principles for the following reasons. Firstly, the article is written

from a public administration/management perspective and is intended to address a public administration problem that can be solved by public officials and political office bearers. Secondly, an overview of Public Administration/Management as an academic discipline is given to illustrate that the focal point of deliberations on the discipline, despite differences between the generic view and innovative approach, remains the generic functions of Public Administration/Management. These functions are performed by government employees, classified as the administrative executive, and while performing these functions the said officials often transgress the rules of just administration and become the perpetrators of maladministration. Thirdly, the reunification of politics and Public Administration is also mentioned, as politicians who act in an administrative capacity are also classified as administrative executives, and they also transgress the rules of just administration and thereby commit maladministration. Further, a dogged pursuit of a political ideology, without adhering to the principles of just administration, inevitably results in misgovernment and maladministration. The application of the field of Public Administration/Management therefore cannot stand alone from politics.

Denhardt and Denhardt (2009:2) define Public Administration as “the management of public programs”. It is not easy to find single sentence definitions of Public Administration by modern authors of academic books. They are cautious such simplistic definitions could do injustice to the complexity and interdisciplinary characteristics of the field of study. Jreisat (2002:45) explicitly states that Public Administration bonds with a variety of study fields. Fox, Schwella and Wissink (2004:2) warn about the imprecision of equating Public Administration with Public Management. According to them Public Management is a specialised field of Public Administration, and Public Administration should be defined in the broadest sense. Their definition of Public Administration is “that system of structures and processes, operating within a particular society as environment, with the objective of facilitating the formulation of appropriate governmental policy, and the efficient execution of the formulated policy”.

Rosenbloom’s (in Denhardt and Denhardt 2009:4) view, when he relates the three functions of government to the role and functions of public administrators, further illustrates the interdisciplinary nature of Public Administration. Firstly, the managerial approach by public administrators relates to the executive function of government and is concerned with the management and organisation of public institutions. Secondly, the political approach links with government’s legislative function with its basis in constitutional values such as the protection of the dignity of individuals, the equality of people and the liberty of citizens. The third idea, the legal approach, attaches to the judicial function of government. Here the public administrator adjudicates and adheres to and enforces the law.

For South African scholars, J.N.N. Cloete is regarded as the founding father of the *generic view* of Public Administration (also termed the *traditional*

approach with its roots in Woodrow Wilson's 1887 publication, *The Study of Administration*) (Hanekom, Rowland and Bain 1993:60; Thornhill 2012:v).

The original generic view of Public Administration separates administration from politics and postulates certain generic management functions as the core focus. Typically these functions will be variants of five or more of the following: Policy Making, Planning, Organising, Leading and/or Motivation, Control, Staffing, Directing, Coordinating and Budgeting (Hanekom *et al.* 1993:62, Denhardt and Denhardt 2009:164). Thornhill recently reverberates Cloete's (in Thornhill 2012:86) view that these typical functions of the administrative executive "are collectively known as public administration".

Critique has been levelled against the generic view of Public Administration by scholars of the so-called "New Public Administration", which appeals for the reunification of Public Administration and politics. The critique is summarised under the following four categories:

- Relevance. The generic view does not address the realities of modern day public life. Its management focus of does not adequately address the political environment and the repercussions of public administration and therefore the generic/traditional approach is in danger of becoming irrelevant;
- Values. The generic public administrator is too descriptive, too institution oriented, too value neutral, and should be less generic, more prescriptive, more client-impact oriented and more normative;
- Social Equity. Not enough importance is given to economic and social disparities and the basic concern of the public administration should be directed to the enhancement of life opportunities for all social groups;
- Social Change. The status quo allows too many power interests in bureaucratic permanent institutions and ways should be implemented to actively bring about institutionalised change (Nasrullah 2005:201).

If one evaluates the above critique against a contemporary publication, as recent as 2012, by a recognised scholar of the generic view on Public Administration in South Africa (Thornhill's 2012 publication), one finds that not all of the critique above is fair. The critique that the political environment is not sufficiently taken into account is countered when the generic view by South African academics pronounces that there are three foundations that serve as the guiding tenets of Public Administration; one of them being the nature of the political milieu of the country. It elaborates on principles such as the supremacy of the Constitution, political supremacy of the legislature, public accountability and the tenets of democracy (Cloete 1998:91). Thornhill (2012:92), as a scholar of the generic view, reiterates that the reality is that public administration is the consequence of political processes and its actions take place in a political environment.

With regards to the critique on values, Cloete (1998:107), Thornhill (2012:109) as well as Hanekom *et al.* (1993:63) make it clear that the pillars upon which Public Administration is built are firstly *social values*, secondly the nature of the political milieu of the country as mentioned above, and thirdly Hanekom *et al.* (1993:63) (who incorporate Thornhill's view) add the requirements of Administrative Law. Social values address the country's constitutional provisions, and related values such as fairness and reasonableness, balanced decisions, thoroughness, probity and finally effectiveness, efficiency and economy of government projects.

In South Africa it has been stated that Fox, Schwella and Wissink depart from the generic view in the sense that they explicitly adopt the open system contingency approach to management, which stresses the importance of the environment in which public administrators unavoidably have to operate (Havenga 2002:37). They distinguish between Public Administration and Public Management and are of the opinion that *albeit* an important component, Public Management is but one of many components in the broader field of Public Administration. Their Public Management model clearly shows that the playing field and conditions under which public administrators must perform are determined by the general (political, economic, social, cultural and technological) and specific (suppliers, regulators, competitors and consumers) environments (Fox *et al.* 2004:18).

Havenga terms their approach the *innovative approach* and enunciates their criticism of the South African generic view under the three captions of reductionism, reification and, similar to the new public administrationists, relevance. Under reductionism it is concluded that the generic view reduces Public Administration to six administrative functions (the generic management functions mentioned earlier). Reification is used to claim that theorists who served as public officials mistake practice for theory, and therefore practice instead of intellectual ideas becomes theory, and under relevance it is claimed that the generic view does not take into account the dynamics of the ever-changing political, economic, social, cultural and technological environment in which public managers must operate (Havenga 2002:36).

Once again the critique does not seem fair. The generic view may not explicitly mention the environment as a topic, but if one studies the scope and content of Thornhill's 2012 publication it is clear that the changing environment as the locus of public administrators is fully recognised. Further, a perusal of the innovative approach of Fox, Schwella and Wissink in their 2004 publication, shows that the largest section of their book is devoted to the generic management (administrative) functions of the generic view. Rowland (in Hanekom *et al.* 1993:66) rightly states that "both Cloete and Schwella, ... conform to the tradition inherent in academic thought by implicitly accepting the

generic administrative/management functions as an *a priori* focus for the study and practice of public administration”, with Cloete and Schwella representing the generic view and innovative approach respectively.

Irrespective of the different viewpoints, it remains a fact that the generic administrative/management functions are accepted as a key focus of Public Administration. It is also known that these functions are performed by political office bearers and government officials/public administrators, from the highest ranking office bearer to the lowest ranking official. That is one of the distinguishing elements of the locus of Public Administration: the fact that the functions of the field are performed by employees of the government (public sector), as opposed to the field of Business Economics where the functions are performed by individuals in, or employees of, the private sector. As explained later, these generic administrative/management functions are also intrinsically linked with Administrative Law, as the actions of the state administration, in performing its functions, are regulated by Administrative Law.

Table 1 is a simplified representation of the structure of South Africa’s public sector.

Table 1: Structure of South Africa’s public sector

	Legislature	Executive		Judiciary
		Political executive	Administrative executive	
National level	Parliament National Assembly and National Council of Provinces	President and Cabinet	State departments Director-Generals and public officials	Constitutional court Supreme Court of Appeal
Provincial level	Provincial legislature Members of the Provincial Legislator	Premier and Members of the Executive Council	Provincial government departments Director-Generals and public officials	Provincial High Courts
Local level	Municipal council	Mayor and Municipal Council	Municipal government departments Town Planning, Fire Fighting, Metropolitan Police, etc.	Magistrate courts

Adapted from Thornhill 2012

Table 1 shows the traditional branches of government in a democracy, namely the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. Cloete (1998:18) and Thornhill (2012:5) further divide the executive between the political and administrative executive; the main distinction being that the political executives are elected by the nation's voters whereas the administrative executives are appointed according to national legislation (Public Service Act 1994, as amended by Act 30 of 2007) and the rules and regulations of the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) (DPSA 2014). As will be explained later, with the interface between Public Administration and Administrative Law, this article's focus is on the administrative executive (as well as partially on members of the political executive, but only when they act in an administrative capacity). It is the administrative executive that performs the administrative functions of the generic view, or put otherwise, the management functions of the innovative approach.

Table 1 further shows the three levels of government, and depicts that each branch of government takes place on national, provincial and local level. The judiciary does not strictly fit into the three levels of government, as the courts from, the highest (Constitutional Court and Supreme Court of Appeal) to the lowest (magistrate courts) are all national institutions. Their hierarchy is determined by the jurisdiction mandated to them, and in the case of Provincial High Courts and magistrates courts, also the geographical area, but these are not related to the specific level of government (Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DJCD) Courts 2014, Burns and Beukes 2006:461).

Recognised authors on Public Administration in South Africa agree that, apart from the political milieu and social values, Administrative Law is one of the principles or norms or part of the foundation upon which Public Administration is built (Hanekom *et al.* 1993:63, Van der Walt and Helmbold 1995:8, Thornhill 2012:114, Fox *et al.* 2004:249). One may say that Administrative Law is one of the sources of Public Administration. Similar views are held by international authors on Public Administration. In the United States of America, Administrative Law is the body of law that covers the application of their Administrative Procedure Act, the act that governs the rule making of their administrative agencies (Denhardt and Denhardt 2009:67). A British publication on global Administrative Law incorporated the viewpoints of authors from Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Uruguay, Venezuela, Italy, Portugal and Spain. It implies that globally the statutory governance of administrations are similar in that they are all grounded on the principles and mechanisms of an administrative law nature (Kingsbury in Robalino-Orellana and Muñoz 2010:ix-xv).

The next section will focus on certain principles of Administrative Law that serve as guidelines for the public administration. The capacity of the article does not allow the incorporation of all the relevant principles, but important applicable themes will be examined.

SOUTH AFRICAN ADMINISTRATIVE LAW GUIDELINES FOR A JUST PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The following definitions or explanations are given for Administrative Law:

- “It is a branch of law concerning an essential component of the State, which is its Public Administration, its organization and functioning, as well as the legal relationship established between the public entities and the citizens or individuals” (Brewer-Carías in Robalino-Orellana and Muñoz 2010:343),
- “General administrative law is the body of law governing the administration in general, prescribing general rules and principles for the lawful exercise of administrative power” (DJCD Benchbook 2014),
- Administrative law is that branch of public law dealing with the actual functioning of government” (Hanekom *et al.* 1993:182),
- “[translated from the Afrikaans] Administrative law is that part of public law which regulates the organisation, authority and conduct of the state administration” (Wiechers 1986:2). Burns maintains that Wiechers’ definition is still relevant today and publishes his definition as “...that section of public law which governs the organisation, powers and actions of the state administration” (Burns and Beukes 2006:3).

If one expands on and dissects the definition of Wiechers (as adopted by Burns and Beukes) into the components of Public Law, organisation, powers, actions and state administration, the distinctiveness of Administrative Law is revealed. The following discussion to explain the definition draws on the publications of Wiechers (1986:1-30), Burns & Beukes (2006:3-25) and Burns (2013:3-19) whose deliberations seem to be in agreement.

Public Law—one of the distinguishing differences between Public Law and Private Law is that the public law relationship is characterised by the presence of state authority, whereas the private law relationship is usually based on consensus or agreement. The administrative law (as part of Public Law) relationship is encountered between government organs *inter se* or between government bodies and other subjects such as officials in subordinate positions and the citizens of the country.

Organisation—the government may only organise itself according to the law. In other words the creation (and termination) of administrative organisations must be in accordance with enabling statutes.

Powers—the state administration may not exceed its powers (*ultra vires*), and should always act within the boundaries of the enabling legislation/empowering statute (*intra vires*).

Actions—Administrative Law determines that the actions of the state administration are not only lawful, but also procedurally fair, and that the

consequences of the actions of the state administration are just and reasonable for citizens and subordinate officials.

State administration—the state administration can be seen as the administrative executive branch of government (various state departments and as mentioned before also the political executive but only when they act in an administrative capacity, such as when the President pardons a prisoner) as well as parastatals, such as Telkom, which provides a public service. Principles of Administrative Law even apply to institutions such as rugby unions. The reason for this is the power position that such institutions enjoy over for example rugby clubs that are in a subordinate position in the hierarchical organisation.

The above clarification of the definition of Administrative Law already explains the reason for the existence of this part of Public Law. To elaborate on this, the state administration has power, and concurrent with the possession of power, is the possibility to abuse this power. On the other hand, the citizens have rights, and the possibility of infringement on their rights by the state administration, is a real possibility. As a matter of fact, the violation of rights of citizens, through the abuse of power by the state administration is an actual reality. The state administration's actions that constitute abuse of power are not always acts in bad faith (*mala fide*). Even actions that are done in good faith and with good intentions (*bona fide*) can be unlawful or infringe on the rights of citizens (or subordinates). For example, a public administrator that authorises old age pension to a young person due to the recipient's poor socio-economic circumstances may have good intentions with his actions, but it amounts to the abuse of public power and unlawful action. The reason for the existence of Administrative Law is thus to protect the rights of citizens and subordinates against the abuse of power by the state administration.

This brings the discussion to the supreme law of South Africa, the Constitution. Section 2 dictates that "This Constitution is the supreme law of the Republic; law or conduct inconsistent with it is invalid, and the obligations imposed by it must be fulfilled". Public administrators are directed by section 33 of the Constitution; everyone's right to just administrative action. Further, the obligation on government to enact national legislation in order to give effect to this right was fulfilled on 20 November 2000, when the PAJA came into operation. PAJA is an example of an act in the ambit of general administrative law, because it binds all of the state administration on national, provincial and local level. Particular administrative law on the other hand regulates a specific area of administration, where for example specific acts provide specific powers to specific state administrators to perform specific duties such as to govern fisheries, vehicle licensing, immigration or state tendering procedures respectively. PAJA does not provide for powers for specific state departments but prescribes to all state administrators which actions constitute just administrative action. It follows that

if state administrators do not follow these prescripts, or act inconsistent with the prescripts then their action will be unjust administrative action and will violate everyone's or an individual's right to just administrative action. The action will thus be unlawful. Another example of such a prescriptive act that binds all of the state administration is the Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000 (PAIA) (Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRC) 2014).

Table 1 is useful in explaining some administrative law principles. One should bear in mind that Administrative Law is a specialised branch of Constitutional Law, therefore many administrative law principles are derived from Constitutional Law and constitutional principles. A quick distinction between the two branches of law is that Constitutional Law regulates the interaction and relationship between the higher echelons of government (horizontal on the apex of Table 1), whereas Administrative Law finds application vertically under the administrative executive of Table 1 (Wiechers 1986:9, Burns and Beukes 2006:15).

Table 1 further illustrates the concept of *trias politica*; the separation of powers between the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. These days it is accepted that the initial absolute separation of powers as pronounced by Montesquieu does not realise in modern democracies. There is some meddling by each branch into the domain of the other. Burns (2013:75) explains for example that the President as the head of the executive is elected by the legislature, and the higher order judges of the judiciary are appointed by the executive (President), and acts by the legislature must be assented to by the executive (President). It is also true that the judiciary can declare any legislation by the legislature or the executive as unconstitutional and therefore invalid. The fact is that the concept of separation of powers is endemic of South Africa's constitutional system. The Constitution, sections 43, 85 and 165 makes distinctions between the Republic's highest legislative, executive and judicial authority and powers respectively.

The Constitution, section 1(c), also codifies the concept of *rule of law* into the constitutional system. Further, section 165(5) reads: "An order or decision issued by a court binds all persons to whom and organs of state to which it applies". In other words, in essence South Africans may not be governed by arbitrary subjective individuals or coalitions, but by a government whose administrative conduct and decisions must be authorised by law, because no one is above the law. The United Nations' (United Nations 2014) view on the rule of law includes: "...adherence to the principles of supremacy of law, equality before the law, accountability to the law, fairness in the application of the law, separation of powers, participation in decision-making, legal certainty, avoidance of arbitrariness and procedural and legal transparency". It follows that if the state administration does not abide by this principle of the rule of

law one may as a matter of last resort approach the courts for judicial review of the administrative action in question – and then the state administration *must*, not *may*, bring that court decision into effect, as is the case with all findings or decisions of the courts on any other matter. Should the state administration not bring the courts’ decision into effect, the country will be well on its way to mob rule.

South Africa’s Department of Justice and Constitutional Development rightly acknowledges that PAJA: “...does not exhaustively set out the duties of administrators in relation to the lawful, reasonable and fair exercise of public power” (DJCD Benchbook 2014:32). In other words, PAJA does not (nor is its duty to) provide for the foundational understanding of everyone’s right to *just administrative action*. PAJA’s sections 3 and 4 do to an extent address procedural fairness and reasonableness, but a deeper understanding of the principles of just administrative action, as stipulated by section 33(1) of the Constitution, is needed by public administrators and is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Just Administrative Action

Just administrative action		
Lawfulness	Procedural Fairness	Substantive Fairness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Constitution • Empowering legislation • Prescriptive legislation • Discretionary powers • Requirements relating to the author of the act/ public administrator • Requirements relating to the form of administrative acts • Requirement relating to the purpose of the administrative act • Requirement of <i>bona fides</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>nemo iudex</i> rule • The <i>audi alterim partem</i> doctrine • The doctrine of legitimate expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationality • Reasonableness • Proportionality

Adapted from Burns 1998

Table 2 portrays that the pillars upon which the right to just administrative action rests are lawfulness, procedural fairness and substantive fairness. The pillar of *lawfulness* entails all legislation as well as the common law principles related to Administrative Law, including technical processes and procedures which must be followed. The *procedural fairness* pillar holds that public administrators must

follow entrenched common law procedures when they act, procedures such as to give an implicated party an *ex ante facto* opportunity to put his/her side forward, and the absence of bias. The *substantive fairness* pillar is about the consequence or effect of the administrative action in question on subjects in subordinate positions, and whether the public administrator was rational in his decision making, and would a reasonable person of a certain class or status perceive the administrative action to be reasonable and fair.

The three pillars above are the sum of the requirements (in the sense that no pillar may be excluded) that must be met by public administrators in person and or the administrative actions they perform in order for the action/s to qualify as just administrative action. It may sound as a contradiction in terms, but the word *unlawful* is used as an umbrella term to describe administrative action that does not comply with the requirements of just administrative action. Table 2 however portrays lawfulness as one of the three pillars of just administrative action. This is done in order to draw a distinction between the three categories of requirements.

It is important to note that the requirements of all three pillars must be met (Wiechers 1986:194-286, Burns 1998:125-196, Burns and Beukes 2006:197-213). A public administrator's action may for instance be lawful in the sense that he/she acted within the boundaries of all relevant legislation (*intra vires*), and he/she are properly qualified and transgressed no requirement under the *lawfulness* pillar, while the effect of his/her action is *substantially fair*, but he/she was noticeably biased while performing the action. The action will then not meet the requirements of the *procedurally fair* pillar, and will thus not meet the requirements of just administrative action, and will therefore be branded as unlawful administrative action. It is further a necessity that all the requirements of each individual pillar be met, or that no requirement is transgressed, in order to comply. For example, under the pillar of lawfulness in Table 2, a public administrator may once again have seemingly acted within the boundaries of all relevant legislation, used his/her discretion properly, did not transgress any prerequisite relating to the form of his/her administrative action, and acted *bona fide* for an authorised purpose, but he/she delegated his/her powers to an unauthorised administrator. The action cannot then be lawful because one of the requirements relating to the author of the act was not complied with. The same applies for the other two pillars of just administrative action.

To summarise, the requirements for just administrative action will only be met if there is complete horizontal compliance with all three pillars of Table 2, together with complete vertical compliance with each individual pillar. The contents of Table 2 thus serve as criteria to evaluate whether public officials and administrators comply with the requirements of just administrative action.

One may give the concept of just administrative action a scientific formula as follows: $JAA = L + PF + SF$; where JAA = Just Administrative Action, L = Lawfulness, PF = Procedural Fairness and SF = Substantive Fairness.

Table 2 assumes a reasonable measure of administrative law knowledge, which is knowledge on the principles of just administrative action, which public administrators should have in order to comply effectively with the prescripts of PAJA. Rather than explaining each component of Table 2, the next section will by way of example show the correlation of misgovernment and maladministration by executive political office bearers and public managers, with the transgression of these deeper principles of just administrative action as well as with constitutional principles. In doing so further clarity on some of Table 2's components will be obtained.

MISGOVERNMENT AND MALADMINISTRATION: POLITICAL OFFICE BEARERS, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATORS AND THE PRINCIPLES OF JUST ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

Compliance with the principles of just administrative action will, as Cloete (in Thornhill 2012:93) put it, prevent "... the legislatures from passing *malenactments*, the governmental office-bearers from practising *misgovernment*, and the [public] officials from committing *maladministration*".

In South Africa the President is the highest executive authority. It was widely alleged in the media that certain irregularities was prevalent with security upgrades to the eventual amount of R246 million at the private residence of the President at Nkandla. Seven complaints (including by members of the ordinary public and a Member of Parliament) were lodged with the Public Protector, Advocate Thuli Madonsela. The Public Protector (established under sections 181(1)(a) and 182 of the Constitution) investigated these allegations and reported on it under the title "Secure in Comfort" (Public Protector 2014 Report No 25 of 2013/2014). The Public Protector found that the President was personally liable to pay for all upgrades that were not related to security, and that the Minister of Police and the National Treasury should assist him in determining the amount due. The President is required by law to reply to parliament on the report. In his reply, the President stated that it is up to the Police Minister to determine whether he owes anything (Public Protector 2014 Report No 25 of 2013/2014, Citi Press [South African Press Association (SAPA)] 2014, SABC (SAPA) 2014).

If one accepts the above as true, then important administrative law principles are neglected. One of the principles is that the state administration may not exceed its powers, and may only act within the boundaries of the powers as stipulated by law. The Police Minister will thus act *ultra vires* if he, as Madonsela

states in a follow up letter to the President, reviews the decisions of the Public Protector, as there are no legal grounds under which the Minister can assume such power (SABC (SAPA) 2014). A further principle relevant to the situation is the prohibition on unlawful delegation. Discretionary powers may only be delegated by and to expressly legally authorised state administrators (Burns 1998:143, Wiechers 1986:210, Burns and Beukes 2006:297, Burns 2013:330). As implied in Madonsela's follow up letter to the President, neither the President nor the Minister of Police is authorised by law to review the decisions of the Public Protector, it will thus be an unlawful action by the President to delegate such powers, as well as unlawful by the Minister to accept the delegation (Kgosana 2014:1).

A further principle of Administrative Law and just administrative action under the lawfulness pillar is that the public administrator must be properly qualified for a specific administrative function in order to make decisions. This is one of the common law rules relating to the state administrator and is in legal terms referred to as *ratione personae*. If this rule is examined from a law/legal viewpoint it entails that only a public/state administrator with the required professional qualification, or status, or expertise may decide on specific matters or hold specific positions. Many examples exist to explain this rule. It is common knowledge that a judge or magistrate in the country's judicial system must at least have a tertiary qualification in law, and that a person with only qualifications in for example medicine will not qualify to be appointed. If an enabling statute authorises a principal of a school to expel a learner on certain grounds, it will not suffice if a vice-principal makes the decision to expel. An example from the previous governmental dispensation is that a secretary of a town council does not have the same status as a town clerk, and may therefore not make the same level decisions as a town clerk (Burns 1998:142, Wiechers 1986:208, Burns and Beukes 2006:292).

If this legal principle is simplified to the public/state administration, South Africa unfortunately offers numerous real life examples of transgressing this requirement of just administrative action. It is reported that Deputy National Director of Public Prosecutions, Nomgcobo Jiba, failed to prove that she is qualified for the position. One of the prerequisites of the position is a certificate of admission as an advocate which to date the official failed to provide (Maphumulo 2014). A further example is the appointment of the South African Broadcasting Corporation's (SABC) Acting Chief Operations Officer, Mr Hlaudi Motsoeneng. The qualifications requirement for the post was at least a matric certificate and preferably a tertiary education. The appointment was unlawful, because not only did he not provide the required certificate during his application, he also fraudulently indicated on his application form that he did have matric. He later under investigation by the Public Protector admitted that he did not pass matric (Public Protector 2014 Report No 23 of

2013/2014). Another example is the appointment of President Zuma's daughter as the chief of staff for the Telecommunications Minister. It is reported that even though she does not have the required five years experience for the position she was still appointed (Molefe 2014). The appointee is not to blame, but the political office bearer and public officials involved transgressed the *ratione personae* requirement of lawfulness with the appointment, and therefore the action cannot be deemed just administrative action.

The principles of just administrative action under the procedural fairness pillar *inter alia* require compliance with the rule against bias (*nemo iudex* rule). The rule against bias stretches further than the superficial understanding that there should be an absence of a subjective inclination for or against certain preferences or dislikes by the public administrator. It includes the absence of pecuniary or financial interest, and personal interest (Burns 1998:173, Burns and Beukes 2006:305, Burns 2013:338). Personal interest includes the required absence of nepotism. At the Drakenstein Municipality it was found that an employee used his position at the municipality to unduly influence the process to have his nephew appointed. This was done despite the fact that the implicated municipal official knew that the staffing policy of the employer prohibited any involvement of employees during the staffing interviews of family members (Public Protector 2013 Report No 21 of 2012/2013). The previous example of the President's daughter's appointment can also be classified under this principle of the *nemo iudex* rule, because it is natural behaviour to assume that the appointment was influenced by the political affiliation between the President and one of his cabinet members. These examples indicate a reasonable perception of bias and this is enough grounds for the administrative action not be just (Burns 1998:173, Burns and Beukes 2006:304). An unfortunately excellent example of nepotism is the allocation of government tenders to family members, friends and affiliates.

Non-compliance with the substantive fairness pillar of just administrative action are summarised in a report by the Public Protector on the manner in which the Department of Trade and Industry handled the finances of the National Consumer Commission. In the words of the Public Protector: "The manner in which the authority was exercised, however, fails to meet the test of good administration. Although lawful, the department's conduct was unfair, unreasonable and constitutes maladministration. This gap between what is lawful and what is lawful *and also* the proper way to do things is a trap that many public officials fall into" (Hlongwane 2013).

The above paragraphs explained a selected few examples of public maladministration that were found by checking them against the three pillars of just administrative action. The capacity of this article does not allow for an extended discussion on all the reported cases that were examined, therefore the list below will only show reported cases of maladministration together with the

principle of just administrative action relevant to the reported case. One must bear in mind that the public administrators involved were not necessarily found to be liable for maladministration, but the list shows the link between the alleged misconduct and the relevant just administrative action principles applicable to the alleged transgressions. These transgressed principles are all addressed in the report. The cases given are all those captured in the 2014/2015 investigation report of the Public Protector up to October 2014, and are presented in the same sequence as in the report (Public Protector 2014 Investigation Reports 2014/2015):

- Report on an own initiative investigation into allegations of members of the public being mauled by animals escaping from Hluhluwe Imfolozi Park in Okhukho, Ulundi: Report No 3 of 2014/15 – Lawfulness, enabling legislation, requirements relating to the form of administrative acts, failure to act.
- Report on an investigation into a complaint against the South African Bureau of Standards relating to the withdrawal of a permit for the manufacturing and sale of motor vehicle number plates: Report No 4 of 2014/15 – Procedural fairness, failure to provide the Complainant with adequate reasons, failure to provide the Complainant with the opportunity to respond, failure to inform the Complainant of the right to submit written presentations to the Chief Executive Officer.
- Report on an investigation into allegations of maladministration by the National Empowerment Fund (NEF) which allegedly resulted in prejudice to Ms.N.: Report No 5 of 2014/15 – Lawfulness, common law rules relating to the author of an act (*ratione temporis*), undue delay to act; procedural fairness, the Complainant suffered prejudice due to the NEF's maladministration.
- Report on an investigation into allegations of undue delay by the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) in implementing the decisions of the Independent Tribunal for Social Assistance Appeals (ITSAA): Report No 6 of 2014/15 – Lawfulness, violation of the constitutional principle of co-operative government, common law rules relating to the author of an act (*ratione temporis*); procedural fairness, the Complainant suffered prejudice due to SASSA's maladministration.
- Report on an investigation into allegations of failure by Sol Plaatje Local Municipality to lodge a disability claim on behalf of its employee in accordance with the disability rules of the South African Local Authorities (SALA) Pension Fund master policy: Report No 2 of 2014/15 – Lawfulness, failure to comply with legislation, common law rules relating to the author of an act (*ratione temporis*); procedural fairness, the Deceased suffered prejudice due to the Municipality's maladministration.
- Report on an investigation into the alleged refusal by the Gauteng Department of Health to pay for services rendered by CKB Washroom Sales and Services CC: Report No 1 of 2014/15 – Lawfulness, failure to comply with legislation (section

38 of The Public Finance Management Act); procedural fairness, failure by the Department to provide timely, accurate and accessible information, doctrine of legitimate expectations; substantive fairness, the Complainant was treated unfairly.

During the 2013/2014 reporting year the Public Protector investigated 22 cases related to maladministration and or abuse of power in the public sector (Public Protector 2014 Investigation Reports 2013/2014). Once again, the capacity of this article does not allow for a discussion on all these cases. It is also not the purpose of this article to list and comment on the myriad other examples of maladministration and abuse of public power which are constantly in the news. The point is rather that a workable knowledge and compliance with the foundational principles of just administrative action should consequence in a decline in misgovernment and maladministration.

It is clear that there is a direct link between maladministration and misgovernment on the one side and the non-compliance of the principles of just administrative action on the other side.

CONCLUSION

Even though there are different approaches to the field of Public Administration, there is agreement among these approaches on how they view the locus, and substantial similarities in how they view the focus of Public Administration. Administrative Law, and specifically the principles of the constitutional right to just administrative action, cannot be divorced from Public Administration. Public administrators and political office bearers make themselves guilty of maladministration and misgovernment by not adhering to the administrative law guidelines on just administrative action.

Further research to determine why this situation exists in the public sector and how the field of Public Administration can contribute in improving this state of affairs is already in progress, and the results are to be published soon.

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Gender mainstreaming in policy and political contexts

The case of South African Local Government

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ABSTRACT

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has made commitments in the spirit of global and African declarations¹ regarding women participating in regional, national and grassroots politics and policy-making. The Southern African Regional Symposium on Women in Local Government was held in Johannesburg, South Africa in 1996 to review the women's participation in local government in the SADC region. In 1997, SADC Heads of State committed to be part of the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development signed in Malawi. Despite these efforts, at the onset of 2015, a year where millennium development goals were planned to be realised, concerns still arise regarding: What is the enormity of gender²-awareness in policy and political-based decision-making processes? Are there any initiatives in place to capacitate women in order for them to partake in policy-making and political processes? In order to find the answers to these concerns, the article utilises qualitative, descriptive and analytical approach, and aims to explore the status of gender mainstreaming in both policy and political contexts in South African local government as a case-study.

INTRODUCTION

Most development plans and policies of African states have been “gender blind”. The planning and policy-making processes in the region have failed to appreciate the fact that women and men have different roles and that their needs and constraints are different (Meena 1994:2). The 50th session of the Commission on

the Status of Women (2006) in Paragraph 11 raised concern regarding the equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes and “expressed concern at the serious and persistent obstacles, which were many and varied in nature that still hindered the advancement of women and further affected their participation in decision-making processes...” (<http://www.un.org/>³). Despite this concern, the reality is that “plans and policies have not been ‘gender responsive’ That is, they have not recognized existing gender imbalances, and have not taken into account the different gender roles which men and women play. Women are therefore constrained in participating effectively in the development process because their subordinate position in society is ignored in development planning and policy-making, while their concrete needs are equally ignored. This is reflected in the manner in which resources are allocated and utilized” (Meena 1994:2). This nature of gender inequality is further confirmed by an analysis of 33 African countries approaching a total of 214 political parties exploring the issues of gender equality in policy-making as documented in a report entitled “Political Parties in Africa through a Gender Lens”. The findings reveal that “[e]ven when political parties state their commitments to gender equality, contradictions may still exist between stated commitments and related provisions in the same policy documents...[and]...not one has achieved equal representation and participation for women and men at this level” (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) 2013:15).

In order to improve the challenge, various conferences, workshops and discussion panels were and are still organised to discuss the issues surrounding gender mainstreaming in policy/political contexts at global, regional, national and local levels. In 2005, an Expert Group Meeting was organised by the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in collaboration with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The meeting was hosted by the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The main focus of this discussion was to explore the issues of “Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes, with particular emphasis on political participation and leadership” (<http://www.un.org/>⁴). The meeting explored and debated on matters such as the impact of women participating in social-economic development as a wider perspective. Several relevant recommendations were considered emphasising the need for gender-based capacity-building, and gender-awareness in policy processes. This process led the way to organising an online discussion in 2007 by the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa in cooperation with the E-Network of National Gender Equality Machineries in Africa. The focus of the discussion was “Women, political participation and

decision-making in Africa” (<http://www.un.org>⁵). The discussion sessions raised debates on women’s participation on varied fronts, viz. political, policy-making, media, education, etc. In order to improve the situation on the African continent as a whole, the Council of the Africa Union established a Women’s Committee (AUWC) in 2003. The 20th Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting on Gender Mainstreaming was organised in 2011 in Addis Ababa. The discussions resulted in the realisation that “while the efforts are commendable, achievement of human development in Africa will only be possible when gender equality and women’s empowerment become a reality” (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) 2013:24).

These efforts provide reasons for the equal representation of women at the local level, due to the fact that African states are bound with international and regional treaties to advance gender-based representation at all levels of policy-making and decision-making structures and processes. It is “therefore important that women are elected to influence policy at the local level...Inclusion and effective participation is, therefore, necessary to address the subordination and marginalization of women, and to ensure that the needs of women are met in the consolidation of local governance in Southern Africa” (Ballington 2001:1) and the African continent as a whole. This is supported by the Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory chairperson, Dr Njabulo Ndebele (2013:1) on exploring the situation in South Africa, he stated that “... we still suffer from some very strong and outdated attitudes towards differences in genders and the rights of men and women... the cause of women’s emancipation is part of our national struggle against outdated practices and prejudices. It is a struggle that demands equal effort from both men and women alike”. Evertzen (2001:3) added exposing the situation at local government level and stated that, “women are still hampered by many barriers, individual as well as institutional factors, related to the organisation of society and the political system, with the risk that they will not reap equal benefits”. That is an explanation that “the representation of women in local authority leadership positions in Africa is still limited” (Kinuthia-Njenga 2010:16). The article aims to explore the situation in a country-specific scenario and utilises the empowerment approach (an aspect of feminist theory) as a hypothetical base for the study that could lead to “transformation of gender relations into gender planning” (Wieringa 1994:830), required in South African local government.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Gender is conceptually defined by various scholars, academics and organisations in varied perspectives. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of

the United Nations (FAO) (1997) gender is the “central organising principles of societies”. This is supported by Connell (2002:23) as “social and historical patterns and processes” and by Grown, Gupta and Khan (2003) who considered gender as a “social construct in the sense that it differentiates the roles, responsibilities and obligations of women and men”. The concept was additionally explained as “socially determined ideas and practices” (Reeves and Baden 2000:3); “complex interrelationship between those traits” (Venter and Venter 2009); “array of socially constructed roles” (Espen and Jolly 2006:3); “socially and culturally learned expectations and behaviours” (Holmes 2007:2); “expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviours” (March, Smyth and Mukhopadhyay 2013:1); “behavioural and attitudinal differences of feminism and masculine aspects of varied personalities” (Vyas-Doorgapersad 2014:327); and “differing societal expectations in different cultures establish the behavioural, psychological and physical attributes” (Cherry 2015:1). The definitions obtained from literature review (Bornstein 1998; Broverman, Broverman, Clarkson, Rosenkrantz, and Vogel 1970; Evans 2000; Goodman 1996; Kessler and McKenna 1978; Money 1955; Monro 2006; Moore 1994; Moser 1993; Phillips and Ferguson 1999; Rubin 1975; Thomas 1995) construe that gender is socially and culturally constructed diverse tasks, roles and responsibilities related to women and men. Based on wide-ranging characteristics, it can be summed up that despite subjective, biased and personally ‘opinionised’ statements, both women and men deserve equal respect and opportunities at personal and professional levels, hence they deserve gender equality in all aspects of life.

Gender equality is therefore a consequence where “different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally” (Olgati and Shapiro 2002: 80). This corollary is supported by Kornegay (2000: xviii) stating that gender equality is a “situation where women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and potential” and “underlying causes of discrimination are systematically identified and removed” (Commission for Gender Equality 2011:1). The opinions and statements of various academics and practitioners (Australian Development Co-operation 2010; Beall 2004; Grown *et al.* 2003; Gutto 1996; Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Gender Toolkit 2012; Mafunisa 2006; Molebatsi 2009; Mukhopadhyay 2004; Reeves and Baden 2000; United States Agency for International Development (USAID) 2008) concur that gender equality is about equal respect, opportunities, privileges, rights, appreciation and recognition offered to women and men in family, community, society and in the workplace.

In order to establish gender mainstreaming in government processes, various scholars (Aili Mari 2008; Dejene 2010; Du Toit 1995; Gisela 2006; Guy 1990;

Hassim and Meintjes 2005; Kathleen 2008; Larry 1999; Ngoma 2006; Samson 2008; Shireen 2006; Tanga 2008; van Driel 1994) have analysed political, governance and democracy theories. These theories discuss the feminist-activist movements in Africa and Southern African countries exploring and emphasising the need for gender-based participation in political and policy contexts. These scholarly works resulted into the establishment of the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa, adopted by the African Union (AU) in 2003. Subsequently in 2004, the Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa was adopted in the Third Ordinary Session of the UN Assembly in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. These declarations inspired South Africa “to accede to regional and international instruments promoting gender equality; increased awareness of gender issues in all spheres of life; and enhanced the integration of gender considerations into government policies and programmes” (Holli, Magnusson and Ronnblom 2005:148) that requires continuous review and assessment to fill the gaps for improvement.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING: THE CASE OF SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The “concept of bringing gender issues into the mainstream of society was clearly established as a global strategy for promoting gender equality” (International Labour Organisation (ILO) 2013:1) during the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995. According to Carolyn Hannan, Director of the UN Division for the Advancement of Women, the principles of mainstreaming require that, “gender analysis should always be carried out; clear political will; and efforts be made to broaden women’s equitable participation at all levels of decision-making” (compiled from ILO 2013:2) . It is nonetheless to be considered as “ a transformative methodology in that it assesses, develops, implements, and evaluates political and policy-making processes in order to make visible, and to account for, gender differences” (Greckol undated:1). The significance of gender mainstreaming in local government was emphasised by the International Union of Local Governments (IULA). The essence of the Declaration on Women in Local Government is stated in Box 1.

Gender mainstreaming, based on the Declaration on Women in Local Government excerpts, is considered imperative at all stages of policy-making and politically-inclined decision-making strategies. A gender specialist, Tanya Goldman, during an address on mainstreaming gender stated that “[g]ender mainstreaming thus is about making every single bit of work that...Government does sensitive to the different needs and interests of women and men, girls and boys. It is not just about formally treating everybody the same. The outcomes

Box 1: Declaration on Women in Local Government

Local government as an employer in a strategic position to influence local society.

Women have an equal right to employment in local government and equality in recruitment procedures. As employees in local government, women and men have the right to equal pay, equal access to benefits, promotion and training, as well as the right to equal working conditions and treatment in the evaluation of their work. Women's often heavy workload of paid and unpaid work is a barrier to their ability to take part in decision-making. Local government has an important role to play in providing affordable, professional and safe care services for children, older people and people with disabilities, be that directly or in partnership with the private or the voluntary sectors, and in promoting the sharing of household tasks by women and men on an equal basis. Men have the equal right and responsibility to care for their children and relatives and should be encouraged to do so (IULA declaration).

Administrative Structures, Mechanisms and Resources

- Gender Equality/Women's Office (with adequate human resources and budget within central administration, in charge of gender mainstreaming);
- Annual gender equality action plan (with specific goals, indicators, budget);
- Training in gender mainstreaming (for elected officials and staff, men and women);
- Access to disaggregated data on all urban issues;
- Gender impact assessment of urban policies, programmes and service delivery;
- Equal opportunity programme for hiring (with specific targets for different types of jobs);
- Information service in boroughs, neighbourhoods or districts;
- Process to handle citizen requests and complaints from women and men.

Source: International Union of Local Governments (IULA). (n.d.). *Declaration on Women in Local Government*. Also refer Greckol Undated: 4-5.

for women and men, girls and boys must be equal. The challenge of gender mainstreaming is to make sure that this happens as part of the natural part of policy development, implementation and monitoring and evaluation in all sectors" (Legislative Sector South Africa undated: 4). The gender inclusion in terms of participation and representation [may] have a positive impact on the efficient formulation and implementation of government policies. This section furthermore explores the gender mainstreaming in South African local government in both policy and political contexts.

Gender in policy context

The significant policy document in local government is the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) that requires community participation especially during 'needs analysis' and 'stakeholder analysis'. The aim is to obtain the opinions and suggestions of community members regarding their needs and expectations for inclusion in the development plan. On a practical level, Gender Links (2008:17) emphasise that "although women have a vested stake in the provision of services such as water, fuel, transport, recreational facilities

etc. they are often not consulted in these processes. Gender considerations are not well reflected in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP)". This is confirmed by Hicks and Buccus (Undated:3) raising additional concern that "Integrated development plans (IDPs) do not address gender mainstreaming in service delivery planning, do not refer to the National Gender Policy Framework, the Gender Policy Framework for local government, or any municipal gender policy, and do not refer to gender equality or women's empowerment". Through their research works on gender issues in local government, Hicks and Buccus moreover claim that "within municipalities, despite the creation of this elaborate gender machinery and provision of guidelines for mainstreaming gender within IDPs, these are largely not followed and gender remains a 'side issue'"(Undated:17). This situation can be verified by the analytical work conducted by the Commission on Gender Equality in 2002, where in local policy-making processes "emphatic recommendations were made to integrate a gender perspective, with research done on the IDPs of nine municipalities showing that gender was seriously neglected in the conceptualisation of and planning for 'development'. One of the conclusions reached in the report is that generally, municipalities addressed gender concerns by default (focusing on issues that were conventionally assumed to have an impact on women) instead of strategy (ensuring that priorities addressed what women identified as needs)" (ActITFem 2013:4).

The author/researcher of this article advanced this nature of research and utilised municipal management oriented 'short-course sessions' to obtain significant information from the municipal councillors/employees of a few districts (Bojanala Platinum; Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati) and local municipalities (City of Matlosana; Kagisano-Molopo; Lekwa; Madibeng; Mafube; Matjhabeng; Mogale; Moretele; Ratlou) in South Africa. Utilising a qualitative approach, structured questions were asked to 83 registered learners (46 female and 37 male). The demography of respondents shows a positive attitude towards increased women's participation for capacity-building initiatives, and the presence of women participants, hence supporting the empowerment approach utilised as a theoretical scaffold in this article. Responses were received on two significant aspects, viz. women employees are given equal opportunity to participate in the IDP processes; and women community members are equally visible participating in the IDP processes. Mixed responses were received. Women employees are given equal opportunity to participate in the IDP processes, however, there is a lack of understanding regarding the IDP, which effects the level of participation. Municipalities have realised the nature of this challenge and register these respondents to gain understanding regarding local government processes, policy-making and IDP processes through short courses, supporting the empowerment approach. On the other hand there was disagreement in believing that women

(community members) are still restricted to obligate their household responsibilities instead of their social-political contribution in the policy-making processes. This way of thinking requires transformation in mentality that is regulated by social, family and cultural norms. These findings concur with the intention of the local government portfolio, stipulated in A Draft Policy Discussion Document for the City of Cape Town (2004:3) stating that “it is Local Government’s moral and legal responsibility to engage in a gender equality approach in all its policies, programmes and projects in order to ensure fairness in the treatment of women and men. Given ingrained disparities, equal treatment of women and men is insufficient as a strategy for gender equality. Specific measures must be developed to identify and remove the underlying causes of discrimination in policies, laws, procedures, beliefs, practices and attitudes that maintain gender inequality. This can only be achieved from a multi-dimensional approach that focuses on all aspects both internal and external to” [any] municipality.

Gender in political context

According to the *SADC Gender Protocol 2014 Barometer* (2014:72), on the commencement of the “2015 landmark year for the SADC region to have reached gender parity in all areas of decision-making, no country has reached the 50% target of women’s representation in parliament, cabinet or local government”. The situation is dire in the South African context as stipulated in a *Report on the Gender in the 2014 South African National Elections* (Morna, Mbadhlanyana, Ndlovu and Robinson 2014:2) emphasising that “the local government elections took place in 2011, and will take place again in 2016. It is significant that in this sphere of governance SA also missed the opportunity – so tantalizingly close–of achieving gender parity”. This statement can be substantiated with the review of political manifestos of political parties, published in a report entitled *Gender in the 2011 South African Local Government Elections*. The Report states that “these manifestos failed to indicate how they would promote the mainstreaming of gender into their various planned programmes and projects...Some political parties mentioned gender vaguely; some did not mention gender at all...” (Morna and Mbadhlanyana 2011:10), comprehensively stated in Table 1.

The Table reflects that the ANC is the only party that placed the intention of mainstreaming gender into its manifesto, but was not sustained, and according to Gender Links (2011:1), “the 2011 local government elections that witnessed a decline in women’s representation at the very moment that South Africa should be redoubling its efforts to achieve gender parity underscores the need for a legislated quota for women in national and local elections... a gender analysis of the 18 May 2011 local government election...shows that women now constitute 38% of councillors following the 18 May polls, down from 40% in 2006”. President of the

Table 1: Gender analysis of election manifestos

Party	Quota	Gender specific references in manifestos	Gender mainstreamed In manifestos
African National Congress (ANC)	Committed to the 50:50% quota to achieve gender – equality after the 2011 local government elections.	Vigorously implement broad-based economic empowerment and affirmative action policies.	The manifesto says that the ANC led government will build a local government system that will give power to communities to make their voices heard and to work with municipalities to make change happen. In doing so municipalities will need to ensure that there is equal access to employment and skills development for women and youth.
African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP)	No Quota	Only mentions women in terms of increasing safety. ACDP will prioritise efforts to increase the safety and wellbeing of women and children.	No specific mention of how it plans to mainstream gender into daily activities. And it mentions these plans rather vaguely by indicating that an elected local councillor will support community initiatives to help prevent teen-pregnancy and offer assistance for young mothers.
Democratic Alliance (DA)	No Quota	No mention of women in the entire manifesto, not even in the introduction to the manifesto.	Not mainstreamed at all no plans or indications of how they plan to ensure that effective service delivery will improve the lives of women.
Freedom Front Plus (FFP)	No Quota	No mention of women in the manifesto nor in the introduction.	Not mainstreamed, the focus is on building Christian Values and promoting a multi-lingual society and on service delivery.
Inkhata Freedom Party (IFP)	No Quota	No mention of women in the manifesto nor in the introduction.	Not mainstreamed.
United Christian Democratic Party (UCDP)	No Quota	The UCDP does recognise that corruption within municipalities can hinder the plan to bring on par gender equity. However this is mentioned very oddly, no clear plan as to how they are willing to address this issue.	No clear mention of how the UCDP will ensure that women are offered opportunities for growth within these municipalities, and to also address the issue of how corruption will be rooted out.
United Democratic Movement (UDM)	No Quota	The UDM has an integrated environmental management plan which does include women. It states that a UDM led council will promote women's and youth participation in environmental projects that create job opportunities.	Although there is mention that a UDM council will promote women's participation and have opportunities for jobs there is no clear plan or indication of how this will be implemented.

Party	Quota	Gender specific references in manifestos	Gender mainstreamed In manifestos
Congress of People (COPE)	No quota	Establish a Women's Development Fund to focus on funding and assisting women to engage in productive economic activity.	Not mainstreamed.
Independent Democrats (ID)	No quota	Build an inclusive nation...	The manifesto is issue based but does not mainstream gender within the issues.
Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC)	No quota	Legislating for mandatory life sentences for.... women abuse.	Gender is not mainstreamed in the manifesto.
African People's Convention	Manifesto not yet available.		

Source: compiled from Gender in the 2009 South African Elections; Gender in the 2011 South African Local Government Elections; SADC Gender Protocol 2013 Barometer.

Republic of South Africa, Dr Jacob Zuma raised this concern during a Progressive Women's Movement of SA conference in Mthatha stressing that "[t]he country missed the opportunity at these elections to advance local government towards a 50/50 gender parity... this was because some political parties did not feature an adequate number of women in their candidate lists for local government" (Zuma 2012:1). It is therefore witnessed that the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 is not considered as obligatory for political parties "to ensure that half of all party candidates on their lists are women" (Letsholo 2006:13).

The author/researcher conducted a study in 2013 to explore the status of gender in local government. The findings were published in 2014⁶. The study established significant themes to explore, viz. measures are in place to improve the number of women councillors; and women councillors participate in the policy-formulation process. Open-ended questions were also structured to obtain comprehensive explanations regarding existing challenges related to [this] debatable issue. The findings realise [the summarised version]⁷, the following challenges to achieve absolute gender mainstreaming in local decision-making processes: women need capacity-building in terms of further studies; the government-of-the day mandate regarding a 50% quota system in political structures still require political will to implement; lack of lobbying for women councillors; retention of women councillors; lack of women caucus participation in the capacity-building programmes; lack of initiative by political parties to recruit more women; and, lack of implementation of Employment

Equity Plans in [most of the] municipalities. The findings furthermore reflect that the stereo-type mentality whereby it is not acceptable for women to dominate men in society, still exists. This mentality results in ego-conflict and lack of support from male counterparts in the workplace. It can be deduced that the gender mainstreaming in policy formulation process still requires political determination. This situation can have a ripple effect whereby a lack of 'gender-based' tasks and responsibilities, participation and decision-making eventually [may] lead to 'gender-biased' policy outcome(s). The findings corroborate the opinions of Janine Hicks, a Commissioner for the Commission on Gender Equality and Imraan Buccus, a Research Fellow in the School of Social Sciences at the University of KwaZulu Natal, who, based on their research works on gender and local government, emphasise that "in order to comprehend fully the electoral dynamics from the perspective of women's political participation and representation...comparative gender-based parameters must be considered" (Hicks and Buccus undated:4). In addition they quote Pottie and Ford (2001) that women "be at the forefront of local electoral policies" (Hicks and Buccus undated:4) generating gender equality, gender-based representation and participation in political decision-making processes.

THE WAY FORWARD

In order to bring gender equality (moreover improve the status of women) into a political context (local elections) and policy context (Integrated Development Plan), the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) in collaboration with the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) hosted a discussion session on 15 April 2011. The objectives of the discussions were established as (Commission for Gender Equality 2011:1; also refer Vyas-Doorgapersad 2014:109): "to secure political parties' commitment to promoting gender equality and enhancing the status of women; to highlight CGE research findings relating to such commitment, in the form of the gender mainstreaming of manifestos, and gender analysis of electoral lists; to highlight CGE research findings related to municipal gender mainstreaming of Integrated Development Plans, and implementation of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA's) 2007 national gender policy; to debate with stakeholders on this evidence of political and practical commitment to and implementation of gender equality at the local level; to highlight the Electoral Code of Conduct provisions relating to women's free and full participation in political and election processes, and secure parties' commitment to uphold these, and to foreground and challenge the institutional culture and practice within political parties themselves, and the extent to which parties are committed to ensuring an enabling environment for women's full political participation". The article

leaves the scope for future debates and discussions emphasising the significance of the empowerment approach for women that signifies, according to Mosedale (2004:252; Vyas-Doorgapersad 2014: 109) “the process by which women redefine and extend what is possible for them to be and do in situations where they have been restricted, compared to men, from being and doing”.

CONCLUSION

The article proposes a model for improvement called Gender-based representation in local government (G-bRLG), refer Diagram 1. The model highlights the significant elements that require vital consideration to realise the empowerment approach.

Diagram 1: Gender-based representation in local government (G-bRLG)

Key result area	Indicators	Planned conduct
Policy context	Existence of a gender-sensitive communication plan	Conduct a series of sessions incorporating varied modes of communication in regional/local languages offered to women and men
	Involvement of women leaders in policy-formulation process	Organise facilitation workshops covering areas of civic education and understanding regarding participatory governance
	Institutionalise a Gender Council to demarcate gender-based needs	Plan public participation sessions to receive responses from diverse groups within the community
	Establish membership to Gender Council	Membership to be open to all diverse groups of community members and inviting them to attend sessions on the issues covering gender
	Discussion sessions to explore matters of gender-based participation in policy-making processes	Establish community meeting forums to discuss gender-based participation mechanisms exploring the significance of gender-based inclusion in policy-making processes
	Research to incorporate gender-disaggregated data	Appoint researchers and statisticians
	Conduct needs analysis to incorporate gender-sensitive issues in agenda	Incorporate gender in policy agenda stage

Key result area	Indicators	Planned conduct
Political context	Implement quota to increase the number of women councilors	Open discussions with political parties
	Institutionalise gender-based representation in leadership positions	Incorporate gender mainstreaming in political manifestos
	Create gender-based awareness in decision-making processes	Organise civic education workshops
	Gender-based capacity-building programmes for strategic positions	Train women and men to understand the gender-based tasks and responsibilities
	Integration with interest groups	Invite interest groups for participatory discussions
	Capacity-building workshops to create gender-based awareness in decision-making processes	Appoint gender consultants

There are many aspects in policy and political contexts where gender mainstreaming require dire consideration, which are not incorporated in the diagram, viz. gender-based: involvement in agenda-setting; representation in needs and stakeholder analysis; involvement in identification and prioritisation of projects; sensitivity in communication plan; participation in budget sessions; civic awareness sessions; political affiliation; recognition of empowerment; to state a few. The practical reasons restricting this absorption of wide-ranging standpoints of gender mainstreaming are the realisation that there is indeed a lack of data, methodology and indicators for monitoring progress; adequate research for making informed decisions; financial and human resources for implementing women empowerment activities; laws and practices that discriminate against women; political will, etc. Future research in this area, however, may assist the researcher to gather more dimensions, varied perspectives and comparative best practices to comprehensively incorporate gender-based indicators in varied streams of policy-making and political decision-making processes. This is nonetheless an issue of continuous debate, comparative research and social reform.

NOTES

- 1 United Nations' (UN) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)], the Constitutive Act of the African Union, the Dakar Platform for Action (1994); the

- African Plan of Action to Accelerate the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action for the Advancement of Women (1999); the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003); and the African Union's Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004).
- 2 The concept gender in this article focuses on women and aims to explore the inclusion/exclusion of women in local government processes.
 - 3 Refer to <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/TechnicalCooperation/docs/Online%20Discussion%20Report%20Africa%20FINAL.pdf> for complete report
 - 4 Refer to <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/eql-men/FinalReport.pdf> for complete documentation.
 - 5 Refer to <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/TechnicalCooperation/docs/Online%20Discussion%20Report%20Africa%20FINAL.pdf> for complete document.
 - 6 The work is acknowledged in the bibliography.
 - 7 The findings are re-stated in the article to elaborate upon the issue in discussion.

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Leadership development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

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ABSTRACT

Leadership development has emerged as an important theoretical and practical stream of management. As an area of higher learning, leadership draws from numerous academic fields and real life sources and therefore requires integration of knowledge with experience. There is an implicit assumption that leadership is important, that leaders make a difference, and that positive group and organisational effects are produced by leaders and the leadership process. To most people the importance of leadership is self-evident no matter the setting. In organisations, effective leadership facilitates higher-quality production with more efficient services; it provides a sense of cohesiveness, personal development, and higher levels of satisfaction among those conducting the work; and it provides an overarching sense of direction and vision, an alignment with the environment, a healthy mechanism for innovation and creativity, and a resource for invigorating the organisational culture. This is no small order, especially in contemporary times.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is a vast country endowed with huge natural and mineral resources. But for decades the DRC has been through coups d'état, civil wars, rebellions, political turmoil and instability, and it also faced aggression from its neighbouring countries in recent years. All these events have impacted negatively on the state and have provoked the decay of public institutions, making the country one of the notorious failed states of the world (Tshiyoyo 2011:104). Given the state's failure in the DRC, creating a strong nation should be a priority. The government in the DRC should strengthen the organs of the state in order to tackle the socio-economic crisis that has

paralysed many public institutions and impeded the proper functioning of the state's apparatus. This will require a new breed of leaders who will be able to provide the stewardship needed to pave the way for the country to be placed on the track of development. The DRC requires leaders who are transformational or visionary given its particular context. In this article the model that is suggested to enhance leadership development in the DRC consists of three pillars, namely spirituality, emotional intelligence and morality. However, the success of the proposed model will depend on the kind of social order that prevails in the country and on the type of political arrangements made by the country's leaders.

INTRODUCTION

Governance is seen as the relationship between those who govern and those who are governed and focuses on the institutional capacity of public organisations to provide the public goods and services demanded by a country's citizens or their representatives in an effective, transparent, impartial, and accountable manner, subject to resource constraints. Africa is continuously going through political and social changes – even after emancipation from colonial powers, Africa continued to be unstable. Africa is, however, often viewed as a continent characterised by doom and gloom. Africa is being devastated by disease, poverty, armed conflict, dictatorship, corruption, nepotism and gross violations of human rights. However, Africa has entered a period of optimism.

African governments were confronted by severe odds during the post-independence period. Embodied within its structures are systemic anomalies derived from the inherited colonial administrative apparatus which inhibit the growth of the system into a development-oriented apparatus. At the same time, the post-independence 'ecology' deprived the system of the necessary dynamism for effective performance. African governments are now in a dual crisis: a crisis of performance, as well as of sustenance (Mutahaba, Baguma and Halfani 1993:7,17). However, many have lamented the absence of political and leadership skills that have plagued the African nations which became independent after World War II. One result has been that African public bureaucracies, although constrained by policy decisions made by political leaders, have played a central role in the performance of leadership functions in development (Vengroff Belhaj and Ndiaye 1991). In his comparison of African nations, Heady (2001) noted commonalities about the nature of political leadership that in effect, suggest that knowledge of political processes

in the developing countries is understandably still fragmentary and tentative. The absence of strong political leadership in these countries has resulted in political regimes that can be characterised by: widely shared developmental ideologies as the source of basic political goals; high reliance on the political sector for achieving results in society; widespread incipient or actual political stability; modernising elitist leadership accompanied by a wide 'political gap' between the rulers and the ruled; and imbalances in political institutions, with the public bureaucracy often playing a more dominant role than other institutions. Therefore, Brautigan (1996:89) argues that in Africa, leadership is a scarcity due to the nature of African political regimes. Leaders and followers are both ensnared by the politics of patronage, and society currently offers few countervailing forces.

Wohlgemuth, Carlsson and Kifle (1998:21) insist that leadership qualities under the circumstances provided by the post-colonial public administration systems are beset by problems. The DRC public service has its roots in the administration system that was introduced by the colonial powers. The administrative system's historical legacy is prevalent, and has perhaps gone through the development experience of most African societies after independence. Characteristic of public organisations is that they are not compatible with the surrounding social and cultural environment.

The main consequence of this historical legacy is that the conditions for effective leadership are difficult to realise within existing organisational and institutional traditions. Furthermore, Rotberg (2004:17) stresses that Africa needs leaders. For him, strong leaders committed to change are one of the key drivers to progress. Developing the capabilities of leaders at all levels and in all spheres: political, the public sector, business and civil society, is crucial to African led sustainable development. This implies that good leaders deliver security of the state and of the person, the rule of law, good education and health services, and a framework conducive to economic growth. In addition to these capabilities, there is still another experience that cannot be overlooked: People grow up in an age in which everything is in a state of change, development or progress.

According to Auriacombe (1999) three questions emerge: "How could leadership be viewed in the political system so that the description thereof corresponds to how it is experienced by the people – at least some of its aspects?; What does the observation of living in a bureaucratic world have to do with leadership, public governance and politics?; and what if any, is the relationship between the past and the present?". Auriacombe (2003) argues that: "Various academic fields of study offer insights into the above three questions. Each field has its own methodological lenses through which to regard the political and leadership phenomena. Each has its own focus and emphases that concentrated on matters which varied greatly in the degree to which they are

coincident with the [above] three questions?”. A qualitative research approach is followed using descriptive and prescriptive methods of research.

According to Morrow (1975:49-50) descriptive and prescriptive theories are by no means incompatible. Hence, in examining the nature of public administration as a socio-political phenomenon, it is possible to describe what actually transpires within administrative agencies and postulate possible causes for such behaviour. In most cases, however, the descriptive and the prescriptive dimensions of theory work hand-in-hand. For example, if one undertakes to describe the causes for administrative behaviour, the discoveries can be utilised by scholars and practitioners seeking policy or management reform. Therefore, relevant literature sources pertaining to leadership, governance and development were accessed in order to put the subject of discourse within its context.

Leadership and governance issues in Africa are a result of the effects of colonisation. In order to overcome these challenges the effects of colonisation have to be deliberated, hence, it is in this context that leaders are needed at all levels of African societies in general, and effective leadership in the DRC in particular. The article contextualises leadership and governance issues in Africa in order to consider the effect of colonisation on the continent. The article also outlines the necessity for an effective leadership culture in the DRC before it proposes a framework for leadership development in the country. The proposed model for leadership development is tri-dimensional as it focuses on three main pillars, namely spirituality, emotional intelligence and morality.

CONTEXTUALISING LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE CONSTRAINTS IN AFRICA

Since the 1950s, when African countries began assuming their independence, development economists have sought to advance neo-liberal and development theories based on European experience as the only solution to the development challenges. Consequently, the problems of underdevelopment were viewed as manifestations of distortion in the factors of production that prevented the operation of a free-market system. Therefore, corrections of such dislocation through the efficient allocation of resources and following the path Europe had taken were the only panacea. Nevertheless, approaching the question of Africa's development impasse constitutes revisiting the question of colonisation as well as issues surrounding the development of the postcolonial state in Africa. This nuance is manifested in the widespread and growing disparity that surrounds many postcolonial nations in southern Africa (Andreasson 2010:122-123). In order to find a path to development, African countries must revisit the patterns

left behind by colonisation. This will require engagement on how structures are established and how leaders evolve throughout societies.

Prior to colonialism, the African governance system varied according to the level of development and the socio-political systems in place, but generally their administrative systems lacked the attributes of a modern state. Colonialism, to a great extent, supplanted or suppressed the various traditional administrative organisations, and with them their administrative cultural values. In most parts of Africa, the traditional administrative organisations were done away with and replaced by bureaucratic organisations styled after the system in the mother country. In this, the civilising mission of the colonial masters had limited scope; it was mainly concerned with pacifying the “natives” for purposes of facilitating exploitation of natural resources. As such, little investment was put into the development of complicated administrative infrastructures; the administrative systems consisted of skeletal organisations, only large enough for the purposes of extracting revenues and ensuring orderly governance (Mutahaba *et al.* 1993:6). Furthermore, the goals of the colonial system naturally dictated the governance system that was put in place. Since the goals were to maintain ‘law and order’ and collect taxes, the public administration system that was fostered was highly legalistic, emphasising loyalty, processes, procedures, and precedents (Mutahaba *et al.* 1993:6).

Rules and regulations became the main instruments for eliciting compliance and discipline. Administrative training and practices were similarly modelled along those lines. The organisation of the administration was highly hierarchical, inhibiting lower-level participation in decision-making and since it was in the service of the colonial masters, it was highly suppressive and did not respond to public demands. These attributes contributed immensely to the evolution of an administrative culture that was conservative, unresponsive and under-developmental in orientation. However, in so far as the interests of the colonial state remained limited to the goals mentioned earlier, the administrative system seemed to operate effectively (Mutahaba *et al.* 1993:7). The bureaucratic model in developing countries can be argued to have largely failed, and with the roots of its failure found most often prior to independence. Colonial governments used bureaucratic means to administer their colonies, often by using indigenous civil servants, at least at the lower levels. Even whole higher levels remained firmly in the hands of expatriates or the home government, a system of administration was put in place and this system continued with little change into the post-independence period. After independence, many lower-level colonial civil servants became senior officers in the public services, often as a result of the principle of seniority being rigidly acquired from the colonial government, but they were ill-equipped for their new role. The bureaucracy was large and important but did not have the institutional support to work effectively (Hugues 2012:298-299).

According to Smith (1996:181) a universal feature of colonial government was that it developed bureaucracies while neglecting legislatures, parties, local councils and other bodies able to maintain control and accountability. An administrative system can and did work for most of the twentieth century in the developed world, though with the limitations. But when bureaucracy is the only developed institutional actor, as in much of the developing world, a serious imbalance can and does arise.

Administration requires instructions to be given clearly to enable an administrator to carry them out. However, if instructions are not clear, because of the inadequacies of the political system, or if political leaders are erratic, as is often the case, bureaucracy gains power. When bureaucracy, particularly administrative bureaucracy, is the most powerful institutional actor it rules without political constraint, but it is rudderless in the strategic sense without input from the political leadership. The separation of politics from administration may have been successful in developed countries for a long period, but in developing countries these principles have been inadequate because of the underdevelopment of the political system. Only if the political and administrative systems are in some kind of balance can Wilson's prescription have some utility.

Leadership and governance issues in Africa are a result of the effects of colonisation. In order to overcome these challenges these effects of colonisation have to be deliberated, hence, it is in this context that leaders are needed at all levels of African societies in general, and effective leadership in the DRC in particular. With the introduction of independence in 1960 the DRC inherited a civil service that was effective, though it had been used mainly as an instrument for promoting the colonial power that ruled the country, as noted earlier. In spite of the fact that these structures were not wholly suitable for the needs of the newly independent citizens, it is clear that if they had been reformed and adapted properly they would have allowed the country to be on the path of development. Instead, most of the Congolese leaders neglected the maintenance of the institutions of the state and never committed themselves to establishing a system that would ensure good governance of the country's resources. As a result, the country lies in ruins (Tshiyoyo 2011:104-105).

Rotberg (2002:128) notes that destructive decisions by individual leaders have paved the way to state failure. President Mobutu's kleptocratic rule of more than three decades depleted the economy of Zaïre (now known as the DRC) until he was deposed in 1997. Shekhawat (2009:7) stresses that the Congolese state and economy still bear the deep impact of Mobutu's *predatory* rule of thirty-two years. Makgetlaneng (2010:63) insists that the DRC has been in a continuous state of crisis in the strategic area of the provision of basic social services to its citizens. Consequently there is a structural need for a strategy, vision and programme of action to change socio-political and economic

relations characterised by the accumulation of wealth and privileges by its rulers in the face of massive socio-economic problems faced by the Congolese people. The successive rulers have not been committed to the resolution of these problems through the provision of basic social services.

Given the state's failure in the DRC, creating a strong nation should be a priority. This will require a leadership style which is transformational in nature and leaders who will provide stewardship needed to pave the way for the country to be placed on the track of development. Nixon (1982:340) argues that different systems need different kinds of leaders, and different countries, with different cultural backgrounds and at different stages of development, need different systems. De Vries (2008:89) insists that the first and most crucial element of transformation is leadership at the top. Top leadership should be directly and actively involved in establishing an environment that encourages change, innovation, risk taking, pride in work and continuous improvement. As a result, alignment of the top team in understanding transformation and the need for change, as well as giving clear guidance, will constitute the most important factor in transforming and reforming the public service in the African context and particularly in the DRC.

Notably the crisis in the DRC is basically a result of combined long-term structural degradations, medium-term inter-communitarian tensions and short-term regional, military and political conflicts. Over the years, this multi-layered crisis has had disastrous socioeconomic effects that are affecting the various regions of the country to different degrees. The root causes of the crisis are structural degradation, which has benefited some international interests; followed by inter-communitarian tensions and the regional crisis (Bourque & Sampson 2001:6). The DRC is in a socio-economic and political crisis due to multi-faceted challenges. Addressing this crisis requires a change from within, meaning the DRC government must be or become aware of the risks that the country is facing and they should ensure that a proper strategy is in place, especially when it comes to the management of public affairs. Moreover, this will require the rise of strong leaders who should attempt to reverse the circumstances that have failed the DRC. Developing strong leaders with a pronounced sense of patriotism is a prerequisite in order to tackle the various challenges facing the country. Effective leaders have the ability to put in place structures that can assist in tackling the challenges of development and put the country on the path to economic development.

Considering the historical background of the DRC and many challenges the country has faced in the past five decades, there is a need for leaders who have a clear vision of how they intend to change the way things have been done in the country, to focus on national interests and mobilise the nation in order to reverse the patterns that have hindered the DRC's development.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

This section highlights concepts used in the article to provide conceptual clarification for the applicability of these following terms:

Leadership

Frequently the term leadership is confused with the term authority. There is no universal definition of leadership because leadership is complex and is studied in different ways that require different definitions. The table below lists some of the most common definitions of leadership.

Table 1: Leadership definitions

Theorist(s)	Definition(s)
Stark & Flaherty (1999:221)	Leadership, unlike management, is not a formal position – it is a relationship; their power base comes voluntarily from their followers.
Maxwell (1999:1)	Leadership is the capacity and will to rally men and women to a common purpose and the character which inspires confidence.
Van Rensburg (2007:2)	Leadership is about <i>will and influence</i> ; the will of an individual to improve the circumstances in any situation as a service to others; influence people and circumstances.
Lee (2005:7)	Leaders shape and realise success, drawing on their ability to influence, inspire, collaborate, and coach.
Schuitema (1998:21)	Lead out achieving a result through people.
Cooper (2005:17)	Leadership is about charisma, transformatio, vision, change, commitment, extra effort, and pro-action.
Lussier & Achara (2007:6)	Leadership is the influencing process of leaders and followers to achieve organisational objectives through change.
O’Toole (1999:3)	Leaders are admirable in their behaviour, noble in their goals, and have the compelling desire to help their followers and organisation achieve their highest potential.
Scott (1981:87)	Leadership can be defined as the ability to influence the behaviour of others.

Source: (Van der Waldt and Auriacombe 2009:45)

According to Van der Waldt and Auriacombe (2009:49), running through much of this is a set of beliefs that can be described as a classical view of leadership where leaders :

- Tend to be identified by position. They are part of the hierarchy of authority in an organisation.
- Become the focus for answers and solutions. People look to them when they don't know what to do, or when they can't be bothered to work things out for themselves.
- Give direction and have vision.
- Have special qualities setting them apart. These help to create the gap between leaders and followers.

Authority

To explore the term authority the article turns to Heifetz's (1994) important discussion of the matter. Authority is often seen as the possession of powers based on a formal role. In organisations, for example, the tendency is to see people in authority positions as those who have the right to direct employees. They are obeyed because their exercise of power is seen as legitimate. It may also be that subordinates fear the consequences of not following their orders or 'requests'. The possibility of them disadvantaging people may well secure their compliance. They may also be followed because they show leadership. The latter is generally something more informal—the ability to make sense of, and act in, situations that are out of the ordinary. In this way, leaders do not simply influence; they have to show that crises or unexpected events and experiences do not faze them. Leaders may have formal authority, but they rely in large part on informal authority. This flows from their personal qualities and actions. They may be trusted, respected for their expertise, or followed because of their ability to persuade. Leaders have authority as part of an exchange: if they fail to deliver the goods or to meet people's expectations, they run the risk of authority being removed and given to another. Those who have formal authority over them may take this action. However, the other side also needs to be considered. Followers, knowingly or unknowingly, accept the right of the person to lead – and he or she is dependent on this. The leader also relies on 'followers' for feedback and contributions. Without these they will not have the information and resources to do their job. Leaders and followers are interdependent (Van der Waldt and Auriacombe 2009:58).

Power, influence and compliance

Power

Power is an intangible force in an organisation. It cannot be seen, but its effect can be felt. It is the ability of one person or department in an organisation to influence other people to bring about desired outcomes. Potential power is

realised through politics and influence (Lussier and Achua 2007:114). In its most general sense, power is the ability to pursue and attain goals through mastery of one's environment (Weber 1968:1, 53). Throughout the histories of powerful people, there has often been a distinction between the exercise of power through influence and coercion – “carrot and stick’. This distinction is found in the Chinese tradition of *li* and *fa*, ruling by influence and persuasion, as opposed to law and force (Glenn 2000:282-291). However, Nye reconceptualised the idea in terms of ‘soft power’ and ‘hard power’ (Nye 2004:212). In real life the dichotomy is less polarised, and better viewed as a continuum – from softer to harder – or as a balance of the two extremes – carrot and stick. When power is exercised through influence rather than coercion, those exercising that power are likely to have greater legitimacy – their claim to power is generally accepted and/or successful (Williams 2012:59).

Power has two forms: Distributional power, used by individuals to control others; and collective power, used by groups, for example between companies or states. He furthermore notes that power is exercised in two ways: extensive power and intensive power. Extensive power refers to the ability to organise large numbers of people over far-flung territories in order to engage in minimally stable cooperation. Intensive power refers to the ability to organise tightly and command a high level of mobilisation or commitment from the participants, whether the area and numbers covered are great or small. Finally, power has two types: authoritative, an order from a senior to a subordinate, as in an army; and diffused, networked power which seems natural, such as nationalistic feelings during war. Authoritative power is actually willed by groups and institutions. It comprises definite commands and conscious obedience. Diffused power, spreads in more spontaneous, unconscious, decentered way throughout a population, resulting in similar social practices that embody power relations but are not explicitly commanded (Mann 1986:7-8).

Influence

The key to leadership effectiveness is based on the influence of the leader. The key to positive influence is to grow personally and to use one's talents and abilities in service to others and to the cause or purpose of the group. This influence has to serve as catalyst in creating something meaningful and something which is a clear improvement on the past (Van Rensburg 2007:66). Influence is the effect a person's actions have on the attitudes, values, beliefs, or actions of others. Whereas power is the capacity to cause a change in a person, influence is the degree of actual change. Leaders can improve their effectiveness by understanding the various types and sources of power as well as the influence tactics they or their followers may use (Van der Waldt and Auriacombe 2009:58). Influencing is the process of a leader communicating

ideas, gaining acceptance of them, and motivating followers to support and implement the ideas through change. Influence is the essence of leadership (Lussier and Achua 2007:8). Effective leaders influence followers to think not only of their own interests but the interest of the organisation. Leadership occurs when followers are influenced to do what is ethical and beneficial for the organisation and themselves (Lengnick-Hall and Lengnick-Hall 2003:151-152).

Compliance

The question to ask according to Van der Waldt and Auriacombe (2009:59) is whether people accept the influence of a leader. One major reason is that leaders have power. In a governance setting the following **six major types of power** are crucial for leaders to effect appropriate change:

- *Legitimate power.* Legitimate power stems from a position's placement in the hierarchy of the institution and the authority vested in the position. Legitimate power is thus the authority granted from a formal position in an organisation. Certain rights, responsibilities, and prerogatives accrue to anyone holding a formal leadership position. Followers accept the legitimate rights of formal leaders to set goals, make decisions, and direct activities.
- *Reward power.* Reward power is based on the capacity to control and provide valued rewards to others. Reward power stems from the authority to bestow rewards on other people. Leaders control resources and their distributions. Leaders can use reward power to influence subordinates' behaviour.
- *Coercive power.* Coercive power depends on the ability to punish others when they do not engage in desired behaviour (e.g. the ability of the leader to punish errant organisational members through suspension and/or expulsion). Coercive power is thus the authority to punish or recommend punishment. Leaders have the right to fire or demote subordinates, criticise, or withdraw pay increases. Coercive power represents the more negative side of legitimate and reward power.
- *Expert power.* Expert power results from a leader's special knowledge or skill regarding tasks performed by followers. When a leader is a true expert, subordinates go along with recommendations because of his superior knowledge. Leaders at supervisory levels often earn promotions because of their technical experience; at top management levels, leaders may lack expert power because subordinates know more about technical details. Expert power is thus based on the possession of expertise that is valued by others (e.g. expert knowledge based on qualification and experience).
- *Information power.* This relates to power that results from access to and control over distribution of important information about institutional operations and future plans (e.g. information pertaining to the future of municipalities as envisioned through discussions and research).

- *Referent power.* Referent power is authority based on personality characteristics that command followers' attention, respect, and admiration so that they want to emulate the leader. Referent power depends on the leader's personal characteristics rather than on a formal title or position and is visible in the area of charismatic leadership. Referent power thus results from being admired, personally identified with, or liked by others (e.g. power personified by Nelson Mandela).

The above six types of power are potential means of influencing others. Leaders use the various types of power to influence others to do what is necessary to accomplish organisational goals. There are three outcomes from the use of power: compliance, resistance, and commitment (Van der Waldt and Auriacombe 2009:58).

TPOLOGY OF LEADERS

Why is it that certain leaders choose particular styles as their vehicle for leadership? The typology below provided by Van der Waldt and Auriacombe (2009:67) is useful in this regard.

- **Charismatic:**
Some charismatics do not realise they have charisma until later in life. It is useful to be aware early if you do have it because charisma can have startling effects upon people, which, in turn, can cause unexpected results. Charismatics are most successful in situations which require leaps of strategic vision in situations where leadership really does know best.
- **Shepherd:**
Builds a resilient business; safe and sound; unlikely to be surprised by changes in the market or catastrophe; admired leader, although difficult to copy.
- **Autocratic:**
The autocratic style is usually considered unsuitable style for the late 21st century. However, appearing to be, or actually being, autocratic tends to be a feature of personality. The autocratic style is most successful in a crisis, when an organisation has to change rapidly, whether growing or turning itself from decline to growth (Van der Waldt and Auriacombe 2009:67).
- **Superior intelligence:**
Leaders with an appropriate emotional intelligence will learn, when young, how to handle intelligence. Superior intelligence is most successful in businesses where there are large numbers of highly qualified or bright people. They find it easier to accept a superior intelligence leader.

- **Army general:**
This command style does not come from a need to order people, nor an inability to listen to others, but from self-confidence in the right to lead and the ability to do so.
- **Princely leader:**
The princely leader is most successful in long-established businesses, which have powerful brands and dependable market share. They excel at regal leadership, taking finely calculated decisions to move the ocean liner a few degrees to port or starboard.
- **Nature's native:**
Nature's natives are effective under most circumstances. However, they excel in large-scale, multinational or global organisations, because their style transcends local or national, culturally narrow behaviour and enables them to fit into most nationalities and cultures.

There are many other types of leaders (e.g. authentic leader, servant-leader, ethical leader, to name but a few) but most of them range from the two main categories, namely: transactional and transformational. The use of each type depends largely on the context and the circumstances faced with. According to Tshiyoyo (2012:207) looking at the current configuration of the African continent, the use of the servant-model becomes relevant. Despite the availability of abundant natural resources only few countries have managed to progress since their access to independence. The servant-leader model, if well applied, can assist African leaders to reverse the dark picture that portrays the performance of the continent and pave a way for the development of Africa as a continent. In this article the focus on the three pillars that constitute the model proposed for leadership development are based on the servant-leader approach.

THREE PILLARS FOR FOUNDATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Effective leadership facilitates quality production and more efficient services; it provides a sense of cohesiveness, personal development, and higher levels of satisfaction among those conducting the work; it provides an overarching sense of direction and vision, an alignment with the environment, a healthy mechanism for innovation and creativity, and a resource for invigorating the organisational culture (Van Wart 2003:214). Leadership development has emerged as an important theoretical and practical stream of management. There is an implicit assumption that leadership is important, that leaders make

a difference, and that positive group and organisational effects are produced by leaders and the leadership process (Pierce & Newstrom 2000).

Africa needs leaders. Strong leaders committed to change are one of the key drivers to progress. Developing capabilities of leaders at all levels and in all spheres: political, the public sector, business and civil society are critical to African led sustainable development. This implies that good leaders honour the security of the state and of the person, the rule of law, good education and health services, and a framework conducive to economic growth (Rotberg 2004:17; Tshiyoyo 2012:205). As stressed previously, the pillars that are proposed in this article are founded on spirituality/vision, emotional intelligence, and morality. The need and the relevance of such dimensions in leadership development are explained below.

Spirituality

Olowu and Sako (2002:47) describe spirituality as a kind of energy source that (a) is beyond ourselves and transcendent; (b) impels us to search for the purpose of life here and after, as well as why are we here on earth; (c) has an overarching influence on our sense of right and wrong; (d) empowers us to care for others; and (e) inspires us to act for the common good. Although spirituality is supposed to be an integral part of our religious traditions and beliefs, its secular dimension, which is yet to be particularly acknowledged by secular institutions, is crucial in governance, especially to public service ethics and values. The aforementioned energy source can be converted into a moral force to be used for good governance.

Moreover, Reave (2005:663) adds that effective leadership facilitates higher-quality production with more efficient services of someone who can be trusted, relied upon, and admired. Spiritual leadership is also demonstrated through behaviour, whether in individual reflective practice or in the ethical, compassionate, and respectful treatment of others.

However, Fry (2003:711) argues that spiritual leadership is concerned with creating a vision wherein organisation members experience a sense of calling in that their life has meaning and makes a difference in establishing a social/organisational culture based on altruistic love whereby leaders and followers have genuine care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others, thereby producing a sense of membership, and people feel understood and appreciated. Burke (2006:13-14) maintains that a spiritual leadership approach asks fundamentally different questions about what it means to be human, what we really mean by growth, and what values and power distributions are needed to enhance both organisations and society as a whole. In this context, the framework that is proposed in this study has given pre-eminence to spirituality,

because we believe that if leaders have a clear vision of where they want to take their organisation or state it becomes easier for them to find strategic means leading them towards the attainment of that vision.

Leaders and emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence as a meta-skill refers to a person's abilities to perceive, identify, understand, and successfully manage emotions in self and others. Emotional understanding and skills affect our success and happiness in our work as well as in our personal lives. Leaders can harness, and direct the power of emotions to improve employee satisfaction, morale, and motivation, as well as to enhance organisational effectiveness.

One important skill for leaders is to understand the range of emotions and how they manifest themselves. Some researchers accept eight «families» of emotions: anger, sadness, fear, enjoyment, love, surprise, disgust, and shame. People in cultures around the world have been found to recognise these same basic emotions when shown photographs of facial expressions. Leaders, attuned to their own feelings and the feelings of others, can use this understanding to enhance the organisation.

The competencies and abilities of emotional intelligence are grouped into four fundamental categories:

- **Self-awareness** is the ability to recognise and understand your own emotions and how they affect your life and work. People who are in touch with their emotions are better able to guide their own lives. Leaders with a high level of self-awareness learn to trust their “gut feelings” for decision making. This component includes the ability to assess one's own strengths and limitations, with a healthy sense of self-confidence.
- **Self-management** includes the ability to control disruptive or harmful emotions. Leaders learn to balance their own emotions so that worry, anxiety, or anger does not get in the way, enabling them to think clearly and effectively. Managing emotions means understanding them and using that understanding to deal with situations productively. Other characteristics in this category include trustworthiness, conscientiousness, and adaptability.
- **Social awareness** refers to one's ability to understand and empathise with others. Socially aware leaders practice *empathy*, the ability to put yourself in someone else's shoes, sense their emotions, and understand their perspective. These leaders are capable of understanding divergent points of view and interacting effectively with many different types of people and emotions. The characteristic of *organisational awareness* is the ability to get along in organisational life, build networks, and use political behaviour to accomplish positive results.

- **Relationship management** is the ability to connect to others and build positive relationships. Leaders with high emotional intelligence treat others with compassion, sensitivity, and kindness. Leaders use their understanding of emotions to inspire change and lead people toward something better, to build teamwork and collaboration, and to resolve conflicts as they arise.

A leader's emotional abilities play a key role in charismatic leadership behaviour. Charismatic leaders hold strong emotional convictions and relate to followers on an emotional level. Transformational leaders project an inspiring vision for change and motivate followers to achieve it, which requires all the components of emotional intelligence. A high level of self-awareness, plus the ability to manage one's emotions, enables a leader to display self-confidence and earn the respect and trust of followers. The emotional state of the leader affects the entire group, department, or organisation.

This *emotional contagion* means that leaders who maintain balance and keep themselves motivated are positive role models to help motivate and inspire others. Emotionally intelligent leaders help followers grow and develop, see and enhance their self-worth, and help meet their needs and achieve their personal goals.

Schmidt and Hunter (1998:262) explain that intelligence is one of the best predictors of general job performance. The intelligence-performance relationship is stronger for complex jobs, supporting the importance of intelligence for leadership, because the tasks performed by leaders are generally complex. Therefore, not only are intelligent leaders better problem solvers, but they are likely to be more creative and foster the creativity of their followers. Beyond the actual leadership advantages intelligence affords, intelligence may also cause a leader to appear 'leader-like'. If individuals believe that leaders are endowed with certain characteristics, then when individuals observe these characteristics in others, they infer leadership or the existence of leadership potential (Guilford 1950; Rushton 1990).

Fiedler (2002:91) states that most scholars and commentators would agree that effective leadership requires the abilities to perceive and understand information, reason with it, imagine possibilities, use intuition, make judgements, solve problems and make decisions. Indeed, Judge, Colbert and Ilies (2004) found a significant but moderate association between intelligence and leadership. These abilities are necessary for creating vision, mission, shared values and strategies for pursuing the vision and mission that 'win' people's minds. Goleman (2004:1) found that while the qualities traditionally associated with leadership, such as intelligence, toughness, determination and vision are required for success, they are insufficient. Truly effective leaders are also distinguished by a high degree of emotional intelligence, which includes self-

awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skill. These qualities may sound 'soft' and unbusinesslike, but Goleman found direct ties between emotional intelligence and measurable business results.

Considering the need for leaders which prevails in the dire situation of the DRC, one may insist that emotional intelligence should be one of the prerequisites for leadership development. Emotional intelligence has the ability to assist leaders to develop a leadership style that is best suited to the circumstances of the country. Nevertheless, emotional intelligence can work better in the leadership development process only if spirituality is also outlined as one of the characteristics. Spirituality assists leaders to have a purpose, something they live for, and something that inspires their endeavour in an organisation or society. Spirituality and emotional intelligence are not sufficient, leaders will also have to be trained in order to exhibit a moral standard that respects and promotes societal values at all times.

Leaders and morality

The morality of leadership is often a neglected element in leadership studies. This phenomenon is not unsurprising given the fixation on and preoccupation with leadership effectiveness in leadership studies. To a certain extent, the insatiable quest to achieve higher quarterly profits in the corporate world dictates many leadership researchers the academic settings to dedicate their studies to answering a crucial question of how leadership improves corporate performance. Following this logic, one can easily overlook the negative effects which the absence of morality in leadership theories or models can have on performance (Sendjaya 2005:75).

The exercise of authority and power always entails ethical challenges. This internal system of moral values in every individual necessitates the inclusion of morality in any leadership concept which presupposes a dyadic relationship between leader and follower. Therefore, to say that inserting morality into the concept of leadership is unacceptable is a denial of this universal fact of human nature. As a matter of fact, there is no leadership apart from morality since all forms of leadership are value-laden (Gini 1995).

Burns (1978:20) considers morality as a crucial component of transforming leadership. He bases his notion of transforming leaders on two moral issues: the morality of the means and ends, and the public and private morality of a leader. In transforming leadership interaction, leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality. According to this concept, real leadership takes place only when leaders' and followers' ethical aspirations are enhanced as a result of their interactions. Only those who appeal to higher ideals, moral values, and higher-order needs of followers can be called

transforming leaders (Burns 1978:20 and Ciulla 1995). In this context, Sendjaya (2005:76, 84) insists that good leadership is impossible without the presence of morality. Sendjaya (2005:84) insists that a sound understanding of leadership necessitates the inclusion of objective moral values. Rest (1979) argues that moral reasoning is thought to be one's conceptual and analytical ability to frame socio-moral problems using one's standards and values to judge the proper course of action. Dukerish, Nichols, Elm and Vollrath (1990) reported that leaders high in moral reasoning were more likely to assume a coaching or teaching role than were leaders with less sophisticated moral reasoning. Therefore, good leaders behave in ways that enable them to succeed in these roles. Table 1 outlines a list of elements attached to each dimension.

Table 1: Dimensions for leadership development

Leadership development	<p>Spirituality (vision–charisma)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision • Will • Self-belief • Loyalty • Respect • Agreeableness • Conscientiousness
	<p>Emotional Intelligence (intellectual stimulation)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competence • Creativity • Objectivity • Empathy • Engagement • Development • Mentoring • Coaching • Character
	<p>Morality (individualised consideration)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics • Integrity • Mutual respect • Self-esteem • Honesty

Source: (Adapted from Tshiyoyo 2012)

A true leader needs to serve a particular purpose which might be the promotion of the betterment of the living conditions of citizens rather than serving a leader's own selfish interests (Tshiyoyo 2012:205). A good leader must have a combination of spirituality, emotional intelligence and morality, because change is a process that is driven by multiple forces. In Africa and particularly in the DRC it is essential to realise that development requires a lasting change and that change needs to come from within. A combination of the proposed dimensions could assist in developing leaders who are able to address the

multifaceted crisis which prevails in the DRC. Current and future leaders should have a certain degree of spirituality as it is synonymous to having a vision which must lead any endeavour towards transformation. The DRC should also have leaders who can display a well-developed emotional intelligence to cope with the multiple challenges facing the country in terms of governance. Finally, morality is paramount as leaders are also expected to abide by principles of good governance and lead by example. Given the state of collapse in the DRC, the country needs leaders who possess these three dimensions simultaneously.

CONCLUSION

This article provides an overview of leadership and governance issues in order to demonstrate the extent to which those issues influence leadership development in a country such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The country has been and is still going through a profound leadership crisis that has orchestrated the state's collapse and minimised the country's prospects for economic development. The article argues that Africa needs effective leaders because strong leaders committed to change are one of the key drivers to progress. However, leadership effectiveness is determined by leaders' ability to overcome the challenges they are faced with in their direct settings. Considering the particular context of DRC, leadership development becomes problematic due to political, social, economic and environmental factors but the current situation is due to the fact that the after effects or the consequences of colonisation have not been dealt with adequately. In order to overcome the various challenges the country is facing the DRC requires the development of leaders at all levels.

The personal side of any leader is concerned with motivation, character, maturity, will power, freedom, meaning, creativity, ethics and values, culture, responsibility and accountability, loyalty, commitment, self-sacrifice, courage, genius, and other qualities.

Both the personal and strategic sides of leadership include the use of power. With power, there is one rule that may not be broken: the use of power should only benefit the public interest and never the political ambitions of the leader. Sharing power also means transferring responsibility and accountability. Accountability without power is as empty as power without accountability. When a subordinate is held accountable but does not have the authority to implement decisions, it is as ridiculous as a corporate officer's having power but not feeling personally responsible for an institution's success.

The most important aims of the DRC must find expression in the country's desire to create a balance between the strategic and personal qualities of its leadership. Achieving this balance successfully will mean that the government

does not only pay attention to practices and products but will also deal with the free decisions that human beings make about values and about how to treat one another and themselves. This transformation occurs on the personal, not the strategic side of leadership. This is what the article argues for in the three pillars proposed for leadership development which follows a transformational leadership approach and relies on three dimensions, namely: spirituality, emotional intelligence and morality. The combination of these dimensions can assist in developing leaders who are able to address the multi-faceted crisis facing the DRC. This kind of leader is essential as the DRC must dispose of ineffective leaders in order to create space for a new generation of leaders who are able to break the patterns which have hampered the country's development. DRC's current predicament is partly self-inflicted, due to poor leadership and mismanagement, and only Congolese leaders and Congolese people can address this predicament.

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Sustainable Development

An interrogation of the concept

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ABSTRACT

In view of the fact that the promises of globalisation have not delivered on its pledge of being a “tidal wave that will raise all ships” (Pezzoli 1997:560), the widening inequality in the standard of living between developed and developing countries; and the increasing poverty within and among developing nations, brought increasing popularity to the concept of sustainable development. Mindful of the fact that sustainable development is a double-edged sword that cuts both ways, development practitioners and policymakers are sceptical whenever businesses or governments mention the term ‘sustainable development’, because they believe that it has been appropriated and abused by many people. This article uses Ruttan’s (1994:211), theory of establishment appropriation to explain the reason for the fluidity and ambiguity in the understanding and meaning of the concept of sustainable development. The article traces the various processes which led to the rise of the concept of sustainable development into global prominence. It concludes with a recommendation of what sustainable development should entail whenever it is used in relation to the developing parts of the world like sub-Saharan Africa.

CONCEPTUALISING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In order to fully appreciate the variety, complexity and pervasiveness of current development problems especially concerning the needs of the developing parts of the world like Africa, Meir (1995:16) advised that development practitioners, policymakers and academics should be mindful of the historical origins of development problems, since this is one of the best safeguards against taking a superficial view of the issue. The notion that a particular human practice

or endeavour could prove to be sustainable or unsustainable has been mentioned in literature as far back as the ancient Greeks (Malthus 1820:5), and has gained more prominence since World War II (World Commission on Environment and Development, WCED 1987:8-9). Daly (1990:20) asserted that the concept of sustainable development has increasingly come to dominate and shape international debates regarding environmental and developmental policymaking. The use of the concept has also crept into the development and environmental discourse of many developing countries of the world especially in Africa. From the oil wells of Nigeria, Angola, Ghana and Cameroon, many multinational companies are brandishing the term 'sustainable development' as their code of honour but there is little evidence on the ground to support their slogans. The concept was catapulted into global prominence by the Report of the Brundtland Commission in 1987. Sustainable development was formally endorsed as a policy objective by world leaders at the Rio summit five years later in 1992. The phrase has been absorbed into the conceptual lexicon of international organisations such as the World Bank and the OECD; been accorded its own global secretariat in the form of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), and achieved near-constitutional status in the European Union through its incorporation into the Maastricht and Amsterdam treaties (Ukwandu 2009:138).

Globally, captains of industry, political leaders and public administrators now routinely and continuously justify politics, projects and initiatives in terms of the contribution they make towards sustainable development. Sustainable development has become something which practically everybody from all backgrounds claims to subscribe to. This phenomenon gained more attention during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro (1992:2), where world leaders demonstrated that no single nation or group of people could continue progressing economically while the majority remained hungry and poor especially in Africa (Dwivedi 1994:32). Although the concept of sustainable development assumes a central importance in almost all contemporary discourses, which has environmental and development-related ramifications, there has been little serious intellectual research and consensus on the real meaning of the move towards sustainable development. Baker (2007:298) observed that we have seen a great deal of discursive 'smoke', but little in the way of empirical 'fire' where sustainable development is concerned.

Sustainable development is a problematic concept, because its language and definitions vary based on the intellectual and ideological disposition of the person or groups advocating for the term. Many definitions of this concept have been proposed and used in literature, and they allude to different disciplines and persuasions. For example, sustainable development has been variously

conceived as vision expression (Lee 1993 cited in Gladwin *et al.* 2009:876), value change (Clark 1989:2; Farrel 1999:65), moral development (Rolston 1994), social reorganisation (Gore 1992; 269), and a transformational process (Viederman 1994, cited in Ukwandu 2009:139) towards a desired future or better world. A critic of the concept of sustainable development referred to it as “motherhood and apple pie” (Beckerman 1992:491).

Sustainable development was defined by the World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission) as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations” (WCED 1987:8). The needs mentioned in the report included food, water, shelter, education, healthcare and employment, and these are the basic and fundamental human needs which are proving to be unattainable for millions of people living in most countries of sub-Saharan Africa. From this definition, we can deduce that the term sustainable development is not practiced in Africa or that it is a work in progress. This seminal definition of sustainable development is usually translated into the simultaneous satisfaction of three objectives: economic efficiency, environmental protection, and social justice (Cagri 1995:2; Healey and Shaw 1993:769; Pearce *et al.* 1990:3; Sadler and Jacobs 1989:2; Muducumura 2002:139). As such, sustainable development depends on dynamic relationships between people in the same society and from different societies, between people and their technology, and other species and their shared natural environment (Downs 2000:604).

The Brundtland definition of sustainable development re-echoed and reinforced Ruskin’s (cited in Douthwaite 1990:1) stewardship concerns, highlighting the responsibility of the current generation towards the future, while looking at the future to determine how best to use its inheritance from the past (Howe 1997:597). Solow (1992:10) elaborated the Brundtland commission’s definition of the concept to unfurl the duty imposed on the current generation by sustainability and development. Muducumura (2002:139) explained that this sacred duty of sustainable development entails not bequeathing to posterity any particular thing, but rather to endow posterity with whatever it needs to achieve a standard of living at least as good as one’s own, and to look after the next generation in the same way. Within these sentiments, Pronk and Haq (1992:5) incorporated the concept of fairness in their definition of sustainable development, by explaining the rationale behind economic growth.

Thus, sustainable development should provide fairness and opportunity for the entire world’s people, not just for the privileged few in the developed countries of the world, without further destroying the world’s finite natural resources and carrying capacity. Furthermore, with special reference to equity, Briassoulis (1999:228) viewed sustainable development as a form of development that allows the pursuit of wellbeing by current generations, while caring about the legitimate

right of future generations to look after their own welfare. Thus, intra- and intergenerational justice in the distribution of the costs and benefits of economic growth and development should be a basic consideration in all development policies and programmes, albeit a very thorny aspect of sustainable development (cited in Muducumura 2002:141). For the millions in Africa, there has been little or no justice in development as the gains of economic growth and development have only profited the rich and politically well connected.

Liou (1999:15) broadened our understanding of the concept of sustainable development through buttressing its broader scope of total development, which takes human resources development, the balance between environmental protection and economic growth, the appreciation of cultural differences, the cultivation of local administrative systems, and the importance of performance accountability into account. The narrative of Liou (1999:16) was corroborated in the writings of Chambers (1983:180) on the need for development to be cognisant of community sentiments, realities and values, in order for it to succeed. Similarly, the underpinnings of sustainability are captured in Carley and Christie's (1992:48) definition of sustainable development as a "continuing process of mediation among social, economic and environmental needs which results in positive socioeconomic change that does not undermine the ecological and social systems upon which communities and society are dependent".

Sometimes when the term sustainable development is used, it could refer to a managerial and operational process meant to improve patterns of stability and adaptability of current development (Beckerman 1994:490). More often than not, sustainable development evokes an alternative, ideological model of development that is inherently contradictory to present practices (Redclift 1987:65). In clearer terms, Redclift (1987:66) tried to explain that much of what is presently advocated as sustainable development is in direct opposition to the increased globalisation and massive economic growth and industrialisation being witnessed in the world. Within this context, sustainable development is therefore a call for an 'alternative to growth at all costs syndrome', which is presently plaguing Western civilisation. Notwithstanding the extraordinary growth of sustainability literature in the past few years, much of the analysis and discussion of this concept remained mired in terminological ambiguities, as well as disagreements about facts and practical implications (Lele 1991:608; Reid 1995:129).

Tolba (1984, cited in Muducumura 2002:141) bemoaned the fact that sustainable development had become an article of faith often used by many development practitioners, but poorly clarified or even understood by the public. The United States National Academy of Engineering opined (Daly and Cobb 1989:15) that sustainable development would remain little more than a slogan unless disciplines interested in development could provide operational concepts that would ultimately improve the economy and the environment.

Moreover, some scholars have recognised the absence of a rigorous intellectual and theoretical lens through which to view the concept: “the absence of a clear theoretical and analytical framework makes it difficult to determine whether the new policies will indeed foster an environmentally sound and socially meaningful form of development” (Lele 1991:608). Based on this limitation, theorists and development practitioners have grappled with the sustainability concept for at least the past two decades, and Jacobs (1993:79) believed that no one has been able to fully explore this complex phenomenon.

Skolimowski (1995:69) was of the view that despite its ambiguity, the concept of sustainable development is like a religion that everybody wants to identify with, but it also raised crucial issues when one recalls how earlier models of development have largely failed to meet the needs of the present population in both the North and the South over the past 50 years. (The terms North and South are used respectively to refer to industrialised countries especially those of Europe and North America commonly understood in development dictionary now as developed countries of the world while South means countries with little industrialisation, commonly referred to as developing countries, which are mostly in sub-Saharan Africa).

As the world economy took off immediately after World War II, there was general recognition of the dangers of pollution and the environmental effects of untrammelled economic growth (Turner 1988:106). Based on this, there were doubts about the sustainability of conventional growth objectives, strategies and policies. These issues were brought to the forefront of public debate globally. From the early days of the call for sustainable development, the call from some quarters was for zero-growth strategies (Daly 1977:180). This narrative was given impetus by the publication of the Club of Rome report—Limits to Growth, in 1972 (Meadows *et al.* 1992:1).

The Limits to Growth narrative was widely criticised globally and it was partially displaced by the counter argument that environmental protection and continued economic growth could be seen as mutually compatible as it would be morally unjust for developing countries of the world especially those in Africa to continue in relative deprivation in the name of protecting the environment (Beckerman 1994:489). The term ‘sustainable development’ was used to refer to this new point of view (cited in Baker *et al.*, 1997:14). This new narrative was couched as a form of development that seeks to fulfil the needs and not the wants of people. It entered the public arena in 1980 when the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) presented the World Conservation Strategy (WCN) with the overall aim of achieving sustainable development through the conservation of living resources (WCN/IUCN 1980:5). However, the World Conservation Strategy was limited in the sense that its prime focus was on ecological sustainability, as opposed to social and economic sustainability (Baker 2007:298). One of the weak points of the World Conservation Strategy (WCN)

was its narrow perception of sustainability as a strictly environmental concern while neglecting the needs of the people. The sustainability concept is much more holistic in its view and outlook as it sees the issues of sustainability and environmental protection in relation to its long-term viability to the social and economic development of a country (Ukwandu 2009:140).

The Brundtland Report (WCED 1987:44) held that the achievement of sustainable development at the global level should be linked to a number of major political and social changes: elimination of poverty and exploitation, equal distribution of global resources, an end to the current pattern of military expenditure, new methods of ensuring just population control, lifestyle changes, appropriate technology, and institutional changes including democratisation, achieved through effective citizen participation in decision-making (Turner 1988:105). The Report was of the view that sustainable development also implies a concern for both intergenerational and intra-generational equity in resource use. Intergenerational equity refers to including the needs of future generations in the design and implementation of current policy. Intra-generational equity highlights the importance of meeting the basic needs of present generations, where poverty is seen as both a consequence and a cause of unsustainable behaviours. In addition, intra-generational equity applies to those trapped in poverty in most of sub-Saharan Africa, where massive pillaging of natural resources is taking place daily. In short, sustainable development was linked to questions of power and the removal of disparities in economic and political relationships between developed and developing countries of the world (Brundtland Report 1987:45).

Achtenberg (1993:86) highlighted some non-anthropocentric notes which are contained in the Report. For example, the Report argued that the case for the conservation of nature should not rest only with development goals as part of mankind's moral obligation towards other living beings and future generations (WCED 1987:48). Mankind has a moral obligation to the preservation of species and organisms (Berkes and Folke 1994:128), not only for themselves, but also for future generations. It also involves leaving the earth a better place than we found it. Buckley (1995:14) argued that for sustainable development to be feasible, we also have to bear in mind the concept of 'critical natural capital', which refers to those parts of natural capital that cannot be replaced if lost (or at least, not within feasible time frames) and cannot therefore be replaced with human capital or compensated for by positive forces elsewhere.

Buckley (1995:15) is of the view that it is imperative that the world is aware of the distinction between natural and man-made capital. Economists have traditionally defined capital as things people have built that have value, such as roads or factories, and these are the things that environmental economists define as 'human-made capital'. 'Natural capital' is created by bio-geophysical processes rather than human action, and helps environments to meet human

needs through the provision of raw materials (fish or timber) or what are referred to as 'services' (cited in Adams 2001:10). In this context, such services would include the role of global bio-geochemical cycles in maintaining the ecological conditions necessary for human life, or the more mundane way in which wetlands moderate floods or absorb pollutants (Barbier 1998:344).

AN OVERVIEW OF SOME DEFINITIONS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A plethora of sustainable development definitions has emerged globally and only a few of those definitions have been genuine attempts at establishing an intellectually rigorous and operational sustainable development concept which would be commonly accepted. One of the aims of the article is to examine a number of those definitions. This is vital as the endeavour will allow researchers and policymakers to have clarity on the strengths of those definitions and also to unveil many of their weaknesses. It is important to start with the definition provided by the United Nations under the auspices of the WCED which is popularly called the Brundtland report (1987). This is how they explained the concept of sustainable development:

Sustainable development is a development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland Report 1987:43). Further on in the report, they argued that: Sustainable development is a process of change in which the exploitation of natural resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development, and institutional change are all in harmony and enhance the current and future potential to meet needs and aspirations (Brundtland Report 1987:46).

One of the weaknesses of these two definitions is that they are devoid of specific parameters, guidelines or minimum positions. One must question whether or not they leave us any more knowledgeable in terms of what truly constitutes sustainable development—for example, if meeting needs and aspirations constitutes development, then:

- Exactly what needs and aspirations are the WCED referring to?
- Is the WCED referring only to basic physiological needs or the full spectrum of human needs, including 'higher-order' needs?
- Does development include wants as well as needs?
- Is development achieved through the attainment of any needs, wants or aspirations, irrespective of their moral content—that is, irrespective of whether or not they are virtuous in terms of accepted standards of right and wrong?

- Who really determines the needs or wants that, if attained, constitute development?
- Is development to some extent dependent upon how effectively these needs are being met?
- Is the continued growth of macroeconomic systems necessary for these needs and wants to be attained? (Lawn 2001:150).
- Furthermore, if not compromising the ability of future generations to meet its own needs is an example of sustainability, then:
- What are the minimum conditions required to ensure that such potential is not compromised?
- Does this mean bequeathing to posterity a stock of suitable assets?
- If so, what types of assets—man-made, naturally occurring, or both, and in what combinations? (Lawn 1998:20).

Deducing from the ambiguity and fluidity which is manifestly clear in the many definitions of sustainable development contained in the Brundtland Report, one can then properly appreciate Ruttan's (1994:15) theory of establishment appropriation, whereby dominant institutions subvert legitimate external challenges by appropriating the symbols of sustainable development that are promoted by people, both in the developed and developing world. The coining of the concept of sustainable development was done in order to ameliorate the penury and material deprivation which characterises life in developing countries of the world especially Africa, but it was hijacked by powerful institutions that made sure that sustainable development has as many definitions as possible, thereby meaning many things to many people, even when referring to poor women, environmental equity and justice in the distribution of the world's resources.

The dominant epistemology, thinking and definitions of sustainable development are all deficient in a number of ways as they seek to say many things with little clarity. The few definitions that have properly encapsulated and accentuated the inclusive nature and meaning of sustainable development are listed below:

- sustainable development involves "...a pattern of social and structural economic transformations which optimises the economic and other social benefits available in the present, without jeopardising the likely potential for similar benefits in the future. The primary goal of sustainable development is to achieve a reasonable and equitably distributed level of economic well-being that can be perpetuated continually for future human generations" (Goodland and Ledec 1987:35-36).
- Sustainable development is a concept which involves "...satisfying the multiple criteria of sustainable growth, poverty alleviation, and sound environmental management" (World Bank 1987:10).

- Sustainable development is "...development that is likely to achieve lasting satisfaction of human needs and improvement in the quality of life" (Allen 1980:23).
- Sustainable development involves "...learning how long-term and large-scale interactions between environment and development can be better managed to increase the prospects for ecologically sustainable improvements in human well-being" (Clark and Munn 1986:5).

Unlike the sustainable development concept proposed by the WCED, one could easily ask the following different but clearly related questions concerning the aforementioned definitions. In terms of development considerations:

- What is meant by economic wellbeing and how is it related to development?
- How does one determine a reasonable and equitable distribution of economic wellbeing—that is, to what extent must economic wellbeing be redistributed in order to constitute development?
- Is sustainable economic growth possible, and if so, does it necessarily equate to development?
- In what ways do the satisfaction of human needs and improvement in the quality of life constitute development? What about needs and wants? (Cited in Lawn 2001:17). In terms of the sustainability considerations implied by the above definitions and concepts:
- What are the minimum conditions required to prevent the endangerment of economic and social benefits in the future – in other words, how can a flow of economic and social benefits be perpetuated for many generations?
- Because 'many generations' does not imply all future generations, how many is many?
- If sustainability is conditional upon ensuring that future generations are not made worse off, what is meant by worse off? Moreover, once known, what does its prevention entail?
- How does sound environmental management constitute sustainability—in other words, could human management be more important than environmental management?
- What are the minimum requirements for ensuring mankind's ecologically sustainable interaction with the environment? (Cited in Beckerman 1999:21).

VIEWS ON THE RISE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The global effort to secure the best way to improve human welfare and tackle human poverty, which is no doubt ethically imperative has given fresh energy to a thorough interrogation of the question of whether or not the world is on

the right path to development (Corbridge 1993:450; Goulet 1997:1160). This is because despite the massive reach and spread of globalisation, millions of people especially in Africa are still wallowing in abject poverty, penury and wretchedness (Pezzoli 1997:560). As Goodland *et al.* (1993:298) succinctly stated, poverty is a massive global outrage". The recognition and awareness of the many unsolvable problems of poverty and underdevelopment in the developing countries of the world especially those in sub-Saharan Africa are well known to politicians, aid agencies, and academic analysts both in the developed and developing world, but they are not caused by the poor people in the developing countries of the world. This is how Timberlake (1985) explained it:

Environmental bankruptcy has not been caused by the stupid African peasant, as so many of these governments and aid agencies and their experts like to think. On the contrary, it is the African peasant who best understands how and why he or she has been forced to damage the environment on which they depend, and it is he or she who is the key to rebuilding their continent (Timberlake 1995:224).

The recognition of the damage done to the environment and the best way to solve the problem have long made the crisis of poverty and underdevelopment the commonplace motif of development writing and discourse, as this is very common to discussions and debates in sub-Saharan Africa (Brandt 1983:44; Frank 1981:62; Frobel *et al.* 1985:12). The crisis of development, or the lack of it, includes the problem of the debt crisis in most of sub-Saharan Africa, the declining per capita food production, growing poverty and socio-economic differentials, both within countries of sub-Saharan Africa and in other regions of the world (UNDP 2003:15).

The economic trajectory of the international community spearheaded by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has in the past tended to favour 'fire-fighting' approaches, as exemplified by the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), which involved an examination of the deeper ills and treatment of symptoms of poverty and underdevelopment in sub-Saharan Africa, not its causes (Adams 2001:15). This lack of understanding of the root causes of poverty and underdevelopment in Africa has left little room for lateral thinking about ways and means of making development feasible on the continent, and this was evident in the poorly conceived policies of structural adjustment and economic development imposed on African countries by donors in the developed world (Pieterse 1991; Preston 1985:4; Wiarda 1981:191). Thus, Nyerere (1985:489) commented that "African starvation is topical, but relations between rich and poor countries which underlie Africa's vulnerability to natural disasters have

been relegated to the side-lines of world discussion". Dissatisfaction about the underlying premises of development as prescriptions given to the developing countries of the world (SAP) has not worked, and has in fact made things worse (Mkandawire 1997:15; Onimode 1988:3). The concept of sustainable development was partly popularised because it was seen as a solution to the alleviation of poverty in Africa. In recognition of the failures of the economic prescriptions forced on the developing countries of the world, some scholars have labelled such knowledge's, epistemologies as being practically irrelevant, conceptually Eurocentric, theoretically impoverished, ideologically prejudiced, paradigmatically bankrupt, philosophically parochial, narrowly focused, and lacking multidisciplinary perspectives (Braun 1990:55; Edwards 1989:121; Goulet 1983:610; Leys 1996:7; Mathur 1989:480; Muducumura 2002:39; Palmer 1978:95; Pieterse 1991; Preston 1985:4; Wiarda 1981:191).

Haque (1999:7) explained that the increasing global concern for rethinking development and re-examining the traditional mode, based on the logic of industrialism, reinforced the focus on the question of sustainability, and the global crisis that resulted from widespread industrialisation shifted thinking towards sustainable development (Daly 1991a: 9; Reid 1995:129). Similarly, a special session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly concluded that the "overall trends for sustainable development are worse today than they were in 1992" (UNDP 1996:4). Those closely connected to the global financial institutions have acknowledged that macroeconomic policy and international free trade alone are not improving development prospects for the world's poor, especially those in Africa, and that chronic impoverishment and environmental degradation reinforce each other to create increasingly unstable social and ecological systems (Camadeus 2000:9; Sachs 1999; cited in Muducumura 2002:137).

According to the World Bank (2013) the world has had an unprecedented pace of poverty reduction since the early 1980s, during which the number of people living in extreme poverty was reduced by more than 700 million. Despite these remarkable achievements, approximately 1.2 billion people remained entrenched in abject poverty and penury by 2010 and many of those were people in Africa (World Bank 2013).The persistence of endemic poverty, especially in most countries of sub-Saharan Africa, has been referred to as the pollution of poverty(Adams 2001:10).

It was the view of Adams (2001:18) that the use of pollution as a metaphor in talking about poverty in most developing countries of the world is crucial for a number of reasons. Firstly, while Western societies are busy boasting about the positive effects of liberalisation and unrestricted free markets, claiming that global economic growth will filter down and that the force of globalisation will have sent a rising tide of people on an upward spiral of wealth and prosperity (Pezzoli

1997:560), the reality on the ground proves that the world is on a dangerous path, as most people and citizens of the globe are being left behind in the “rising wave”.

Based on the estimates of the World Bank (2013) mentioned above many people in sub-Saharan Africa are sinking in the ocean of poverty and unemployment. Secondly, the term ‘pollution’ -understood as a harmful or unwanted good has served to emphasise the serious types of damage and social harm which poverty causes throughout the developing regions of the world, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Thirdly and finally, the notion of pollution also serves to emphasise the unusual concentration of poverty in most of sub-Saharan Africa—it is after all the concentration of unwanted/harmful substances which transforms them into pollution (Pezzoli 1997:560). It is the untrammelled globalisation of trade and industries championed by the institutions of global governance like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank that has polluted many parts of Africa, where African resources are exploited and the people on the continent are unable to or even prevented from enjoying the benefits of their wealth (Ukwandu 2009:140).

The concomitant effects of poverty, crime, breakdown in moral and family values, rugged individualism and consumerism, not to mention the reduction in self-esteem that comes with the prolonged lack of jobs and hopelessness, and the culture of dependency and entitlement that poverty breeds within a generation of citizens who stay for years without jobs, gives one a picture of the pollution of the mind, individual, family and society at large. While the eradication of the social suffering associated with poverty has been a crucial goal of sustainable development, sustainability is also based upon a concern for the harm which poverty can inflict on the environment. In many ways, arguing for a link between poverty and environmental exploitation seems paradoxical and counter intuitive (Daly 1991a: 10). It was, after all, economic success and rapid industrial growth which generated the first forms of international political concern over global environmental pollution (Adam 2001:23).

Presently, politicians and policymakers, especially those in sub-Saharan Africa have been faced with the reality that while unchecked economic growth can be harmful to the environment, poverty can also be disastrous. The link between social poverty and environmental degradation is aptly expressed by Porrit (1992:35), when he observes that “poverty is one of the greatest threats to the environment today. It is poverty that drives people to overgraze, to cut down trees, to adopt ecologically damaging shortcuts and lifestyles, to have larger families than they would otherwise choose, to flee from rural areas into already over-burdened cities—in short to consume the very seed corn on which the future depends, in order to stay alive today”.

Many scholars have argued that it is not only unregulated industrial development and economic growth that is doing damage to the environment

and hence leading millions of people into the trap of poverty or unsustainability, but also the deleterious effects of poverty on the lives of billions of people throughout the world, especially in Africa (Grainger 1982:5; Blaikie 1985:119; Blaikie and Brookfield 1987:15). It was actually in recognition of the deleterious effect of increasing poverty on the lives of millions of people throughout the world especially in Africa, that the concept of sustainable development became popular. This made policymakers, researchers and academic practitioners worldwide seek for ways of fashioning a just and more equitable world. The renowned Catholic theologian St Augustine alluded to the need for justice and fair play in the world when he held that: "It is justice that distinguishes a civilized society from a band of robbers and a pathway away from barbarism and savagery to civilization" (cited in Ukwandu 2009:301).

The concept of sustainable development acquired world-wide acclaim and popularity in this period of global awakening to the suffering of the poorest of the poor. The awakening brought calls from many world-wide for a new type of order or system that would take care of the weak, poor and vulnerable segments of the population. World Bank former President Wolfensohn (1999:2) called for an 'integration of effort' and expanded partnerships among groups (aid agencies, other financial donors, the private sector and non-governmental organisations), as well as a sharing of knowledge, in order to produce a new integrated plan for development (Muducumura 2002: 3a). Sharing the same view, Camadeus (2000:9), the former director general of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), recognised the failure of macroeconomic policies to solve systemic and chronic poverty in Africa, and the overriding need to advance well beyond debt forgiveness to empower underdeveloped economies.

PROCESSES THAT LED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The real time and place of birth of the concept of sustainable development is highly debatable and is reflected by the many and varied opinions that exist within the sustainable development literature. For instance, while Barbier (1998:344) believes that the sustainable development concept has its origins during the 1970s, Hundloe (1991:5) argued that the evolution of the sustainable development concept can be traced back to the origins of the economics discipline itself. Hundloe (1991:5) bases his argument on a strong conviction that the concept has logical links with the founders of economics and others who have assisted in the development of the discipline into its present state. Some scholars have argued that rather than having been born out of any single historical event, sustainable development has evolved from the foundations laid

by crucial actions and events in the past (Van den Berg and Van der Straaten 1994:1). This view is the dominant narrative expressed by Van den Berg and Van der Straaten (1994:1). They are of the view that sustainable development emerged as a result of the following events:

- The Stockholm conference on the Human Environment in 1972 and the subsequent establishment of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP:1).
- The Limits to Growth Report (Meadows *et al.* 1992:1).
- The World Conservation Strategy (WCN/IUCN 1980:5).
- The US Global 2000 Report to the President (Barney 1992) and its response: The Resourceful Earth (Simon and Kahn 1984).
- The IASA report on Sustainable Development of the Biosphere (Clark and Munn 1986:5).
- The previously mentioned United Nations report: Our Common Future (WCED 1987:48).

Without underestimating the significance of any of the preceding events, it is the researcher's belief that the sustainable development concept emerged largely from the forces generated by the 'Limits-to-Growth' debate of the early 1970s. The Limits-to-Growth debate was sparked by the postulations of the so-called Club of Rome Report (Meadows *et al.* 1992:1). This widely publicised report involved an exhaustive and thorough study of the environmental and resource limits to growth, and the potential role of technological change in removing such limits. The public opprobrium generated by the Report showed the rapid depletion of many key resources and the fast approaching limits to the growth in resource use and macroeconomic systems (Daly 1991a:10). The Club of Rome was vociferous and condemned what it considered to be the unguarded growth at all cost disposition implemented by many policymakers both in national governments and within international development agencies (cited in Lawn 2001:12). In view of the nature of the Club of Rome Report, it became clear in the early 1970s that any broad acceptance of its findings would require major changes geared towards the enthronement of low- or no- growth economies.

Furthermore, by ensuring that the sustainable development concept remained vague and obscure, dominant institutions succeeded in engendering a widespread belief that these growth-based policies needed only cosmetic changes and not radical ones (Lele 1991:607; Ekins 1993:23). By backing away from any attempt to distinguish quantitative growth from qualitative development, the WCED avoided having to consider whether or not continued growth was genuinely desirable and ecologically sustainable. It simply assumed that growth was a laudable macroeconomic objective by advocating a five to ten-fold expansion of the global economy (WCED 1987:48). Despite

occasional references to the need for a qualitative change in the nature of all future economic growth, as opposed to development, the WCED (1987:48) successfully evaded many of the concerns initially raised in the Club of Rome Report. This illustrates the fact that the WCED was hijacked and dominated by the dominant institutions and ideology of the day, led by capitalist America and Western Europe, as it turned away from properly debating whether or not rampant economic growth is desirable for society in the long term.

CONCLUSION AND THE REASON FOR THE AMBIGUITY IN THE UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETATION OF THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In Ruttan's (1994:36) theory of 'establishment appropriation' he elaborated that the establishment or dominant institutions in a society or organisation could decide the dominant institutions or symbols of a particular group if those symbols were perceived to be a threat to their way of life. This is done so as to use those symbols to serve their own interest and not the interests of the original owners. Sustainable development was one of those symbols and concepts which was appropriated. With a clear understanding of this thesis one gets a better understanding of why the concept of sustainable development lacks the required intellectual rigor and robustness to embody all that is needed to get most of Africa out of poverty and deprivation of scarce resources such as water.

Establishment appropriation occurs when dominant institutions subvert legitimate external challenges by appropriating or embracing the symbols promoted by opposition forces. By playing a significant role in the evolution of these emerging symbols, dominant institutions are able to demobilise external challenges and ensure their own longevity and continued dominance (Ruttan 1994:36). As an upshot of the process of the establishment appropriation that followed the publication of the Club of Rome Report, it was the sustainable development concept that eventually emerged as the central focus or symbol of the newly directed debate. However, because of the influence of dominant institutions such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the United Nations (UN), the sustainable development debate proceeded in a manner that deliberately avoided crucial issues concerning the desirability of economic growth (for example, what the optimal physical scale of the macro economy is, and the non-recognition of issues such as equity and justice in the distribution of resources throughout the world). As a result, dominant institutions were able to legitimise and justify the status quo.

In view of the fact that most multinational companies and 'prophets' of unregulated capitalism, led by the IMF and World Bank, were unwilling to allow

any cog in the wheel of globalisation of trade and investments, to enrich a few but impoverish many (Sachs 2005:309; Pezzoli 1997:560), they made sure that the concept of sustainable development became a loose, fluid and ambiguous jargon, open to different interpretations depending on one's outlook, perception, orientation and motive. This was in fulfilment of what Ruttan (1994:15) calls "establishment appropriation".

The narrative that development encompasses economic growth can be traced back to the views of one of the classical economists, Adam Smith (1977:446), who opined that economic growth will inevitably lead to the 'wealth of nations'. This means that the whole idea of development encompasses interrupted economic growth and development. Smith stated the following:

That capital which had been silently and gradually accumulated by the private frugality and good conduct of individuals, by their universal, continual and uninterrupted effort to better their own conditions, had inadvertently maintained the progress of England towards opulence and improvement and this has brought about improvement in the productive powers of labour so that more people will enjoy a greater share of the necessities and conveniences of life in the civilised and thriving nations as opposed to the penury in the savage nations of hunters and fishers (Smith 1977:104-5).

We can deduce that the basic philosophy of Smith (1977:104-5) is that economic growth remains the main aim of development, the evidence from many developing countries in Africa, such as Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, Angola etc., suggests that economic growth has not translated into any benefit to the majority of the population. The idea that economic growth invariably leads to development, though popular with international organisations such as the IMF, is erroneous. Sometimes it does reflect another reality, as Frank (1981:62) suggested, because it is "a Trojan horse of a word" whose contents have not been good to the majority of developing countries. Equatorial Guinea has been one of the fastest growing economies in Africa and indeed the world, but it still has a high infant mortality rate, low life expectancy, and high levels of illiteracy, with pervasive unemployment and more than half of the population surviving on less than one US Dollar per day. This proves that economic growth does not necessarily equate to development (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-20731448>). Wealth is not always distributed equally or fairly in a country, and the case of South Africa is a good example of extreme "opulence in the midst of destitution" (Madisha 2005:5).

Sufficient attention by global institutions such as the World Bank and IMF to the possibility of sub-Saharan African countries and large parts of Asia undertaking the same stages and processes of economic revolution and

growth achieved by most European countries and North America, and the environmental impact of continuous and unprecedented economic growth and development on the earth's resources and nature; is well documented (Sachs and Santarius 2007:10). Evidence of the extent to which growth is regarded as a sustainable development prerequisite can be seen in the following three definitions mentioned by Daly (1991a:10):

- Sustainable development is development that maintains the highest rate of economic growth fuelling inflation (OCED 2001b:63).
- Sustainable development is “a dynamic concept taking into consideration the expanding needs of a growing world population, implying by this a steady rate of growth (Sachs 1999:18).
- Sustainable development requires “... a sustainable growth in the rate of increase in economic activity” (in Daly 1991a:10).

By their very nature the above definitions of sustainable development suggest, firstly, that economic growth constitutes development in its own right and, secondly, that economic growth is unquestionably sustainable. Yet, all three definitions fail to show in what way economic growth is related to human wellbeing. Furthermore, neither definition makes an explicit reference to the natural resource base that sustains economic activity. One can only conclude, therefore, that all three definitions are based on pure articles of faith. Hence, unlike the preceding definitions, they clearly lack intellectual rigor, as well as any vestige of operational value.

Finally, the understanding and knowledge of sustainable development was fluid and not easily understood by many because there was a sustained effort to turn the concept which was meant to create a fair and just society into a concept that could be used by all and sundry to sustain their uninterrupted economic activity without caring for the people, the weak and the vulnerable.

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A differentiated approach to Local Government

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ABSTRACT

Differentiation can be seen as a tool to try to focus the support from national and provincial government and associated institutions to local government toward ensuring functional, performing municipalities that deliver their services adequately. This article aims to explore what the current policy debate on differentiation entails and to find out why differentiation may be necessary or not. The article pays attention to differentiation as contained in legislation, concepts relevant to differentiation in local government in terms of segmentation and support models, powers and functions, financial resources, the urban-rural divide and institutional systems. The article finally provides a proposed approach towards differentiation in local government.

INTRODUCTION

The National Development Plan (NDP) (2011:23) states that a capable state does not materialise by decree, nor can it be legislated or crafted from conference resolutions. It has to be painstakingly built, brick by brick, institution by institution and sustained and rejuvenated over time. It requires leadership, sound policies, skilled managers and workers, clear lines of accountability, appropriate systems and consistent and fair application of rules.

It is now widely acknowledged that the one-size-fits-all approach (adopted by national and provincial government) to legislative and policy implementation, and to fiscal, functional and planning arrangements for local government has not assisted municipalities with varying legacies and backgrounds to deliver

uniformly on their mandates and obligations. The 'one-size-fits-all' strategies did not take into consideration the impact of major integration challenges compounded by spatial differences between municipalities in terms of capacity, to raise revenue and to deliver services (Draft Framework for a Differentiated Approach: Discussion Document (FDA) 2011:4-5). However, there is some legislation, such as the Municipal Property Rates Act 6 of 2004, which adopted a differentiated approach but it is not yet known whether the approach will achieve the desired effect.

The Minister for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA)'s Delivery Agreement (2010:58) states that "[n]ot all municipalities have the same capacity to raise revenues, as levels of poverty vary considerably and are particularly high in mostly rural municipalities" and that (The Minister for COGTA's Delivery Agreement 2010:73) "there is evidence of a huge lack of capacity at provincial level to perform their functions adequately...At this stage the country does not have a systematic approach towards performance monitoring and support for local government (despite Chapter 6 of the Municipal Systems Act dealing with such). Most of the efforts are ad hoc...". This statement underscores the need for local government to use a differentiated approach as a measure to resolve the pressing issues at local government level. But, will it be sustainable if the actual requirements to ensure functional spheres are not addressed? That is, if every sphere and the institutions in that sphere's needs are each not addressed according to its uniqueness?

Pointing to differences between municipalities the Department of Cooperative Governance (DCoG) in the Ministry of CoGTA, developed the Draft Framework for a Differentiated Approach to Municipal Support: Discussion Document in 2011 (FDA). This draft framework indicates that "Over the past few years, there has been increasing acknowledgement of the differential nature of municipalities. Indeed, the Constitution at the outset differentiated the local government system by institutionalising three sets of municipalities: Category A (metropolitan municipalities), Category B (local municipalities) and Category C (district municipalities)". A number of different informal classifications have also started to emerge, as a way to better understanding the reality of municipalities.

The above has given rise to the renewal of the view in government that a differentiated approach, implemented by spatially categorising municipalities and using "relatively fixed" characteristics (i.e. characteristics that in aggregate are unlikely to change dramatically during the period of a year or two) is necessary. Characteristics include historical legacy, socio-economic vulnerability, capacity shortages and an inability by a municipal area to take control of its physical location. Accordingly, profiling of municipalities could assist government in providing differentiated and targeted capacity support (Draft FDA to Municipal

Support: Discussion Document 2011:4). The characteristics alluded to in the discussion document are those classified mostly as environmental capacity in the National Capacity Building Framework (NCBF): 2012 to 2016 (2012:6) while the 'capacity shortages' (the institutional capacity) (NCBF: 2012 to 2016 2012:6), could in some cases be a symptom of the environmental capacity challenges, i.e. the potential or competence, or lack thereof, found outside of municipalities' formal structures (Greßling 2015).

The envisaged targeted capacity support could enable better performing municipalities to manage a clearly defined and coherent concentration of functional assignments that enable a faster rate of development and good governance. The vulnerable municipalities, however, should be 'freed' to concentrate on basic service delivery functions, with far fewer demands on their limited finances and capacities. Complex financial management and reporting, engineering services and project management for infrastructure (institutional capacity), for example, could be managed in alternative ways (Draft FDA to Municipal Support: Discussion Document 2011:4). It could also necessitate the possible augmentation of a spatially differentiated approach with provision for targeted capacity support and an 'early-warning' system, not only to spatially challenged municipalities but to all municipalities (DCoG Review of the White Paper (RWP) 2011:93).

Many reforms and performance shortcomings relating to local government are inter-related and require a coherent approach and focused address; as confirmed by the Policy Review on Provincial and Local Government in 2008 and the review of the White Paper on Local Government of 1998 (Draft FDA to Municipal Support: Discussion Document 2011:4).

The article considers what differentiation means in local government. To differentiate means: "to recognise or identify as different or distinct" (NCBF 2012:10). It is important to make a distinction between differences between municipalities and differentiation between municipalities: **Differences** refer to the characteristics of municipalities (see a further explanation in the discussion on segmentation of municipalities) and **differentiation** refers to the way municipalities are treated in the light of those differences (NCBF 2012:10).

The article commences by investigating how differentiation is referred to in the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 and the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000. Concepts relevant to the differentiation context are explained, such as: segmentation and support as well as functionality and viability. Differentiation in practice in SA local government is discussed with due reflection on segmentation models of the National Treasury, the Municipal; Infrastructure Investment Framework (MIIF), the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB), municipalities segmented according to audit performance and the DCoG's spatially vulnerable municipalities'

segmentation model. Differentiation and powers and functions, financial resources, the urban-rural divide and institutional systems are also discussed. Lastly, a proposed approach towards differentiation for local government is given.

DIFFERENTIATION AS CONTAINED IN LEGISLATION

Cooperative governance is pertinent in the implementation of differentiation as it affects the nature of the relationships across the three spheres of government and associated institutions and thus influences how, through cooperative governance local government is supported. For the purposes of this article, reference to categories, types and kinds of municipalities is viewed as a reference to the context of differentiation.

The Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998

Chapter 1 of this Act describes the categories and types of municipalities, as follows: **‘category’**, in relation to municipalities, means a category A, B or C municipality envisaged in Section 155(1) of the Constitution while **‘type’** in relation to municipalities, means a type of municipality envisaged in Section 155(2) of the Constitution, and defined in Part 2 of Chapter 1 of the Municipal Structures Act of 1998.

In Part 2 of Chapter 1 of the Municipal Structures Act of 1998 types of municipalities are dealt with in Sections 7-11 of the Act. General: The different types of municipalities that may be established within each category of a municipality are defined in accordance with the following systems of municipal government or combinations of those systems, as set out in Sections 8, 9 and 10 of the Act.

- A collective executive system which allows for the exercise of executive authority through an executive committee in which the executive leadership of the municipality is collectively vested.
- A mayoral executive system which allows for the exercise of executive authority through an executive mayor in whom the executive leadership of the municipality is vested and who is assisted by a mayoral committee.
- A plenary executive system which limits the exercise of executive authority to the municipal council itself.
- A subcouncil participatory system which allows for delegated powers to be exercised by subcouncils established for parts of the municipality.
- A ward participatory system which allows for matters of local concern to wards to be dealt with by committees established for wards.

The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 (MSA)

Chapter 3 of the MSA is about Municipal Functions and Powers while Chapter 8 deals with different types of municipal services' provision such as proposals towards multi-jurisdictional service utilities and municipal entities, to ensure that services are being delivered.

In the context of the Act differentiation is referred to in:

- Sections 22 (2)(b), 37, 49, 72, 84, 104 and 120 when referring to making regulations or issuing guidelines in terms of community participation, the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), performance management, local public administration and human resources (HR), municipal services, credit control and debt collection, and miscellaneous matters, respectively.
- Section 74 when determining a tariff policy.
- Section 97 in determining a credit control or debt collection policy and “as long as the differentiation does not amount to unfair discrimination”.
- Section 98 when determining by-laws and “as long as the differentiation does not amount to unfair discrimination”.
- Section 108 (5)(b) in the determination of minimum standard setting “to differentiate between different kinds of municipalities according to their respective capacities”.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF DIFFERENTIATION

Concepts that are meaningful for the purposes of this article are clarified in the sections below.

Differentiation: segmentation and support

According to the Draft FDA to Municipal Support: Discussion Document (2011:5), in segmenting (determining differences between municipalities or creating typologies for) municipalities, government wants to aggregate municipalities into some workable number of relatively homogenous categories (segments) according to needs, and then treat these categories (segments) differently or according to a differentiated approach through targeted support interventions. The following steps form part of a segmentation process (Greýling 2015):

- Identification of a broad based group/location according to conditions and needs.

- Identification of relatively homogeneous groups that will receive and respond to targeted support interventions in a similar way.

However, there may be various segmentation groupings.

It is thus crucial to understand that there is a direct relationship between the envisaged support interventions and the segmentation. For example: electricity needs to be provided. There are different groups (segments) of municipalities responding to this function in different ways (Greýling 2015):

- Some can manage reticulation, distribution and billing to generate their own electricity.
- Some rely on districts or Eskom.
- Some struggle to provide the necessary infrastructure.
- Some have largely indigent populations and must provide significant amounts of 'Free Basic Electricity' within an area of limited tax revenue.

Thus, we can see that once relatively homogeneous groups have been identified (also called categories or segments) the second step is to differentiate the support interventions to best address the needs of that particular group (Draft FDA to Municipal Support: Discussion Document 2011:5).

The DCoG (in Draft FDA to Municipal Support: Discussion Document 2011:5-6) gives another example of metros that can generate their own revenue, reticulate and manage customer services, and may only need to be monitored for managing excessive electricity losses that might affect their sustainability. Whereas for large urban municipalities that do not generate their own electricity, the need may be for technical support to manage their energy demand and infrastructure maintenance plans to ensure quality and reliable services (i.e. reduced power outages). Smaller urban municipalities might need support on infrastructure planning, and the customer management side, for example, switching to pre-paid metering systems for lower income areas, etc.

The DCoG (RWP) (in Greýling 2015) states that despite the Cabinet resolutions "to mainstream the hands-on support approach to all municipalities", and the various skills capacity enhancement programmes for municipal efficiency; skills deployment initiatives to support municipalities have still not been harmonised and coordinated through a single point of support. This results in resources being wasted and initiatives duplicated. This challenge points to a need for a framework to guide and support the different stakeholders' support initiatives to ensure that there is a differentiated approach but in a coordinated fashion. According to Greýling (2015:203) differentiated support initiatives could be:

- Governance interventions (cross-cutting).
- Sector-wide capacity development (cross-cutting).
- Municipal infrastructure assessments (cross-cutting).

- Municipal infrastructure capacity support that consists of:
 - Capacity development support.
 - Direct delivery support.
 - Technical support.
 - Implementing coordination to support municipal infrastructure provision.

The DCoG: RWP (in Greýling 2015:205) states that the principle of differentiation is that each municipal area's unique circumstances needs to be taken into consideration before applying a uniform fiscal and policy regime, or expecting equitable standards in performance and service delivery. The differentiated approach calls for better coordinated and targeted support for smaller municipalities, whilst simultaneously empowering cities to play a stronger and more direct role in crucial built environment functions such as the delivery of housing.

Clarity is further needed on who is ultimately responsible for oversight and support, and the degree to which national government may intervene directly in municipalities (in Greýling 2015:207). A COGTA Memo (2010:1) states that the Constitution establishes a system of cooperative government in the Republic, constituted as national, provincial and local spheres of government. In terms of the principles of cooperative government set out in Chapter 3 of the Constitution, each sphere of government must respect the constitutional status, powers and functions of another sphere. The national government and the provincial governments must furthermore support and strengthen the capacity of municipalities to manage their own affairs. In order to ensure effective, transparent, accountable and coherent governance in the Republic, the Constitution makes provision for processes of intervention by one sphere of government into another in circumstances where there is a failure to fulfil executive obligations imposed in terms of constitutional or statutory provisions (COGTA Memo 2010:1).

The Constitution furthermore makes provision for national legislation to regulate these interventions. Section 139(8) provides that national legislation may regulate the implementation of Section 139 as well as the processes established by it (COGTA Memo 2010:1-2). The COGTA Memo (2010:2) states that currently there is no legislation contemplated in Section 139(8) to regulate interventions arising from other causes. The proposed Intervention in Provinces and Municipalities Bill of 2010 is to make provision for the supervision of provinces and municipalities and to regulate in terms of Section 139, but will apply to discretionary financial interventions and Sections 139(4) and (5) interventions only to the extent that the Bill's provisions are not inconsistent with the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003 (MFMA).

For a provincial intervention in a municipality in terms of Section 139(1), the Bill provides the following menu of intervention steps for the provincial executive (COGTA Memo 2010:3):

- Measures to regulate the exercise by the municipality of its powers to ensure fulfilment of the obligation.
- A directive binding the municipality to take specific steps to ensure fulfilment of the obligation.
- Assumption of responsibility for the obligation by the provincial executive.
- The preparation and imposition of a financial recovery plan for the municipality in accordance with Sections 137(1), 141(1), (3) and (4) and 145 of the MFMA, if the intervention is a discretionary financial intervention.
- Suspension of any internal structure or functionary of the municipality and the appointment of an administrator to perform the functions of the suspended internal structure or functionary.
- Dissolution of the council and appointment of an administrator to administer the municipality until a new council is declared elected.

Differentiation: functionality and viability

According to the NCBF: 2012 to 2016 (2012:3) the aim with support, capacity building and training for local government is to achieve the objectives in the Constitution and legislation through relevant management practices and systems; to address the deliverables contained in the Minister's Delivery Agreement (MDA) and move municipalities to sustainable functionality; performance; and adequate delivery of services, at the level of the individual, institution and environment.

DCoG defines (Draft FDA to Municipal Support: Discussion Document 2011:25) a viable municipality as one that is able to:

- Grow in population and economic terms.
- Govern and democratically represent the interests of the community.
- Satisfy the responsibilities for administration and services in accordance with legislation.
- Provide the services needed at a cost that the residents are willing to pay (i.e. cost effective).
- Fund services from its financial resources.

One would want a sustainable institution to be both functional and viable. Functionality thus refers to the institution's ability to arrange its individuals and other resources in such a way that it achieves its purpose. However, it may function within one set of circumstances but should change happen it may not be functional within the changed set of circumstances, unless it is constantly

aware of the changes within its context and is able to adapt to those changes. Viability includes the consideration of the broader environmental factors in which an institution finds itself and of which it has to remain aware as they will influence the institution's performance and ability to deliver its services adequately and consistently.

Differentiation and segmentation models

The following subsections contextualise differentiation in terms of the segmentation models (also referred to as classification systems or models) in the South African local government context.

The DCoG (RWP 2011:86 and 88) informs that during the consolidation phase of local government (post-2000) a number of departments developed different ways of differentiating or classifying municipalities to more accurately understand the differentiated challenges facing municipalities. The **different classification systems** focus on different variables in terms of application.

The National Treasury

The National Treasury developed a hybrid method, combining both space economy characteristics with performance characteristics, to identify the relative resourcing of municipalities using seven indicators (DCoG: RWP 2011:85-86):

- Percentage of households without access to basic services (from 2001 census).
- Property rates per capita (the National Treasury local government database and 2001 census). This is seen to be a good proxy for viability.
- Poverty rate (from 2001 census).
- Percentage staff vacancy (MDB and StatsSA).
- Municipal debt per capita.
- Municipal densities (population density of a municipal area using 2007 StatsSA Community Survey).
- National contribution to Gross Value Add (GVA) (based on 2004 statistics).

Using this information, municipalities are classified into six groups from very high performing to very weak.

Municipal Infrastructure Investment Framework (MIIF)

The DCoG (FDA 2011 in Greyling 2015:200) says that relatively well developed examples of the differentiated approach already exist in the MIIF and Comprehensive Infrastructure Plans (CIP), using the Municipal Services Financial Model (MSFM). This model uses the identified extent of infrastructure to be provided (as per a segmented model) to inform the actions needed to achieve the eradication of backlogs by a certain target date. It covers:

- The capital expenditure required to provide this infrastructure.
- The methods of financing this capital expenditure.
- The operating expenditure required to ensure that the infrastructure provided is properly operated and maintained.
- The methods of raising revenue to cover this operating expenditure, drawing on the provisions of the Municipal Fiscal Framework (MFF).
- The monitoring system required to assess progress with respect to infrastructure delivery.
- A municipal infrastructure asset management strategy aimed at ensuring that the systems are in place in a municipality to manage the infrastructure provided.

The MIIF then places specific emphasis on estimating expenditure and assessing the capital finance and operating revenue requirements to cover this expenditure. The overall objective of the framework is to assess the amount of capital which is required to meet the municipal infrastructure delivery targets of government and to assess the options for ensuring that sufficient capital finance is available to cover this capital cost to ensure that the infrastructure programme is financially sustainable, which implies that there is sufficient operating revenue to cover the operating and maintenance costs of infrastructure-related services. Earlier MIIF categories, and MIIF 7 (2009/10) have recognised the very different circumstances which exist in municipalities across the country and the related difference in their financial viability (DCoG: FDA 2011 in Greßling 2015:222).

DCoG's MIIF uses the legal categorisation of municipalities and further disaggregates them into particular typologies based on spatial characteristics, size of institution and budget, population and percentage urban population (DCoG: RWP 2011:86-87) with the following result:

- **A:** Metros: Large urban complexes with populations over 1 million and accounting for 56% of all municipal expenditure in the country.
- **B1:** Local municipalities with large budgets and containing secondary cities.
- **B2:** Local municipalities with a large town as a core.
- **B3:** Local municipalities with small towns, with relatively small populations and significant proportion of urban population but with no large town as a core.
- **B4:** Local municipalities which are mainly rural with communal tenure and with, at most, one or two small towns in their area.
- **C1:** District municipalities which are not water service authorities.
- **C2:** District municipalities which are water service authorities.

This method of categorisation is useful to understand the different types of municipalities and what their characteristics are likely to be, but it is not a

rational indicator of particularly management capacity, nor does it provide any indication of the primary economic / livelihood drivers in a municipality (DCoG 2011 in Greýling 2015:223).

The DCoG (FDA 2011 in Greýling 2015:207) says the strengths of the MIF are that it provides for four settlement types, in order to allow for different service level costs associated with particular settlement conditions and for different service delivery programmes for each settlement type. For this exercise the four grouped geographical types used in Census 2001 were used, namely:

- Urban–formal
- Urban–informal
- Rural–informal (Communal Areas, formerly called ‘tribal areas’ by StatsSA)
- Rural–formal (mainly commercial farming areas with property held freehold rights).

The model also caters for different service level decisions for households living in the various geographical or settlement types. This model has been adapted to apply to the country as a whole, to provide a picture of 10 year trends for the aggregated municipal operating and capital accounts, in terms of both expenditure and income. It considers the six functional groupings below thus providing for a full package (DCoG: DFA 2011 in Greýling 2015:224):

- Water supply and sanitation, referred to as water services.
- Electricity.
- Municipal waste management or refuse services.
- Roads and storm water.
- Public services (e.g. community halls, parks, recreational facilities).
- Special infrastructure which includes:
 - Economic infrastructure and buildings for projects which can be run as independent financial entities (e.g. a conference centre, a market, an abattoir, etc.). This does not include ‘economic networks’, which is a broader definition including transport and communication networks, which are singled out and included in other categories.
 - Public places which do not involve buildings but require capital works, with a pedestrian mall or public square being examples.
 - Municipal public transport infrastructure.
- Administration buildings and systems.
- Governance, Administration, Planning and Development Facilitation (GAPD) which typically includes:
 - Governance: councillor remuneration and the overheads associated with council affairs including the secretariat to the council.

- Administration: the municipal manager's office, treasury and other administrative functions such as office administration, HR, legal and information technology services.
- Planning: IDPs, strategic plans, spatial plans and land use management including building plan approvals.
- Development facilitation: Local Economic Development (LED) planning including relationships with private sector enterprises; management of property developers, regulation of business activity, including licensing, etc.

The Local Government Skills Audit (2007 to 2010) adopted six (instead of four above) functional units to assist with comparable research from a national perspective (Greýling 2015:221).

The weakness of the MIIF is that it is problematic, within rapidly shifting household dynamics, but necessary to try to identify 'poor households'. The setting of a "poverty baseline" has remained arbitrary and is still not "official". It is furthermore assumed that the high income household group as a whole can cross-subsidise low income households (Greýling 2015:221). The model separates households into two groups: low income (below R3 500 pm) and high income. For the sake of simplicity no middle income group is used (DCoG: FDA 2011 in Greýling 2015:221). DCoG (FDA 2011 in Greýling 2015:221) states "South Africa's poverty rate is, however, so high and the numbers of households living in poverty so many that this assumption should be tested. This kind of data also informs indigent registers, and is important for estimation of free services to be supplied, and the costs thereof. The reality of this assumption, i.e. those 4,981,640 households will in effect subsidize 7,518,972 households".

The model provides for the inclusion of a range of service levels for each municipal function or service. The range of service levels to be applied can be selected by the user but there are standard descriptions of service levels which are applied by certain national sector departments. It is, however, not always acceptable to communities; due to a variety of reasons, to receive the 'basic' level of services, e.g. in an urban environment public standpipes within 200 meters of the dwelling or VIP toilets are no longer acceptable. Municipalities often indicate shortages resulting from choosing higher levels than 'basic' as 'underfunding' of infrastructure through the grants. The model uses 2001 census statistics to determine the backlogs – it is currently 2015 and due to population growth and migration these statistics are inadequate to really determine where the needs are (DCoG: FDA 2011 in Greýling 2015:221).

The Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB)

The MDB (2009:157) states that while the classification of municipalities has yet to be used for the demarcation of municipal boundaries, it may be useful

to undertake a spatial analysis of the municipal variations to identify if there are any boundary implications which should be considered when making future determinations. This would require an understanding of the link between municipal capacity and the associated administrative boundaries. Considering what municipalities do in different areas and/or provinces, the local available resource base and development imperatives may indeed result in either an increase or decrease of municipalities in some locations.

The MDB Capacity Assessment Report for 2008/09 (2009 in Greýling 2015:229) also states that in at least the last three MDB National Capacity Assessment Reports, a system of district and local municipality classifications has been used to better understand the variations in the municipal results. In particular, the information has highlighted the differences between the rural or poorer socio-economic regions in SA and those which are more urban and/or with greater resources. The Constitution acknowledges, and the Municipal Structures Act provides for, an asymmetrical system of local government (CoGTA is currently undertaking a review of provincial and local government in which the asymmetry of local government will need to be addressed) (Greýling 2015:225).

Moreover, a number of classification 1 local municipalities continue with their struggle to develop sufficient capacity to render a comprehensive range of municipal functions. District municipalities in the Free State and Mpumalanga perform few or any functions (MDB 2009 in Greýling 2015:221).

Municipalities segmented according to audit performance

The DCoG (FDA 2011 in Greýling 2015:221) states that it is only the Auditor-General (AG) that measures actual performance of organisations – not fully – only financially – it gives the following opinions based on its audits:

- **Unqualified.** This is an audit opinion without significant concerns on any other matters, including audit reports with emphasis on matter (matters of information) only.
- **Other matters.** The audit opinion is unqualified financially, but auditors had concerns which require the focused attention of the leadership, audited entities and oversight, to be eliminated.
- **Qualified.** The financial statements are satisfactory, except for certain information or parts thereof.
- **Disclaimer.** The audited entity could not provide information or evidence to support the information, transactions and balances in the financial statements. This opinion is highly undesirable.
- **Adverse.** The financial statements are fundamentally unreliable, because the information of records on which the financial statements are based do not agree with those held by the auditors. This opinion is highly undesirable.

Government has a drive towards clean audits in all its spheres. Auditor-General, Terence Nombembe, cautioned that for Operation Clean Audit 2014 to succeed, SA's mayors need to lead the movement towards the clean administration of their municipalities (in Greýling 2015:229).

DCoG's spatially vulnerable municipalities' segmentation model

The DCoG (FDA 2011 in Greýling 2015:230) indicated that the settlement patterns, location and geo-technical issues may also impact service delivery and municipal viability. The DCoG's Municipal Spatial Classification System (segmentation model) developed municipal profiles according to levels of functionality, socio-economic profile and backlog status. In developing the vulnerability framework, the indicators/classifications below were applied. The information was then assessed on a scale of performance results; these were then ranked from the best to the worst result per local municipality, whereafter the municipalities were divided into quartiles to indicate a range of four classifications.

Four classifications are identified (DCoG: FDA 2011 in Greýling 2015:221):

- Class 1: Most vulnerable (57)
- Class 2: Second most vulnerable (58)
- Class 3: Second highest performing (58)
- Class 4: Highest performing (58)

The results indicating the Class 1 or most vulnerable segment were informed by a data driven process, and ranked results in the fields of socio-economic conditions, municipal capacity and service delivery levels. The majority of municipalities found most vulnerable were previously located within the disestablished Apartheid homelands:

Class 1 (most vulnerable) municipalities: Data sources for the selected indicators were StatsSA, Global Insight, Community Survey 2007 (of StatsSA), MDB, the CSIR, the National Treasury, the DGoG and the AG (DCoG: FDA 2011 in Greýling 2015:232).

The local municipalities falling within the Class 2 category are the second most vulnerable grouping of local municipalities nationally. When examining the spatial location, the **Class 2 municipalities (vulnerable)** tend to be found in the following locations (DCoG: FDA 2011 in Greýling 2015:221):

- Commercial farming areas with small service towns.
- Municipalities in which a portion was previously located in the disestablished Apartheid homelands.
- Semi desert areas or those areas with low population densities.

DCoG (FDA 2011 in Greýling 2015:235) indicated that the municipalities found in **Class 3** are the **second highest performing groups of municipalities**. The

majority of these municipalities fall outside the abolished Apartheid Bantustans. These municipalities tend to be:

- commercial farming areas supported by small towns;
- smaller mining towns; and/or
- semi desert areas.

The municipalities found in **Class 4 are the best performing group of local municipalities** nationally. These municipalities tend to contain (DCoG: FDA 2011 in Greýling 2015:235):

- highly urbanised communities;
- large urban centres; and
- mining towns.

The weakness of this model, as with most models that may be reviewed, is the persistence of anomalies in the ratings. 'Low' categories will always have better performing elements, and 'high' rankings will always have poorer elements. This is why it is proposed that typologies, classifications and segmented approaches are not concretised as policy, but serve to inform, guide and shape a differentiated governance response. To illustrate by example highly vulnerable areas in Mpumalanga and Northern Cape, specifically regarding service delivery backlogs, for reasons related to data-led analysis processes; actually fell into the Class 2 'second most vulnerable' segment. If these municipalities were then to be officially segmented into Class 2, government support mechanisms would 'miss' them, whereas if they are under the spotlight for targeted and appropriate support, differentiated approaches serve their needs most accurately (DCoG: FDA 2011 in Greýling 2015:236).

Differentiation and powers and functions

Powers and functions and differentiation are linked to each other by way of legislation. Thornhill (2009:27) says the sphere or level of local government is a creation of each state. Its composition, functions and powers are determined according to the role the State requires it to play. Therefore, it could be expected that the system of local government and administration will possess the characteristics peculiar to a particular state and will also reflect the current governing party's (or alliance's) policies regarding the decentralisation of functions.

The sphere of local government is also assigned original powers in the Constitution of 1996 through Section 156. Thus, municipalities are not hierarchically linked to the national or provincial government, but are considered as equal partners in promoting the development of the South African society. The heading to Section 153 of the Constitution of 1996, commissions municipalities

to perform **developmental duties**. Section 153 states unequivocally that a municipality **must** give priority to the basic needs of society and promote the social and economic development of the community. Section 153a states that municipalities are also required by the Constitution of 1996 to participate in national and provincial development programmes (Thornhill 2009:30).

The effectiveness of any system of local government and administration is highly dependent on the functions and powers assigned to it. In the case of SA the Constitution of 1996 assigns legislative and executive authority to the council and states the objects of local government (Thornhill 2009:30).

The functions of local government are set out in Schedules 4 and 5 of the Constitution of 1996. These include *inter alia* functions performed (Thornhill 2009:31):

- concurrently with the national and provincial spheres e.g. air pollution, child care facilities, local tourism, municipal planning and municipal health services; and
- in functional areas of exclusive provincial competence e.g. local amenities, local sport facilities, municipal roads, noise pollution and refuse removal.

The quality and the extent of the services to be provided are not identified e.g. the health, housing and environmental functions performed concurrently with the provincial and the national spheres are not stated clearly in the Constitution of 1996. Functions and powers are also assigned in legislation e.g. housing to selected municipalities and welfare services. However, municipalities cannot solely be held accountable in the case of possible under performance as in many cases they lack clear policy guidelines from national or provincial governments; or/and financial and HR capacity to fulfil their extensive obligations (Thornhill 2009:31).

It is possible to have more differentiation in the powers and functions of provinces and municipalities when taking capacity into account. The present system can be improved with clarifications in the areas of housing, water, sanitation, electricity and public transport. The NDP proposes that regional utilities must provide services on behalf of less resourced municipalities on an agency basis without undermining the accountability of the services. Large cities should be given greater fiscal and political powers to coordinate human settlement upgrading, transport and spatial planning (NDP 2011:24).

The desired outcome of the differentiated approach is to also regulate functional arrangements **for the three spheres** in new national legislation that will (DCoG: RWP 2011:91-92):

- Provide for new governance procedures for allocating functional responsibilities across government according to a differentiated approach.
- Provide for a process to define minimum capacity, norms and standards for service delivery functions for each category.

- Provide options for differentiating IDP in accordance with municipal capacity.
- Provide options for increasing delivery functions, e.g. housing in accordance with municipal capacity.
- Provide options for alternative methods of delivery where necessary.
- Introduce a basket of options for increased public participation in the affairs of government.
- Provide for five-yearly assessments of performance linked to the electoral mandate; thereafter assignments may be adjusted for the next term.
- Provide for support and capacity building solutions that will address the unique circumstances of a municipality.
- Provide for a mechanism for monitoring and evaluation within the review of functional allocations linked to the five-yearly performance review of formal assignments.
- Link the fiscal system to stable assignment delegations across government.

Differentiation and financial resources

Financial resources are necessary for any local authority and the National Treasury (Department of Finance (DoF) in Greýling 2015:240) indicates that there are five main reasons why access to financial markets is considered important for local authorities. These may be summarised as follows:

- Access to capital: Local governments in SA are responsible for infrastructure that requires large, 'lumpy' capital investments on a periodic basis. Given the extensive needs in SA, financing this investment on a 'pay-as-you-go' or 'taxation-in-advance' basis is usually neither possible nor efficient. Particularly where the need for capital greatly exceeds what is available on a grant basis from the central fiscus, access to capital markets can provide municipalities with the capital resources necessary to finance infrastructure investments efficiently.
- Inter-temporal equity: The benefits of the infrastructure investments that municipalities make often endure for extensive periods and accrue to future generations of taxpayers and consumers. It is equitable for such generations to bear some of the costs of these benefits. Financing investment over time with funds accessed from capital markets allows for this.
- Efficiency: Because capital markets allocate capital resources on a commercial basis, capital is allocated efficiently. Moreover, the opportunity costs of capital provide incentives to ensure efficient standards of delivery and discourage 'overbuilding' and wasteful investment.
- Accountability: Markets tend to punish poor fiscal and management performance through pricing (pushing up interest rates or making capital

increasingly scarce). This can promote accountability and fiscal discipline at local level. It may also provide other stakeholders (national government; the provinces and aid agencies) with a convenient means to assess the relative performance of municipal governments.

- Short-term matching of revenues and expenditures: In the short term – for example within a given financial year – municipal revenues and expenditures are seldom completely congruent in time. Short-term borrowing allows municipalities to deal with this lack of synchronicity.

International experience suggests that achieving these benefits depends on the method of access and the conditions under which this access occurs. In principle there are two main routes: local governments can access capital markets through ‘on-lending’ from central government, most often through a public intermediary (a financial parastatal), or they may access the markets directly (DoF in Greýling 2015:241).

In SA the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), which is increasingly active in the municipal market, already represents one ‘indirect’ access mechanism. As already recorded, the interface between this mechanism and the private market in respect of municipal debt is an important issue which will require further attention once the policy framework is established in legislation. The DBSA aside, there are three broad reasons why government wishes to facilitate direct access by municipalities to the capital markets (DoF in Greýling 2015:242):

- Limitation of implicit or contingent liabilities: It is important to protect central government from ultimately inheriting the debts of local government. When sub-sovereigns borrow through central government the debts of these bodies easily become the implicit or contingent liabilities of central government. Policy and legislation need to ensure that central government is not perceived as a banker of last resort. This is necessary for prudent fiscal management at the national level and is fundamental to government’s ability to maintain its macro targets. It is also needed to ensure that municipalities face strong incentives to improve their own management and credit worthiness, knowing that it is unlikely that central support will be forthcoming to compensate for local mismanagement or policy errors (DoF in Greýling 2015:242).
- Systemic discipline: International experience suggests that the indirect borrowing route can result in situations where credit allocation decisions become increasingly less commercial in character. Under such conditions, capital does not necessarily flow to the most productive users, but to those players who are politically the most astute. In other words the efficiency and accountability outcomes become diluted. Incentives for inefficient

and wasteful decision-making can replace those which encourage the productive use of capital and tight financial management (DoF in Greýling 2015:242).

- Expanding investment resources: Subsovereign borrowing via the State can result in the “squeezing out” of private capital from the municipal sector, thereby narrowing the aggregate resource available for investment (DoF in Greýling 2015:243).

Moreover, central control of borrowing can also create incentives for local governments to elude these restrictions through innovative off-budget schemes. Centralised borrowing, therefore, does not necessarily increase the ability of central government to control the liabilities of local government, but it may simultaneously diminish the overall financial resource base for investment in worthy projects (DoF in Greýling 2015:243).

Direct access to capital markets offers the potential for a more transparent, market-based system to develop where there is a greater chance of achieving the benefits of accessing capital markets. However, it is also true that moral hazard problems – which arise from the assumption by capital markets that borrowing by local governments is ultimately backed by central government – may also develop where there is direct borrowing by sub-sovereigns from private financial markets. Ultimately, such problems can never be eliminated completely (DoF in Greýling 2015:242).

The State has to play an active role in broadening the participation of the mass of South Africans in the productive private sector and in quality jobs, and in the creation of new enterprises. This active developmental state in municipal regions must administer pricing regarding tariffs charged for services in a manner that allows for basic service provision to the poor and a minimum level of basic needs. The core business of municipalities must ensure improved revenue streams in a manner that broadens the reach and range of services and a redistribution of surpluses (DCoG: RWP 2011:90).

Whilst investment in basic infrastructure and services should occur across the board, limited resources (which differ from one municipality to another) should be applied strategically and government investment should go into areas that will yield the highest impact in terms of economic output, employment creation and poverty reduction when it comes to economic fixed capital formation. Investments in sparsely populated rural areas should be based on a new vision of sustainable rural economies and should focus on innovative employment generation strategies that do not necessarily require large sums of capital. Beyond government investment, local citizen involvement in economic development and innovation should be vigorously encouraged (DCoG: RWP 2011:90).

DIFFERENTIATION AND THE URBAN-RURAL DIVIDE

In South Africa, the classification of the country into rural and urban areas is rather fluid in nature. There is a clear shift away from this system towards an all inclusive one. However, the concept remains important regarding targeted development programmes, such as the Urban Renewal Programmes (URP) and the Rural Development Strategy (RDS,) as well as for statistical purposes (StatsSA 2003:1 in Mubangizi 2009:154).

The primary mechanism used by the National Treasury to define rural municipalities is the methodology adopted by the DCoG which is based on the context within which municipalities operate and uses variables such as the number of poor households, the proportion of households with access to services (water, sanitation and electricity), and information on capital and operating budgets to group municipalities into seven different categories (DCoG: RWP 2011:86). SA's RDS defines rural areas as "those areas that have the lowest level of services, and the greatest average distance to the nearest service points" (Mubangizi 2009:154). These areas include large-scale farming enterprises and are largely (but not exclusively) former homelands or Bantustan areas. Furthermore, municipalities have little potential to raise sufficient taxes to meet the costs of services. The definition proposed characterises rural areas as those with low access to services and a low potential to raise taxes (Mubangizi 2008:275 in Mubangizi 2009:154-155). According to Kumalo, rural areas' dependence on a cash-economy is due to a decline in subsistence farming practices (Kumalo 2005:161 in Mubangizi 2009:155).

There are contrasting pictures which mirror the urban-rural divide. Challenges imposed by urbanisation on the receiving cities such as pressure on infrastructure, social welfare programmes, limited economic opportunities and service delivery are evident. Other areas, particularly rural municipalities, lose economically active people to the cities and this slows down development significantly (DCoG: RWP 2011:61).

The DCoG (DCoG: RWP 2011:91) proposes introducing differentiation 'across the spectrum' as to them it is clear that **urban and rural environments have differing needs** based on their respective regional socio-economic conditions. It is clear that highly urbanised provinces or regions need to respond to the challenges of housing demand, high immigration and urban sprawl, plus the demands of sustaining concentrated economic activity. Conversely, largely rural provinces suffering from poverty and related negative socio-economic realities cannot prioritise the same functions that are applicable to urban environments. This principle has been applied in the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) Policy Review, which assigns a higher degree of responsibility to infrastructure management to the six (now eight) metropolitan areas (DCoG: RWP 2011:91).

The DCoG (in Greýling 2015:242) states that there is:

- A challenge with the current design of the local government fiscal framework, which provides that funding related to a particular function gets paid to the municipality that is legally responsible for the delivery of a function. In many instances, funds that are paid to the district municipality, that is, the service delivery authority, even though the function is provided by the local municipality; are not passed to the local municipality to subsidise the service appropriately as expected.
- A very high level of grant dependence among rural municipalities and government transfers alone cannot address all the service delivery pressures that local government faces because they are intended to supplement the municipalities' own revenues.
- Also a challenge in most rural local municipalities is raising their own revenue. In practice, rural municipalities do not levy property rates and service charges to non-poor households and businesses in their areas even if they can afford it. The National Treasury believes that this practice, which is also prevalent in many developing countries, undermines the finances of the municipality and also breaks the revenue-service link between the municipality and the ratepayer/customer that entitles them to demand better quality services because they are paying for them.

Metros, district and local municipalities can thus not necessarily be strictly categorised as urban or rural but there could be a mixture of characteristics associated with each, depending on the community referred to.

Differentiation and institutional systems

The differing municipal realities show the anomaly of enforcing a governance framework that applies uniformly to cities, small towns and remote and rural areas when in reality they are very different places with different needs and capacities. The impact of both economic growth and migration on municipalities since 1994, as well as the performance outcomes of different municipalities, requires a thorough rethink on how municipalities are categorised and the concomitant powers and functions that are necessary for them to become efficient municipal institutions (DCoG: RWP 2011:89).

The distinct differences in capacities and institutional context within the 283 (now 278) municipalities mean that they have not all been able to pass through the phases of establishment, consolidation and sustainability at the same rate or within an even playing field. It follows that some of these municipalities are seriously challenged to fulfil their obligations. This calls for the consideration of a differentiated approach to improve institutional systems at municipal level (DCoG: RWP 2011:85).

The DCoG's Review of the RWP on Local Government (2011:10) states that a **differentiated approach** to improve institutional systems at a municipal level requires a model which would fully consider the implications for support, funding, planning and service delivery. There is especially a need to prioritise **institutional, service delivery and economic development support** to the high growth cities and city-regions and the high-density settlement areas of the former homelands with large and growing populations but little economic activity and high rates of poverty.

The differentiated approach to institutional systems of local government can be applied on the level of segmentation of municipalities to ensure more equitable support to poor rural municipalities and assigning powers and functions in a sustainable fashion, and also at the level of municipal technical support (including planning, infrastructure delivery and operations, funding and financial strategies for infrastructure) improved through a guiding framework taking into account the unique circumstances of municipalities (DCoG: RWP 2011:96–97).

THE DIFFERENTIATED APPROACH PROPOSED FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The DCoG (FDA 2011 in Greýling 2015:242) states that the State of Local Government Assessment of 2009 sets out to explore the root causes of the 'municipal failures' that have begun to dominate the debate on progress in service delivery. It is known that despite considerable progress with regard to basic service delivery in municipal areas, there remain significant performance constraints that need urgent response from government in the face of increasing loss of public confidence in municipal governance.

The DCoG (FDA 2011 in Greýling 2015:242) also states that a **spatially differentiated approach** is premised upon the differences in a municipality's ability to take control of its challenges, e.g. those municipalities with less than 30% universal access to water, sanitation, electricity and refuse removal.

The DCoG (FDA 2011 in Greýling 2015:243) states that all models of segmentation will have some areas of discrepancy, anomalies, differences and possible borderline cases. It may be a process that obfuscates support needs, rather than isolating them for attention. It therefore might not serve the intended purpose to design an overall segmentation model. Applying the usage of segmentation, but closely linked to the purpose of the intervention; might be more useful. Limiting the State's response to spatial segmentation without differentiating the response to targeted functions (e.g. weak delivery of sanitation or refuse removal) may result in inadequate interventions including the solving

of issues related to capacity, management and governance challenges, in borderline cases within the segmentation model.

Interventions in these contrasting spatial areas will be coordinated according to the various priority needs, largely focusing on access to services, with back support likely in terms of financial and administrative management. The Municipal Turn-Around Strategies (MTAS's) of municipalities will be assessed in this regard, as will all other relevant data that may be obtained concerning conditions and performance of the municipalities.

The differentiated approach calls for better coordinated and targeted support for smaller municipalities, whilst simultaneously empowering cities to play a stronger and more direct role in crucial built environment functions such as the delivery of housing (DCoG FDA 2011 in Greßling 2015:244).

The DCoG (FDA 2011 in Greßling 2015:244) states that there are two major issues that the differentiated approach will attempt to resolve:

Firstly, government needs to recognise that there is a growing urban problem of informal settlements with the resulting lack of access to basic services by the majority of the urban poor. Addressing this challenge requires government to review the capacity of big cities to deliver and coordinate their built environment outcomes. This should also acknowledge that basic service backlogs in these cities are mostly dependent on the pace of the eradication of informal settlements and the creation of new human settlements. Integration and coordination therefore can only occur if it takes place at the point of planning and implementation by a municipality. This will enable the cities to use different funding instruments appropriately to address the problem of housing.

Secondly, there are rural development challenges which are still unsolved of communities that did not have access to basic services pre-1994. Most of these communities are found in rural municipalities which on the one hand face huge backlogs in basic services and on the other hand lack the requisite capacity to deliver due to various reasons. Most of these municipalities are also dependent on grants. Clearly, grants to these municipalities should be well targeted to ensure that the objectives of government are met, that is, addressing basic service infrastructure in water, sanitation and electricity, etc.

The DCoG (FDA 2011 in Greßling 2015:245) argues that:

Targeted capacity support would enable higher category, better performing municipalities to manage a clearly defined and coherent concentration of functional assignments that enable a faster rate of development and good governance. The weaker municipalities, however, would be 'freed' to concentrate on basic service delivery functions, with far fewer demands on their limited finances and capacities.

To achieve this, government has to aggregate local municipalities into some workable number of relatively homogenous categories (segments) according to

needs and then treat these categories (segments) differently or according to a differentiated approach through targeted support interventions.

It might not serve the intended purpose to design an overall segmentation model. Applying the usage of segmentation, but closely linked to the purpose of the intervention, might be more useful. The DCoG is proposing the use of an Meta Framework for Differentiation (MFD) approach, by identifying broad based groups according to needs. Three streams for intervention were identified:

- Planning support, including municipal powers and functions;
- Technical support for infrastructure and service delivery; and
- Financial and administrative support and capacity building.

It is proposed that the DCoG MFD be accepted as step 1 of the differentiation process, which consists of two steps:

- identification of a broad based group(s) according to needs; and
- identification of relatively homogeneous groups that will respond to support interventions in a similar way.

For the purpose of these two steps, within the “most vulnerable” group further differentiation be applied functionally according to relevant models such as the National Treasury, the AG, MIIF, the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agents (MISAs), the blue and green drop models, etc. The principle of differentiation is that each municipal area’s unique circumstances need to be taken into consideration before applying a uniform fiscal and policy regime, or expecting equitable standards in performance and service delivery.

CONCLUSION

The various typologies (segmentation models) described in this article focused on the following diverse list of characteristics in an attempt to better understand or effectively support municipalities: anti-corruption campaign; broad spatial characteristics; budget required/financial viability; capacity building, systems, HR development and improved organisational culture; community/social services; community participation; financial aspects; financial viability; free basic services which target poor households, appropriate billing system and reducing municipal debt; general management; good governance; HR; institutional arrangements; IDP; integrated human settlement development; LED; job creation, the Extended Public Works Programme and the nature of the municipal infrastructure support required; a Performance Management System; performance monitoring, evaluation and communication; political structures;

poverty and under-development in those areas with the highest concentration of population; powers and functions; public empowerment, participation and community development; service delivery; size; the Spatial Development Framework; special intervention in rural and urban development nodes; technical services; the capacity (systems, processes and HR) to implement municipal infrastructure grant projects and urban and rural nature. Each typology has its own criteria relevant to a specific area of focus.

Differentiation can be seen as a tool to try to focus the support from national and provincial government and associated institutions to local government toward ensuring functional, performing municipalities that deliver their services adequately.

However, various authors have highlighted the following as aspects that also need attention for local government as a system to be successful:

- Reinvent government to ensure a developmental state.
- A municipality must be structured so that its operations succeed (productive capability).
- Financial strategies (not compliance) are needed in the municipal space.
- Cooperative governance (to address complexities in powers and functions and limited resources).
- A sustainable livelihood framework is needed to address urbanisation.
- Effective policy formulation.
- Capacity building to manage resources.
- Equity and community-based planning and monitoring of delivery (active citizens).
- Leadership, unity and social cohesion must be built.
- An understanding of exactly what each of the municipalities' profiles contain.

In the end, citizens want their needs addressed and thus the words contained in the NDP (2011:23) are so relevant "It has to be painstakingly built, brick by brick, institution by institution and sustained and rejuvenated over time". This remains the preferred approach and it is thought to be the more sustainable approach. Perhaps, according to the NDP (2011:23) "we need to educate our nation and politicians on how to patiently first build functional institutions (while monitoring their progress) before we measure their performance and expect delivery of services that they may not yet be able to deliver".

NOTE

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Teaching the philosophy of science to Public Administration Students in South African Universities

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the relationship between ontology, epistemology and methodology within the context of Public Administration. This relationship is also known as the 'philosophy of science debate'. The aim of this article, among other things is to articulate the ways and means of deepening the understanding of South African university students (in the field of Public Administration and other related disciplines within social sciences) regarding to the ontological and epistemological assumptions of social research. Research methodology modules in South African universities should make a priority of including literature on the 'philosophy of science debate' in the syllabus; precisely because it is practically impossible to have an in-depth understanding of social research without being taught about the connection between ontology, epistemology and methodology. The researchers in this article argue that Public Administration must be value-driven. Therefore, research carried out within the discipline of Public Administration should focus on participatory/action research as opposed to positivism. This article constitutes a distinct and original contribution to the subject of Public Administration in South African universities on how social research should be undertaken.

INTRODUCTION

Firstly and most importantly, the authors of this article unpack the ontological and epistemological assumptions of scientific knowledge within the realm of Public Administration. This approach is premised on the fact that ontological approaches of social sciences influence the methodologies utilised by researchers when embarking on scientific research. This means that it is of paramount importance for students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels to be taught about the 'philosophy of science'. In teachings Public Administration students and those in other related fields of social science, the relationship between ontology, epistemology and methodology will deepen their understanding of social research. South Africa has a shortage of researchers in general (National Development Plan 2012:278). Hence, it is extremely important for universities to introduce students at undergraduate and postgraduate level to the 'philosophy of science debate'. This will enable South Africa to have a pool of public administrators who are more strongly rooted in the ontological and epistemological assumptions of social research.

According to Mouton (2009:9), the whole notion of the 'philosophy of science debate' is meant to give greater clarity on key concepts of science and social research. Intellectual production is extremely important for development; simply because in order to address underdevelopment, government needs to have a knowledge-based economy. Researchers are needed in order for South Africa to grow its economy and promote development for the majority.

There seems to be a tendency amongst postgraduate students of Public Administration in South African universities to do empirical research that is inclined towards positivism. This is informed by the thinking that quantitative research methodology is more scientific than the qualitative approach. Some researchers tend to assume that all social problems can be explained through statistics. However, students of Public Administration need to know that Public Administration as an academic discipline is a so-called 'applied social science' (Punch 2009:9). Suffice to say, social sciences are 'value-driven'. This means that researchers of Public Administration need to examine social phenomena/public service within theoretical frameworks in order to have a contextual understanding of the complexities at play in the public sector. Some scholars have argued that researchers have preconceived views about social issues due to socialisation. Critical theory becomes an important tool in understanding that social/political problems are not simplistic but have complexities and researchers should take an ideological/theoretical stand when conducting social research (Alexander and Reed 2009:30).

It must be noted that not much scholarly work has been done on how both undergraduate and post-graduate students should be taught about the

'philosophy of science debate'. Thus, this article constitutes a distinct and original contribution to the subject of Public Administration in South African universities and internationally on how Public Administration research should be undertaken. The next discussion examines the relationship between ontology, epistemology and methodology. It is extremely important to pay attention to the linkages of concepts such as ontology and epistemology in order to understand the philosophical underpinnings of research methodology.

THE ONTOLOGICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

This section addresses the 'philosophy of science debate' on the relationship between ontology, epistemology and methodology precisely because the ontological framework utilised by the researcher in social science influences how knowledge is produced. This defines what knowledge is and how it is generated by scholars and is contested in social science. Every argument that is brought to the fore by a social scientist can be examined differently simply because there are different ontological approaches for 'intellectual production' or knowledge creation (Breakfast 2013:135-136). Mouton (2009:9) similarly points out that the philosophy of science debate is about conceptualising critical concepts in the world of science such as ontology, epistemology, and methodology. He goes on to say that what lies at the heart of the philosophy of science debate is objectivism, subjectivism, validity and scientific knowledge.

This brief background calls for the conceptualisation of ontology, epistemology and methodology. The concept of ontology focuses on providing an examination of 'social reality'. Ontology concentrates on what is real in society and what is not (Mouton 2009:46 and 1996:46; Willis 2007:8). Gray (2009:17) follows the same line of thinking when he points out that the ontological standpoint of the researcher influences the methodology employed in research. According to Du Plooy (2007:20), ontology refers to a specific belief that the researcher subscribes to, and uses to explain what he/she perceives to be constituting reality.

Ontology in the social sciences acknowledges that researchers are human beings and their approaches to their lives are influenced by the beliefs they hold. The ontological approach focuses on investigating social reality (Mouton and Marais 1991:11-12). An ontological approach plays a crucial role in influencing how the researcher views society. The intellectual outlook of the researcher is influenced by a set of beliefs which is called the theoretical model of the researcher or the ontological approach followed by the researcher (Gerber 2009:21). According to Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006:6), 'ontology specifies the nature of reality that is to be studied and what can be known about it'.

Ontology acknowledges the reality about what exists in the world before one can enter into the realm of science and employ a particular methodology of research. According to Punch (2009:16), ontological questions in the main are about: 'What is the form and nature of reality and, therefore, what is there that can be known about it?'. Neuman (2003:16) argues that different ontological approaches have different philosophical assumptions and rules with regard to research. Social research is conducted within the social context. This implies that there are certain factors which shape the thinking of social scientists. Among other things, these factors include socialisation, ideological and theoretical frameworks, etc.

Ontology is therefore the theoretical framework that the researcher believes explains social reality. Juxtaposed to this view, ontology identifies what may be considered facts. For instance, positivist ontology will see quantitative data as real facts. On the other hand, humanist or phenomenological ontology will see qualitative facts as the real facts. This also defines what the researcher's methodology will be with respect to the collection of facts. The writers have described ontology, of which epistemology is a subset, while methodology is a subset of epistemology. Epistemology is about what constitutes 'true knowledge'.

Blanche, Durrheim, and Painer (2009:6), and Punch (2009:16) assert that epistemological questions pertain to: 'What is the relationship between the knower and what can be known?' Du Plooy (2007:20) asserts that epistemology in the main is about knowledge. Methodology on the other hand seeks to address questions such as: 'How do researchers go about collecting data? How do scholars achieve their research aims in the scientific community?' (Mouton 2009:35).

Epistemology in a nutshell refers to the 'science of knowing'. However, epistemology should not be confused with methodology. Research methodology is 'a subfield of epistemology' which is a way of finding out about phenomena (Babbie 2005:6). The epistemological approach is concerned with searching for 'true knowledge'. The epistemological approach influences the methodology of a particular research project and its findings. Epistemology is the world view of the researcher concerning how knowledge can be perceived. This approach compels social scientists to be committed to the exploration of truth. If any social scientist rejects the approach he or she defies the values of the scientific community (Creswell 2009:6). Epistemology lays a good philosophical foundation for both natural and social research. Again, epistemology is concerned with 'how can we know the things that exist' (Creswell 2009:6). The researcher's view of knowledge in both the natural and social sciences is known as epistemology. Epistemology is sometimes used as a synonym for 'knowledge acquisition', and epistemological approaches of social research are concerned about getting to know the truth (Babbie and Mouton 2005:13). This

is done by using specific criteria such as objectivism and rationalism to produce valid explanations about social problems (Mouton and Marais 1991:14; Mouton 1996:31; 2009:28; Gerber 2009:19; Willis 2007:10).

The above implies that social scientists should always avoid being biased when undertaking research. In addition, this signifies that all arguments by researchers should be advanced in a logical way. Assertions made by scholars should be based on thorough reasoning and not on emotions (Cohen and Medley 2005:80). Academic arguments should make absolute sense. In the scientific world there is a reason for everything and ‘nothing just happens—it happens for a reason’ (Babbie 1990:13). According to Van den Berg (2010:9-13), scholars in the scientific community are expected to support the assertions they make by relevant evidence or reasons. This view is echoed by Rossouw (2003:37) when he points out that scientific knowledge is about convincing other people by argumentation. Mouton follows the same line of thinking when he argues that scientific research is about the logic of argumentation all the time, also that claims made by researchers should be accompanied by logical reasons (Mouton 2009:69).

Explanations should therefore always be provided to back up arguments. This is part of the academic tradition. Gray (2009:17) asserts that on the whole the epistemological traditions concentrate on ‘what it means to know’. Gray concludes by stating that ‘epistemology provides a philosophical background for deciding what kinds of knowledge are legitimate and adequate. In a few, well-chosen words, epistemology is a theory of knowledge (Schott and Marshall 2005:193).

THE CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN ONTOLOGY, EPISTEMOLOGY AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the table below is to outline the difference between the key concepts of the ‘philosophy of science debate’ such as ontology, epistemology and methodology.

Table 1: Distinction between ontology, epistemology and methodology

Ontology	This is a theory that influences the intellectual outlook of the researcher when undertaking scientific research. It is also the world point of view of the researcher. Ontology is linked to socialisation. This signifies that the ideology, academic background, religious beliefs, cultural views, value-based judgments etc., have an influence on the interpretation of the researcher about the world. This theory focuses on the reality that shapes the standpoint of the researcher.
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Epistemology	Epistemology focuses on 'knowledge acquisition'. It is an approach that enables both natural and social scientists to understand how knowledge is manufactured in the scientific world. While it is not a synonym for methodology it influences the methodological choice of the researcher. This framework helps the researcher to understand how scientists know what they know.
Methodology	This theory guides researchers in both natural and social sciences on how to conduct research. Methodology is not a synonym of method; it is more than a method. It is underpinned by philosophical assumptions informed by epistemology.

Source: Gerber 2009:18–21

When social scientists have a deeper understanding of ontology and epistemology they are able to separate scientific from lay or ordinary knowledge. This implies that research concepts such as ontology and epistemology are linked to scientific and lay knowledge. It is of great importance to make a distinction between scientific and lay knowledge; because among other things this article discusses the process of producing scientific knowledge. Scientific knowledge is acquired systematically and presented in an unbiased way. Social scientists should always depend on the principle of objectivity when presenting research findings. Scientific statements should be verified by other scholars. The word 'science' should not be limited to the natural sciences. It is also useful in the social sciences when evidence is produced to support a rational argument (Babbie 2005:3; Brynard and Hanekom 2005:1; Babbie and Mouton 2005:6-7; Gerber 2009:19).

Lay knowledge is based on unsystematic knowledge about what exists around us (Babbie and Mouton (2005:4-15). Again, lay knowledge is an ordinary way of thinking, sometimes referred to as naïve, such as common sense and value-based statements (Babbie and Mouton 2005:4-15). Ordinary or lay knowledge is informed by common sense. Arguments are accepted on the basis of the authority of the person. Lay knowledge is passed on 'from one generation to the next' (Huysamen 1995:4; Bless and Higson-Smith 2000:1-3; Mouton 2009:7-8 1996:8).¹ On the contrary, scientific knowledge is not accepted without a closer examination. Furthermore scientific knowledge is not stagnant like lay knowledge; it changes if there is new evidence brought to the fore by scholars.

SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND LAY KNOWLEDGE

Table 2 is meant to classify scientific and lay knowledge in a logical way.

Table 2: Scientific versus lay knowledge

Scientific knowledge	Lay knowledge
<p>Scientific knowledge is evidence based. It is informed by empirical or theoretical evidence. It is expected to be validated by the scientific community or academia. Scientific knowledge follows a systematic approach in order to produce valid statements. This approach emanates from ontological, epistemological and thorough methodological approaches of the academic or scientific community. Natural and social scientists are expected to be critical at all times when manufacturing scientific knowledge. All statements should be questioned before they are accepted. Statements must withstand 'the test of time'. Scientific knowledge should be peer-reviewed before being made available to the public. Scientific statements must be explained rationally. The explanation should also be objective not biased.</p>	<p>This kind of knowledge refers to common sense, unscientific statements and subjective views or natural wisdom. It is related to value judgments. In most cases the source of lay knowledge is culture, religion, morality, community values (community based knowledge) and personal experiences. Lay knowledge is also described as ordinary knowledge. This type of knowledge does not follow a systematic approach for examining issues in general.</p>

Adapted from: Babbie and Mouton (2005:4–15)

There are three ontological approaches to scientific knowledge. These approaches include positivism, the phenomenological paradigm and critical theory. Moreover, these ontological theories are sometimes referred to as objectivism (positivism), subjectivism (the phenomenological approach) and constructivism (critical theory) (Bradshaw 2007:8-12; Babbie and Mouton 2005:20). It is of great importance for social scientists to have a deeper understanding of these ontological approaches in order for them to distinguish between research methodologies. Positivism is normally associated with Auguste Comte who coined the concept in 1822 for social scientists to follow the same approach as that employed by natural scientists (Babbie 2005:35).

There are three ontological foundations of positivism:

- Empirical evidence should also be produced by social scientists when making assertions. This evidence should always withstand the test of the scientific community. It should also be verifiable by validity and reliability.
- Social scientists should utilise the same methods as natural scientists. He calls this approach 'methodological naturalism'.
- Scholars of the social sciences should be rational at all times and uphold the principle of objectivity (Mouton 1993:2).

Positivists hold an opinion that social researchers should be objective when examining social phenomena. According to the proponents of positivism, knowledge should be 'value-free' (Denzin and Lincoln 2000:8-9). According

to the paradigm, social scientists should analyse social phenomena by using statistics. Quantitative data is meant to link the variables examined in research. The proponents of positivism are of the view that scientific knowledge is superior to common sense (Neuman 2003:78; Hammersley, 1995:2). It could be argued that this view is premised on the fact that scientific knowledge is evidence-based as opposed to natural wisdom or lay knowledge. Table 3 illustrates research paradigms, methodological approaches and lay knowledge.

RESEARCH PARADIGMS

The illustration below is meant to distinguish different perspectives of scientific research.

Table 3: Perspectives on research paradigms

<p>World Three: Ontological perspectives of social science Positivist school of thought, phenomenological paradigm and critical theoretical framework</p>
<p>World Two: Methodological traditions of social sciences Quantitative methodology, qualitative methodology, participatory research approach Research methodologies: Produce ‘evidence-based knowledge’ or ‘scientific knowledge’</p>
<p>World One: Lay or ordinary knowledge 1. ‘Common sense’ 2. Natural wisdom 3. Socio-economic and political problems, etc</p>

Adapted: Mouton (2005:139–141, 2004:14, 2009:10); Babbie and Mouton (2005:14-15)

Positivists argue that social scientists should enter a debate by proposing a problem statement when embarking upon research. This is a scholarly tradition that is expected to be followed by the proponents of positivism. Positivists are of the view that social scientists should test theories by using their findings. According to the phenomenological paradigm however, positivism has major errors in its intellectual outlook regarding scientific research. These two ontological approaches differ fundamentally with regard to ‘knowledge production’. The phenomenological school is sometimes referred to as the interpretivist approach. The concept ‘phenomenological paradigm’ was coined by Alfred Schutz during the 1940s (Babbie and Mouton 2005:28; Acton *et al.* 2002:5).

The phenomenological paradigm refers to the importance of subjective interpretation by a researcher in examining social phenomena. In addition, phenomenologists are against the notion of objectivism advocated by positivism (Breakfast 2013:142). The phenomenological approach encourages the researcher to be an instrument of data collection by participating in the research. The researcher in

this approach is expected to have a deeper understanding of the context of subjects examined. This ontological approach embraces the notion of subjectivism as opposed to objectivism. Interpretivism concentrates on the personal understanding of reality, how people see themselves in relation to the world they are living in (Neuman 2003:76; Willis 2007:53; Leedy 1997:161; Leedy and Ormrod 2001:153).

POSITIVISM AND ANTI-POSITIVISM

The purpose of the Table below is to contrast positivism and phenomenology.

Table 4: Comparison of positivistic and phenomenological approaches to research

Ontological approaches	Positivist school of thought	Phenomenological tradition
Epistemological approach	Social scientists should uphold the principle of objectivity	The researcher should participate in social research by being subjective
	Research should be 'value free'	Research should be understood within the social context. Values are important in social research
	Concentrate on examining variables	The researcher should get a deeper understanding of the phenomenon examined
Methodological approaches	Social scientists should focus on a large sample in order to generalise the findings	The sample size of the research should be small
	The researcher should formulate a hypothesis	The study should be guided by a research question
	Quantitative approach	Qualitative approach

Source: (Gray 2009:23 quoting Easterby-Smith *et al*; Viviers 2003:50); (Neuman 2003:13); (De Vos *et al*. 2009:75)

The interpretivist approach encourages researchers to examine non-verbal communication closely when conducting research in natural settings (Neuman 2003:76). This implies that social scientists should take into account the gestures and body language of the participants when collecting data. This also means that statements should be decoded by the researcher in order to get a thorough meaning of what is being said. The whole notion of getting contextual understanding is directly linked to subjectivism. The phenomenological paradigm is centered on the idea that socio-economic and political problems can be solved by subjective interpretation of social reality. The interpretative

school embraces relativism in social sciences. This means that there is no single or absolute truth. According to the phenomenological paradigm there are 'multiple realities' (Hammersley 1995:16). This means that there is no one interpretation when analysing social phenomena. Furthermore social problems are interpreted differently by different people. Thus the interpretative paradigm acknowledges the subjective participation of the researcher in social research.

With regard to critical theory, Neuman (2003:81) asserts that this theory is a third ontological approach to scientific research in social sciences. He goes on to link this theoretical framework to Marxism. Proponents of Marxism in this context see conflict theory as a tool of analysis when conducting research. The main aim of the critical theorists in participatory research is to examine very closely the social problems caused by the capitalist system through participatory research. The rationale behind undertaking research is to overhaul the capitalist structure of society. Scientific evidence in this regard is used to back up Marxist arguments.

Proponents of critical research theory are practical when conducting research. Critical research theorists are always concerned about improving the lives of the poor. Critical theory is linked to participatory action research. The thinking behind this research is to make a change in society by unveiling the findings. Critical theory is influenced extensively by the Frankfurt school established in 1923 by a group of Marxist scholars (Neuman 2003:81-83). It is worth noting that these scholars at Frankfurt were called neo-Marxists and included most prominently, Heidegger, Adorno and Horkheimer. Critical research theorists argue very strongly that objectivity in the social sciences, is a myth. These theorists hold the firm view that objectivity in social research maintains the *status quo* in society (Snyman 1993:207; Babbie and Mouton 2005:58; Neuman 2003:81-83).

According to these theorists, the notion of objectivism perpetuates the ruling state of affairs because it accepts things as they are without taking a particular position and advocating for change in society. Critical theorists criticise the phenomenologists for embracing relativism when interpreting socio-economic problems. They also argue that research is concerned with incapacitating the people, especially the poorest of the poor. The intellectual outlook of the researcher is inspired by a particular theoretical framework. Thus critical research theorists sympathise with the working class and believe that taking a particular stand helps the researcher to critique society. Proponents of this research framework are always trying to expose capitalism (Neuman 2003:81; Willis 2007:82).

Gray states that critical research theory is not only concerned with providing interpretation, it is also concerned with making radical change in society. Gray goes on to outline four ontological assumptions of this theory:

- Ideas are mediated by power relations in society

- Certain groups in society are privileged over others and exert an oppressive force on subordinate groups
- What are presented as ‘facts’ cannot be disentangled from ideology, and the self-interest of dominant groups
- Mainstream research practices are implicated, even if unconsciously, in the reproduction of the system of class, race and gender oppression (Gray 2009:25).

Against the above backdrop, it must be noted that both at Master’s and Doctoral level students should be expected to have a deeper understanding of different ontological approaches in order to understand the relationship between ontology, epistemology and methodology. These propositions can be summarised as follows: ontology is a theoretical model; epistemology is what the specific theoretical framework perceives as fact while methodology is a theory that guides the researcher in respect of how to undertake research. Methodology therefore encompasses the strategies that should be employed by the researcher when collecting data. Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2009:2) assert that knowing how research is undertaken is the job of research methodology or strategy.

It is important to assert the position of the researcher with regard to the ontological, epistemological and methodological approaches of the study when doing social research as well as assumptions about what are to be regarded as facts. This is regarded as the epistemological perspective of the research (Breakfast 2013:136). The next section discusses the importance of research variables, in particular, within the context of quantitative studies.

RESEARCH VARIABLES

According to Neuman (2003:71), the concept of variable is employed by quantitative researchers in both natural and social sciences. When social scientists examine cause and effect, they are interested in finding out which phenomenon, known as the independent variable, influences or causes the existence of another phenomenon, known as the dependent variable. When scrutinising variables it is of paramount importance to know when there is a direct relationship between two or more variables. One variable should influence the other variable. This theory or relationship is called causation or causality (Babbie 1999:57–61; 2005:16–20; Leedy and Ormrod 2001:233).

Independent variables

The independent variable directly causes a particular behavior or phenomenon (Creswell 2009:50). In other words, it brings about changes in other variables.

Dependent variables

The dependent variable is a phenomenon caused by the effect of the independent variable in society (Brynard and Hanekom 2005:20). The next section examines thinking skills within the realm of social sciences with specific reference to Public Administration.

THINKING SKILLS OF SOCIAL SCIENCES: DEDUCTION, ABDUCTION AND INDUCTION

Methodological traditions of social sciences embrace two thinking skills. Deductive and inductive thinking are important tools of data interpretation and analysis in scientific research. Deductive reasoning starts with the premise that is the basis of the arguments. The premises are assertions or suppositions that are undeniable and widely accepted as valid. Thinking then continues logically from these premises to conclusions that must also be regarded as fact. Deductive thinking moves from general observation to a specific conclusion (Babbie 2005:25). Deduction is a reasoning process of sciences that starts with abstract observation (hypothesis), rational correlation among variables, 'then moves toward concrete empirical evidence'. Deductive thinking is associated with the quantitative research method which is directly related to the ontological approach called positivism. Induction, on the other hand, moves from specific observation to a general conclusion (Leedy and Ormrod 2001:34; Babbie 2005:25; Neuman 2003:51). There is a less well-known, third form of reasoning, called abduction. First proposed by Charles Peirce in 1903, abduction is an alternative process of logic to induction and deduction, that is admirably suited to the qualitative approach. The abductive process, according to Peirce, (in Moser, 1999), can be described according to the following steps: 'The surprising fact C is observed; but if A were true, C would be self-evident; consequently there is ground to suspect that A is true'. The following section discusses the difference between research design and methodology.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design signifies the entire plan of the research and how the research question will be answered. The main aim of the research design is to develop a plan of action and implement the plan so 'that the validity of the findings are maximized' (Mouton and Marais 1991:193). The research design is the approach that is chosen to fundamentally address the research question.

Moreover, research design in layman’s terms refers to a process of planning the research project. No researcher can be successful in carrying out scientific research without a clear research design (Leedy and Ormrod 2001:91). Mouton (2005:56); Babbie and Mouton (2005:74-5) assert that ‘...research design is a plan or blueprint of how you intend conducting the research. Researchers often confuse research design and research methodology’. It is of paramount importance to draw a distinction between the two concepts of research design and research methodology.

Table 5: Comparison between research design and research methodology

Research design	Research methodology
Concentrates on the end result of the study. The central question in this regard is what type of research is to be executed and what type of research findings are expected	Concentrates on the entire research procedure and instruments to be employed to carry out the study. The focus is around data collection
Research design is geared towards addressing the ‘research question’	Research methodology focuses on the gathering of data and draws a sample for the study
Concentrates on the logical order of the study. Among other things, a research design plans the type of evidence relevant to the study	Concentrates on the unit of analysis

Sources: (Mouton 2009:107; 2005:56 and Babbie and Mouton 2005:75)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

There are two methodological approaches generally used in Public Administration, namely qualitative and quantitative methodologies. However, it is worth noting that researchers may, and frequently do employ both methods at the same time. According to Mouton and Marais (1991:91), the concept ‘triangulation’ was developed by Denzin for ‘multiple methods of data collection’ in which case it would also be correct to label the research design as comprising ‘mixed methods’. Neuman (2003:138) concurs with the above assertion when he argues that triangulation is normally used by social scientists when employing two methods in one research project (see also Mouton and Marais 1991:91). Neuman (2003:1390) goes on to say that these approaches do not compete with one another instead they ‘complement each other’.

Leedy (1993:145) is of the view that these methods are utilised simultaneously due to the strength of each. Babbie (2005:28) argues that ‘recognizing the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research doesn’t mean that you

must identify your research activities with one to the exclusion of the other. A complete understanding of a topic requires both techniques'. There are three reasons for utilising both methods:

- With mixed-methods, social scientists are not limited to using the techniques associated with traditional design, whether qualitative or quantitative.
- The main advantage of triangulation design is that it can show a result (quantitative) and explain why it was obtained (qualitative).
- Triangulation is employed when the strengths of one method complements the weakness of the other, so that together they provide detailed data (McMillan and Schumacher 2006:27).

There are two philosophical perspectives underpinning these methodological traditions. Firstly, the philosophical roots of the qualitative method can be traced to the anti-positivist or phenomenological paradigm. Secondly, the quantitative approach can be traced to positivism. The qualitative approach is descriptive in nature and it provides an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon examined. On the other hand, the quantitative method uses numbers in analysing social phenomena. Neuman (2003:71) asserts that 'positivist researchers prefer precise quantitative data and often use experiments, surveys, and statistics. They seek rigorous, exact measures and objective research; they test hypotheses by carefully analysing numbers from the measures'. This is done to link variables.²

Table 6: Comparison of the qualitative and quantitative approaches to research

Quantitative approach	Qualitative approach
Objectivism (the researcher should be neutral or be an outsider when conducting research). Research should not include the values of the researcher. 'The Quantitative researcher adopts a more distanced stance'	Subjectivism (the researcher should be personally involved or participate physically when undertaking research.) This also implies that the researcher should personally interpret the actions of the participants
Systematic planning is vitally important before embarking upon research	Unsystematic and spontaneous at all times
'Context controlled as far as possible'	Context is of paramount importance
All the instruments used when collecting data are highly standardised, e.g. questionnaires and structured planned interviews, etc	Instruments for data collection are not standardised e.g. unstructured or semi-structured interviews and focus groups

Source: (Mouton and Marais 1991:155–163)

The idea of employing mixed methods emanated in 1959 from Campbell and Fisk when they used different methods simultaneously. Subsequently these scholars motivated other researchers to utilise both approaches when solving

problems. This has been termed triangulation, which is an approach in which the researcher examines a phenomenon from two different angles or points of view to fix a problem. Utilising triangulation in social science means that one is able to examine social phenomena from different angles (Neuman 2003:138; Creswell 2009:14).

This approach, favoured within the qualitative tradition, refers to a way of collecting data empirically by examining individual experiences and human interaction by direct observation and historical studies. Qualitative researchers focus on the interpretation of the entire situation. The qualitative method is aimed at getting a complete or holistic understanding of individual problems (Denzin and Lincoln 2000:2-9; Creswell 2009:4). When employing a qualitative approach the researcher is able to dig deeper by asking follow-up questions without being confined to a list of structured questions.

Table 7: Overview of the qualitative method

Aim	The main aim of this approach is to get an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon or situation examined. Human beings are investigated in their own context. Interpretation of events is encouraged by using value-judgments. The researcher should concentrate on the 'natural setting' of the participants. The qualitative approach is descriptive in nature.
Sample	The sample size of the research should be small. Most of the time researchers use a purposive sampling technique. However, it must be noted that researchers can also use a snowball or convenience technique.
Data analysis	Content analysis: Focuses on the words of the participants, debates and body language. Thematic approach: Findings are presented as themes. The researcher employs a narrative approach.

Source Leedy and Ormrod (2010:146); Leedy (1997:166)

The quantitative approach on the other hand measures variables by assigning numbers to what they scrutinise. Quantitative studies focus on numbers when reporting their findings. Respondents are drawn from a large sample (McMillan and Schumacher 2006:149; Mouton and Marais 1991:163; Brynard and Hanekom 2005:29). Quantitative analysis is based on converting raw data into numbers which is called the quantification of data, according to the proponents of positivism. Numbers are at the heart of quantitative research methodology. This approach is used to examine the relationship between variables. This methodological tradition postulates that there are two kinds of variables which are called independent (cause) and dependent variables. The most common tool for quantitative data gathering is called a survey (Babbie 2004: 16-396; Manheim and Rich 1995:129).

Research in Public Administration can benefit greatly from the application of mixed methods research, combining the empirical strengths of quantitative

methods – especially the survey, which provides data in respect of numbers, and answering questions such as ‘how many’, ‘when’ and ‘how far’, etc., with those of the qualitative method, epitomizes -apartheid practice of public administration.³

In as much as researchers have an option of employing mixed methods when embarking on social research; due to the nature of Public Administration on a global scale; social/organisational problems can be better understood through action research. For instance, in South Africa every now and then, there are violent service delivery protests which are underpinned by the history of violence of colonialism and apartheid. In trying to understand the problems of the public service researchers should not only quantify social problems. This does not imply that quantitative research is not needed. Nonetheless, action research as explained above is meant as a change for the better. One of the objectives of action/participatory research is to do social research that will empower people on the ground. After all, empirical research needs to give policy advice to local/provincial/national authorities.

CONCLUSION AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE SCHOLARSHIP OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The researchers have set out how research in the social sciences, in particular in Public Administration should be carried out through an understanding of the ontological, epistemological, and methodological aspects of that research. Public Administration in South Africa is beset by many difficulties, including various challenges to public service delivery, a lack of adequate training, widespread corruption, and deficits in the allocation of infrastructure stemming from the country’s history.

These challenges all need to be properly understood, or scholars will be in no position to meet them successfully. Fundamental to that understanding will be a solid grasp of the fundamentals of social science research, and it will need both qualitative and quantitative methods, honed to a high level of skill if it is to prove effective. However, it must be noted that Public Administration as an area of study is value-driven. The public sector has complexities and needs to be understood in context.

It is therefore vital that the university training of practitioners in Public Administration provide such skills so that the public servant of the future is, among other things, a skilled researcher, able to reflect, self-consciously on his or her practice, in the generation of knowledge of the challenges facing the public sector. Hopefully, this brief article will go some way towards providing a first step in that direction.

NOTES

- 1 See also the work of Karl Popper (1972, 1974) on this matter.
- 2 Scholars like Babbie and Mouton (2005), Babbie (2004, 1999), Mouton (1998), Neuman (2003), Mouton and Marais (1991) Leedy (1993), Punch (2009, 2005) and Manheim and Rich (1995) hold a firm view that there two types of variable, independent and dependent variable. According to them, the independent variable causes the existence of the dependent variable.
- 3 See also the work of Wessels and Thani (2014) on research methodology for South African students.

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Book Review

Fundamentals of social research methods. An African perspective

Bless, C., Higson-Smith, C. and Sithole, S. L. (eds.) 2013.
5th edition. Cape Town: JUTA. ISBN 9780702186837, soft cover, 410 pages.

This publication, a re-worked text with new authors, now in its 5th edition, remains a classic social research methodology guide for senior students, researchers and professionals in social sciences and related fields. The authors cover all the fundamentals for social research in 17 chapters with, what they refer to as an “African perspective”, which should make it relevant for South African researchers, teachers, policy-makers and planners who conduct social research.

The text is generally well structured from Chapter 1, with a healthy overlap (sometimes leading to confusion) and cross-referencing style, to guide researchers and professionals on the basic and more advanced quantitative and qualitative social research methods and the integration of these methodologies. The structure of the publication is logical in that the chapters follow the steps of the research process. What makes the chapters very readable is that each opens with an introduction, the text, chapter objectives (presented in boxes), examples, key points, a checklist, exercises and finally, additional references. Practical figures link arguments between chapters and consolidate the presentations rather well. The structure and format of the publication make it an exceptional teaching tool for social research methodology and for researchers who tackle the challenges of research on their own. Also included are a glossary, an alphabetical list of key words and a bibliography. In general, the publication makes a professional and high-quality impression on the reader.

In addition to previous editions, the 5th introduces both updated former and new chapters. Chapters 1-6 present the standard introduction to a publication of this nature, covering the methods of acquiring knowledge; the scientific method applied to social reality; research ethics; problem conception; types of research and research questions and variables. Chapter 7, an important new chapter, addresses participatory action research; Chapter 8 covers research and community development (also new), while Chapter 9, a new chapter, gives perspectives on monitoring and evaluation for community projects. Chapters 7–9 are the main foci on what the authors refer to as an “African perspective”, the sub-title of the publication. These are important foci for social researchers, policy-makers and planners; however, those interested in these topics need to undertake additional research on them.

Chapters 10-13 cover research planning and design; sampling; data collecting techniques and conclude with skills enabling data quality. The new chapter 14 deals with quantitative data analysis in detail, followed (also new), by Chapter 15, on qualitative data analysis. The bias in the focus of the publication, as Chapter 14 indicates, is towards quantitative data analysis, which is addressed expertly. The final two Chapters, 16 and 17, both lacking detail, cover research findings and dissemination and research management.

The publication is very comprehensive, currently probably the best South African text on the topic and certainly a must as a prescribed reference for senior and post-graduate students and professionals. Some chapters, 15 specifically, lack detail within the larger context of a 410 page publication and one which professes an “African perspective” as per chapters 7–9. Chapters 16 and 17, as is often the case in publications on social research methodology, lack detail, as these foci warrant a publication on their own, of which there are many available in South Africa. In some of the additional resource lists (per each chapter), more South African references, of which there are many valuable contributions, could have been indicated as additional options for readers. There are cases where some issues presented over the 17 chapters could have been better consolidated in a particular chapter instead of re-addressing them in a later one.

The publication is highly recommended to both teachers of social research methodology and students. This publication, read together with additional publications on writing and presentation skills (see Chapters 16 & 17), handsomely addresses just about every topic a social researcher should consider in planning a project or conducting research for a thesis. South African policy-makers and social development planners can do well by studying this publication, while subjects like psychology, sociology, anthropology, social work, public administration and management, development studies and political science should prescribe it. Policy-makers, government officials, community change agents and activists can be empowered by the publication’s message that societies can benefit if we understand how people relate to their meaning-giving local contexts, realities and challenges.

This updated and extended new publication remains one of the leading standard texts on the topic in South Africa, standing boldly next to larger 674 page works like Babbie, E. and Mouton, J. (eds.) (2001). *The practice of social research. South African edition*, Oxford University Press.

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