ACADEMIC PAPER

WILEY

Public service delivery in South Africa: The political influence at local government level

Mfundo Mandla Masuku[1] | Nokukhanya Noqiniselo Jili[2]

[1] Department of Development Studies, North West University, Mahikeng, South Africa

[2] Department of Public Administration, University of Zululand, KwaDlangezwa, South Africa

Correspondence
Mfundo Mandla Masuku, Department of Development Studies, North West University, Mahikeng, South Africa.
Email: masuku.masuku@nwu.ac.za

Present Address
Mfundo Mandla Masuku, Department of Development Studies, University of Mpumalanga, South Africa

This paper analyses poor service delivery at local government level, which is attributed to the politicisation of administrative components in municipalities, resulting in poor local governance. The public service delivery system has been perceived as one of the most important ways of reducing poverty through poverty alleviation programmes. As part of the South African government's cooperative system, key stakeholders in municipalities ought to adopt an integrated approach to public service delivery. An integrated approach to public service delivery demands that local municipalities, together with relevant stakeholders, integrate processes and services to ensure effective and efficient service delivery. This ultimately will result in an improved standard of living and sustainable livelihood for communities. With regard to public service delivery, local municipalities have the obligation of creating income opportunities people, especially the poor, with the sole aim of contributing towards poverty reduction and the realisation of the expectations of people, as stated in the South African government's White Paper of transforming public service delivery. The political interface in local municipalities greatly affects effective and efficient administration, as well as growth opportunities. Administrators, therefore, have the important function of ensuring that explicit assignments of objectives and administrative functions are wholly separated from the policymaking activities of government. This paper, therefore, suggests that municipalities adopt the merit system and abandon the spoils system that is highly characterised by political favours and political interferences. Political favours and interferences are dominant in local South African government, and they hinder the process of providing services equally.

1 | INTRODUCTION

Internationally, local government is regarded as the sphere of government that should provide the immediate necessary intervention in terms of provision of services because it is a sphere that is closer to the community. This paper argues that poor service delivery at a local government level is attributed to the politicisation of administrative components in municipalities, resultant of poor local governance. A number of persisting service delivery challenges, which include governance problems and backlogs, have been identified in South African municipalities over a number of years (Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2009; Koma, 2010; Chitiga-Mabugu & Monkam, 2013).

This paper attests that the concept of service delivery is more popular at an elemental level where local government is mandated to render basic communal needs and services that will improve the quality of life and enhance the livelihoods of people. Service delivery in South Africa is often marred by financial irregularities, corruption, and maladministration. Violent service delivery protests are caused by the high levels of

inefficiency and incompetencies from local government (Kroukamp & Cloete, 2018).

The state of corruption in South Africa has been reported as a regular occurrence in all three spheres of government. There are tools available to detect corruption practices, the abuse of authority, and ensuring accountability, but those tools are not well implemented (Napier, 2018). Although there is significance improvement in some areas, the challenge of corruption remains consistent at the forefront of development and requires more effort to end it in order to improve the quality of people's lives. Backlog challenges, such as housing, water, and sanitation; relationships with communities ruined by poor communication and accountability; and problems with the political administrative interface, and intra and interpolitical party issues, negatively affect governance and the provision of basic services. Lack of basic services, include housing, water and sanitation, and insufficient municipal capacity, due to the lack of essential skills, has been identified by numerous scholars as persisting challenges (State of local government in South Africa: Overview report National State of local government assessments, 2009; Jili & Banjo, 2013; Koma, 2010; Maserumule, 2008; Olum, 2011; Thornhill, 2008).

A report published by the South African Local Government Association, in 2007, identified critical issues with regard to council capacity, notably that there is inadequate legal support and advice to their decision making. Kanyane and Koma (2014) revealed that weak leadership in strategic management, including corporate governance, shortage of skills to implement the financial management legislation, misplacement of skills within the municipalities, and political consideration in appointment of senior managers without the required qualification, had tremendously affected the performance of municipalities. It is, therefore, crucial to look at the influence of political favours towards the provision of services in South African municipalities.

Maserumule (2007) viewed the politics–administration interference as being caused by the lack of relationship between the elected and appointed officials and their endeavours to provide services to the citizens. He stressed that those officials must find a point of convergence whereby they work together as a team to administrate and manage municipal affairs and make certain that there is provision of services to all citizens.

Mafunisa (2003) emphasised that political interference in administration would erode the opportunity of efficiency administration hence policymaking activities ought to be wholly separated from administration functions and that administrators had to have explicit objectives before they could begin to develop an efficient administrative function.

The South African government's tardiness to deliver basic services and their unfulfilled promises has caused service delivery protests and frustrations in various communities. The slow process of providing services to the people is usually caused by the interference of politicians in the duties of public administrators. Political interference in the functioning of municipalities is revealed as a problem that hinders the effectiveness and efficiency of the provision of services (Zarenda, 2013). This includes instances where municipal officials have used political processes to subvert council procedures. Partly political

factionalism also impacts on the stability and effectiveness of local government.

2 | POLITICS–ADMINISTRATION DICHOTOMY

The debate on how the relationship between politics and administration should be managed dates back to the late 19th century when Woodrow Wilson advocated for the complete separation of the two. In the 20th century, philosophers, such as Waldo, Jane Addams, John Dewey, and William James, criticised that impractical dichotomy and advocated for an interface, which is still the globally ideal model for the 21st century.

Political connections are considered as a very important factor influencing the ways public institutions perform (Fan, Wong, & Zhang, 2007), which also affect public sector employment decisions. In contrast, Napier (2018) argued that the separation of powers in the public sector, particularly in local government, has been largely overlooked in literature. The political bureaucratic model presents arguments that the elected office-bearers have a mandate to manage and control the public service. This means that there is no difference between politics and administration and between party and state. Moreover, Koma and Modumo (2016) argued that administrative components in local government should be free from politicisation because services in municipalities should be equitably rendered and not furnished only to individuals who have a partisan interest.

The appointment of politicians in senior bureaucratic positions, such as senior management and general management, is viewed as a means of controlling bureaucrats and civil service (Heywood, 1997: 335). Mafunisa (2003) stated that the politicised bureaucratic model gives politicians the power to determine how bureaucracy in public sector operates. Politicians are dominant and lead the administration under the politicised bureaucratic model. Tshishonga (2014) assert that in South Africa, the politicised model is anchored in the cadre Policy and Development Strategy of the African National Congress (ANC) which in 1997 emphasises on the recruitment from within the party and that potential recruits are made to understand and accept the basic policies and programmes of the ANC.

Political influence weakens municipal officials' performance within municipalities because the municipal council is the one who decides who to hire. Municipal managers are appointed by the decision of the entire municipal council; they even recommend the name and that is influenced by the political party dominant within the municipality.

In the academic discipline of public administration, the dichotomy model is regarded as the founding theory. Although appropriately criticised for being irrelevant, the dichotomy model is still given a historical legitimacy that it does not deserve (Overeem, 2012). Political interference in administration would erode the opportunity for administration efficiency and policymaking activities ought to be wholly separated from administration functions. Administrators have to have an explicit assignment of objectives before they begin to develop an efficient administrative function (Mafunisa, 2003). The dichotomy model

holds the view that the interference by politicians in public administration is inappropriate and will erode administrative efficiency and temper with the administrative neutrality of public officials. This model maintains that there is a complete separation of the responsibility between politicians and public officials.

The model is opposed to the pollicised bureaucracy model, which suggests that public administration and politics are one unit in which party structures dominate decisions in administrative matters (Mafunisa, 2003). Furthermore, Mafunisa (2003) found the politicised bureaucratic model to be a neutral model of administrative responsibility. Shafritz, in the study of Mafunisa (2003: 87), maintained that the politics and administration dichotomy holds that political interference in administration would corrode the opportunity for administrative efficiency, and the policymaking activities of the government are a burden to be completely separated from the administrative functions. Mafunisa's view is further supported by Heywood (1997:355) when he pointed out that the recruitment of the senior bureaucracy into the ideological enthusiasm of the government of the day effectively confuses the distinctions between politics and public officials.

The politicised bureaucratic model does not only corrode administrative efficiency, nor does it confuse the distinction between politicians and the public officials, whereas the depoliticised bureaucratic model is neutral. This model requires the separation of administrative functions from those of policymakers. The government's administrative function is to implement its policies to the satisfaction of the people and the ruling political party, which has set both the developmental and political agenda of the country. The implementation of such policies shall mean the implementation of policies by public officials belonging to different political ideologies and members of the public. This suggests that any political approach must also be an approach that embraces public administration, through the entire policy processes, including planning, implementation, and evaluation or review policy.

3 | COMPLEMENTARY MODEL

The complementary model is based on the notion that political and administration office-bearers can join together in pursuit of good governance (Svara, 2001). This model is described as a model that offers a positive approach to examine the distinct contribution of political office-bearers and public servants to the democratic process. Svara (2001) revealed that this model is better grounded historically and gives a positive approach to test the distinct contributions of political office-bearers and public servants to the democratic process. This model stresses that each office-bearer is interdependent, along with their distinct roles, and compliant in a manner that is in the best interest of the citizens.

In support of complementary model, Maphunye (2001), in his study about the roles and the structure in post 1994 departments, highlighted that both elected political office-bearers and appointed public servants agreed that there is no overlap between the world of the public servants and the world of political office-bearers. His study further suggested that the two groups should work together to realise the goal of the public and satisfy their needs. This theory acknowledges the different roles and responsibilities of each but sees the needs for interaction and interdependence as an alternative to the dichotomy model. This paper supports Maphunye (2011) in a sense that public officials and politicians should work together based on their separate roles and responsibilities, and no one should interfere in what the other is supposed to do.

4 | POLITICISED BUREAUCRATIC MODEL

The political bureaucratic model presents arguments that the elected office-bearers have a mandate to manage and control the public service. The appointment of politicians in senior bureaucratic positions, such as senior management and general management, is viewed as a means of controlling bureaucrats and civil service (Heywood, 1997: 335). It centres itself in the inseparability nature of politics and administration. Politicians take a leading role by leading the administration under the politicised bureaucratic model. In South Africa, the politicised model is anchored in the cadre policy and development strategy of the ANC (1997) which emphasises on the recruitment from within the party and that potential recruits are made to understand and accept the basic policies and programmes of the ANC.

Under apartheid, before 1994, after the National Party won the 1948 general election, the ANC deployed its members into strategic posts and positions in order to catalyse the pursuance of its agenda in the entire republic. The ANC is the ruling party of the present government. The majority of ministers and members of the executive council, including the presidency and premiers, are ANC members. The senior managers of administration are mostly members of the ruling party. Mafunisa (2003: 89) believed that the ruling party has to ensure that people who are committed to the party's transformation agenda occupy all the senior positions in all the spheres of government (the national, provincial, and local government).

This model entails an active participation of senior public servants in policy decision making, by virtue of their proximity to elected officials. These officials have a political and ideological orientation to serve the best interest of the ruling party to achieve its objectives of service delivery within public sector institutions.

This paper used the politicised bureaucracy model to measure the extent to which the public sector is politicised and how much power politicians wield, as compared with their counterparts, the administrators. Baekgaard, Mortensen, and Bech Seeberg (2018) emphasised the importance of the administrative component because administrators are in a possession of administrative backgrounds that enable them to manage and develop the public sector and advise politicians in all institutional matters.

5 | CHALLENGES OF POLITICAL INFLUENCE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

At the Commonwealth Local Government Conference, De Visser (2009) stated that the inappropriate political interference in

administration has caused South African municipalities to experience serious challenges that are difficult with which to deal. The strained relationship between politicians and administration officials appears to be the norm. Rolland (2018) attested that South African municipalities are continuously vulnerable to potential regime changes, resultant to introducing new political leadership with its new ideologies and strategies. The new political leadership could therefore institute unanticipated changes as far as administrative structures of municipalities are concerned. In most cases, the lack of separation of powers between legislature and executive authority at local government level is often blamed for this. Paradza, Mokwena, and Richards (2010) and Rolland (2018) shared similar sentiments when they indicated that at local government level, service delivery is experiencing difficulties because of the different philosophies between the political and administrative interface that have attributed to confusion in terms of their roles.

Political affiliation to the ruling party is the basis of being nominated and becoming a candidate. The community also elects councillors based on their political affiliation because the community know and understand the ideology that guides that particular party. Municipal managers should be appointed based on their competences, skills and experience. A municipal manager should be independent from the municipal council. The council should not recommend who will be the head of the administration. Local government should appoint experts who are independent of political affiliation, especially for the appointment of the municipal manager. The experts that will include all dominating parties within that municipality, interview the candidates, verify their qualifications, and work together with the legal and monitoring team. The personnel management should also be independent from the politics that will enable them to employ relevant candidates based on competency and not political affiliation.

In other instances, public projects are left uncompleted, or a poor quality of services is delivered to the people, such as failure to complete tarred roads or even if it is completed, it is not of good quality. Failure to deliver those projects undermines the citizen's welfare, and leads to the loss of billons of rands. It has been revealed that the extent of these failures varies within and across the country, driving national, and global inequalities (Bobby Banerjee, 2014). The Good Governance Learning Network (2008) revealed that public perceptions on local government are negative; the results show that the level of trust in local government is in the minority at 48.1%. This shows that citizens have lost their trust in local government and the results are substantially lower than those in provincial government, which is 59.5% and the national government at 64.3%. Citizens trust national government more than their local government.

The political administration interface has become a weak and a vulnerable trait of many municipalities. There is no doubt that members of municipal executives, officials and councillors are struggling to define their clear roles. There is growing concern around the inappropriate relationship between regional party structures and municipalities (De Visser, 2010). The municipality should, therefore, implement a merit system in the future because the spoils system and political favours are dominant in local government. A merit system

involves the principle of recruitment only of qualified individuals from appropriate sources in an endeavour to compose a workforce from all segments of society, and selection and advancement should be determined solely on the basis of relative ability, knowledge, and skills after fair and open competition, which assures that all receive equal opportunities.

Another principle entails that all the applicants and employees should receive fair and equitable treatment in all aspects of personnel management, without considering political affiliation. Furthermore, equal pay should be provided for work of equal value. This principle embodies the vision that maintaining equitable salaries, and rewarding excellence performance, will attract and retain the most effective and efficient workforce through positive employee engagement.

All employees should maintain high standards of ethics, integrity conduct, and concern about the public interest. The intent behind this principle is to consider the balance that must be struck between the employees' right to be hired and fired, solely on the basis of his or her abilities, and with regards to the public expectation of the government that is impartially administered and flexibly managed.

It is further stipulated in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) that public administration must be governed by the democratic values and principles enshrined in Sections 151–164 of the Constitution. Section 153 (a) states the development duties of municipalities, which is to "structure and manage its administration budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community and to promote the social and economic development of the community." This mandate requires a very strong relationship between political and administrative office-bearers, to work together in order to realise the goal of the municipality. The National Development Plan (NDP; 2013) serves as the strategic policy document to ensure that government does play a significant role, as contemplated in the 1996 Constitution.

The other fundamental principle is the principle of providing employees with education and training. Education and training will result in better organisational and individual performance which will lead to development. It is important for the local government sphere to provide education and training for employees to create civil servants that are worthy of the public and its confidence. This could be achieved through de-politicising and separating administrative duties from politics by training officials to be loyal to public institutions, and not partisan interests.

It is, therefore, important that the above principles should be applicable to national, provincial and local spheres of government to ensure accountability and the effective provision of services. A lot has been written about local government and service delivery, but as yet there is no investigation that stresses on how to deal with political interference. Some of the studies are contrary to this view; various studies have been conducted on the evolution and history of local government. The previous studies have also focused on the service delivery backlogs, resulting in public protests and some studies have indicated that the causes of those protests are usually because political influence.

6 | WARD COMMITTEES AND WARD COUNCILLORS

Ward committees face three critical limitations: political representation, structural limits to power, and the notions of councillors and party politics (Oldfield, 2008).

In a study that was conducted in Govan Mbeki Municipality (Secunda, Mpumalanga), ward committee members asserted that the problem in the municipality was that the ward committees were not independent, as they relied too much on their ward councillor as their chairperson. They were coddled by their ward councillor, or when they came up with creative ideas they were viewed as a threat to the councillors. When there were elections of the ward committee members in the community, the councillor already had the names of the people to be elected. This situation debilitated some ward committee members, because they could not contribute because they were just told what to do (Roux, 2005:8).

Furthermore, a study that was conducted at Msunduzi Local Municipality (Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal) by Smith and De Visse, (2009) found that ward committees are very often politicised in one of the following three ways: first there is inter-party competition, in which political parties control the ward committees and where the composition of committees is skewed towards supporters of the other party. There is also intra-party competition, in which ward committees have become embroiled in the factionalism within political parties, where one other faction within the ANC party uses the ward committees to secure greater political power. Lastly, Piper and Deacon (2008), and Smith and De Visse (2009) pointed out that there is a term-policy competition, whereby the role of ward committees, rather than the composition, is defined by the political party and not the legislative framework.

Section 79 (a) of the Municipal Structures Act (1998) stipulates that ward committees may make recommendation on any matter affecting their wards. This implies that they have a role to play and their recommendations are based on the matters that affect the community members, not ward councillors as individuals. In some cases, there is a close relationship between the ward committees and the branch of political leadership. In some instance, the members of both structures are the same. There is also a citation whereby the ward committees are combined with the branch leadership, to avoid the elements of animosity between the two groups, which are essential (Piper & Deacon, 2008). This articulates the fact that municipal councillors have influence in the selection of ward committees, and this shows that even the councillors are influenced by the municipal council. Reddy (2016) offered explanations that municipalities whose councils have a scarcity of skills in political and administrative components consequently have negative impacts on governance and service delivery.

Municipal managers are also elected according to political factions. The problem is that this affects service delivery because they perhaps do have the skills or knowledge suited to the post, especially because they are the ones to implement the resolution of the councillors, together with the officials within the municipality. It is also noted that the effectiveness of the ward committees are constrained by the limitations of the levels of the education, skills, and expertise of members. A skills audit of 373 ward committee members in the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, carried out by the Project for Conflict Resolution and Development in 2008, founded that only 34 of the members (9%) had post-matric training (qualification). It is likely that the education profiles of ward committee members in rural municipalities will reflect even lower levels of skills and education (Bendle, 2008).

Because of the ANC won power in the first democratic elections, post-apartheid, in 1994, it has maintained a strongly loyal stance to its members, placing 'cadres' in all spheres of government. The term "cadres" has been used to describe ANC loyalists, because of the armed struggle during apartheid against the white National government.

South Africa is at a high risk in terms of the ruling party (ANC) selecting and deploying cadres within municipalities, and this is the signal of the politicians abusing their powers. The level of risk in local government is high because they do not involve a merit system in the selection of employment.

7 | PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND DEPLOYING CADRES

The fundamental principle of local democracy is participation. With democracy, every citizen can participate in public affairs by freely communicating information about political issues, by openly expressing their own opinion on public affairs; by expressing their expectations without fear of repression, by voting in elections, by engaging in civil society organisations or political parties and by standing up as the candidate in democratic elections. In this way, democracy is the government of the people, by the people, for the people (Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011). Politics require the ideas and values that set the goals and standards of political organisations. Freedom, justice and solidarity are such principles that guide the political organisation of any society. Political parties, business organisations, as well as other non-governmental organisations of civil society, are organisations that collect shared social interests. Therefore, politics cannot be divorced from government; it must work together. However, politics should not overlap in such a way that it takes the place of governance and governing policies.

The existence of local government has always been defended on the basis that it is a crucial aspect of the process of the democratisation and intensification of mass participation in the decision-making process. No political system is considered complete and democratic if it does not have a system of local government. Local government must serve the two purposes of providing services to the people and representing citizens in determining specific public needs and how these local needs should be met.

The current ANC government designed a NDP, 2013 that is aimed at collaborating all sections of society and the effective leadership by the government. The state provides the institution and infrastructure that enables the economy and society to operate. Critical

interventions are required to build a state capable of realising this vision by 2030.

However, it is worrying that even the NDP is devised to address issues that emanate from municipalities. The main challenge has been unpredictable in capacity that leads to unpredictable performance in local, provincial, and national government (National Development Plan, 2013). This is caused by a complex set of factors, including tensions in the political administrative interface, an instability of the administrative leadership, a skills deficit, the erosion of accountability and authority, poor organisational design, and low staff morale. The public service needs to immerse in the development agenda, insulated from undue political interference. Staff at all levels must have the authority, experience and support they need to do their jobs. This will require a long-term approach to skills' development. In analysing this vision, the government, at all levels, must start to act immediately.

The politicisation of the public service is a government activity where the appointment and career of those in the service are subjected to political will (Madumo, 2016). This means that political interference dictates the appointment of administrative personnel at particular government departments. Deploying ANC loyalists/cadres is acceptable only if that cadre matches the job or has the required skills, to execute the tasks that are given in the job description.

Meritocracy is a political philosophy that believes that power should be vested in individuals according to merit. Advancement in such a system is based on intellectual talent, measured through examination, and demonstrated through achievement in the field where it is implemented, then really the principle of meritocracy should be highly observed.

The question one will ask is how can cadre deployment and employment be managed? Is the current political landscape conducive for cadre deployment? Does cadre deployment and employment assist in the rendering of services? Reitan, Gustafsoon, and Blekesaune (2015) viewed that the depoliticisation of local government activities often leads to a positive reform where effectiveness and efficiency are pursued by local government and the designed results are realised by communities.

Deploying cadres is acceptable as common practice only if the person the person to be deployed has a level of skill suitable to the municipal position in question. Loyalty alone is not enough, but the issue of educational level experience and preparedness should mostly be taken in to consideration. One should not be employed in a post by virtue of having had followed party orders (Netshitenzhe, 2013).

Local government institutions are the ones that are closest to the community, and they are informed by a community's needs, aspirations, dreams, and frustrations. In South Africa, councillors are not seen as champions and guardians of service delivery. Councillors and the municipal councils are perceived as being preoccupied with politics and the technicalities of administration. It is evident that there is misgivings and mistrust from the community towards municipal officials and councillors as can be seen in the violent community protests directed at the councillors and municipal officials.

8 | CONCLUSION

Political interference in administration hampers efficient administrative opportunities. In order for administrators to begin with developing an efficient administrative system, they must have explicit objectives and administrative functions that are wholly separated from the policy-making activities of political parties, especially of the government's ruling party. For service delivery to be effective in all the local spheres of the government, officials should understand their powers, distinctive responsibilities and acknowledge that they have different roles. They have to work together in order to be effective and do their jobs as they are supposed to. Politicians should not abuse their powers, more especially when it comes to recruitment. However, if all local municipal officials were employed by the merit principles, service delivery in South Africa would improve. Local governments who are able to separate the roles and duties of public officials and politicians are doing better to deliver what the public need. The debate about whether the public sector should be or should not be politicised is ongoing, but to curb political infighting in local government and to gain the confidence of the public, politicians should not influence administrators on what, when, and how, to do what is supposed to be done by administration.

ORCID

Mfundo Mandla Masuku https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3743-0779

REFERENCES

Baekgaard, M., Mortensen, P. B., & Bech Seeberg, H. (2018). The bureaucracy and the policy agenda. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, *28*(2), 239–253. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mux045

Bendle, M. (2008). Nelson Mandela Bay municipality skills audit of ward committees. Port Elizabeth: Project for conflict resolution and development.

Bobby Banerjee, S. (2014). A critical perspective on corporate social responsibility: Towards a global governance framework. *Critical Perspectives on International Business*, *10*(1/2), 84–95. https://doi.org/10.1108/cpoib-06-2013-0021

Chitiga-Mabugu M., & Monkam N. (2013). Assessing fiscal capacity at the local government level in South Africa. Department of Economics Working Paper Series. University of Pretoria, Pretoria.

De Visser, J. (2009). Developmental local government in South Africa: Institutional fault lines. *Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance*, *x*(2), 7–25. https://doi.org/10.5130/cjlg.v0i2.1005

De Visser, J. (2010). The Political-administrative interface in South African municipalities: Assessing the quality of local democracies. *Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance*, *x*(5), 86–101. https://doi.org/10.5130/cjlg.v0i5.1473

Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (2009). *State of local government in South Africa: Overview report National State of local government assessments*. Pretoria: Government Press.

Fan, J. P., Wong, T. J., & Zhang, T. (2007). Politically connected CEOs, corporate governance, and Post-IPO performance of China's newly partially privatized firms. *Journal of Financial Economics*, *84*(2), 330–357. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfineco.2006.03.008

Heywood, P. (1997). Political corruption: Problems and perspectives. *Political Studies*, *45*(3), 417–435. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.00089

Hofmeister, W., & Grabow, K. (2011). *Political parties, function and organisation in democratic societies*. Singapore: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung.

Jili, N. N., & Banjo, A. (2013). Youth and service delivery violence in Mpumalanga, South Africa. *Journal of Public Administration*, *48*(2), 251–266.

Kanyane, M., & Koma, S. (2014). *Developmental local government in South Africa: Issues for consideration*. Wandsbeck: Reach Publishers.

Koma, S. B. (2010). The state of local government in South Africa: Issues, trends and options. *Journal of Public Administration*, *45*(Special issue 1), 111–120.

Koma, S. B., & Modumo, O. S. (2016). Whither Public Administration in South Africa? The Quest for Repositioning in the 21st century. *Africa's Public Service Delivery & Performance Review*, *4*(3), 482–487.

Kroukamp, H., & Cloete, F. (2018). Improving professionalism in South African local government. *Acta Academica*, *50*(1), 61–80.

Mafunisa, M. J. (2003). Separation of politics from the South African public service: Rhetoric or reality. *Journal of Public Administration*, *38*(2), 85–101.

Maphunye, K. J. (2001). The South African senior public service: Roles and the structure in post-1994 departments. *Journal of Public Administration*, *36*(4), 312–323.

Maphunye, K. J. (2011). The relevance of the developmental state model to South Africa's and Botswana's public services: A comparative perspective. *Journal of Public Administration*, *46*(1), 608–621.

Maserumule, M. H. (2007). Reflections on South Africa as a developmental state. *Journal of Public Administration*, *42*(3), 211–219.

Maserumule, M. H. (2008). Framework for strengthening the capacity of municipalities in South Africa: A developmental local government perspective. *Journal of Public Administration*, *43*(3.2), x.

Napier, C. J. (2018). Political oversight committees and the separation of powers in the local sphere of government: the case of the City of Tshwane. *Journal of Public Administration*, *53*(2), 169–185.

National Planning Commission (NDP). (2013). National development plan—2030. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Netshitenzhe, J. (2013). *Why inequality matters: South African trends and interventions* (pp. 1–13). Mapungubwe: Institute for Strategic Reflection (Mistra).

Network, G. G. L. (2008). *Local democracy in action. A civil society perspective on local governance in South Africa*. Cape Town: GGLN.

Oldfield, S. (2008). Participatory mechanisms and community politics: Building consensus and conflict. In M. van Donk, M. Swilling, E. Pieterse, & S. Parnell (Eds.), *Consolidating developmental local government: Lessons from the South African experience* (pp. 487–500). Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Olum, Y. (2011). Multiparty politics in Uganda. Retrieved from https://www.kas.de (Accessed 15 August, 2016).

Overeem, P. (2012). *The politics-administration dichotomy: Toward a constitutional perspective*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Paradza, G., Mokwena, L., & Richards, L. (2010). Assessing the role of councillors in service delivery at local government level in South Africa. Research Report, No. 125. Centre for Policy Studies, Africa Portal.

Piper, L., & Deacon, R. (2008). Party politics, elite accountability and public participation: Ward committee politics in the Msunduzi Municipality. *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa*, *66*(1), 61–82. https://doi.org/10.1353/trn.0.0007

Reddy, P. S. (2016). The politics of service delivery in South Africa: The local government sphere in context. *TD: The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa*, *12*(1), 1–8.

Reitan, M., Gustafsson, K., & Blekesaune, A. (2015). Do local government reforms result in higher levels of trust in local politicians? *Local Government Studies*, *41*(1), 156–179. https://doi.org/10.1080/03003930.2014.891983

Republic of South Africa (1996). *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996*. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Rolland, M. (2018). A change management framework to sustain administrative effectiveness after municipal elections. *Politeia*, *37*(1), 1–17.

Roux, N.L. (2005). Unrest at the local sphere of government in South Africa: Unrealistic expectations or the inability to implement policies? Strategic Review for Southern Africa. Available Online: http://goliath.ecnext.com

Smith, T., & De Visse, J. (2009). Are ward committees working? Insights from six case studies. Community Law Centre, University of the Western Cape.

Svara, J. H. (2001). The myth of the dichotomy: Complementarity of politics and administration in the past and future of public administration. *Public Administration Review*, *61*(2), 176–183. https://doi.org/10.1111/0033-3352.00020

Thornhill, C. (2008). The transformed local government system: Some lessons. *Journal of Public Administration*, *43*(Special Issue 2), 493–591.

Tshishonga, N. (2014). Cadre development and its implications on service delivery in South Africa: A human development capability approach. *Journal of Public Administration*, *49*(3), 891–908.

Zarenda, H. (2013). *South Africa's National Development Plan and its implications for regional development*. Stellenbosch: Tralac.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Mfundo Mandla Masuku is a senior lecturer in the School of Development Studies at University of Mpumalanga, and he holds a PhD in development studies.

Nokukhanya Noqiniselo Jili is a lecturer and Head of the Department of Public Administration at University of Zululand. She holds a masters in Public Administration, and she is currently completing her PhD in public administration.