



# African Journal of Public Affairs

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**Publisher:** J O Kuye, African Consortium of Public Administration

Tel: +27 12 420 3334

Fax: +27 12 362 5265, +27 12 361 5030

E-mail: kuyej@up.ac.za, kuyejo@yahoo.ca

Postal address: P O Box 1399, Faerie Glen, South Africa, 0043



# EDITORIAL POLICY AND MANUSCRIPT SPECIFICATIONS

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1. The *African Journal of Public Affairs* is a bi-annual journal issued on behalf of the African Consortium of Public Administration.
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3. The journal publishes peer-reviewed articles, review articles, case studies, exemplar profiles, viewpoints and research results from practitioners of all grades and professions, academics and other specialists on the broad spectrum of administrative concerns regarding local, national, regional and international affairs.
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## MANUSCRIPT SPECIFICATIONS

Except in special cases where prior permission has been obtained, articles should not exceed 5 000 words. Prospective contributors are specifically requested to ensure that the language and technical aspects of their contributions are of a high standard. THREE identical copies of a manuscript, typed in 1,5 line spacing, 12pt Times New Roman should be submitted. A disk should also be submitted. Each manuscript should also be accompanied by an English abstract of up to 200 words. Since manuscripts are circulated anonymously for evaluation, the name and affiliation of the author(s) should appear on a separate page. If the manuscript is not accepted, a computer disk with the text, preferably in MS Word or WordPerfect must be sent to the editor. Only the Harvard style will be accepted for references.

All manuscripts must be accompanied by a covering letter in which the author(s) state(s) that the manuscript(s) has/have not been submitted or will not be submitted or published or is not being published elsewhere in any form unless rejected by the editor of the *African Journal of Public Affairs*.



## EDITORIAL MESSAGE

The *African Journal of Public Affairs* (AJPA) is a scientific journal published on behalf of the African Consortium of Public Administration (ACPA) – an independent entity with the mission to promote excellence, leadership and sustainability in Public Affairs, especially on the African continent. The establishment of the journal was borne from the urgent need that exists for independent journals that will capture scholarly contributions devoid of specific political and ideological alliances and rather promote, facilitate and stimulate innovation and intellectual individualism in critical thinking and theory construction.

The era for global and inter-continental academia has arrived. The African dialogue on public affairs on the international plank is here to stay. AJPA heralds a new chapter in the scientific documentation of public affairs activities in Africa. It will seek to capture the uniqueness of the continent, its institutions and its people, while embarking on its development trajectory. It is focused on celebrating excellence in governance and cautioning against transgressions and the erosion of good order. It is often stated that there are not enough publication opportunities for scholars and interested parties concerning developments on the continent, combined with the associated administrative activities found in such publications. With the launch of AJPA, it is envisaged that an avenue will be created through which the true dynamism of Public Affairs can be captured. It will become a repository where knowledge is shared and where the world will be enlightened as to the critical issues that confront the African continent. The journal will be published on a bi-annual basis. It is envisaged that the publication frequency may be increased in future and be made available in electronic format. Opportunities exist for entities that seek edition buy-outs and dedicated conference editions.

Specifically, the Editorial Board wishes to invite articles from scientists, practitioners and others, which will stimulate debate and provide alternative and innovative approaches and ideas and thought-provoking theories. Therefore, this journal is seen as providing an opportunity to the many practitioners who may struggle to present their action research to an apposite readership.

In this inaugural edition, an attempt is made to demonstrate the array of article themes and types to be accommodated in AJPA in future. The reader will notice that there are contributions from different authors, representing different focus areas in Public Affairs. Therefore, in the December 2007 inaugural edition, we are elated to present viewpoints concerning education, globalisation, ethics, agriculture, policy, community participation, human resources, education, organisational dynamics and inter-governmental relations.

The AJPA draws intellectual strength from the global diaspora and continental intellectual dialogue. You are invited to enjoy the discourses and, of course, to contribute to this journal and to collaborate in securing its success.

Chief Editor  
J O Kuye

# A DECADE REVIEW OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

**J O Kuye**

**School of Public Management and Administration  
University of Pretoria, South Africa**

## ABSTRACT

*The evaluation of higher education at the cluster of a decade of democracy should clearly note the starting point of governmental policy in all sectors of society. It is imperative to take note of the fact that the decade spanning 1994 to 2004 does not represent a stagnant stage in policy development in South Africa. The year 1994 signifies a radical departure from the past regarding all policies, financing systems, organisational structures, human resource utilisation and democratically based representivity and public accountability.*

## INTRODUCTION

Developments in higher education are discussed within the frameworks provided in the white Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education, National Plan for Higher Education (2000), other policy documents and research reports relevant to the subject. The basic arguments are forwarded in accordance with the assumption that higher education is accepted as a primary requirement for development of the South African society and that its contribution should be acknowledged in the public and private sectors.

## JUSTIFICATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Through the relevant policy documents approved by Government since 1994 it has been stated clearly that higher education is required to obtain and sustain higher levels of economic growth; improve the living standards of the masses; initiate socio-economic change and development; enable good citizenship by empowering citizens to participate in a meaningful manner in the democratic processes; develop new bases of knowledge and contribute to opening avenues to allow citizens to utilise opportunities created in the economy; and to allow South Africans to compete internationally in the quest for excellence.

Higher education should not be viewed as a separate or isolated sector. It is an integral part of the comprehensive services sector in which Government plays a major role. It can never be static and has to adapt its policies and practices continuously to meet the ever-changing needs of society, technology and of the global village of which South Africa is now part. Furthermore, education has to accept as a fait accompli that the world operates on a knowledge-driven economy.

## INHERITANCE OF THE PAST

With the advent of democratic government in 1994, higher education experienced a lack of confidence from the majority of the South African society. This was due to inter alia the perception that higher education was caught in the trap of an apartheid-based past; that it lacked concern with real output; that serious deficiencies existed in governance and that duplication was rife (e.g. 14 different institutions formulating policies on education); and there existed a serious lack of trust in the quality of higher education which was mainly due to the racially based policies and lack of overall public accountability.

The new democratic South Africa, which very soon became part of the global village, realised that Government requires the development of an honest, effective, efficient and innovative public service. In



this regard higher education would be required to play a major role in generating high and medium level capacities and skills. Policy development, policy implementation, planning, managerial and administrative competencies and financial skills were considered prerequisites for the development and maintenance of an effective higher education system.

## **HIGHER EDUCATION SINCE 1994**

Bearing in mind the inheritance of the apartheid past, higher education was faced with a number of challenges, which required an extensive transformation of policies, financing practices, human resources, organisational restructuring and transparency through effective accountability. These challenges are discussed under appropriate headings.

### **Legal and policy challenges**

The key developments since 1994 include, inter alia:

- The National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) was established in 1996 and produced a report that provided three pillars for higher education viz the need for a policy on increased participation; a policy on greater responsiveness to ensure that social challenges are met and a policy to provide for increased co-operation and partnerships.
- The white Paper entitled: Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education (1997) accepted that participation of South Africans in higher education through massification would produce the desired results regarding the transformation of the system of higher education. (This proposal was not accepted).
- The National Plan for Higher Education (1997) endeavoured to eliminate the vacuum created by the incremental approach to the execution of policies and addresses the absence of regulatory instruments. It also identified the danger of some higher educational institutions seizing market opportunities, leaving the historically black universities in the lurch. One of its main proposals concerned the rejection of the NCHE's proposed differentiation through distinct institutional types and proposing instead differentiation through mission and programme mix. The Plan furthermore made provision for an increase in the participation rate and the graduation rate; shifting the ratio between the humanities, business and commerce, and science, engineering and technology from 49:26:25 to 40:30:30; and the introduction of institutional mission and programme differentiation.
- The Higher Education Act, 1997 formalised policy incentives and regulated higher educational matters, other policy developments include a new language policy, an institutional redress policy; and the development and implementation of the National Higher Education Information and Application Service.

As a result of the respective policy incentives, the situation in 2004 included a new higher education funding framework; a restructured higher education system; a national framework and criteria for quality promotion and quality assurance; a single co-ordinated higher education system; and the identification of the need for the improvement of the quality of leadership and management in public higher education institutions.

### **Institutional challenge**

As already alluded to, the system of higher education was highly fragmented from a political, administrative and operational perspective. The 36 higher education institutions (universities and technikons) under the political direction of eight different political structures were not conducive to co-ordinated development. Since 1994 Government succeeded in instituting a process that radically changed the higher education system by e.g. the creation of an integrated system of higher education, the eradication of rigid boundaries between institutional types; the eradication of boundaries created by legacies of the past; and changes in programmes and qualification offerings in the curriculums and terms of higher education provision.

The NCHE's report entitled: Towards a New Higher Education Landscape: Meeting the Equity, Quality and Social Development Imperatives of South Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (2000) inter alia provided for three sets of higher education institutions viz bedrock institutions which would focus on quality undergraduate programmes and limited postgraduate programmes up to masters level. A second set would focus on undergraduate and comprehensive postgraduate taught and research programmes including the doctoral level and extensive research. A third set would focus on quality undergraduate and selective postgraduate taught and research programmes up to the doctoral level and select areas of research. Distance education will be dealt with separately.

In an effort to rationalise higher education institutions, provision was made for specific mergers under the guidance of a Merger Unit. Funds were also provided for the mandatory restructuring. Furthermore colleges were incorporated into the higher education system (e.g. colleges of education, colleges of nursing and colleges of agriculture). Private higher education was reorganised and the Higher Education Quality Committee accredited 14 providers of this type and conditionally granted accreditation for a further 30.

In 2004, the new institutional landscape of higher education consisted of 22 public institutions i.e. 11 universities, five universities of technology and six comprehensive institutions. These merged institutions increased the number of students in most cases quite dramatically e.g. UNISA (formerly University of South Africa/Technikon South Africa and VUDEC (formerly part of Vista), as distance education institution now boasts 210 275 students, Tshwane University of Technology (formerly Technikon Pretoria/Technikon Northern Gauteng and Technikon North-West) now accommodates 53 373 enrolments and the University of Pretoria (formerly University of Pretoria and Mamelodi Campus of Vista) now has 44 643 enrolments. These three universities now accommodate 47% of the total number of enrolments in higher education.

## **Obtaining equity**

In promoting equity Government endeavours to ensure that education enrolments reflect society's social composition; that it reflects the equitable distribution of opportunities and outcomes; that staffing reflects society's social composition; that higher education's research outputs reflect equitable participation, opportunity and outcomes; that resources are made available to historically disadvantaged social groups as well as to formerly disadvantaged higher education institutions; and that capacity is increased with respect to quality to obtain fair opportunities for historically disadvantaged educational institutions.

The need for a focus on obtaining equity is borne out by inter alia the fact that in the period 1990-1994 (i.e. before the transformation of South Africa) enrolments grew by an overall figure of 130 000. However, the participation rates were skewed by race with 9% growth for Africans, 13% for coloureds, 40% for Indians and 70% for whites.

As far as staff at higher education institutions is concerned, of a total of 45 000 staff members in the higher education sector, 80% were white, 12% African, 4% coloured and 4% Indian. Therefore, it was imperative to address these inequities in a fully democratic state striving towards representivity in all sectors of the South African economy. Since 1994 Government engaged in various policy initiatives to address the unequal representation in student and staff numbers.

The white Paper referred to earlier, proposed massification as a basis for policy development. However, this approach was unacceptable to Government. This was mainly due to the cost involved in expanding the higher education system and labour market indicators. Instead Government accepted the proposals contained in the National Plan (also already referred to). This inter alia required an increase in the participation rate from 15% to 20% by 2010-2015 in the economy by increasing the number of graduates with skills and

competencies to meet the human resource needs; by increasing graduates on undergraduate programmes by 25% and masters programme graduates by 33%.

Staff equity had to be addressed not only to accommodate a new higher education system requiring representivity, but also to meet new labour legislation introduced since 1994 e.g. the Employment Equity Act, 1998. The goal set in the National Plan to increase participation in student numbers was partly successful. Student numbers increased from 473 000 in 1993 to 605 000 in 1998, but declined to 586 000 in 1999. This was probably due to the lack of sustainability of some historically disadvantaged universities. Taken overall, enrolment by race in the period 1993 to 1999 indicates a steady increase of black enrolments from 191 000 to 404 000; coloureds from 28 000 to 39 000; Indians from 30 000 to 49 000; and a decline in white enrolments from 223 000 to 182 000 in the same period. The gender profile did not change dramatically i.e. men from 271 000 in 1993 to 312 000 in 2002; women from 202 000 to 363 000 in the same period.

As far as graduate outputs by universities and technikons (i.e. before the mergers) are concerned, an increase from 81 764 in 1995 to 101 679 in 2002 is worth mentioning. The concern of Government regarding the output by field of study, however, did not change significantly as far as the three broad fields of study are concerned (i.e. science, engineering and technology; business, commerce and management; and humanities and social sciences). In 1995 the ratio at universities and technikons was 24%, 16%, 59% and in 2002 it was 26%, 25% and 49%. (Note: figures differ between the annual reports of SAPSE, HEM and CHE.)

The graduate output by qualification level showed no significant change between 1995 and 2002. However, as far as graduates by race are concerned, African graduates increased from 39% to 53%, coloureds remained at 5%, Indians at 7% and whites decreased from 50% to 35%. There is some concern regarding the decline in university graduation rates between 1995 and 2002, especially in the fields of Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) and Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS). The Business, Commerce and Management Sciences (BCMS) however, achieved a slight increase. Some concern is raised regarding the sustainability of particular higher educational programmes as a result of the ageing of the academic workforce. Current analyses indicate that the workforce is not being replenished and those academics in the age groups above 45 are on the increase in the staff complements.

After the merging of higher education institutions, the equity principle is clearly discernible. Currently African students form 59% of enrolments at merged universities and white students 22% whereas before the merger the percentages were 42% and 45% respectively. Although equity has changed positively in the composition of students, the academic staff component is still dominated by whites. Overall Africans constitute only 20% of the academic personnel corps, whites constitute 69%, coloureds 4% and Indians 7%. Even after the merger policy had been implemented the proportions still remain relatively the same. In the executive/management complement in higher education institutions, viewed overall, the white staff still dominate.

## Teaching and learning

The academic practices prevalent at universities in 1994 were either Western in nature or dominated by principles and practices supposedly focused on Africa. However, in fact the practices were often antagonistic to African culture. The technikons were mostly vocationally oriented and were not synchronised. Since 1994 Government introduced a number of new policies that changed the teaching and learning approaches and practices e.g. the white Paper on Education and Training, the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) Act, 1995 and other policies already alluded to.

The emphasis on teaching and learning shifted to steer South Africa along a high skills, high growth path of economic development; to bring academic and vocational education into closer alignment with one

another; to modularise curriculums to facilitate the acquisition of skills within flexible time frames; to erode disciplinary boundaries in favour of interdisciplinarity; and to follow an outcomes-based approach to allow cross-field outcomes.

The need to change the traditional approach to teaching and learning in a democratic, internationally acceptable state is characterised by three important considerations viz the expected increase in the number of entrants into higher education institutions; the approach to change institutional arrangements to obtain flexible teaching teams; and the entrance into the global village, which would require a shift in knowledge production from discipline based to interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary team based research by university researchers as well as outside researchers.

It is important to note that the transformation of the higher education curriculums requires an appropriate balance between the rigid norms of traditional disciplines and the more open knowledge systems demanded by the environmental factors influenced by higher education. In this regard Government initiated the SAQA policy and regulations which provide for flexibility in learning through key concepts for higher education; through a new academic policy (NAP) to provide a framework to support the National Plan; through the NQF consultative document to facilitate flexibility in learning and teaching; and through the Higher Education Quality Committee's (HEQC) framework and policies putting teaching and learning at the centre stage of quality assurance by connecting it to national and regional contexts, goals and targets.

Curriculum changes have been effected since 1994. However, issues that still require attention are inter alia whether the changed curriculum addresses the real needs of South Africa; whether the programme motivations have really been effected by the various higher education institutions; and whether all institutions actually eradicated disciplinary boundaries and developed integrated programmes.

The current situation (2004) indicates that an accelerated change in higher education can occur only if a new academic policy is in place. The issue of teaching and learning delivery models is critically influenced by the electronic media as these affect the clear conventional distinction between contact institutions and distance education, making the distinction to some extent superfluous.

The implementation of information and communication technology (ICT) should be done circumspectly. ICT could be used to widen access to higher education. However, it should be considered that not all students from historically disadvantaged communities, even at this stage, have access to the electronic media. The mergers and incorporations of higher education institutions also have an effect on the issue under discussion as the ability to use ICT may be different in the historically disadvantaged institutions and the historically advantaged institutions. The integration of programmes of the merged institutions should carefully note the knowledge base of all students as well as the accessibility of ICT at the various campuses.

## Research

Research is probably one of the most critical responsibilities of higher education institutions. Research on the one hand creates new knowledge that could be transferred to students and/or utilised by governmental bodies, commerce and industry. On the other hand, research is conducted to verify existing knowledge and to record such knowledge for posterity.

Before considering the current policies and approaches to research in higher education institutions, a brief reference to the role players in research is required. It should be emphasised that research is neither the sole domain of higher education institutions nor of researchers at such institutions. The business sector and civil society should become stakeholders not only in funding research, but also in knowledge provision. Such an

approach facilitates multidisciplinary research, institutional networking and contributes to the sustainability of long term research programmes. The South African Department of Science and Technology as a case in point developed a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) framework for the scientific professions which resulted in the Scientific Professions Act, 2003.

In 1993 a Science and Technology Initiative (STI) was launched by the ANC to address issues related to the political transformation that lay ahead. After 1994 the STI reports informed the national research policy developments. The reports identified a number of deficiencies in science and technology (S&T) policies e.g. that public participation was not transparent, that the S&T system mainly served the white minority; that S&T institutions were fragmented; that a leadership vacuum existed; and that the enrolments and graduate output of natural scientists, engineers, technologists and technicians was declining.

Considering research in isolation is inadvisable. Research and development (R&D) should be viewed as two sides of a coin. Research without the concomitant development is of no use to society and South Africa in general. In South Africa, R&D activities are undertaken by higher education institutions and government and industry in relatively equal shares. Higher education institutions receive about 40% of state expenditure on R&D and totals about 0,8% of the GDP between 1989 and 1994. The business sector contributes about 10% to the R&D of higher education institutions.

One factor that requires Government's attention is the division of R&D among the different research fields. The national sciences, technology and engineering as a research field represents 67,6% of expenditure by higher education institutions. The social sciences and humanities represent the remaining 32,4% of the expenditure. If the socio-economic objective is taken for classification of R&D expenditure of higher education institutions, defence represents 0,2%; economic development 35,8%; society 35,6%; the environment 10,1%; and for the advancement of knowledge 18,2%. The headcount of researchers also seems to indicate that the majority of researchers is located in higher education (48,5%), with business second at 25,5%. The science councils are third with 18,1%; government only accommodates 6,6% of the researchers and the non-profit organisations represent 1,3% of the researchers.

It is significant that in the higher education sector five of the universities conduct 60% of the higher education R&D. If the combined institutions are assessed, eight universities and technikons are responsible for 90% of the higher education R&D. This indicates that even after the mergers, the majority of higher education institutions fail to undertake any significant R&D. This view is underscored by the fact that as far as research and innovation are concerned, South Africa has a rather low score. In 2002 it ranked 107 out of 173 countries in the human development index; and 22 out of 39 countries in the technology achievement index. These facts indicate that South Africa could lose its small edge over other middle developing economies if research and development/innovation are not urgently addressed.

A number of improvements occurred in the area of research since 1994 e.g. THRIP (Technology and Human Resources of Industry Programme) funding for HEIs increased from R16 460 000 in 1995 to R256 926 000 in 2001, thus an increase of 1 461% in funding to facilitate research. Contract income also serves as a measure to indicate the responsiveness of higher education to the research needs of Government, commerce and industry. A note of caution should be sounded in this regard and that is that HEIs should beware that contract research does not edge out basic research. This may happen as a result of the potential income derived from contract research.

The article output of universities as representative of research output has dropped marginally in the period 1995-2001 by 2%. The output of technikons increased by 149% for the same period, but started from a low base (62 to 153 publications). The new university sector (i.e. after the mergers) still dominates the scientific output

scene, but the new universities of technology still lag behind with only 2,3% of the total higher education scientific output. The average output per academic staff member is 0,55 in the newly structured education sector with the new universities of technology contributing 0,05 publications per academic staff member.

## **Community engagement**

It is expected of higher education institutions to contribute to the reconstruction and development of civil society. It should find a complementary alternative to marketisation by also contributing to the good of society. This change in emphasis requires clarity regarding the interpretation and application of the concept of service to society. It should be recognised that service could be rendered through volunteerism (i.e. students engaging in activities to benefit a recipient community); internships that engage students in activities where the primary benefit is the student; co-operative education where the goal and the benefit is student learning; and service learning which is focused on the development priorities of communities through the interaction between communities on the one hand and students, academics and service providers on the other hand.

The inheritance of the previous Government included lack of mission statements by HEIs regarding community service; lack of policies to operationalise its community service component; service projects being initiated by students and academics to address specific community needs; and few projects containing the three traditional functions of HEIs i.e. teaching, research and service. Since 1994 various initiatives were introduced e.g. the Joint Education Trust Initiatives to support conceptualisation, evaluation and research of pilot service-learning initiatives and to utilise this process to inform higher education policies and practices. A second initiative was the Vice-Chancellors' Meeting in 2000 to consider a range of issues including the suggestion that community engagement should not be optional, but mandatory.

Higher education institutions developed a number of initiatives themselves, such as institutional audits on community engagement; institutional policies and strategies for community engagement; organisational and staffing structures to promote community engagement; the conceptualisation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of academic courses designed to incorporate the principles and practices of service-learning; the development of comprehensive criteria for quality assurance (in collaboration with the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) and the Joint Education Trust (JET)); and research initiatives into factors that promote or prohibit the institutionalisation of service-learning.

It could be argued that 2004 was characterised by various policy initiatives regarding community engagement. Furthermore, HEIs now have at their disposal instruments to conduct audits of their community engagement initiatives, policies and practices.

## **Quality assurance**

No national framework policy for quality in higher education sectors existed prior to 1994. Although an awareness existed for the need to provide for quality assurance in higher education, it was undertaken in an unco-ordinated and erratic manner. In 1994 the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) was established. It focused on quality in higher education. The National Commission on Higher Education convened a task team on quality assurance (QA) and endorsed quality as a key principle for transforming higher education. The QA system that was established operates within the framework of the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995.

Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETA) were established in terms of the Skills Development Act, 1998 to monitor education and training in the respective sectors. The SETAs are accredited by SAQA. Various

SETAs are assigned to deal with higher education programmes. Thus SETAs play a significant role in quality assurance of higher education institutions. This enables South Africa to comply with the international requirements regarding the improvement/enhancement and accountability functions concerning QA.

## **Responsiveness**

Responsiveness refers to the need to ensure that higher education interacts with the policy-makers, industry, commerce, local communities and society in general. Some of the linkages include an exchange between higher education and the economic sector regarding academic planning and curriculum development; collaboration between business and higher education institutions; collaboration in local and/or regional economic development; knowledge transfer between the academic sector and its clients; work placements for higher education students; and the employment of higher education graduates. In the latter case it was found that in the period 1991 to 1995 at least 59% of the respondents to a questionnaire, administered by the Human Sciences Research Council, found employment immediately after obtaining a degree.

As far as R&D serves as an indicator of responsiveness, it was found that in 1993 South Africa spent only 1% of its GDP on R&D in science and technology. It was furthermore found that the linkages between universities and business were limited as research capacities were uneven among HEIs. The historically advantaged institutions did much better than the historically disadvantaged institutions.

Key developments since 1994 in obtaining greater responsiveness by higher education include inter alia the Higher Education Responsiveness National Policy and Strategy. This policy and strategy address e.g. equity of access and eradication of unfair discrimination, meeting of national development needs, support for a democratic ethos and contributions to the advancement of all forms of knowledge and scholarship.

Responsiveness was furthermore advanced through the National Plan for Higher Education (2001); the National Skills Development Strategy (2000); the Driving Competitiveness Framework (2001) promoted by the Department of Trade and Industry; the National Research Development Strategy (2002) and the review by the Human Sciences Research Council entitled Education, Employment and Skills in South Africa; as well as the research into the morality of R&D workers entitled Flight of the Flamingos.

Despite the differences between science and technological development and social progress, 2004 was characterised by the complexity of the relationship. This is mainly due to the fact that simple prediction of labour demand and supply is not the answer. The relationship, as had been found to be the case internationally, is more complex. The relationship between economic and social development on the one hand and education on the other hand is confounded by the incomplete definitions of employability. Lastly a direct correlation between responsiveness and employability cannot be accepted without reservations. The role of higher education is greater than responsiveness to the labour market, it has to respond to other societal goals of a socially committed and critical citizenry.

HIV/AIDS needs specific attention. Although not discussed at length it should be highlighted. Research revealed that higher education provides limited exposure to this important issue. It is obvious that this matter requires urgent attention.

## **Governance**

Governance of higher education systems tended to be influenced by one or more models from the West. Some universities (white) in the pre-1994 era enjoyed considerable autonomy, and were funded by block grants. The universities in the "bantustans" operated under strict national control. Technikons were nationally

controlled through synchronised curriculums and had weak or non-existent traditions of academic freedom. Since 1994 two key themes in higher education governance can be discerned. Firstly, higher education governance had to be transformed in order to break the apartheid mould; and secondly, it was required to meet the challenges of social and economic transformation and globalisation. However, while in other parts of the world university governance could be deregulated, it could not be done in South Africa. Injustices of the past and imbalances had to be corrected. This required governmental involvement.

Policies since 1994 included inter alia the development of co-operative governance as founded in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. It also required the development of clear relationships among the principles of public accountability, institutional autonomy and academic freedom. This requirement provides for differences to be negotiated and the development of transparent ways to support the tenets of democracy, effectiveness and efficiency.

Substantive policy issues in 2004 include the endeavour to break the mould of apartheid in higher education through e.g. the merging of higher education institutions; the creation of comprehensive institutions to facilitate multidisciplinary and multistructural teaching and research; to utilise capacity more efficiently; and to promote public accountability in governance.

## **Financing**

Financing of higher education comprises four components: through student fees; through the National Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS); through private income earned by higher education institutions via various channels; and through entrepreneurial activities. The inheritance in 1994 regarding financing was fragmented and consisted of inter alia formula funding of historically white universities; negotiated budgets for historically black universities and technikons; and full funding for colleges (e.g. nursing colleges). The South African Post-Secondary Education (SAPSE) funding formula was also in existence. This formula provided a complex mechanism for funding universities. The formula resulted in extreme difficulties and produced inequitable consequences in practice.

Since 1994 Government addressed the funding of higher education institutions. The white Paper of 1997 provided for the redress of past inequalities in funding historically white universities and historically black universities. However, the development of a new funding framework proceeded slowly, even though the Department of Education established a Funding Reference Group. Under the auspices of the Department a joint finance committee of the South African Universities Vice-chancellors Association (SAUVCA) and the Committee of Technikon Principals (CTP) produced a comprehensive analysis and discussion document on a new funding framework in 2002. This document ultimately resulted in proposals for a reconsidered funding system for 2004/2005 to 2006/7.

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) already referred to is highly praised for its assistance to financially constrained students. The Scheme operates in partnership with 41 financial aid offices. Funding of higher education institutions is done according to a formula based e.g. on student numbers, general needs and the cost of programmes at the various institutions.

Government expenditure on education and higher education has changed little since 1995/6; it showed a small decline from 22,4% of GDP in 1995 to 19,9% in 2005/6. Higher education's share was 2,69% in 1995 and 2,6% in 2005/6. The funding through NSFAS increased from R59 m in 1994/95 to R733,4 m in 2002/3. To recap, it could be stated that in 2004 the new funding framework retained the two main components of the SAPSE framework i.e. block grants and earmarked funding. However, the model now has new policy underpinnings and the components are applied differently to meet policy objectives.



Currently government grants account for on average 50% of public higher education funding. Student fees comprise 25% and 25% is obtained through private income sources. Institutional restructuring demands 5% of the earmarked funding. Research output grants are also provided for. Teaching output grants are also made to serve as an incentive to higher education institutions. The new funding framework addresses institutional redress; institutional autonomy; growth in enrolments; financial certainty; and academic development. There are, however, tensions in the framework as a result of the mergers; the differentiated landscape within which the various institutions operate; and the argument that the framework neutralises efficiencies and incentives.

## Internationalisation

Internationalisation requires attention as Government inherited an isolated higher education system in 1994. Institutions were restricted with little exposure to developments in other parts of the world. Academics were also not in regular contact with new teaching and research developments.

Since 1994 South Africa became part of the international scene e.g. a member of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), member of the African Union (AU); and a member of various international institutions. This exposure results inter alia in international students and staff becoming involved in South African higher education and vice versa.

The situation in 2004 is characterised by the globalisation of operations. Higher education is deeply involved in this process of opening up new avenues of learning, teaching and research with the assistance of international partners. One example serves to prove the point viz the effects of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO). These effects inter alia underscore the complexities of higher education in an international context.

## CRITICAL ISSUES FOR THE FUTURE

The discussion commenced with a brief overview of the higher education landscape inherited by the democratic Government in 1994. The eleven most significant characteristics of the decade 1994-1995 were highlighted under appropriate headings. In general terms, the following division can be made :

- 1990-1994 consisting mainly of symbolic policy-making i.e. to eradicate the racially based education and irregularities of the past
- 1994-1998 consisting of framework development characterised by various policy initiatives to provide a framework for higher education
- 1999 to the present consisting mainly of the implementation of the various policy initiatives.

During the first decade of democratic, transparent and accountable government various successes were achieved, e.g. a single co-ordinated and differentiated system of higher education was established. This system operates within a national higher education plan. Secondly, private higher education institutions have become an accepted feature of the higher education scene and student enrolments have increased with black student numbers increasing from 40% in 1999 to 60% of overall enrolments in 2002. Women students also increased from 43% of enrolments in 1993 to 54% in 2002.

Challenges for the future are discernible in all the focus areas highlighted and are summarised as follows:

- **Legal and policy context:** It is required that attention be devoted to the development of early warning systems of unanticipated policy consequences. Systems level governance dynamics should be addressed through an appropriate use of centrally driven measures, while simultaneously acknowledging the need for participative self-regulation by the higher education sector.

- **Institutional landscape:** Although the restructuring of the higher education institutions appears to have been completed, various challenges remain. These include, inter alia, a recognition of institutional cultures, cost-effectiveness and outcomes in terms of equity, effectiveness and efficiency.
- **Equity:** From the discussion on equity, progress is clearly visible. However, attention should be devoted to mechanisms to sustain the progress made. Existing weak points e.g. in science, engineering and technology should receive attention. This requires a transformation of institutional and academic cultures especially to achieve staff equity.
- **Teaching and learning:** Government has to finalise a new academic policy to resolve the National Qualification Framework (NQF) review. Furthermore, attention has to be devoted to achieve student equity in throughput and guidelines have to be developed to ensure effective teaching and learning practices.
- **Research:** Research has been highlighted as one of the core functions of higher education. However, attention has to be devoted to the inclusion of higher education in policy development and implementation. Ways and means have to be found to explore the impact of new funding drivers for research. The research capacity of higher education institutions requires attention to obtain sustainable and effective research.
- **Community engagement:** The policy framework which facilitates community engagement should be finalised. The skills and knowledge of experienced higher education institutions should be tapped to assist others to build capacity. The traditional boundaries of academia should be expanded to support meaningful community engagement.
- **Quality assurance:** Operationalising links between quality assurance and planning and funding is required. In a system in flux the measuring of quality is complex, but still has to be addressed. As a result of the higher education landscape, attention should be devoted to obtaining and sustaining a balance between equity and quality. In particular, attention should be given to ensuring quality management.
- **Responsiveness:** Constructive collaboration between higher education and its clients in the public and private sector should be addressed. Furthermore, the contribution of higher education to the economic, social, cultural and intellectual requirements should be addressed. In particular, the commercialisation of higher education to the detriment of community development should be guarded against.
- **Governance:** Appropriate governance models need to be developed and the system level of governance should be re-examined to meet the democratic requirements of public accountability, responsiveness and transparency.
- **Financing:** A need exists to monitor the adequacy of public funding of higher education. Similarly the effects of the new funding framework should be monitored in relation to the impact on institutional redress, institutional autonomy, institutional behaviour and enrolment. The NSFAS should be re-examined to ensure access to higher education by poor students.
- **Internationalisation:** The effects of internationalisation should be addressed regarding its impact on higher education e.g. the effects of the General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS). Policies also have to be developed regarding internationalisation of core educational functions.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Higher education could be viewed as one of the primary drivers for the development of new knowledge, the transfer of such knowledge and the maintenance of a well equipped labour force. It also has to remain responsive to community needs. In the brief exposition it was indicated that Government has made significant progress in transforming the higher education system. However, it has to be pointed out that this system is and should always be in flux. Therefore, the challenge remains for Government to continuously review its policies and practices and amend policies and practices as and when required by the South African society, as well as the global arena within which it operates.

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**C Thornhill**  
**School of Public Management and Administration**  
**University of Pretoria, South Africa**

## ABSTRACT

*Globalisation is an accepted phenomenon in most, if not all, states in the contemporary world. States are influenced by their membership of international bodies, e.g. the United Nations, the International Labour Organisation and the World Health Organization. They are also required to comply with the standards set by various supranational structures, e.g. the African Union and the Southern African Development Community. However, little attention is paid to the administrative effects of these requirements on individual governmental structures. This article introduces the issue by considering the capacity of a state, such as the Republic of South Africa, to formulate and implement policies, develop the required organisational structures, acquire and assign sufficient human resources and budget adequate funds to give effect to its international commitments.*

## INTRODUCTION

The world is developing into a globalising society as a result of technological advancement, economic development, social interactions and various developments in the political arena. These changes were more rapid in some areas such as in Europe through the establishment of the European Union. In some continents co-operation developed more slowly as a result of political instability, economic inconsistencies and tribal differences, as in the case of Africa. However, all countries in the world are affected to some extent by the globalisation phenomenon. In some cases it may be through foreign aid, in some instances it may even be through political/military intervention as in the case of Iraq or Sudan. The co-operation between two or more independent states is formalised by way of treaties or other agreements. These formal inter-state treaties or supranational or international structures require particular administrative arrangements to give effect to the policies contained in the agreements. This discussion concerns some of the crucial administrative arrangements African countries have to consider when entering into international agreements or collaborations.

## GLOBALISATION

Globalisation has come into common use in the past two decades. It is used by business concerns, political leaders, non-governmental organisations, labour unions, academics and the communication media. As will be indicated later, the users do not necessarily attach the same meaning to the term. It should be noted that the term is used in the continuous sense, i.e. as a process. It is not used as an accomplished action. The reference is, therefore not to a globalised world. Thus it could be stated that countries and communities within national states are exploring and developing the concept of a world that is becoming globalised. Therefore, it seems as though it is accepted that the process is not completed. New demands for the consideration of the effects of political, economic and social issues in one part of the world, may have an effect on one or more parts of the rest of the world e.g. the political instability in Ethiopia or Sierra Leone affects the neighbouring countries. The economic crisis in Zimbabwe has a particular effect on South Africa, Botswana and other Southern African countries.

There could be as many definitions of globalisation identified as there are international agreements or authors on the topic. Therefore, an exhaustive discussion will serve no purpose. However, some of the salient characteristics will be identified in order to explain the administrative effects of the phenomenon on African countries.

In some cases authors view globalisation as an economic phenomenon resulting in national economic systems becoming part of larger economic systems as a result of the increase in international trade, foreign investment and the flow of capital across national boundaries. A Dutch academic, Ruud Lubbers, defines globalisation as a process in which geographic distance becomes a factor of diminishing importance in the establishment and the maintenance of cross-border economic, political and socio-cultural relationships (<http://globalise.kub.nl/>). Opponents to the phenomenon view the trend as an effort to establish a global economy dominated by large conglomerates in well developed countries with no regard for the effects on developmental countries such as most African countries. This may even be detrimental to an economically constrained country in which such international enterprises operate. It is not disputed that globalisation has an economic dimension, but there are other aspects to consider.

Douglas Nelson of the Murphy Institute of Political Economy at Tulane University (<http://www.tulane.edu/~dnelson/BIBS/globalBib.pdf>) attempts to define globalisation and its implications in terms of its effects on poverty, gender, culture, political structure and its dynamics. It is a well known fact that the natural environment is not bound by the artificial boundaries determined through political bargaining during the colonisation of Africa by European countries e.g. England, France, Belgium, Portugal and Germany. Neither can poverty and the effects thereof be contained within the boundaries of a failing state such as Ethiopia. Social conscience demands that social issues be the concern of the international society. A disregard for basic human rights is no longer viewed as of concern to one political entity alone. The international community has become aware of social injustices through technological advances and a plethora of structures involving themselves in cases of economic decline, political turmoil or socially unacceptable practices such as a disregard for human rights.

Globalisation could be linked to the policies and operations of government and governmental institutions. Governments are required to participate in various supranational (e.g. SADC or ECOWAS) and international organisations (e.g. the United Nations or the WTO) to be able to fulfill its commitments to stabilise or maintain its economic sector, develop acceptable social conditions, meet environmental challenges (e.g. global warming) and establish a stable political system in the globalising world.

Considering the globalising phenomenon it could be argued that it reveals the following characteristics:

- It signifies continuous change to which most national states on the political front and commercial and industrial concerns are subjected.
- In many cases trade is no longer limited to the country of origin of particular products (e.g. China, Taiwan, India and Singapore). This is not a new phenomenon. The Phoenicians and Arabian countries were already trading with Africa centuries ago. However, in recent decades the economies of some countries have become subservient to the economic decisions of international organisations e.g. the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization.
- Investment is no longer within the political domain of only the countries with well established economies. Foreign direct investment is only one of the economic challenges facing many less developed economies and developmental states.
- National borders are not disappearing, but politically established boundaries of national states (mostly by former colonial powers) are coming under pressure as tourism, trade, environmental factors and diseases demand trans-border actions (e.g. in the case of communicable diseases). Passports and visas may be required to move across political borders, but more people travel, business is conducted by entrepreneurs in various countries and natural resources are transported and utilised in adjacent countries. South Africa, for example, established the multilateral Southern African Customs Union (SACU) in 2002 between the governments of the Republic of South Africa, the Republic of Botswana, the Kingdom of Lesotho, the Republic of Namibia and the Kingdom of Swaziland to promote economic development in the southern area of Africa. All African countries are members of various international organisations related to trade e.g. the UN World Trade Organization; related to social development, e.g. UNESCO; or to health matters, e.g. the World Health Organization.

- Rapid advancement in computer technology requires countries to co-operate to utilise and even to control the use of technological capacity e.g. the Internet. Information has become one of the most powerful resources any country has available. Therefore, access to information is vital for development, e.g. in the case of education, air traffic, health matters, policing and defence. In this regard, it would be beneficial if African countries could become a member of the World Intellectual Property Organization.
- Natural resources cannot, in most cases, be confined within political boundaries e.g. water. The earth's composition is much older than humanity. In recent decades the effects of human interference in natural phenomena have been recognised. Most countries are members of one or more environmentally linked organisations, e.g. the UN Disaster Assessment and Co-ordination Team, the World Organization for Animal Health; the African Ministerial Council on the Environment; the African Ministerial Council on Water; the United Nations Framework Convention to Combat Desertification; the United Nations Forum on Forests; the World Meteorological Organization; and/or the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
- Concern for human rights has increased extensively in recent decades. With the development of trade some countries allowed labour practices to develop to the detriment of the labourers involved to increase the profit of the manufacturer. This tendency in some countries revealed the fact that a free market economy does not necessarily imply that workers enjoy an acceptable level of freedom to offer their labour in a fair manner. This prompted the establishment of international organisations e.g. the International Labour Organization (ILO). Various African countries are members of the ILO and have passed legislation to give effect to agreements under the ILO.
- Globalisation is viewed as an important factor to combat poverty (Nissanke & Thorbecke, 2007:1). It is argued that globalisation creates an environment conducive to faster economic growth and the transmission of knowledge. Although world income distribution continues to be rather unequal and some African countries are even stagnating, more transparency contributes to potential donor countries becoming aware of hardships on a continuous basis. Nissanke and Thorbecke even found that the population living on less than \$1 per day has decreased from 40% to 21% between 1981 and 2001 (Loc. cit.). This reduction could not be attributed to only globalisation, but the phenomenon has contributed to international debates on the issue and to the development of an international consciousness concerning the plight of the indigent.

From the above discussion it may be argued that globalisation has many faces. The examples quoted reveal that globalisation covers a wide variety of phenomena in the physical environment, the social environment and the political environment. Various African countries have subscribed to international conventions and treaties. Thus African countries have had to establish and maintain extensive administrative systems to manage these institutions and treaties.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE CONSEQUENCES**

### **Policy implications**

States have to incorporate programmes in their strategic plans to comply with international requirements. Culture is not bound to the borders of a single politically determined state. African people in the past moved across the continent. Their legacies are widespread and require policies adopted by various countries to preserve their heritage. Together with the African Union (AU) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) African countries have embarked on a road to restore and preserve African heritage (Loc. cit.). Thus again it proves that the globalisation of phenomena also has cultural effects.

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is probably one of the operational areas that are the most subject to globalisation. Every country in the world is influenced by ICT. Even the most remote areas

need to be or are globally linked. It was estimated that  $\pm 3,28$  million South Africans had access to the internet in 2003 (Ibid.139). However, this development has also resulted in possible misuse or exploitation. Thus countries have been compelled to adopt policies to regulate ICT and its attendant developments. Various African countries are also members of the Universal Postal Union (UPU); the Pan-African Postal Union (PAPU); the Council of Commonwealth Postal Administrators; and the Southern African Transport and Communications Commission (Ibid.146); requiring the acknowledgement of policies determined by such bodies or agreed to in existing treaties and as a signatory to various international treaties, conventions and agreements.

The economy is an open system and is influenced by a multitude of factors in countries with which a particular country has formal or even non-formal relationships. Thus e.g. the value of currency is determined, not by how a country values the currency, but by the trust in the stability of the particular country's political and economic situation as perceived by the international community compared to other currencies. (Ibid. 277).

The statement has often been made that there is only one earth. Natural resources cannot be replenished. Once they have been depleted they cannot be replaced. Therefore, there is a worldwide emphasis on conserving the environment in its broadest sense i.e. the fauna, flora, land, sea and air. As could be expected, Africa will be involved in a variety of international organisations, agreements and treaties. Policies will have to be adopted locally and have to be integrated into international policies. The current concern with global warming is an excellent example of the effects of human intervention in nature. South Africa, as an example, hosted the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSI) in 2002 supporting the United Nations Millennium Summit Declaration's goal of halving world poverty by 2015 and to incorporate decisions taken by the world bodies since the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 (Ibid.234).

World climatic and atmospheric changes are the consequences of world-wide pollution through the so-called greenhouse gas concentrations from emissions from vehicles, factories and other industrial operations. South Africa is subject to these environmental changes and is faced with serious challenges requiring innovative policies to curb the effects. Desertification in the semi-arid areas of the country is another feature demanding attention. In this regard various African countries have signed the Convention to Combat Desertification. This Convention's aim is to assist member countries to combat desertification and its consequences globally (Ibid 258).

Efforts to counter or limit the effects of climatic change require international co-operation. In this regard South Africa is a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol of the United Nations Convention on Climate Change. The Kyoto Protocol is a legally binding instrument through which developed countries undertake to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least 5% of their 1990 levels.

Diseases do not recognise human made boundaries. Therefore, the Department of Health has to acknowledge the global effects of diseases e.g. HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and other communicable diseases. In this regard the Department has adopted and implemented the Directly Observed Treatment Short Course (DOTS) as advocated by the International Union Against TB and by the World Health Organization (Ibid. 389).

Health is, in terms of schedule 4 of the Constitution, 1996 a concurrent legislative function of national, provincial and local government. This requires the co-ordination of health related policies, not only those developed nationally, but also internationally as propagated by the World Health Organization (WHO).

The rehabilitation and the proper handling of prisoners have become a source of international interest. Examples abound of non-governmental organisations world wide raising issues concerning the abuse of power where prisoners are concerned. Many countries, e.g. South Africa, have endorsed the Charter of

Fundamental Rights for Prisoners in 2005. South Africa, therefore, has to develop a programme that will result in full compliance with the United Nations' minimum standards on the treatment of offenders (Ibid. 450). In a similar manner ministers responsible for prisoner management and correctional services in the SADC countries have agreed to implement a protocol signed in Johannesburg in 2003. Policy guidelines are also developed by the South African Correctional Services to enable government to enter into prisoner transfer agreements with other countries (Loc.cit.). Thus, it could be argued that South Africa has become part of a world in which countries do not determine policies in isolation. Although politically sovereign, current practices resulting from more accessibility of countries require policies to be co-ordinated nationally and internationally.

Sustainable development on the African continent is one of the major concerns of NEPAD. The South African Department of Minerals and Energy has played a major role in conceptualising the African Mining Partnership driving the NEPAD mining agenda (Ibid. 456). As part of the African Mining Partnership, the African coastal states are sharing their expertise in compiling their submissions to the United Nations to extend their exclusive economic zones. Various memoranda of understanding have been signed in this regard. Thus it implies that South Africa has to adopt policies, taking note of those of other African countries with coastal boundaries.

Energy provision is probably one of the primary prerequisites for economic development. The Southern African Power Proclamation (SAPP) has been established to co-ordinate the planning and operation of electricity power systems among 11 SADC countries to increase inter-connectivity; facilitate cross-border electricity trading; fully recover the cost of operations; and equitably share benefits.

As far as police services are concerned, South Africa is part of the contingent assisting other African countries in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to promote democracy resulting in the successful elections in 2007. Other African countries also play a major role in the African Union's Mission in Sudan (Ibid. 492).

Social development has become of major concern to countries especially after the Second World War i.e. from 1945 onwards. It has been accepted that social issues are important building blocks for economic development and political stability. However, countries could not be left to their own devices to promote social upliftment and poverty alleviation. Failure by one country to attend to social injustices, has an impact on neighbouring and even other countries. The democratisation of most African states resulted in the eradication of social and other injustices of the past, bearing testimony to the roles of African and European countries concerning social justice world wide.

The involvement of African countries in states such as Sudan, the DRC and Rwanda are examples of global concern for socially related matters in independent states. The effects of HIV/AIDS on social conditions require African countries to participate in various international organisations to combat the pandemic. One such organisation could be cited, i.e. the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) dealing with children orphaned through AIDS related illnesses (Ibid. 546).

The SADC Protocol on Transport, Communications and Meteorology provides a comprehensive framework for regional integration across the entire spectrum of the transport, communications and meteorology sectors. This protocol regarding co-ordinated policies, endeavours to facilitate the flow of goods between and across the territories of the SADC member states (Ibid. 614).

## **Organisational implications**

International commitments require organs of state to establish organisational structures to honour international agreements. Southern African countries recognised the country's international role in agricultural issues and established the Southern African Customs Union (SACU); the Southern African Development Community (SADC); the World Trade Organization (WTO); the International Grains Convention and various other treaties and agreements (Ibid. 96).



## Financial implications

International co-operation has specific budgetary implications. In the case of World Heritage Sites, African countries have to ensure that the sites are maintained. Countries have to budget for the maintenance of such sites. The Kyoto Protocol, aimed at the reduction of GHG emissions, has a significant financial implication. Many countries simply cannot afford to comply with the requirements. An amount of US \$5 m has been donated to South Africa by the United States of America in terms of the USA South Africa Bilateral Agreement on Climate Change Support (Loc. cit). This only partly enables government to give effect to the Kyoto Protocol. However, further financial needs exist that have to be budgeted for by departments in the respective countries concerned.

As far as health matters are concerned, South Africa is one of the 29 countries that have pledged a total of US\$3,7 billion in 2006/2007 to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria over a two year period. A further US\$6 million has also been pledged for a further period of three years (Ibid.390). Other African countries are similarly required to provide funding in their budgets for these purposes.

The financial implications of the utilisation of human resources to manage the various organisations, protocols and agreements cannot be determined accurately. The reason for this is that some personnel may be directly assigned to a programme or organisation while others may only be partly involved. Thus, it is not possible to determine the time utilised for each internationally related activity and consequently the financial implications from documentary sources. Thus the financial effects are merely registered to highlight the financial effects of a globalising world.

## CONCLUSIONS

Globalisation is a process that is evolving at a rapid pace. The respective governments, societies and even individuals are becoming increasingly interconnected through new technological advancements. No government can escape these developments and it is imperative that the public sector as the main guardian of society should be prepared to deal with the phenomenon and its effects on society.

Extensive administrative and managerial actions are required to deal with globalisation. This discussion was an effort to briefly indicate the administrative burden of globalisation on the public sector. (The effects on the private sector have not been attended to). It is obvious that policy formulation needs to be revisited on a regular basis to ensure that national policies and international protocols are integrated. Organisational structures within national, provincial and local government structures have to take note of international requirements and may even have to provide specifically for the actions required to meet international commitments. Similarly budgetary provision has to be made to give effect to international agreements resulting from globalisation.

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# GLOBALISING PUBLIC ETHICS AND INTERESTS: POLICY ALTERNATIVES FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

**EOC Ijeoma**

**School of Public Management and Administration  
University of Pretoria, South Africa**

## ABSTRACT

Since the end of World War II, trillions of dollars have been poured into development schemes by multinational development banks, bilateral aid agencies, and private enterprises. Revolutionary new technologies have transformed the agriculture industry and service sectors alike. Tariffs have been drastically reduced and vast transnational corporations have systematically replaced national corporations that catered for the domestic economy. Similarly, the nation states have largely replaced small companies that catered for the domestic economy and governments seem to have been ignored. If conventional wisdom held true, then the world should have been transformed into a veritable paradise. Poverty, unemployment, malnutrition, homelessness, disease and environmental disruption should be but vague memories of an underdeveloped past. But, to the contrary, these problems have become more serious and more widespread. The service delivery and social welfare ideals of the traditional nation states seem to be far from being realised.

This article explores reasons why the signing of the Uruguay Round of General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) by governments has further stalled the envisaged accelerated global economic growth and development through the globalisation process, by removing all constraints on trade, regardless of social, ecological and moral implications. Instead of accepting the incontrovertible empirical evidence that economic globalisation will only increase many of the problems that face the world today, governments under pressure from transnational corporations insist on pursuing it further. To solve these problems, society will have to follow almost the very opposite path. Instead of seeking to create a single global economy controlled by vast and ever less controllable transnational corporations, it should seek to create a diversity of loosely linked, community-based economies managed by much smaller companies and catering above all (though not exclusively) for local or regional markets. It is not economic globalisation that society should aim for but the reverse, economic localisation to counter-balance today's substantially unfettered globalisation.

## INTRODUCTION

At a time when the world is seen as a global village, with neo-liberal capitalism as the only acceptable economic system, ethics has to be situated within relatedness and interrelatedness. Exploring the ethics of relationships reveals what kinds of relationships are being fostered in the world today. In neo-liberal capitalism, relationships are motivated by self-interest and profit. The free market is seen as an appropriate mechanism to guarantee the well-being of society. At the same time, with the globalisation of capital, the traditional concept of the state as a sovereign entity is being eroded, largely due to transnational corporations becoming dominant influences in the market to the extent that they are able to evade political and social accountability. Some economists see the current global market as a historical epoch that will bring about freedom for the individual from institutional relationships (Davidson and Mogg 1997:42).

Neo-liberal policy analysts are advocating market ideology as the only source of economic growth for African states. What needs to be considered is that Africa and other poor countries could well be victimised by this relationship, which is characterised by fierce and vicious competition. The success of powerful countries is

often based on their ability to prey on the economic and political weaknesses of poor countries. It is their own prosperity that they are mostly concerned with, rather than that of the poor countries. To ensure their own progress, for instance, European countries have mobilised their capital to form a union. The USA has responded by initiating selective trade agreements with other Third World countries. These initiatives point to the evolution of survival in public governance. Politically, the ideal in neo-liberal theory is that the primary function of government is to remove whatever shields protect weak and ill-adapted industries. Global politics has been caught up in a fatalistic laissez-faire philosophy. The fatalism inherent in a laissez-faire philosophy advocates that any interference in the market will have harmful effects (Gaddis 1992:79). The argument is that the world must let the market work according to its own principles and all will be well in the end.

This philosophy encourages one to think only in the short term, for, as Keynes noted in Singer, "In the long run we will all be dead. Karl Marx, in turn, in Singer notes the element of Greek tragedy embedded in the laissez-faire market economy. Modern bourgeois society with its relations of production, of exchange and of property, a society that has conjured up such gigantic means of production and of exchange, is like the sorcerer, who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world which he has conjured through his spells" (Singer 1995:33).

The assumption is that the market is a given tragedy of human kind's existence. Ethics can be seen in the globalisation process as a tool to cushion the ugly effects of selfishness among people, businesses and governments. The implication is that the market system is an inevitable tragedy of existence. The conviction that has emerged among neo-liberal public policy analysts is that, since the market is a phenomenon of tragedy, it also follows that the welfare of society can only be achieved through self-interest. It may be necessary that self-interest and altruism need to be held in balance, with self-interest being the dominant value. This implies that if altruism is given too prominent a role, the likelihood is a political backlash that endangers the very operation of altruism within public welfare.

The tragedy is that self-interest is incompatible with altruism. This contradiction becomes an unresolved moral conflict in the sense that one who sacrifices his or her interests for the good of others will end up being seen as acting primarily for his or her own self-interest. To caricature this kind of reasoning, one can argue that people should be grateful to the selfish and greedy individuals of society. It is their selfishness that sustains altruism. This is clearly a mockery of moral sentiment and reveals that the doctrine of self-interest is actually built on seriously fallacious grounds. For good governance to be secured, the interest of the people should be given the first priority in a democratic state in the globalisation process. Graham (1997:26-30) argues that the economic policies of a particular country are not concerned with the well-being of another country but with its economic self-interest. This implies that a politician who goes about promoting the interests of another country will be abusing power in the sense that he/she is not bound to promote these interests. Thus national interest in economic relations is morally neutral – it has nothing to do with ethical considerations.

In this form of argument, it becomes difficult to argue for common interest at the global level in the sense that the present reality of globalisation seems to go against an ethical theory, which espouses the idea that national interest is neutral. Africa and other Third World countries as having a negative impact on global relationships have experienced the pursuit of national self-interest by the economically advanced countries. If one sees globalisation as implying that humankind is related and interrelated, it becomes nonsensical to talk of national interest apart from the global implications of this interest. Taking into consideration the fact that the world has become a giant market, responsible governments have to realise that their national interests are intertwined. Instead of talking of national interest, one should perhaps refer to global interest so that global ethics could be developed.

## GLOBAL VERSUS NATIONAL PUBLIC ETHICS

Global ethics have to arise from a conscious realisation of the fact that human existence depends on the well-being of the whole. In such a global consciousness there is an ethical attempt to transcend national self-interest and patriotism. Most ethicists tend to see patriotism as the same as altruism, but perhaps the two are best distinguished. Patriotism tends to identify with a group and see its fortunes to some degree as fortunes. Socially, patriotism becomes an expression of the group's self-interest against the interest(s) of those who are classified as not belonging. Patriotism thus implies seeing one's country or race as possessing some superiority over any other race (Singer 1987:51). The ethical implication is that one feels less obliged to help people of other countries than one's own fellow citizens. The bias in ethics in respect of loyalty to the group as a whole shows itself in the high praise accorded to patriotism. Selfish behaviour is disappearing; group selfishness is encouraged when it is called patriotism. In contrast, ancient thinkers such as the Stoic philosophers saw their loyalty as belonging to the world community instead of the state they were born into. To foster a global ethic on the paradigm of relatedness and interrelatedness, there is a need to go beyond patriotism. One needs to see oneself as belonging to a larger reality beyond that which is contextual. One needs to learn to think of those people who stay in countries far away as relatives regardless of language, colour and culture. This can only be possible when globalisation is essentially action at a distance (Beck et al 1997:96). This notion of action at a distance is contradicted by scholars who postulate the survival of one's culture as the goal of all living. In this form of reasoning one's culture is being seen as in a state of competition with other cultures. Its survival is premised on its ability to outsmart other cultures. This is the impression one gets from Skinner's (1988:181) argument that culture has produced the science and technology it needs to save itself. The salient feature of Skinner's argument is that of cultural competitiveness as important for national survival. Instead of seeing globalisation in terms of cultural competitiveness, attempts should be made to see globalisation in terms of multi-culturalism based on the ethos of dialogic engagement. In this dialogic engagement, an outlook should be cultivated based on the idea that no culture has the monopoly on truth but that each culture is nourished and invigorated by constant dialogue with other cultures.

## PUBLIC MORALITY AND SELF-INTEREST

Various post-modernists argue that those countries that are economically successful have a strong moral basis and operate within a strong moral public administrative framework. Their notion of a strong morality is actually based on the Darwinian concept of survival of the fittest. Neo-liberalists see self-interest as a mechanism of natural selection. They see the origin of species. What this means is that those individuals who control the rules of the global economy, its language and logic, its resource allocation, its markets, will survive in the long run. It logically follows that poor countries are an endangered species. Indeed it is their perishing which gives progress to the rich countries. Darwin insinuated the undesirability of the existence of the poor when he said that: With savages, the weak in body may soon be eliminated; and those that survive commonly exhibit a vigorous state of health (Lux 1990:12). According to Darwin as cited in Lux (1990:12) the humanitarian efforts to build a compassionate and sympathetic society are the very causes for the propagation of endless misery. The ideal would be that poor people should be left for nature to take its course.

When bodies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank advise governments to cut spending on social welfare they may be motivated by a lack of morality, i.e. the Darwinian theory of natural selection, or instead by a morality of a common belonging. If reality is that everything is related and interrelated to everything else, it would follow that the present dualistic economic and political system should be substituted with another, more holistic model. From denying relationships among people, neo-liberal theory, modeled on the Darwinian paradigm, denies relatedness between people and the environment. The present global socio-economic and political structure encourages externalising and objectifying of human

beings and the environment. It accentuates the competitive element and equates self-interest with the common good. This juxtaposition also distorts the capacity of objective thinking so that even much of what passes for science is tainted by ideology.

Self-interest gave rise to parliamentary politics. The political participation of citizens in policy formulation is motivated by the need to safeguard and advance one's own self-interest. The role of government becomes that of protecting the individual's self-interest. Those who consider government as existing only to promulgate laws of its own, are misguided in the sense that they simply do not understand this basic feature of human nature. Moreover, any attempt by government to come up with rules to organise society is actually illusory. Smith (1969:381) implies that the wealth of nations is not based on governmental planning but on the freedom of individuals to exchange, specialise and extend their markets. While engaging in the pursuit of their self-interest, individuals or nations end up promoting the common good. This moral paradigm was that of participants in a system that moralised self-interest within a free market system without government intervention.

In view of the foregoing it may be deduced that the global market is an expression of relationships in which individuals make political and economic decisions that produce economic and political consequences. For example, when the USA was considering the African Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA) aimed at creating investment funds and developing a free trade agreement with Africa, President Clinton expressed the spirit of the legislation as paying more attention to those who are making the right political and economic reforms. Thus the USA wants to help the magnets of change. Sub-Saharan Africa is still a largely untapped market of about 800 million people. This example shows that economically powerful countries do give shape to the political and economic design of poor countries – be it good or bad. Therefore, developing countries should begin to initiate positive local economic initiatives for good governance in the face of this globalisation process.

Furthermore, it is important to point out that two mechanisms exist, which are used by economically powerful countries to bring about effective change, namely, aid and investment. With these two mechanisms, powerful countries pronounce damnation or blessings on poor countries. Their intention may not be to promote the well-being of poor countries, but to persuade them to embrace the liberal market system. The market, being driven by self-interest, cannot accommodate the interests of the majority of people who have no access to a basic livelihood. In fact the market depends on a society's readiness to sacrifice its citizens. This has been a crucial issue in IMF and World Bank lending policies. At the micro-economic level, these financial institutions insist that African governments should cut welfare spending and not interfere with the market. At the macro-economic level; governments should allow the mobility of capital. It is only upon the fulfillment of these policies that loans are given, depending on the economic performance of the country in question. The aim of lending policies is to advance the liberalisation of the economy and the mobility of capital – the lending policies are basically modeled on the needs of the liberal economies of the North. The economic dominance of the developed countries thus did not come about as a result of a spontaneous order but through an extensive exploitation of natural resources, guided by the assumption that these resources would never be depleted. However, resources are finite, which implies that scarcity of resources will eventually lead to the collapse of the global free market system. An economic system based on self-interest, for this reason, cannot bring about the global common good. Such an economic system will in the long run ultimately militate against itself.

An alternative ethical paradigm that is able to address the concerns of globalisation has to emerge from a world-view based on relatedness and interrelatedness. Africa's economic and political well-being in its quest for effective good public leadership and governance do not lie in subsuming the neo-liberal economic system within the ambit of globalisation, rather the government needs to encourage local economic initiatives as an approach to safeguard the general economic interests of all citizens.

## POLICY GUIDANCE ON GLOBALISATION ETHICS AND CULTURE: AN APPRAISAL

What makes globalisation worthy of discussion, despite the vagueness of the term, is its cultural magic. After a long history of extraordinary destruction, societies could become one single society. This contribution raises an important question: where does the discourse of globalisation derive its objectives from? The world will quickly discover the close link between the modernisation project and the globalisation project. The underlying perception so far has shown that the expected dividends from the globalisation process may be more beneficial to developed economies than their developing counterparts. The main conclusion is that globalisation may neither produce useful results nor help to advance the cause of mankind unless human beings begin to look inwards for local self-sustainable empowerment. But as custodians of people, culture and policies that drive every societal change, governments may need to re-think their policy conceptions and formulation aimed at protecting its citizens. The role of governments at all levels in this era of global change cannot be undermined.

The modernisation project has failed to westernise the culture of the world. The discourse of modernisation – laden with ideological distortions, instrumental policies and strange concepts – has been powerless to assist. In addition, development has been a minefield of corruption embracing those who do not mind losing their intellectual probity. The discourse of globalisation takes its inspiration from such ruins and some professionals believe that the end of history has arrived with the inception of the globalisation process.

Criticising scholarly Western relations with the rest of the world is unlikely to please contemporary conservative thinkers for a number of reasons (Robertson, 1992:38):

- firstly, on account of its currency in academic institutions;
- secondly, an analysis is made credible by its balanced tone and unstated creed of the superior West; and
- thirdly, certain values and principles espoused by Robertson as shared, invite further inquiry into values.

The concept of globalisation could not be revived if many ideological patterns exist. Some see the world systems in which the world is conceived as a consequence of the capitalist system of exchange. Similarly, globalisation should be centered on such a conception that involves the attempts to take the notion of globality very seriously. Much of the thrust of this thinking centres on attempts to depict the main general contour of the world as a whole. But if one employs the concept of culture more fluidly and adventurously, culture indicates a particular way of sociological specifics and not vice versa. Therefore, in this globalisation era, culture should be seen as a social representation of the global field that stresses and processes diversity, which has implications for socialisation in the contemporary world. From this standpoint every culture will be seen as equal and only to blend with that of others in the globalisation process. If societies do not think in terms of divergence, globalisation becomes a social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding.

Globalisation as a process may be conceived to be the fruit of modernity. But there must be something after modernity. Therefore, globalisation cannot be comprehensively considered simply as an aspect of the outcome of the Western project of modernity. It may also be argued that globalisation is intimately related to modernity as well as post-modernity and post-modernisation. Globalisation concepts have had so many critics in wider perspectives, as did the previous world's concepts such as modernity, anti-modernity and post-modernity and its impact on the world. The public sector may be seen as agents of the globalisation process. Leaders and governments create legal and environmentally friendly environments in which big businesses thrive. Therefore, further world integration within the globalisation process either for profit or for social change cannot succeed without government inputs. Globalisation may represent the final stage of the world's societal integration. However, in order to simplify complex arguments Westernisation may present a minimal model of globalisation. Therefore, countries should endeavour to assume a moderate

stance towards globalisation by moving towards self-reliance and local economic initiatives. Otherwise, Westernisation, imperialism and capitalism will be repeated in the globalisation process.

Globalisation involves the possible integration of the economy, polity and culture of one sphere into another. If this is so, the human endeavour to influence or dominate has been evidenced throughout the ages. Therefore, the globalisation process should be embraced with a holistic approach in which there is more concern to create a socio-cultural system in which culture; polity and economy play dominant roles in the world system. Economy and polity are not excluded from the world system, but help to energise it negatively or positively.

In a world system, individuals, societies, and humankind are to be treated in terms of one coherent analytical framework; hence there is a need for better leadership and governance to administer these changes. In so far as culture is unified it will be extremely abstract, expressing tolerance for diversity and individual choice. More importantly, territoriality will disappear as an organising principle for social and cultural life, it will be a society without borders and spatial boundaries, and, if care is not taken, without policies that will be relevant to the needs of the people. It is therefore worthwhile for governments all over the world to be more protective of their local culture rather than making it more vulnerable to others in the name of global integration.

There must be well-articulated models for effective good governance that will show how economy, polity and culture work together in the new world system and particularly diffuse the idea that culture is superior to everything else. The emphasis should be that, in all political systems of the world, good leadership and governance aimed at local people-centred development, is the only hope for global economic survival. This implies that culture will inevitably dovetail with economics and governance because culture has always been politicised, for example, in Japan-US relations where the US culture is seen to be superior to that of Japan even in their trade agreements. Therefore, if economic aspects and profits only drive the globalisation process, the world is proceeding without cultural guidance and economies and politics have not been strong enough to globalise existing reality.

## **CONCLUSION AND REMARKS ON POLICY ALTERNATIVES**

The views expressed above give a picture of globalisation from both a political and ethical point of view. Each view tends towards cultural cloning of the entire world in the name of change and modernisation. For example, if Islamic ideas and values should press Muslims to attack the world system, more than a single set of policy alternatives is needed to prevent the world system from being undermined; an alternative, which would please major actors. That is so because it is difficult to agree that Islamic ideas and values are the best for all or vice versa. Therefore, societies must go further in dynamising a societal order in relation to a global order, which almost automatically means that political-ideological and religious movements arise in deference to the issue of defining societies in relationship to the rest of the world and global circumstances as a whole.

To be in the business of globalisation is to be in the business of culture and vice versa. For example, in terms of culture the process implies that Arabs and Jews must discuss their differences and adopt some policy alternatives that bring them closer to a single global order. Islam, Confucianism and Western liberal democracy contest with one another for dominance at the contemporary world socio-political scene. In terms of polity and economy, the process also involves international organisations and transnational movements whose aim it is to have the upper hand rather than the advancement of humankind. Consequently, under the Western umbrella where organisations and multinationals play a dominant role, globalisation will be no more than the disorganisation of non-Western cultures and structures.

It is evidenced in this article that globalisation originated from Western thought in the same way as the discourse on modernisation has, and this can be better termed global cultural cloning. Western intellectuals



still see themselves as the best in the field despite the West's diminished capacity for spinning intellectual stories about non-Western places. Indeed, it shows that the North is more conscious about the globe than the South. This raises the question of whose influence will shape the present and future welfare of the earth's inhabitants. Freedom and equal justice should be an overriding factor.

The new version of change is also about competition, in which the rich alone will be rewarded and esteemed, provided it is done with openness and clear developmental intentions. Therefore, if globalisation is not a form of cultural dominance by the West then every nation in the developing world should be left to dictate the pace and limits of its own involvement. However, globalisation is not a self-operating machine, but requires a great deal of co-operation from those involved, especially when the problem relates to cultural identity. Therefore, the contemporary world demands a hegemonic organisation capable of diffusing, enforcing and protecting the harmonious interaction of economic, political and cultural processes. The problem is that good hegemonic power (whose goal is co-operation and liberation rather than colonisation and domination) is hard to define in the modern world, given that international public administration can be easily abused and subverted for national interests.

Similarly, as national governments and their leaders have the traditional role of serving the interest of their people, it will not be out of place for them to protect the same interests in matters of global concern and at the same time have good global relations with other sovereign states. However, the existing international public policy prescriptions are not universal in application and even if they were, leadership and governance scenarios are not the same all over the world and this poses a serious administrative threat in the present globalisation era. Thus, the concept of powerful global actors must be organisational; for example, the body of the United Nations (UN) and its agencies are in a position to make sure that every global decision must be in the interest of the people and not for a few economically privileged countries or/and individuals. It is important to note that policies and programmes of developing nations need to be focused on public service delivery in aspects that pose serious threats to the society such as primary health-care in dealing with deadly diseases such as Acquired Immunity Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), tuberculosis (TB) and malaria; education, which gives a boost to people's empowerment, training and development; and poverty alleviation programmes.

These challenges and many others may not be priorities for developed countries at this stage, but they are serious realities that impede several developmental efforts in developing countries. Unless these issues are viewed in the proper perspective, the chances of survival of developing countries may be slim in the present globalisation era.

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# AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA: PUBLIC POLICY FOR SOCIAL UPLIFTMENT

**K B Moeti**

**School of Public Management and Administration  
University of Pretoria, South Africa**

## ABSTRACT

The dislocation (within national borders) of indigenous Africans from their land, represents one of the most tragic and explosive remnants of colonialism to befall the African continent. In recent times, the governments of Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa (among others) have been under immense pressure from their majority black population groups to address the 'land question' in an attempt to reverse the negative outcomes of colonial exploitation.

European colonial rulers contributed greatly to poverty among Africa's majority populations, as they sought to enrich themselves and their settler populations at the expense of blacks. The legacy of poverty still persists to this day, as does the legacy of dis-enfranchisement of blacks from access to and use of land. Some have argued that land reform should take place as a matter of 'righting past wrongs' and also to alleviate poverty and contribute to development. The contrary argument is that returning land to indigenous Africans would be disastrous, as they do not have the necessary acumen and skills to make productive use of the land. Land reform in the South African context is the focus of this paper. More specifically, the article assesses the appropriateness of government's land reform policy.

## INTRODUCTION

The primary directive of any government policy is to reflect the values and norms of society. Any change in these values and norms necessitates a continued process of policy evaluation. As part of the policy evaluation process, existing as well as prior legislation, programmes and policies must be reviewed with the expectation that these will contribute to setting the contextual background that informs forward-looking policy making processes (White Paper on Agriculture 1995:16).

From the 19th century onwards, the policies of successive white governments sought to create wealth for the small population of white commercial farmers by destroying independent African farming communities (CDE 2005:5). Apartheid laws used to attain these goals were, among others, the Natives Land Act, 1913 and the Natives Trust and Land Act, 1936. Through these laws, millions of Africans were forcibly removed from their land and re-located into overcrowded 'homelands', while at the same time white commercial farmers were provided with extensive support through state subsidies and assistance programmes. With the Group Areas Act, 1950, forced removals under apartheid were no longer limited to rural areas, but extended also to urban areas, such that blacks were forcibly relocated from urban areas to semi-urban 'townships/locations' (Commission on Restitution of Land Rights website <http://land.pwv.gov.za/restitution/BACKGROU.RES.htm> visited on 28/10/2007).

After the 1994 elections, as a way of reversing the damage caused by past discriminatory land policy, the South African government launched a comprehensive three-pronged land reform programme. The three components of this land reform programme are restitution, redistribution, and tenure reform. Land restitution aims to restore land to those who were displaced as a consequence of apartheid laws, and is restricted to assisting individuals and communities that can prove that they were forcefully removed after 19 June 1913 (<http://land.pwv.gov.za/restitution/BACKGROU.RES.htm> visited on 28/10/2007). These claims

are the responsibility of the Land Claims Court and Commission (White Paper on Land Policy 1997). The land distribution component aims to provide land to previously disadvantaged individuals (both rural and urban) such as the poor and landless, labour tenants, farm workers and new entrants to agriculture. Lastly, land tenure reform aims to ensure that land policy in South Africa accommodates secure and diverse forms of land tenure/ownership that are to the benefit of all South Africans. Land tenure thus relates to empowering disadvantaged groups (tenants, farm workers and others) whose livelihood is legally insecure because they occupy land belonging to other persons, including land registered in the name of the state.

## **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND TO LAND DISTRIBUTION**

The distinctive characteristic of South Africa's history that influenced every aspect of societal life is the system of racial discrimination that came to be known as apartheid. The South African government used apartheid not only to further the political and social interests of white Afrikaner citizens, it also used apartheid as a springboard for industrialisation and development to serve the ends of white economic empowerment (Lowenberg and Kaempfer 2001:33; Cf. Fine and Rustumjee 1996:63; Cf. Maylam 1986:143-152; Cf. Clark 1994:134-7). In the latter instance, white farmers and mine owners solicited and received the assistance of the government in disenfranchising blacks as a way of creating a low-wage labour force that would increase the profitability of both industries. The basic strategy employed by the government to disenfranchise blacks was to first alienate them from their land by implementing the 1913 Land Act which ended the system of squatting and sharecropping by Africans on white farms, and the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act which reserved 86% of the total land area of the country for whites only. The combined effect of these two pieces of legislation is that Africans were confined to residing on 14% of the land, most of which was unsuitable for farming and grazing. This effectively destroyed the formally viable and flourishing black peasant farming sector. Thereafter, 'hut taxes' and 'labour taxes' on blacks in the 'homelands' were imposed which heavily taxed blacks earning a living in black areas ('homelands') with the intent of compelling them to work for cash wages in 'white' areas while residing in black areas (Natrass cited in Lowenberg and Kaempfer 2001:33-35; Cf. Lipton and Simkins 1993:359-60).

Since the Afrikaners gained political power, South African governments have used all means at their disposal to further the lot of the Afrikaner population in general and more specifically to solve the "poor whites problem" (Omer-Cooper 1987:171-2; Cf. Clark 1994:48,163). An inexhaustive list of the tools used to achieve these goals includes 'import substitution industrialisation' (ISI), the creation of state owned enterprises, and last but not least - apartheid. Thus, since the earlier stages of development and industrialisation, the government extensively intervened in private markets on the side of white farmers/landowners and mining magnates against black labour (Clark 1994:48,163; Cf. Lipton and Simkins (eds.) 1993:359-60; Cf. Lowenberg and Kaempfer 2001:32-5). There was also a conscious effort on the part of Government to reduce or even eliminate 'dependence' on foreign trade, which had intermittently been interrupted by politically motivated trade embargoes since as early as the 1940s (Lowenberg and Kaempfer 2001:6). The pattern of exploitation of the African masses by the government in the name of development and advancement was to continue until the complete dismantling of apartheid coinciding with the promulgation of the 1993 interim Constitution.

## **APARTHEID'S LEGACY – A CHALLENGE FOR SOUTH AFRICAN AGRICULTURAL POLICY**

Government's policy of regulating the agricultural sector along racial and class lines, left in its wake a negative legacy that has survived and persisted into the present. This apartheid era legacy that has unavoidably been inherited by the present democratic government is what has commonly been referred to as the 'two agricultures' (Lipton and Simpkins (eds.) 1993:360). The 'two agricultures' is epitomised by the reality of two separate agricultural sectors, one for whites and one for blacks. The white agricultural sector used to be heavily subsidised by the Government and flourished into a highly competitive large-scale capital

intensive industry that even today produces the bulk of domestic as well as export food supplies. The black agricultural sector received no assistance from the government and remained small-scale, labour intensive and produced mainly for subsistence rather than for markets (domestic or foreign) (Lipton and Simpkins ed. 1993:360). The Government during the apartheid era actually took measures to handicap the black agricultural sector in order to further benefit the white agricultural sector. This approach of the Government (as alluded to earlier) is exemplified by the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts which restricted black ownership and residence in South Africa to 14% of the total surface area of the country. Another significant piece of legislation that impeded black agricultural development was the 1970 Subdivision of Land Act, which disallowed black smallholder farming in 'white' areas. Throughout this era black farmers were also excluded from access to financial, marketing and other assistance programmes of the numerous agricultural boards that serviced and assisted white farmers only (Lipton and Simpkins (ed.) 1993:360).

The paradox of the 'two agricultures' is an area of agricultural policy that is only now being addressed (South Africa - white Paper on Agriculture 1995; Cf. South Africa Yearbook 1999:75). At present the discrepancies in land ownership and production are such that by 1999 approximately 67 000 white farmers produced 95% of marketed production on 85 million hectares (ha); while an estimated one million black farmers produced 5% of marketed production on 16 million ha (South Africa Yearbook 1999:75). More current statistics (CDE 2005:11) indicate that by 2001:

"...There [were] probably some 91 000 black commercial farmers in South Africa – about twice the number of white commercial farmers. However, most of them have far smaller farms, and they therefore still own less than 5% of commercial agricultural land. This reality is a consequence of the discriminatory history. It is neither right nor sustainable, and constitutes a central challenge to commercial agriculture...white-owned farms produce more than 90% of marketed produce; however, this is being done by fewer and fewer farmers" (CDE 2005:11).

As the costs of direct support (cheap loans, subsidies and tax breaks) and indirect support (protection from imports, provision of research and extension, favourable terms of trade with the urban sector) to the white agricultural sector had risen exponentially since Union in 1910, it became increasingly clear to Government that a reassessment of the costs and benefits of the agricultural system was needed (Lowenberg and Kaempfer 2001:194-96). As Van Zyl et al (1996:199-200) indicate,

"...The policy environment of racial discrimination and price distortions, however, could not be sustained, and the pressures on agriculture for reversal of these policies began to mount during the 1980s...the period is characterised by a reversal of the policies of the previous two periods, consisting of removal of the racial barriers between black and white agriculture, and increased liberalisation and democratisation of the agricultural sector."

The costs of subsidising the white agricultural sector appears to have outweighed the benefits thereof, as is also evidenced by the fact that agriculture's contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has been estimated to have declined from almost 20% in 1951 to 6% in 1990 (Lipton and Simpkins (ed.) 1993:361). This figure fell again to 3,4% in 2002 (CDE 2005:10).

## POST-APARTHEID AGRICULTURAL POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT

The four major challenges that face the South African agricultural sector in the post-apartheid era are firstly, the social and economic imbalances brought about by the existence of the 'two agricultures' as an inherited challenge to democracy and development of the industry; secondly, the poor agricultural resource endowment of the country evidenced by the fact that only 17 million out of 100 million ha of farmland is presently classified as arable, and of this only 4 million ha is classified as 'high potential arable land'. The remaining 80 million ha of farmland suffers from poor soil content, low and erratic rainfall, and soil erosion and degradation (CDE 2005:10; South Africa Yearbook 1999:76-83). Thirdly, among the most

important factors limiting agricultural production is the availability of water (South Africa Yearbook 1999:76). The country's average annual rainfall is only 502mm, which is well below the world average of 857mm. Further, recent severe droughts, floods, hail storms and frosts have contributed to reduced agricultural production; and fourthly, the industry has also been plagued by inefficiencies and a tendency towards oversupply in maize, wheat, livestock, dairy, sugar and wine production as a direct result of stringent regulation and subsidisation. The result of the artificial market support of the white farming sector has been the frequent tendency towards the dislocation of supply and demand in its trading market (South Africa Yearbook 1999:76).

Oversupply of the market is also partly attributable to unpredictable weather conditions that necessitate that farmers should plan their production with the expectation of natural losses due to bad weather, pests, plagues, and other pathologies. The implications to farmers of oversupply include increased transportation and storage costs, unfavourable volume-to-price ratios and wastage due to the perishable nature of produce. (Lipton and Simkins 1993:359; Cf. Loxton 1993:216-220; Cf. South Africa Yearbook 1999:76,83).

Despite the above-mentioned challenges to the agricultural sector, South Africa remains self-sufficient in virtually all major agricultural products and is normally a net-exporter of food stocks. Also, despite the industry's steadily declining share of GDP (3,4% in 2002 compared to 20% in the 1930s) it remains of vital importance to the economy as a provider of essential domestic consumer food requirements while also employing approximately one million people in its various sectors (South Africa 1999:75-6).

## **Marketing**

The Marketing of Agricultural Products Act, 1996, is the main impetus of the current efforts to reform the industry. The 1996 Act, under the supervision of the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC), scheduled the termination of all agricultural sector boards and schemes established in terms of the 1986 Marketing Act. By the 5th of January 1998, all agricultural control boards ceased to exist. In terms of the Act, certain limited statutory measures may be introduced in support of the industry, such as statutory levies to finance the research and information functions within a given sector (South Africa 1999:84). As of the closure of the agricultural boards, the key objectives of the NAMC are to integrate disadvantaged and small-scale participants into the mainstream of agriculture and to monitor the efficiency of the market, intervening only to correct market imperfections and socially unacceptable effects (South Africa 1999:84; white Paper on Agriculture 1995:9).

## **Credit and assistance**

In line with its new policy directive, the National Department of Agriculture resolved to remove itself from direct involvement in agricultural credit delivery by abolishing the Agricultural Credit Board (ACB) and the State Assisted Production Loan Scheme through financial intermediaries. The agricultural industry must now seek assistance from the Land Bank and/or private financing from banks, creditors, financial institutions and agricultural co-operatives (South Africa Yearbook 1999:85).

## **Reforming land ownership**

The white Paper on South African Land Policy (1997) clearly indicates that the ANC government subscribes to the World Bank's market oriented approach to land redistribution (Zimmerman 2005:380). The government has thus refrained from expropriations and does so only as a last resort, and then only with market-related compensation. The principle that applies in all land reform cases is the willing seller, willing buyer principle.

In the area of restitution, for example, the government has undertaken to work with claimants through the Restitution of Land Rights Act, 1994. This Act aims to provide legal remedy to persons and communities that

were dispossessed of their land as a result of past racial discriminatory laws and practices that occurred after 1913. The compensation is in the form of restitution of rights in land and claimants have the following options (<http://.land.pww.gov.za/restitution/BACKGROU.RES.htm> visited on 28/10/2007)

- restoration of the land from which claimants were dispossessed;
- provision of alternative land;
- payment of compensation;
- alternative relief including a combination of the above-mentioned;
- sharing of the land;
- budgetary assistance such as services and infrastructure development; or
- priority access to state resources with regard to housing and land development programmes.

There is no question that there is competition for scarce arable land. As such, land reform policy as the mandate of the Department of Land Affairs is intended to be demand-led, meaning that only those who are able to demonstrate considerable interest in, and the capacity to become productive farmers will be able to access the programme. This can be deduced from the 'willing buyer' section of the 'willing buyer/willing seller' policy. Demand-led land reform means that applicants must be qualified on the basis of potential to make productive use of the land. This means that successful applicants/beneficiaries would (Van Zyl et al 1996:13-15):

- initiate the administrative process of determining programme eligibility;
- have to contribute from their own resources to the start-up costs of the new farming enterprise;
- have to show that they were capable of becoming successful farmers; and
- bear the risks of farming.

According to Van Zyl et al (1996:13-15), demand-led targeting has the advantage of preserving productivity in the agricultural sector, since participation tends to be limited to those who can indeed make productive use of the land. In the world of perfect markets, demand-led targeting implements a shadow of willing to pay criterion which would ensure that land goes to those who most want it. The disadvantage of the demand-led targeting, however, is that its participation requirements may tend to favour those rural blacks who already have a reasonably strong asset base, thus potentially excluding the have-nots. If the poor prove to be systematically unwilling or unable to demonstrate the necessary level of interest or capacity, they will be left out of the land redistribution programme. Concerns expressed by some as to whether redistributed land should be put to its most effective use, can be somewhat allayed by the government's demonstrated commitment to ensuring that support systems are in place for successful land claimants.

## CONCLUSION

In the final analysis, the system of apartheid brought itself to an end as, with the passage of time, it increasingly proved itself to be an unworkable political, social and economic system. Although apartheid no longer exists, it has left behind a significant legacy that represents hindrances in many sectors of the economy that are only now being resolved.

The passage of time has always brought the agricultural sector of the economy from first to third place in terms of share of GDP in contemporary times. Although this sector of the economy continues to be plagued by climatic and natural resource encumbrances, its contribution to GDP and thus development is significant as it employs over a million people and exports the majority of its produce. The apartheid legacy inherited by the agricultural sector is what has come to be called the two agricultures. As apartheid was an expensive system to maintain, the evidence suggests that the productivity of agriculture began to decline as a direct result of the costs of subsidising the white farming sector while disenfranchising small-scale black farming.

Land reform will be able to claim success if it has led to the establishment of a large number of new financially successful and prosperous professional farmers from previously disadvantaged population groups, while at the same time catering for improved food security for many people who have neither the interest nor the ability to become successful professional farmers.

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# MULTIPLICITY IN PUBLIC POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

**P A Brynard**

**School of Public Management and Administration  
University of Pretoria, South Africa**

## ABSTRACT

Failures in service delivery or policy outcomes are in some instances ascribed to single and linear causes. Similarly, the successes of policy outcomes are seemingly due to one success factor. This article attempts to indicate the multiple factors influencing implementation outcomes. The emphasis of multiplicity provides a clearer understanding of real policy implementation. Investigation into multiple policy actors and the relation with structures and outcomes provide a meaningful perspective on policy implementation.

## INTRODUCTION

In policy implementation there are multiple factors influencing implementation outcomes. There are also many different models in the literature that deal with implementation and variables influencing implementation. In the past the focus on policy implementation tended to converge on the rational or top-down models promoted by Van Meter and Van Horn (Jordan 1995: 5) and Sabatier and Mazmanian (Ryan 1996: 34). These models measured how set goals have been achieved in action and predominantly promote central control. These models were criticised as an insufficient foundation for studies of implementation and in turn led to the interest in the bottom-up models and, more recently, the models of bargaining and evolution in analysis of implementation (Jordan 1995: 6). According to these more contemporary models that advocate the evolving, mutually adapting and exploratory process of policy and programme implementation, it is affected to a large degree by the strategies and policies of the state and corporations and how the people accept or react to how they are implemented. In this sense, implementation is seen as a learning process, rather than simply a consequential step after a policy or strategy is formulated.

The variables that affect implementation outcomes, in particular multiplicity of participants and multiplicity of perspectives, need to be examined in view of the various models and approaches in programme implementation in order to formulate a coherent framework that would be capable of being applied by public sector managers (Ryan 1996: 34). It is important to understand policy implementation and how it changes its surroundings, how it changed itself in the process and how it can be influenced to achieve the goals it set out to achieve (Turton, Brynard, & Meissner 2002: 12).

## THE CONCEPT OF POLICY AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Policy-making is defined by Hanekom as (Hanekom as quoted by Turton, Ashton, & Cloete 2003: 314):

“the activity preceding the publication of a goal, while a policy statement is the making known, the formal articulation, the declaration of intent or the publication of the goal to be pursued. Policy is thus indicative of a goal, a specific purpose, a programme of action that has been decided upon. Public policy is therefore a formally articulated goal that the legislator intends pursuing with society or with a societal group.”

Policy implementation can therefore be defined as those actions by public and private people or groups of people that result in the achievement of objectives that form part of a policy or policy decisions (Van Horn and Van Meter as quoted by Rampedi 2003: 26). Policy implementation ensures that the government and ancillary organisations can carry out the policies. To Pressman and Wildavsky (Pressman and Wildavsky



as quoted by Rampedi 2003: 24) implementation means that part of public programming that follows the initial policy-making, setting of goals and funding it. It is the carrying out of a policy, the forged links in the causal chain to obtain results. Changing actors and different perspectives of these actors can make implementation difficult and complex with a process fraught with conflict.

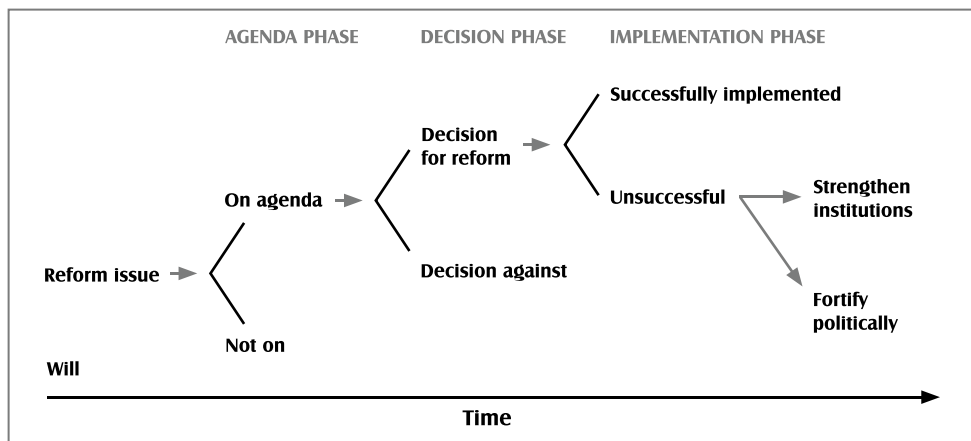
According to Lane (1993), the concept of implementation is characterised by a problematic structure. Webster's Dictionary states that 'implementation' means either the act of implementing or the state of having been implemented; it presents the following key words for 'implement': to carry out: accomplish, fulfill, to give practical effect to and ensure actual fulfillment by concrete measures, to provide instruments or means of practical expression (Lane 1993:90). The formal definition might be: where implementation refers to the bringing about, by means of outputs, of outcomes that are congruent with the original intention(s). Thus, implementation has a double meaning: to give practical effect to or execution on one hand, and fulfillment or accomplishment of its objectives, on the other. This shows a basic ambiguity in the notion of implementation: implementation is an end state or policy execution. The Oxford English Dictionary notes the same double meaning: to complete, perform; to fulfill. Since the concept of implementation implies that these two entities are objective and outcomes satisfy two different relationships: the causal function and the accomplishment function.

Two ideas are fundamental to the concept of implementation: that the policy programme is the output that brings about the outcomes in such a way that the latter accomplish the objectives of the policy. Implementation assessment focuses on the operation of a public policy and its consequences. It includes three logically separate activities: (a) clarification of the objectives involved (the goal function), (b) statement of the relationship between outputs and outcomes in terms of causal effectiveness (the causal function); and (c) clarification of the relation between objectives and outcomes in order to affirm the extent of goal achievement i.e. (the accomplishment function) (Lane 1993:92).

Each of the three tasks presents its own peculiar problems. Together, they imply that it may be difficult to judge the effectiveness of implementation. The ends and means, the intentions of the policies are formulated and enacted by various kinds of actors in the political process. What is an end or a means is an intentional object to some actor, which means that any definition of implementation must specify the actors involved in the process. These actors may be divided into two sets, the formulators and the implementers. To illustrate the multiplicity in policy implementation, the following section provides two models of implementation.

## **MODELS OF IMPLEMENTATION**

According to Lane (1993) implementation models were suggested in response to the neglect of the various stages of policy execution at government level, sometimes called the missing link. To further highlight the complexity and multiplicity of factors that affect implementation Brynard in Cloete (2002:176) states that the process can be affected by the content of policy, its context, the commitment of implementers, the clients the policy is expected to serve and other coalitions of influence. This is commonly referred to as the 5-C protocol of policy implementation. This is contrary to what reductionism scholars say implementation is. They assume that if a policy is decided upon, implementation will be carried out automatically, because to implement a policy, in their view, is simple, straightforward and mechanical, once resources are made available. This state of affairs is described by Lane (1993) as mechanical translation of goals into routine procedures, while Grindle and Thomas (1991) regard it as a linear approach to implementation. The linear model is provided in Figure 1 to illustrate this point in a tree format. The two authors explain that most decision-makers and policy analysts in the past have created the impression that a proposed reform gets on the agenda for Government action. A decision is then made on the proposal or it is rejected. If accepted, the new policy is then implemented either successfully or unsuccessfully. In this model the decision is seen as the most critical, and crucial, choice and implementation is seen as a matter of carrying out that which has



Source: Grindle & Thomas (1991:123)

**Figure 1: A linear model of policy reform**

been decided upon. Successful implementation is viewed as a question of whether or not the implementing institution is strong enough for the task. If implementation is unsuccessful, the usual remedy is to call for greater efforts to strengthen institutional capacity or to blame failure on lack of political will that sometimes becomes a catch-all culprit.

However, the reality is sometimes inconsistent with this linear approach. Björkman (1994) argues that implementation is a complex, interactive and ongoing process of decision-making, which is the most crucial part of the policy process since the policy outcome depends on how successful implementation has been. Brinkerhoff et al (2000) agree with Björkman that the policy implementation process is at least as political as it is technical. It is complex and highly interactive and calls for consensus building. Thus, it can be pointed out that implementation does not always happen automatically and, as a result, it can sometimes be successful or unsuccessful, altered after a decision to pursue it has been made, and removed from the agenda because those responsible for implementing it are convinced that it cannot be carried through.

As an alternative to the linear model, the interactive model is proposed as a more realistic representation of the implementation process (Quade 1974; Dye 1985; and Grindle and Thomas 1991). Figure 2 illustrates this model. In this model, efforts to alter an existing situation through policy upsets an existing equilibrium and elicits some response or reaction from those affected by the changes or the stakeholders and sometimes the actors as well. This reaction from the stakeholders, the model explains, may occur at any point along the process. Unlike the linear model, the interactive model views policy implementation as a process of decision and implementation. This determines whether implementation may go on or return to the agenda or to any point on the model, depending on where conflict occurs. In most cases some items on the agenda are acted upon but many are not, often because of the preferences, perceptions and actions of policy elites and their appreciation of the economic and political environment. This state of affairs is visible in many African governments.

In the implementation process, political, financial, managerial and technical resources are needed. Therefore, throughout the implementation process it is important to guard against those opposing the policy change blocking access to these required resources. The process confirms the fact that sometimes the policy outcome is very different from what the planners conceived due to the process of change and conflict that occurs in the implementation stage.

THREE MAIN APPROACHES OF IMPLEMENTATION STUDIES

The top-down approach is also known as the rational or systems model. This approach is characterised by its hierarchical and control themes. The broad aim is to improve performance, thus to achieve the top’s goals. The policy is an independent variable, a starting point and a benchmark which can and should be controlled by sanctions (Jordan 1995: 6).

The bottom-up approach was a critique on the top-down approach. Implementers of this approach, also known as street level bureaucrats, (Brodkin 2000) sought to achieve greater allegiance between policy-making and policy delivery. The policy is dependent upon the interaction between actors at the local level and the aim is to explain what actually happens when policies are implemented.

The evolution and bargaining models see policy implementation as a bargaining, exchange and negotiation action. The aim of this approach is to explain how policy is the product of bargaining and negotiation between interests and policy is seen as dependent upon a process of bargaining. Implementation is seen as one part of an ongoing process of bargaining and compromise with inputs from the top and innovations from the bottom (Jordan 1995: 15).

In the implementation process policy-makers may use elements from all or some of the above approaches, whichever suit their purposes for the policy at hand.

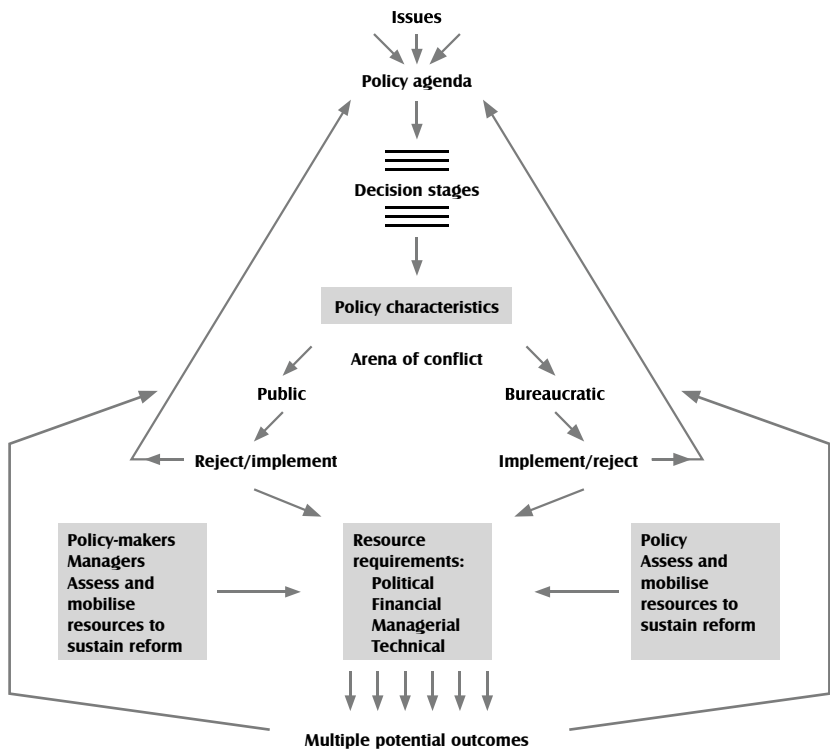


Figure 2: The process of policy implementation

Source: (Grindle & Thomas 1991:127)

## PRESSMAN AND WILDAVSKY'S PREMISE ON MULTIPLICITY

The work of Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) inquired into the discrepancies between the articulated policy goals set in Washington and the little relation of this goal to what was on the ground in Oakland (Colebatch 1998:56). Thus, the problem highlighted in implementation was that of outcomes being different to stated objectives and goals. Pressman and Wildavsky explained this phenomenon as relating to multiplicity of participants and perspectives.

They argued that between the enactment of policy and its implementation, there are numerous decision points, between public and private decision-making bodies (John 1998:27). These decision points in turn reduce the likelihood of the policy-maker's objective being carried out. According to John (1998:27), Pressman and Wildavsky's assumption amounts to a probabilistic theory, where the more the decision points are, the more likely the policy is to fail and vice versa.

Multiplicity is also viewed as a top-down approach to policy research (Lazin 1998:154), which sees policy implementation in an inter-organisational context with a hierarchical arrangement, where the central elite controls lower bureaucrats. That is to say, the top-down approach to policy implementation also sees the discretion and autonomy of local actors as adding to the likelihood of failure in policy implementation.

Looking at the case of multiplicity in decision points, the current milieu in local government in South Africa consists of municipalities with wide-ranging partnerships and many sectors. Citing a case of the Local Economic Development Policy (LED: 2002:38), the institution of co-operative government as enshrined in the South African Constitution (Constitution 1996: Chapter 3), entails that policy is negotiated between the three spheres of government as well as the private sector. Some core problems that have been noted are:

- The issue of varying strategic planning, goal-setting and implementation processes by provinces and municipalities with respect to the LED (LED: 2002:40), resulting in fragmented and differing development outcomes.
- The issue of non-clarification of roles between national government, provinces, municipalities, civil society and the private sector, resulting in different players having different understandings and interpretations of the LED policy (LED 2002: 40).

These examples of the complexities in the different decision points in implementing the LED show that, like that of Britain (John 1998:28), the South African government must navigate the numerous tangles of vertical government departments, regional organisations, the private sector and municipalities to implement policies.

Does this then mean that the route to 'perfect' policy implementation (the ideal outcome from the perspective of the policy-maker), as modelled by Hood (in John 1998:29) can be traced to the Pressman and Wildavsky probabilistic theory of multiplicity? That is, the fewer the decision points the greater the likelihood that the policy will succeed.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES BY MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS

Policies are developed, finalised and approved, but there is no time when the implementation plan is clearly added in writing. Again according to Glass (1999) policies are not self-executing; once they are finalised agencies or administrators are responsible for their implementation. Plans are always the responsibility of implementers. The Reconstruction and Development Programme attempted to come up with a coherent programme that intended to build the nation, but implementation of it demonstrated something else. The vision was there but because of a lack of consistency as well as stability in the state actions did not run the way they were planned. As indicated earlier on, the problem lies in the reactive approach to the development of most policies.

It is important to state that stakeholders are critical in policy formulation, but sometimes handling huge projects which involve a multiplicity of stakeholders can lead to the downfall of the policy. Looking into the South African situation, particularly during the development of the Reconstruction and Development Programme, nearly all stakeholders were involved. They came up with a brilliant document which is comprehensive and still complex to implement. All the programmes were basically reactive to the situation at the time. When the implementation stage came, for instance, in the case of housing, people were expecting proper houses only to find that they got houses that do not meet their expectations.

Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) state that the multiplicity of participants and perspectives combined to produce a formidable obstacle course for the programmes which were designed to reduce unemployment and build the cities. The legacy of the past just like it was in South Africa was so dynamic that addressing it at face value would always suggest a number of problems and stakeholders to be involved. It needed a good planning mechanism which was not really reactive but rather looking beyond the problem as experienced at that point in time. In many instances policy implementers are forced to change the intention of the goal for the simple reason that they have their own interpretation. Lindblom (1980) states that multiple conflicting criteria are universal phenomena in policy implementation, appearing also in areas far removed from ordinary policy implementation in democracies. As indicated above, this is a human error as people do not have the same understanding of the issues as presented. Again the policy implementers must try to be sympathetic to the goals of the policy, have adequate resources, as well as trained people to implement.

When implementing policy there are several tollgates to observe and analysis of progress to make to find out whether a particular programme could be reviewed or be started all over again. There is also a degree of bureaucracy involved where certain actions need to be approved before they can be implemented. Some stakeholders, even when the objective of the policy is clearly written, tend to join with their own agendas.

One other critical component of policy implementation is the decentralisation of power where, for instance, the provincial governments are given power to initiate programmes accordingly and develop policies of their own which would, however, not be antagonistic to the national policies. It has been found that in some provinces in South Africa problems are experienced when policies are implemented, particularly in areas where the ruling party has the minority support. Even when a policy can produce a positive impact, it is not accepted and consequently the community suffers.

Implementation is not simply an administrative or managerial problem, but a complex political process of who gets what, when, how, where and from whom (Turton, Brynard, & Meissner 2002: 11). Because there are many actors that operate on multiple levels it complicates the implementation process further. Consider the example of the Department of National Health's Anti-retroviral Treatment (ARVT) Programme, which has been conceived and rolled out at national sphere. The implementation of the ARVT Programme takes place in the provincial and municipal sphere with multiple actors such as nurses, doctors, pharmacists, dieticians, administrative public officials and laboratory technicians that all have to play a role at their own level. The medication is being procured through a national tender by national Government, the pharmacist who receives and dispenses it is at provincial level, the doctors and nurses who prescribe it can be at provincial or municipal sphere. The ARVT Programme has multiple aspects, such as treatment, prevention, nutrition, drug resistance and treatment compliance and it is being implemented by a multiplicity of actors, with a multiplicity of perspectives in different layers of government. By definition the implementation of such a programme will be faced with enormous difficulties and challenges.

## CONCLUSION

Policy implementation can be studied from many different perspectives using different theoretical tools. Not one perspective can be singled out as better than the rest, as each attempt to explain policy and

programme implementation and the factors influencing it. The questions to ask of the policy implementation process are: Were the intentions of the policy translated into tangible outputs? Did the outcomes of the policy match its goals? What is being implemented? How is policy-making differentiated from policy implementation? In a South African sense it means identifying and examining the relationship between the actors and structures in the national, provincial and municipal spheres; the intergovernmental relationships between these spheres as well as the government's relationship with the public.

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# REFLECTIONS ON COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE CONTEXT OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

**E J van Rooyen**

**School of Public Management and Administration  
University of Pretoria, South Africa**

## ABSTRACT

South Africa is nearing its 14th year of democracy during which significant advances have been made en route to realising its development objectives. However, since sustainable development implies a continuous process in which fairly limited governance models exist, certain problems often occur. In this article the issue of community participation in the context of good governance finds scrutiny. The researcher reflects upon certain issues and aspects associated with community participation and poses certain suggestions, drawn from practical public administration experience. Specifically, the concepts of community participation, stakeholder involvement, negotiation, capacity and consultation are considered against the picture of an ideal democratic system of governance. It is hoped that the thoughts contained in the article would serve to stimulate a debate, which may lead to a critical re-thinking of the way ahead for South Africa and other young African democracies.

## INTRODUCTION

In a functional system of democracy wherein practices of sound governance occur, community participation is seen as an avenue where needs articulation by communities is actively facilitated. The policy of community participation necessitates a process of comprehensive engagement with communities and where divergent opinions, needs and expectations exist, some form of negotiation should often be entered into. Also, it is necessary to institutionalise a process where communities as stakeholders in their own development are informed and made aware – even educated (Van der Wald & Knipe, 1998: 143 and Coetzee, Graaf, Hendricks & Wood, 2001: 473) – on the basics of what developmental government could afford them.

Undeniably, many vexed questions regarding development still remain and much criticism is constantly voiced by communities as far as governance practices are concerned. In this article the researcher, as an active participant in public administration, reflects on certain current issues of governance and community participation and viewing stakeholders as partners, which may warrant debate and consideration as South Africa prepares to enter its 14th year of democracy.

## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION BY STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders are important participants in the process of good governance. Van der Wald & Knipe (1998: 143) quote Paul (1987: 2) in defining community participation as “an active process in which the clients, or those who will benefit, influence the direction and implementation of a development project aimed at improving the welfare of people in terms of income, personal growth, independence and other values regarded as valuable”.

In view of the above definition, in a public management context, Fox & Meyer (1995: 122) define a stakeholder as “...a person or group of people, such as shareholders, employees, customers, creditors, suppliers, trade unions, government and the community, who have an interest in the operation and outcomes of the organisation”.

It can therefore be deduced that stakeholders are those whose existence may somehow be impacted upon by decisions and actions taken by particular (public) institutions and who, in turn, may through their actions impact on the functioning of such institutions. In some documents, such as in the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), the term stakeholder is not employed to refer to the above individuals or groupings. The Act rather uses the word community and refers to community participation to encapsulate the spirit of involving the community in the activities of local government and governance.

Specifically in a local government context, the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) calls for the creation of a culture of community participation in local government. This reflects a policy of government, which emphasises the importance of optimal community involvement in the decision-making activities that form part of governance activities. However, to merely strive towards community participation may not be sufficient to attain the objectives of developmental government, especially from a sustainability point of view. Beckenstein, Long, Arnold & Gladwin (1996: 3) argue that community participation/consultation – also referred to as regulatory processes – in developmental projects may merely be an element of a bureaucratic structure that may impede decision-making. It may well be that this is part of a “going through the motions”-process to legitimise the actions of any particular party which do not embrace the true spirit of partnership and co-operation. In other words, a de facto retaining of a paternalistic approach towards development.

Van der Wald & Knipe (1999: 144) view community participation as a very involved process and specifically mention the problem-solving nature thereof. However, it should be noted that community participation may present some practical problems, *inter alia*: (a) the negotiation processes associated with managing projects where certain community members and groups may frustrate progress; (b) pressure on public officials as the process of participation and consultation requires additional human resources capacity; and (c) the unpredictability associated with dealing with community groups.

According to Beckenstein et al. (1996: 3) the stakeholder concept is critical to sustainable development. Dialogue and negotiation among stakeholders are the vehicles through which the principles for sustainable behaviour are established, implemented and monitored. This form of community participation is far removed from the more traditional regulatory processes that claim to include community participation when Government institutions invite comments from stakeholders. Typically the inputs are then reviewed and incorporated into programmes and projects that balance legislative intent with the concerns of the stakeholders (Beckenstein et al., 1996: 3).

## **NEGOTIATION AS AN IMPORTANT PART OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

Concerning the concept of negotiation, Spoelstra & Pienaar (1996: 3) define it as “a process of interaction between parties directed towards reaching some form of agreement that will hold and which is based upon common interests, with the purpose of resolving conflict, despite widely dividing differences”. The interactive act of becoming aware and being informed and becoming educated often calls for some form of negotiation process between such stakeholders. The Brazilian educationist and philosopher, Paulo Freire, terms this process conscientisation (Coetzee, Graaf, Hendricks & Wood eds., 2001: 473).

Swanepoel & De Beer (1996: 16) mention that there are essentially three possible causes of conflict while managing community development projects: (a) clashing interests; (b) clashing personalities; and (c) misunderstanding. Each of these should be managed through a process of negotiation and by focusing on the causes of the conflict. Spoelstra & Pienaar (1996: 12) continue to classify the types of negotiation, two of which are important for government stakeholder negotiations: Firstly, co-operative negotiation. In this type of negotiation winning or losing is irrelevant. Conflicting views are discussed and converted into co-operation. Secondly, continuous negotiation is a process which involves entering into an on-going relationship between the parties. This relationship is maintained throughout the negotiations and into the future.

Spoelstra & Pienaar (1996: 3) emphasise the nature of negotiation as being that of a process and not an event. An element of continuity therefore forms its basis. In addition, it is also important in this regard to



note that negotiation involves an element of information exchange. From the point of view of local government, information dissemination could have the advantage that it assists in attaining the objective of transparency and that it may result in educating some communities in aspects related to their environment.

Stakeholder negotiations in governance processes are not only reserved for communities or community based organisations. Stakeholder negotiations may occur between other stakeholders as well, for example between business and government, between local and district municipalities or between different spheres of government (e.g. district municipalities and provincial authorities). Other forms of stakeholder negotiations are to be found on an intra-institutional level where different municipal departments may find themselves competing and therefore eventually negotiating for the same resources. Only in this way will true partnerships develop and can the principle of co-operative governance (in an inter- and an intra-institutional context) really manifest.

## **FOSTERING IMPROVED COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

Tsenoli in Reddy ed. (1995: 34) sounds a warning that democratic government and sustainable development can only be realised if facilities, resources and technical skills are provided to ensure that all development is people-driven. Swanepoel & De Beer (1996: 16) confirm that development "is about people participating in decision-making and implementation that will affect their position and their future". In view of the above, the community as stakeholders in governance should therefore actively become involved throughout the process, and be involved in all planning and implementation processes on different government spheres, as elucidated previously. To achieve this ideal, facilities, resources and technical skills amid sound governmental relations and co-operative governance should be available throughout.

Governmental relations often don't work in a practical context because of the possibility that too many layers of decision-making exist, and the red tape and unco-ordinated complexity of the system and imperatives hamper processes. This causes time delays, procrastination and inefficiency as far as public resource expenditure is concerned. This in turn may hamper co-operative governance. The key is to attempt to "streamline" all activities within this arena. The possible answer may be among others: less layers, fewer authorisations, simplified funding and budgeting processes and strict accountability to/by specific decision-makers, as well as improved communication and transparency. However, these issues should be explored as part of an honest process of governance introspection devoid of ideology and political correctness considerations. Also, the following issues may receive consideration as well:

- politicking in public administration causes ineffective service delivery;
- vested interests in all forms and manners stifle the ideal of community orientation and sustainable development;
- investment in human and other forms of capital is wasted if it cannot be retained;
- lack of commitment and unprofessional conduct by politicians and public officials lead to non-implementation;
- it is impossible to translate the laudable ideals as presented in the Batho Pele-document into practical action;
- policies are too abstract and officials do not have the ability to translate policies into action; and
- officials should not only be trained in, but should also be positioned to effectively implement programme and project management principles.

In general capacity issues similarly warrant constant debate and consideration. However, even though conventional truism dictates that in many cases in the public sector capacity does not exist and should be built, the simple truth is that this takes time, it should be done in a proper co-ordinated and focused way and that it should coincide with initiatives such as the Single Public Service-process. The problem which many analysts and practitioners seem to ignore is that South Africa does not have the time to delay service delivery and development up and until the stage when such capacity could eventually be nurtured and organically grown. The South African democracy is under threat as is clearly seen at grass roots level where the rumblings of dissatisfaction

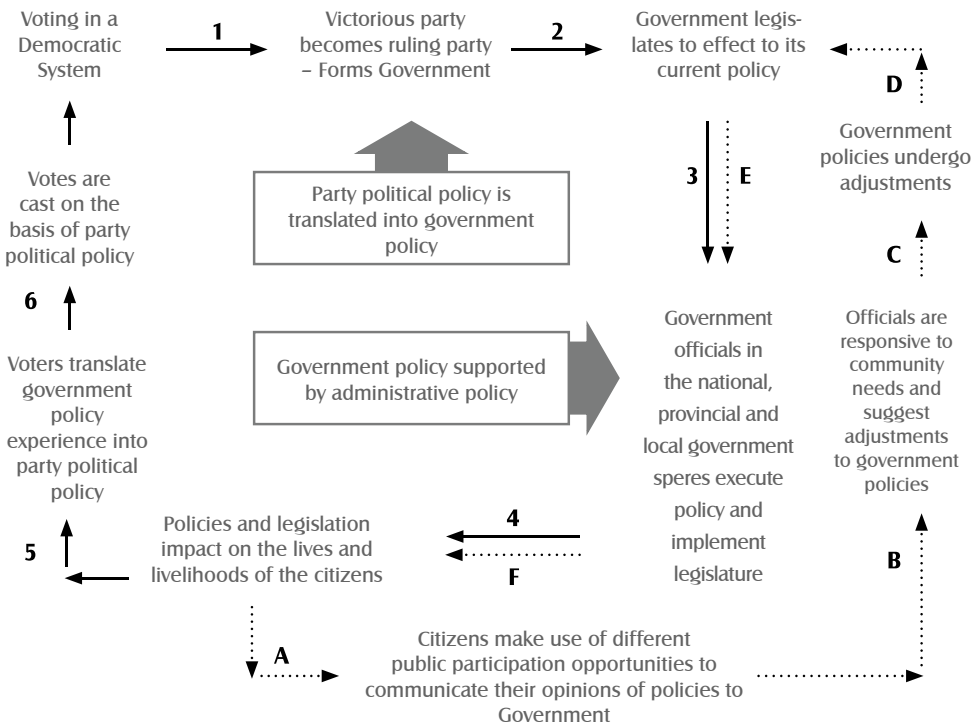
are becoming more evident as time passes. Intermediate strategies should be sought to make development strides to meet the immediate needs. It is conceded that the sustainability aspect associated with development may for the intermediate term be sacrificed to an extent, but the opportunity cost may prove worth the while.

The question thus arises as to how a system of governance within an ideal democracy should accommodate the inputs of communities as stakeholders and how such inputs may change and amend Government policies and strategies which are set for the purposes of development.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN AN IDEAL DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM

In any democratic system, service delivery and good governance largely depend on the efficacy of the policies and supportive legislation that are introduced by Government. However, to understand the role and the integrated nature of government functioning, the following figure serves as a diagrammatical explanation of the stages associated therewith.

Stages 1-6 involve a clockwise flow of how policy develops and impacts on society. Stages A-F involve the counter-flow (counter clockwise) where the government measures, and responds to, the community's opinion of its policies and strategies (or performance in general).



Optimal service delivery and good governance rely on both clock-wise and anti-clockwise processes to run effectively on an integrated basis.

Figure 3: Integrated nature of government functioning and community participation

A description appears on the previous page of an effective system that functionally operates in a clockwise, as well as in a counter-clockwise direction. It could be stated that service delivery and good governance are dependent on, among other factors, the extent to which the integratedness, intergovernmental relations and community participation in the different spheres operate successfully. In a clockwise direction at least six essential phases are indicated, whereas in the counter-clockwise direction phases A to F are indicated.

In a democracy regular elections are held during which all eligible citizens have the opportunity to cast their vote. Theoretically, the voters scrutinise the respective political parties' election manifestos to ascertain which of these parties have the soundest party political policies. Practically, voters do not necessarily support the parties on the basis of their party political policies alone. However, it is assumed that in a mature democracy, party political policy will form the basis upon which voters choose which party to support. It should also be noted that the voters may not always agree with all the party political policies of any given party. Choices are then made as to which party would represent the most important issues or which party's policies the voter would tend to support mostly, in this regard. Once the ballots have been cast and the victorious party has formed the government of the day, it sets itself the task of translating party political policies into government policy. Often, the newly elected government finds that practicalities such as resource constraints or environmental factors necessitate some adjustment to the policies held by the party. Therefore, government policy may deviate from party political policy as originally contained in political party manifestos.

Governments would issue many different government policy documents to provide guidance to decision-makers as to what actions should be taken. In addition, such documents are intended to clarify government policy to the citizens of the country. Policy documents, for instance white Papers (such as the white Paper on Local Government, 1998), serve to indicate what should be done and are typically documents that project Government's vision concerning particular aspects. Policy documents even tend to be somewhat abstract and don't always define exactly the what, where, when, who and how of policy implementation. In addition, where implementation is concerned, mandatory actions and sanctions need to be stipulated. In most cases, policies do not elaborate on such aspects. Subsequently, legislation and a general regulatory framework need to be established in order to support the implementation of policies. Therefore superficially, it may be stated that policies tend to indicate that something should occur, whereas legislation indicates that something must occur as well as in what manner or fashion it should occur.

As a result, Government would give effect to their policies by passing legislation to support their objectives. The agents responsible for implementing policies and executing legislation are the officials who are deployed in the national, provincial and local government sphere. In order to support the officials to effectively implement policies and to execute legislation, administrative policy is developed by government departments. Such policies relate to aspects that pertain to human resources, finances, logistics, procurement, technology application and work methodologies and administrative procedures. Naturally, the above aspects require a regulatory framework to ensure its implementation and execution, as well. Hence, the issuing of legislation such as the Public Finance Management Act 1999 (Act 1 of 1999), the Public Service Act 1994 (Proclamation 103 of 1994), and other instruments such as Treasury Regulations.

It should be borne in mind that all government actions affect society. The effects may differ from positive (development and advancement) to negative (where certain communities or individuals experience discomfort or where their human rights are infringed upon). In a heterogeneous society, such as in South Africa, the government cannot address all diverse needs and aspirations equally well. The government needs to put mechanisms in place to ascertain what needs and aspirations different communities have and it should consult such communities on how services could be rendered effectively. In addition, in some

cases where policies are implemented, the effects thereof are only established after a while. For this reason, the extent of responsiveness of government in terms of the actions it intends to take as well as the actions taken are important.

Citizens may therefore utilise different types of participation opportunities to communicate their opinions of policies to government. Such opportunities may take the form of public hearings, written submissions on proposed legislation, personal liaison with officials or politicians, public debates, media debates, imbizos or mass demonstrations and picketing. In the event where the stakeholders or even segments of stakeholder entities indicate their concern regarding policies or legislation, such messages should be fed into the system for analysis and possible adjustment by expert officials and politicians. If it is found that such concerns hold merit, the system should make provision for adjustment and rectification. Eventually, the citizens will exercise their democratic right to vote to indicate how they feel or how they have experienced the government's service delivery and governance ability.

## CONSULTATION AS A GOVERNANCE PROCESS

An important step in the governance process is to decide on the best approach to the modalities associated with consultation with stakeholders. When it comes to consultation, there is no ideal "recipe" that would satisfy all needs and circumstances. Consultation has to be tailored to meet the time frames, resource availability and nature of the issue(s) at hand.

A valuable approach to consultation could be to ask the following questions:

- **Who:** Who needs to be consulted: other departments, the Minister/MEC, other ministers, other levels of government, other jurisdictions, committees of Cabinet, various external client/stakeholder groups, general public?
- **What:** What should be the subject matter of the consultation: Whether to consult on issue identification, the range of options, the preferred options, the assumptions, the principles, the outcomes?
- **When:** Determining the timing of consultations and when one has consulted enough – i.e. when to end the consultations. Should it take place during the preliminary information gathering stage when one is trying to determine exactly the nature of the problem? Should one wait until there is some internal coalescing around the principles and expected outcomes that will guide the process? Should it be at each step in the process? Should some individuals/groups be consulted at some stages in the process, and others consulted in other phases of the policy development process?
- **Why:** Why does a particular individual, department or group need to be consulted? What type of exchange is one hoping to have with each person/group? Is the purpose of the consultation to gather information, to obtain feedback/reaction? Is it that, through the consultation, there is also the aim of disseminating information (marketing of the policy)? Finding answers to the why of consultation would enable one to determine what could be achieved through consultation. Answers to the why of consultation would also assist in determining the where and how of consultation.
- **Where:** At which location(s) should consultation take place? Is it more appropriate to consult some individuals/groups at certain locations and other individuals/groups at different venues?
- **How:** Asking oneself how the consultation should be conducted, implies finding the best method(s) or procedure to follow when embarking on a consultation programme. Should one arrange workshops, round table discussions, and public meetings? Should the Internet be used to disseminate information on the policy review in order to also solicit possible feedback? Should a discussion paper be released? Should sub-groupings of clients/stakeholders be brought together for consultations? Embarking on a consultation programme implies also budgetary implications. This should carefully be considered when deciding on a programme of consultation.

Utilising the above approach, or consultation checklist, could assist one to develop a conscious consultation plan or programme that would effectively address the particular circumstances that could influence the consultation process. The consultation plan can also be a tool (instrument) to facilitate discussion and endorsement by whoever is directing or co-ordinating the policy initiative, as well as any other officials whose endorsement is required.

Generally, and as a rule, consultation within the public institution (internal consultation) should precede external consultations. Failure to consult internally at the outset can often cause resistance and other difficulties in the policy development process. In particular, do not overlook inter-departmental consultations on problems/issues that cut across more than one department. An important aspect of consultation is to keep people informed – even other public institutions that might become involved in a particular programme – about the objectives of a proposed policy, as well as how it may possibly affect them in the future.

Consultation should be followed up and individuals/public institutions be assured that they will be informed about the outcome of their inputs. Letting stakeholders know how their inputs were used, including an explanation of why their suggestions were implemented, or not implemented, is important to foster positive ongoing relations in the future.

## **CONCLUSION**

The above discussion may serve to stimulate thinking that should put certain principles in place which would form a sound foundation upon which a more refined form of governance could be forged. In terms of Government policy it is required to engage in community participation processes to ensure that sound governance occurs. However, true community participation depends on a variety of aspects such as proper stakeholder involvement in public administration conduct, negotiation, capacity enhancement to achieve efficiency and effectiveness and consultation. In this regard, policies often fail to achieve their envisaged results. In an ideal system of governance, community participation is crucial. It appears that officials should be sensitive towards the complexity and involved nature of the execution of their duties and the crucial role that sound community input plays in this regard. As the process of implementing policies unfolds in all spheres of government, dysfunctionalities should be identified and applicable solutions will have to be sought along this way. This warrants extensive longitudinal research to be conducted throughout the governance arena in order to inform future policy processes.

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# MEASURING DELIVERABLES AND EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP THROUGH ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

**G H van Dijk**  
**School of Public Management and Administration**  
**University of Pretoria, South Africa**

## ABSTRACT

In the article the case is made for the effective and efficient implementation of a performance management system to ensure the appropriate measuring of deliverables. A number of issues that hamper determining and measuring deliverables are identified. Providing measurable deliverables are dependent upon the definition of both quantity and quality of services provided. However, an over-emphasis on input deters appropriate determination of output and outcome. Emphasis also has to be placed on establishing an effective link between individual and organisational performance management and indicators. If the link is absent, so will employee ownership be. Without employee ownership and self-efficacy, organisations are unable to sustain their development initiatives. The article makes the case for appropriate identification, monitoring and evaluation of both individual and organisational performance indicators.

## INTRODUCTION

How does one measure the effectiveness and efficiency of government in South Africa? And is effectiveness and efficiency the only indicators of success? If efficiency is getting work done in the correct manner and effectiveness as getting the correct things done, then isn't one focusing on the basic systems model and not taking into account current chaos theories on organisational processes and behaviour?

In answering the above question, one first has to consider the framework that governs both individual and organisational performance management. Establishing a link between individual and organisational performance management becomes the most important aspect in ensuring that deliverables are measurable and owned by individual employees.

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN SUPPORT OF ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) has been extensively involved in formulating policies for the implementation of a performance management system within the Public Service. According to Chapter 5, Section 10 of the SMS Handbook (Department of Public Service and Administration 2001(a)), a performance management system needs to be integrated with all other organisational processes to be effective. Performance management is an approach to how work is done and organised. The approach should focus on continuous improvement of performance, be driven by senior management and should be strategically aligned with all organisational goals and priorities.

The purpose of the system is to provide policy measures and guidelines for effective and efficient implementation of performance management within the organisation. Performance management is aimed at optimising the potential and current employee output in terms of quality and quantity and increasing the total organisational performance (Department of Public Service and Administration 2001(b):6). Thus, the policy links the importance of individual performance with organisational performance.

Chapters 5 and 6 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000), requires local government to:

- develop a performance management system;
- set targets, monitor and review performance based on indicators linked to the Integrated Development Plan (IDP);
- publish an annual report on performance management for the council, staff, the public and other spheres of government;
- incorporate and report on a set of general indicators prescribed nationally by the minister responsible for local government;
- conduct an internal audit on performance before tabling the report;
- have the annual performance report audited by the Auditor-General; and
- involve the community in setting indicators and targets and reviewing municipal performance.

Key performance indicators (KPIs) (baselines, input, output and outcome indicators) and targets (target date and employee performance targets) linked to the organisational key performance areas (KPA), priority areas and strategic objectives should be compiled with the aim to also establish a clear link between the organisational performance management system, the organisational indicators and the budget system. However, only focusing on organisational performance indicators will not lead to success. A clear link needs to be established between the performance agreements of employees, the organisational goals, the national performance indicators and the organisational performance management system.

Effective and efficient performance management will be based on the ability of the organisation to:

- develop and clearly formulate the political-administrative vision and values of the organisation; and
- achieve the strategic performance objectives through effective and efficient management.

The main principle of performance management is that performance management should be developmental in that it will identify key competencies required from employees as well as identify the strategic focus areas of the organisation (Public Service Regulations 2001).

## KEY FEATURES INFLUENCING PERFORMANCE

Local government, in particular, seems to be caught in the midst of a contradiction – their political leaders charge them with the initiation and management of change, yet the bureaucracy is rule-bound, unable and sometimes unwilling to take on the dynamic and complex task of development. Local government is expected to be an engine of development. But one should also remember that the immense complexity of maintaining a developmental municipality would test the abilities of the most supremely competent manager.

Some other key features that impact of determining the deliverables to be measured include (Jones 2001: 61-62):

- the mechanistic view of organisations based on the assumption that organisations function in accordance with formal policies and objectives, operate at the command of rationality, reasons and factual information;
- emphasis on control rather than performance;
- the contradiction that exists where demands for delegation, decentralisation, consultation and participation are balanced by an equally urgent need for centralisation of power in order to build a cohesive nation;
- poor manpower forecasting leading to inability to create and maintain sustainable pools of managers;
- tension created by the politicisation of local government; and
- extraordinarily powerful belief in the ability of training to solve all organisational problems that leads to vast sums of money spent on unevaluated, and maybe unnecessary, training.



The strategic success of any organisation is dependent on its EVR Congruence – thus, the similarity between its Environment (represented by its key performance indicators measuring customer satisfaction), its Resources (strengths and weaknesses in critical competence areas) and the Values and culture which determine the match between the two and ability of the organisation to sustain its environment-resources relationship. The environment is the source of opportunities and threats – external key success indicators. Resources detail the internal strengths and weaknesses that will either match or fail to match the environmental demands. The values and culture will manage the E-R relationship (Thompson 1996:14-15) by:

- determining the effectiveness of the current match between E and R; and
- managing the ability and will of the organisation to change and strengthen this match.

Traditionally, organisations have relied heavily upon financial measures or hard numbers to evaluate their performance and value (Luthans & Peterson 2002:376). However, experiences have taught that a strong sense of employee ownership of the outcomes of their work is an important predictor of employee behaviour and performance.

How does one go about instilling this sense of ownership? In local government, the emphasis has been on performance and establishing performance indicators. However, if performance indicators attesting to the amount of houses that need to be supplied with water and electricity are not strategically linked to the employee performance system, then trying to match the organisation's resources to its environment becomes an increasingly difficult challenge.

## **CHALLENGES IN MEASURING DELIVERABLES**

Hilliard (1995) states that there are a number of difficulties associated with performance measurement including the elusive concept of output, or in the case of the Senior Management Service (SMS), outcomes; scarcity of performance measures in the sense that only one instrument is used to evaluate performance; and vague performance dimensions dealing with the Public Service's difficulty in determining the quality dimensions of service delivery.

An unresponsive organisational climate and culture together with unclear performance indicators will further exacerbate the situation, while the governance framework of the organisation will either support or lead to the decline of appropriate performance measurement.

Obstacles to measurement of performance include:

- data organisation entailing that municipalities do not have reliable cost and project data centres (including accounting practices/management information systems);
- resistance by managers and staff; and
- outcome measurement issues (quality versus quantity debate).

In order to determine a holistic approach to performance management, leaders need to take cognisance of both the macro- and micro-environmental aspects impacting on performance improvement. Performance improvement needs to be defined in a much broader sense than just taking into consideration the calculable or quantitative criteria that facilitate the achievement of organisational objectives. Performance improvement becomes a way of looking at the entire organisational context within which employees and their leaders find themselves.

Traditional closed organisational models, comprising a strict hierarchy, reliance on rules and regulations and impersonality among colleagues and their clients are not conducive to productivity, innovation and creativity. In the open organisational model service excellence becomes the main aim of performance improvement. Micro-environmental aspects influencing performance improvement centre on the attainment of adequate

employee motivation, control of organisational assets, materials and shrinkage, caring for employee health and safety and developing affordable and accessible public services. The role of leaders in ensuring performance improvement is to provide the supportive organisational climate that is built on norms and standards that exemplify quality and quantity in service delivery.

Performance management is a means of getting better results from organisations, teams and individuals by understanding and managing performance within an agreed framework of planned goals, standards and attributes/competence requirements. In this regard, there are very specific reasons why performance management systems fail, including (Viedge 2003):

- individual goals are not linked to organisational strategy;
- there is no consequence of non-performance by employees;
- employees do not understand what is expected of them;
- necessary job competencies have not been developed;
- leaders do not use individual goals to drive performance;
- there are too many goals per employee;
- there is no link between effective performance and reward and recognition;
- no feedback on performance is given by identifying the concrete areas for improvement;
- employees are not held accountable for results; and
- performance management is seen as separate from the day-to-day management and leading of people.

## **EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND SELF-EFFICACY**

The concept of employee engagement is an important predictor of desirable organisational outcomes, including customer satisfaction, retention, and productivity. Employee engagement focuses on how the psychological experiences of work and work contexts shape the process of people presenting or absenting themselves during task performances. Thus, employees need to be cognitively involved in their work – meaning that they have to be acutely aware of their mission and role in their work environment. Disengagement takes place as a result of (Luthans & Peterson 2002:377-378):

- lacking social interaction at work;
- experiencing little autonomy in work roles; and
- feeling that their jobs are unimportant.

Together with employee engagement, manager self-efficacy becomes paramount. Self-efficacy refers to a manager's beliefs about his or her abilities to mobilise cognitive resources and courses of action needed to successfully execute a specific task within a specific context. Self-efficacy is important to the management of performance improvement. Self-efficacy can be increased in four ways (Luthans & Peterson 2002:379):

- enactive mastery (ability to direct training to job context);
- vicarious learning;
- simple verbal persuasion and social support for lower level jobs; and
- strategy development for higher level jobs.

A performance management system is good leadership practice that has been standardised and incorporated into an all-encompassing system. It will combine the following processes:

- aligning individual objectives to the vision, mission and strategy of the organisation;
- setting individual objectives with corresponding measures;
- setting up a process of regular one-on-one performance reviews;
- ongoing monitoring of performance in terms of objectives; and
- individual development plans linked to job requirements and furthermore linked to organisational objectives and goals.

Some of the best practice research suggests that the following should, among other things, be in place in order to facilitate successful local government performance management (Cameron & Sewell 2003):

- Executive involvement. In most cases performance management systems are initiated by top management, but the case is strongly supported that top management involvement should extend beyond initiation. It should be evident in the manner the system is implemented and the manner in which performance is rewarded and laxity addressed.
- Sense of urgency. New performance management systems are usually suggested when a change within the organisation is evident or needed, e.g. new political leadership or new quality philosophy. The change should immediately be seen and felt by all in the organisation as well as by the customers. Thus, the emphasis on the performance management system as the vehicle to facilitate this evidenced change becomes urgent.
- Alignment with strategic direction. Alignment between organisational vision, mission, objectives and both its organisational and individual performance management system cannot be questioned.
- Conceptual framework. An organisation's performance management system should be integral to its overall management process and directly support the achievement of the organisation's fundamental goals.
- Communication. Communication is crucial for establishing and maintaining a performance management system. It should be multidirectional, running top-down, bottom-up, and horizontally within and across the organisation. All different media should also be utilised according to what would suit the organisation and its customers best.
- Employee involvement. Employee involvement is one of the best ways to create a positive culture that thrives on performance management. When employees are involved in every aspect of their performance measurement and when employees are made aware of their organisational performance responsibility, acceptance becomes easier and employee productivity is increased.

In sum, to undertake performance measurement successfully, an organisation must:

- make a commitment to measure performance and get started;
- treat performance measurement as an ongoing process. Performance measurement is an iterative process that progresses but has no end; and
- tailor the process to the organisation, i.e. an organisation must develop performance measures that complement its culture, size, mission, vision, organisational level, and management structure as well as its goals and objectives.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

In 2005 the then Executive Mayor of the City of Tshwane said in his State of the City Address (2005) that it is Tshwane's goal to become the employer of choice with a staff that engenders a culture of commitment to service excellence. That can only be achieved through the implementation of a performance management system that rewards excellence and confronts laxity.

The development objective of local government is imbedded in both administrative policy and political intent. For the development to be meaningful and responsive to customer need, the development agenda needs to be broken down into measurable objectives that can be managed on both an organisational and individual level. The link between individual and organisational performance needs to be created and employees engaged in the process to ensure its success. Without this important link, objectives might be described in a measurable manner, but not attained in the practical sense.

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# **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT: A LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE IN SOUTH AFRICA**

**P Pillay  
M Subban**  
**School of Public Administration,  
University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), South Africa**

## **ABSTRACT**

Performance management is increasingly gaining momentum in the public sector. It is a strategic approach to the management of public resources and involves the quest for efficiency, effectiveness and economy. This approach has become a statutory performance measure to deliver quality services in a dynamic and diverse public sector environment. The aim of the article is to provide a conceptual framework of performance management from a holistic perspective. In addition, this article seeks to conceptualise, contextualise and operationalise performance management within a local government perspective. Furthermore, several barriers to performance management are identified and some remedial action is highlighted.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Local government is at the forefront of basic services and attention is focused on municipalities to deliver quality services as part of their developmental mandate to the citizens. To this end, performance management is a strategic and integrated process in ensuring that outputs and outcomes are effectively achieved with efficient and economic use of resources. Performance management also refers to results and responsiveness to the needs, desires and resources of the community, client or user (Epstein, 1992: 168). It is an approach that requires public representatives and managers of each institution to manage in such a manner that all its components and individual employees are held accountable, thereby ensuring improved delivery and value-for-money to the public (Department of Provincial and Local Government, Introduction to Performance Management in South Africa, 2001: 3).

According to the KwaZulu-Natal Directorate for Human Resource Development Supervisors' Manual (1996: 60), performance management is a process whereby the manager and the employee both review the employee's performance on a periodic basis. If performance is lacking, the manager coaches the employee on improving trouble spots. Coaching on a timely basis eliminates the often unpleasant and unproductive "post mortem" aspects of the performance appraisal.

## **DEFINITIONS OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

There are several definitions relating to performance management. A few definitions are cited hereunder:

According to Armstrong (1994:23), performance management is defined as: "A method of establishing shared understanding about what is to be achieved, and an approach to managing and developing people in a way that increases the probability that defined outputs will be achieved in both the short and longer terms."

According to Bailey in Service Delivery Review (2003), performance management is viewed as: "...the systematic, data-oriented approach to managing people at work that relies on positive reinforcement as the major way to maximise performance."

The following three components in relation to the above definition are noted:

- systematic (clear processes and procedures);
- data-oriented (if you can't measure it, you can't manage it); and
- positive reinforcement (the system is used in a positive, non-threatening manner).

The overall goal of performance management is to establish an organisational culture in which individuals and teams take responsibility for the continuous improvement of the organisation, and of their own skills and contributions to desired results.

Williams in Cameron & Sewell (2003:244) states:

"The setting of objectives and measurements is the performance management activity which ensures that all employees know what results they need to achieve, to maximise their contribution to the overall business plan. In essence, it enables employees to know what is required of them and on what basis their performance contribution will be assessed."

Williams further emphasises that performance indicators should:

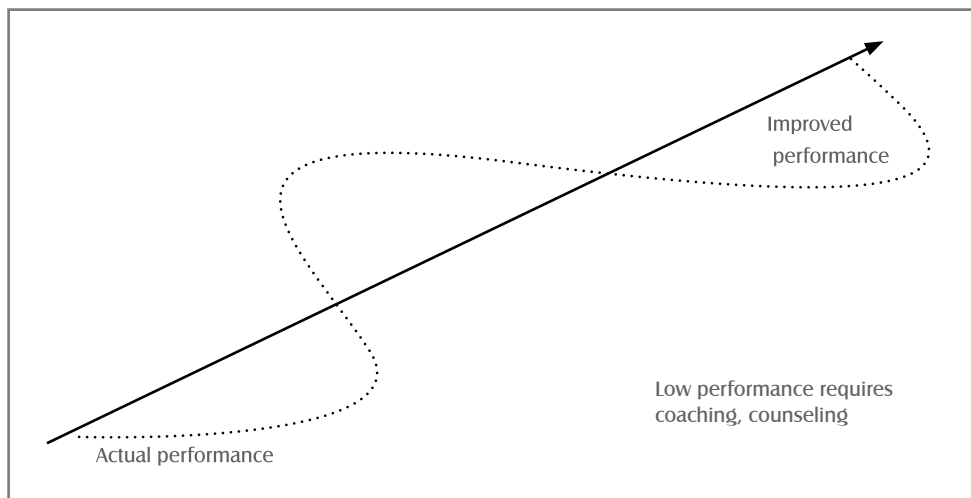
- be agreed jointly in advance between the manager and the individual as both realistic and challenging and are therefore jointly owned;
- measure the actual level of achievement so that the basis on which performance is assessed can be clearly understood in advance; and
- support the overall business strategies and values of the organisation so that the performance objectives taken together are mutually supportive and consistent throughout the organisation.

## THE ESSENCE AND SCOPE OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Performance management is a shared process between managers and individuals and teams they manage. It rejects the assumption that only managers are accountable for the performance of their teams and replaces it with the belief that responsibility is shared between managers and team members. This system is based on the principle of management by contract rather than command, although this does not exclude the need to incorporate high performance expectations in such contracts. There must be an agreement of objectives, knowledge, skill and capability (competence) requirements, performance improvement and personal development plans.

The President, Thabo Mbeki, on 3 February 2006, in his State of the Nation address emphasised the dire importance of addressing the skills shortages, continuing efforts to strengthen local government and focusing on the dual needs of accelerated economic growth and social development in the country. President Mbeki reported that a recent domestic poll revealed that 71% of the South African population believed government was generally performing well, 72% approved of the government's efforts in various areas of social delivery, only 56% thought government was responding well to economic challenges and just 45% was in agreement that the sphere of local government was performing well. The President outlined the main challenges that needed to be addressed in order to improve the country's approval of government's performance, including the challenge of poverty, underdevelopment and marginalisation confronting those in the Second Economy – ultimately honouring the precepts of Batho Pele (Local Government Digest 2006: 8).

A diagrammatical representation of the various stages of performance management is illustrated in Figure 1 below (Armstrong, 1994: 4).



**Figure 4: Stages of the performance management system**

High performance:

- Reinforce through recognition (financial and non-financial, praise, additional responsibility)

Start year	During year	End year
Performance agreement	Monitoring and review against performance agreement	Main performance

The performance management system is not an isolated system run by the Human Resources Department alone, but it is a holistic approach that concerns the whole public sector organisation. Armstrong (1994: 5) correctly states that it is concerned with what people do (their work), how they do it (their behaviour) and what they achieve (their results). The combined impact of these aspects of performance management may be expected to achieve more to improve organisational effectiveness than the various parts if they function separately.

## THE PURPOSE OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance management purports to get better results from the whole organisation, from the individual employees and from teams within it. As Minister Sydney Mufamadi posits in his foreword to the Department of Provincial and Local Government Guide on Performance Management (undated:2), this performance management framework was established to enable national and provincial governments to systematically detect:

- early warning signals of under-performance so as to enable proactive and timely interventions in municipalities experiencing difficulties;
- capacity limitations and thereby develop targeted capacity building and support programmes for local government; and
- weaknesses in the local government system for continued refinement and improvement.

In the same foreword, Minister Mufamadi further states that this framework also provides for municipalities to develop their own performance monitoring systems which will serve as strategic tools to enable municipalities to:

- monitor their own performance in the implementation of IDPs;
- improve efficiency, effectiveness, quality and accountability in service delivery while maximising the development impact; and
- empower communities and the public to hold municipalities accountable as true and real agents of service delivery and development.

The Department of Provincial and Local Government's Guide on Performance Management (undated:8), further states that the overall strategic objectives of the performance management system is to improve the performance of municipalities through:

- creating pressures for change at various levels;
- creating a culture of best practice and encouraging shared learning among municipalities;
- promoting accountability;
- contributing towards the overall development of the Local Government system in the country;
- helping to develop meaningful intervention mechanisms; and
- guiding the development of municipality building programmes.

Despite enthusiasm regarding performance management by various organisations, a comprehensive survey of nine leading South African organisations undertaken by the University of Stellenbosch Business School recently revealed a rather bleak picture of the way employee performance is managed and rewarded in South Africa (SDR 2003:21).

According to Joubert and Noah (in SDR 2003:21), major problems that were identified during the survey included: the existence of a rather negative working culture; changes in corporate strategy did not result in corresponding behaviour changes; and there was generally insufficient line management support for performance management.

This situation is not different in the Public Service, particularly in the performance management of senior managers. A study conducted by the Public Service Commission (PSC) on the management of performance agreements of senior managers in 2002 revealed that a number of senior managers had not signed performance agreements and that performance reviews are not conducted regularly as required. The study found that 12% of the respondents had not been told by their departments how the system of performance agreements worked.

## **OBJECTIVES OF A PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

According to SALGA (2003:72), the objectives of implementing a Performance Management System in municipalities are to:

- achieve sustainable improvements in service delivery to the community;
- develop constructive and open relationships between managers/supervisors and employees;
- encourage and reward good performance;
- link the IDP to team and individual performance;
- enable individuals to develop their abilities, increase their job satisfaction and achieve their full potential so that both the employee and the municipality benefit, and
- fulfill the requirements of the Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000.



## PRINCIPLES OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Ideas on performance management are summarised in the following principles posited by the IRS (1996:21):

- it translates corporate goals into individual, team, departmental and divisional goals;
- it is a continuous and evolutionary process, in which performance improves over time;
- it relies on consensus and co-operation rather than control or coercion;
- it creates a shared understanding of what is required to improve performance and how this will be achieved;
- it requires a management style that is open and honest and encourages two-way communication between superiors and subordinates;
- it requires continuous feedback;
- feedback loops enable the experiences and knowledge gained on the job by individuals to modify corporate objectives;
- it measures and assesses all performance against jointly agreed goals; and
- it should apply to all staff and is not primarily concerned with linking performance to financial reward.

Within the context of local government, the principles that guided the Department of Provincial and Local Government in developing performance management as contained in the Department of Provincial and Local Government's Guide on Performance Management (undated: 8), were the following:

- the system must be owned by municipalities and supported by other spheres of government;
- the system must place communities at the centre of the local government processes;
- the system should be non-punitive;
- the system should be seen as a developing one;
- the system should be linked to the IDP framework;
- the development and implementation of the system needs to cater for capacity variations between and within municipalities; and
- the system needs to build on or at least be linked to existing initiatives.

The underlying rationale behind these principles is to review and remove blockages to service delivery.

## CONSTITUTIONAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

Chapter 7 of the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA 1996) sets out the objectives and developmental duties of local government. Section 152 deals with the objectives of local government, as follows.

### Objectives of local government

Section 152 (1) of the 1996 Constitution highlights the objectives of local government as follows:

- to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities;
- to ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner;
- to promote social and economic development;
- to promote a safe and healthy environment; and
- to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in matters of local government.

Section 152 (2) determines that a municipality must strive, within its financial and administrative capacity, to achieve the objectives set out in subsection (1).

## Developmental duties of local government

Section 153 of the 1996 Constitution states that a municipality must:

- structure and manage its administration and budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community; and
- participate in national and provincial development programmes.

The White Paper on Local Government (Department of Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development, 1998) emphasises the impact which developmental local governments can have on the lives of typical South African communities such as:

- provision of housing infrastructure and services;
- creation of livable integrated cities, towns and rural areas;
- local economic development; and
- community empowerment and resource redistribution.

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000, which specifically deals with the Local Government Performance Management Framework is contemplated in Chapter 7, section 154 (1) of the South African Constitution, 1996, which stipulates that:

“the national and provincial governments, by legislative and other measures, must support and strengthen the capacity of municipalities to manage their own affairs, to exercise their powers and perform their functions.”

Section 154 (2) further states:

“Draft national or provincial legislation that affects the status, institutions, powers or functions of local government must be published for public comment before it is introduced in Parliament or a provincial legislature, in a manner that allows organised local government, municipalities and other interested persons an opportunity to make representations with regard to the draft legislation.”

Chapter 6 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000, is entitled *Performance Management* and is divided into two parts. Part 1 emphasises the macro conditions for a performance management system, the need for economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the utilisation of municipal resources as part of integrated development. It outlines the structures and mechanisms pertaining to the establishment, approval, monitoring and review of the performance management system.

Part 2 of this chapter of the Act provides for the core principles, mechanisms and processes that are necessary to enable municipalities to move progressively towards the social and economical upliftment of local communities and ensure universal access to affordable basic services. The Act also creates an enabling framework for the core processes of planning, performance management, resource mobilisation and organisational change. Part 2 also outlines the following five core functions of the performance management system:

- sets appropriate key performance indicators (KPIs) as yardsticks for measuring performance, including outcomes and impact, with regard to the municipality's development priorities and objectives set out in its integrated development plan;
- sets measurable performance targets;
- monitors performance;
- measures and reviews performance at least once a year;
- improves performance; and
- establishes a process of regular reporting.

Benjamin in Business Day cited in IMFO (2006:42), highlights the MEC's role in laying down the law on performance management to newly elected municipal office bearers. Municipalities are the keys to delivery and accelerated economic growth. The MEC for Gauteng challenged local government officials and members of SALGA to be accountable and effective in finding solutions to change the face of municipalities. He stressed that, those who do not perform or flout the system will have action taken against them. Employees found obstructing service delivery will face the full might of the law. The necessity for a culture of performance management to permeate all activities of municipalities is strongly advocated.

## HUMAN ELEMENT

People are the most important factor when it comes to management, it does not matter how technologically advanced your municipality is, or how much customer focus you have, how low your costs are or how high your quality is, the real difference is made by the human resources at your disposal (Ehlers & Lazenby 2007: 3). It is people who implement and drive strategies forward. Government's development agenda includes, inter alia, training and development of public officials to address the skills deficit in municipalities and at all other spheres.

Chapter 10 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, stipulates that public administration must be governed by democratic values and principles.

Section 195 (i) states: *"Good human resource management and career development practices, to maximise human potential, must be cultivated."*

Chapter 7 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000, provides for local public administration and human resources. Part 4 of the Chapter deals with staff matters. Section 68 of the Act provides for capacity building.

In terms of Section 68 (1) *"A municipality must develop its human resource capacity to a level that enables it to perform its function and exercise its powers in an economical, effective, efficient and accountable way ..."*

A municipality's capacity and development strategies are driven by productive employees and the creation of a positive organisational climate. Another driving force is addressing the skills gap in the municipality and the economy.

In fact, the key performance indicators of strategic focus areas (human capital development) are the:

- number of interventions undertaken in respect of the Human Capital Development Strategy; and
- number of people employed who have gone through various training programmes in the municipality.

## PUBLIC SERVICE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM

The Public Service monitoring and evaluation system is intended to contribute to improved government and service delivery in South Africa. Problems are identified, priority areas are communicated, good practice is noted and departments are given an opportunity to reflect on their own performance. The Public Service Commission conducted monitoring and evaluation research in 2004 into several departments both nationally and provincially. Among those evaluated was the Limpopo Department of Local Government and Housing. The research was undertaken to ascertain the extent to which departments comply with the nine principles of Public Administration as prescribed in Chapter 10, Section 195 (1) of the South African Constitution.

## **BARRIERS TO PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

Barriers to the successful implementation of the performance management system manifest themselves in various ways. According to Ammons cited in Sing (2003:141), common barriers in the public sector can be grouped into three clusters, namely:

- Environmental barriers include absence of market pressures, lack of political appeal, short time horizon of politicians and managers and subordination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness to secondary status. These obstacles are part of the public sector environment.
- Organisational barriers include bureaucratic socialisation process, lack of accountability, union resistance, ambiguous objectives, absence of cost-accounting systems, inadequate performance information, inadequate research, experimentation, bureaucratic rigidities and fragmented authority.
- Personnel barriers include inadequate control of time or the workday, risk avoidance, conceptual confusion and managerial alibis (Ammons, cited in Sing, 2003: 142).

Swain and white cited in Sing (2003: 142) add technological barriers such as the quality of computer literacy, functional application, ignorance by computer systems specialists, hardware and software incompatibilities and reluctance to accept technological gains.

## **OVERCOMING THE BARRIERS TO PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

A suitable remedial action for each barrier depends on the nature of the barrier. Environmental barriers like the lack of political appeal and short time horizon of politicians require political and democratic motivators whereas subordination of the economy requires fiscal motivators. Organisational barriers like union resistance, ambiguous objectives, absence of cost-accounting systems, inadequate performance information, inadequate research, experimentation and technological barriers such as computer illiteracy necessitate capacity-building initiatives. According to the Department of Local Government Guide on the Introduction to Management for Local Government in South Africa (undated: 18), the province may:

- suggest capacity building initiatives;
- issue specific instructions;
- recommend a process of competitive tendering in case of service delivery problems;
- appoint a person/task teams to assist with specific functions for a defined period of time; and
- transfer the function to another body for a specified period of time.

The worst case scenario, if the degree of non-performance is high, is that the province may take over the function completely. As it has been mentioned previously, Section 139 of the Constitution allows the province to intervene in the affairs of the municipality as in case of the KwaZulu-Natal Government's intervention in the affairs of the Abaqulusi Municipality.

According to the Sowetan (Wednesday March 30 2005: 11), Local Government Minister, Mr Sydney Mufamadi has deployed experts to assist in the capacity building of municipalities. He said those deployed would work in municipalities where committees had not been established. He said this would "create a positive legacy of skills transfer which will allow municipalities to manage their own affairs in a professional way" Mercury (Wednesday, 3 March 2005: 3). Minister Mufamadi highlighted that the deployment of experts forms part of the Department of Local Government's Project Consolidate, which has identified 136 municipalities in need of help. He also said that government had budgeted R15,6 billion to build municipal infrastructure in weak municipalities.

Another important development is the establishment of ward committees, which were contemplated in the Municipal Structures Act, 1998, to pave the way for the implementation and review of Integrated Development Plans (IDPs). Sowetan (March 30 2005:11) reports that during Minister Mufamadi's address to 1000 delegates at the two-day Community Participation Conference in Midrand, he said ward committees would serve as "watchdogs over service delivery." He said that if a local councillor abused his or her position, the committees would act as the voice of the community. This further indicates Government's efforts towards assisting weaker municipalities to perform better.

## **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**

A municipality's performance management measurement system entails a framework that describes and presents how a municipality's cycle and process will be conducted, organised and managed with regard to performance planning, performance monitoring, performance measurements and review, performance reporting and performance improvement.

The Municipal Systems Act, 2000, inter alia, promotes the following aspects:

- establishing a framework for support, monitoring and standard setting;
- moving progressively towards social and economic upliftment of local communities; and
- ensuring universal access for all to essential services.

## **IMPLEMENTING A PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

According to the Service Delivery Review (2002:29), the following six-step process is a useful way of describing how a performance management system might best be introduced into a municipality.

Step 1: Define the organisation's mission and its strategic performance objectives

Step 2: Establish an integrated performance management system

Step 3: Establish accountability for performance

Step 4: Establish a process or system for collecting performance data

Step 5: Establish a process or system for analysing, reviewing and reporting performance data

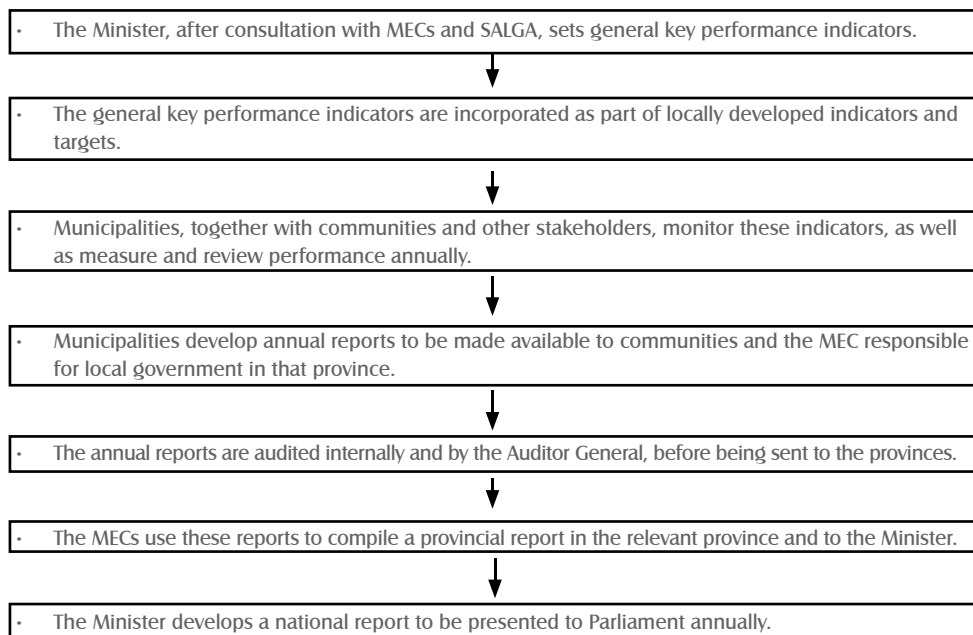
Step 6: Establish a process or system for using performance information to drive improvement

An integrated and balanced individual performance management system can become a "...systematic, data oriented approach to managing people at work that relies on positive reinforcement as the major way to maximise performance. "As such it is a powerful tool for improving both individual and organisational performance.

## **PERFORMANCE REPORTING**

The figure overleaf succinctly illustrates the process of performance reporting as a series of sequential steps.

## FIGURE 2: PERFORMANCE REPORTING OF MUNICIPALITIES



## PHASES RELATED TO PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

To achieve the ideals included in the Municipal Systems Act, the Act prescribes the implementation of core principles, mechanisms and processes.

The nine phases, as outlined in the Auditor-General's Training Manual on Auditing Performance Management within Local Government, and identified in terms of the legislation, regulations and guidelines issued, with regard to performance management, are summarised as follows:

- **Phase 1:** Development of an integrated development plan
- **Phase 2:** Development and implementation of a performance management system
- **Phase 3:** Development and improvement of key performance indicators
- **Phase 4:** Setting targets for key performance indicators
- **Phase 5:** Actual service delivery process
- **Phase 6:** Internal monitoring
- **Phase 7:** Internal control
- **Phase 8:** Performance measurement and reporting
- **Phase 9:** Revision of strategies and objectives

## MODELS FOR PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

While there is no absolute blue-print for performance management, however, a simple performance management model is useful for analysing where the emphasis in particular performance initiatives has been placed.

## The balanced scorecard

The balanced scorecard is a performance measurement approach which enables organisations to define their strategic focus in terms of four key perspectives or strategic themes which need to be balanced for sustainable performance, namely: financial, customer, internal business processes and staff learning and growth perspectives. The alignment of organisational with individual scorecard objectives and identification of linkages between various functions or departments are essential for managing the conflicting strategies in a complex organisation. Initially designed for application to the for-profit (private) sector, where the emphasis on financial profitability objectives is paramount, the authors subsequently developed a modified version of the balanced scorecard tool for non-profit and public sector organisations, notably pioneered by the City of Charlotte, USA (Kaplan in SAJEMS 2003: 260).

## The workforce scorecard

The workforce scorecard lays out a cogent and clear approach on how to turn strategy into performance by focusing on elements of workforce success that can be tracked and monitored. Huselid, Becker & Beatty (2005: 10), dissect the success of performance into four categories.

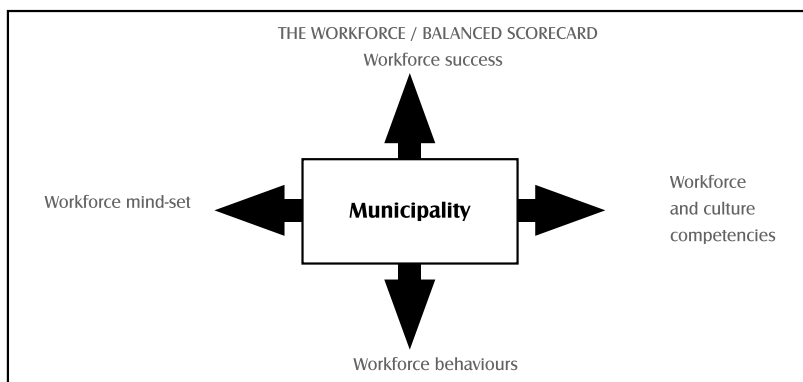


Figure 5: The workforce scorecard

## CHALLENGES CONFRONTING PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Some of the pertinent challenges to be considered are cited in Sing & Subban (2006), as follows:

- choosing among the different methodologies that could be used in promoting performance and performance measurement;
- understanding the various components of the concept of value-for-money;
- understanding the various dimensions and meanings of quality associated with performance management;
- clarifying the difference between performance management and performance indicators;
- choosing criteria for judging the value of performance measures and performance indicators.;
- analysing the varied interdependent and interrelated benefits of and barriers to performance management;
- understanding the requirements of performance criteria and standards, performance targets and definitions of performance information; and
- establishing criteria for performance review, performance monitoring and performance evaluation.

According to Meyer & Theron in Van Der Walddt (2006: 139), further challenges may be cited as:

- difficulties in measuring performance;
- roles and responsibility clarification; and
- political factors that often outweigh management rationale in local government decision-making.

Van Der Walddt (2006:141) elaborates on other challenges to be overcome in local government as;

- organisational climate and culture – functioning with broad array of rules and procedures; and
- organisational factors – structures, practices, policies, political and managerial leadership style, unions and use of technology (Van der Walddt 2006:141).

## CONCLUSION

Performance management must be viewed as an ongoing series of models, frameworks, guidelines, tools and most importantly, the mindset or inculcating a culture for institutional and individual performance to be assessed. The identification of shortcomings is a significant milestone in the performance management agenda. However, the development of performance improvement plans to ensure that measurable targets are linked to delivery is equally important. Municipalities must be realistic about what is achievable over particular time frames, because the tendency may be to be tempted to take on a huge volume of tasks, which may, in the final analysis, become too onerous to ensure the successful review thereof. Ultimately, a holistic perspective to implementing and managing performance within local government is necessary to accelerate service delivery and community upliftment.

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# ACCELERATING PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY THROUGH THE MANAGEMENT OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS IN NIGERIA AND SOUTH AFRICA

**J O Kuye**  
**School of Public Management & Administration**  
**University of Pretoria, South Africa**

**I U Ile**  
**School of Government**  
**University of the Western Cape, South Africa**

## ABSTRACT

The practice of inter-governmental relations (IGR) and its management has become an important element for facilitating service delivery in the public service. This paper departs from the premise that IGR presents an opportunity for improved service delivery that is yet to be fully harnessed. In order to fully actualise the facilitative potential that is inherent in IGR, it has become essential to identify critical elements that can assist public administration practitioners to harness the possible gains that can be made through effective IGR management. These critical elements are identified in this article and are linked to the generic activities of public administration which are described as involving decision-making, planning, advising, co-ordination, conciliation, arbitration, command and data gathering through which government carries out its responsibilities.

The article commences with an overview of the case study contexts – the Nigerian public service and the South African public service. This contextualisation provides an opportunity to highlight and present cross-country findings (Ile, 2006: 146-196) that may assist in improving IGR effectiveness in both federalist and unitary states.

## CONTEXTUALISING CURRENT PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

### Nigerian and South African perspectives

The article commences with an overview of the case study contexts – the Nigerian public service and the South African public service. This contextualisation provides an opportunity to highlight and present cross-country findings (Ile, 2006: 146-196) that may assist in improving IGR effectiveness in both federalist and unitary states.

These two countries have been carefully selected as they exhibit some of the difficulties that several African countries have had to deal with. This relates to managing diversities (in a federalist structure as in the case of Nigeria and in a unitary style government as in the case of South Africa) including embracing ethnic, cultural, racial and religious tensions. It is important to note that over the years, there have been bold attempts to reform the public service in these countries and much has been written about these (Kuye 2006; Levy & Tapscott, 2001; Nnoli 2000). The current public service reform philosophies that shape service delivery in both countries are the Service Compact with all Nigerians (Servicom) and the Batho Pele principles of South Africa. However, much still needs to be done in understanding the factors or elements that facilitate effectiveness of IGR within the current reform initiatives.

The Servicom principles were introduced after a comprehensive public service review. According to the Office of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Servicom is based on the principle that Nigeria can realise its full potential if citizens receive prompt and efficient services from the state. It requires a show of commitment and renewal, consideration for all the rights of Nigerians to enjoy economic and social advancement, and the need to deliver quality services in a dedicated manner that is fair, honest, effective and transparent. (<http://www.servenigeria.com/index.php?option=comcontent&task=view&id=5&Itemid=6>. Retrieved: 23 May 2006).

In South Africa, given the legacy of the apartheid government, there was a pressing need to reshape the manner in which services were delivered to millions of South Africans who were previously excluded or provided substandard services. The Batho Pele principles are about putting people first and aims to enhance the quality of services delivered in a manner that improves accessibility, efficiency and accountability to all recipients of public goods and services. Its key principles are: consultation with customers, adherence to set service standards; increased access to services; higher levels of courtesy; access to information about services; openness and transparency; the remedying of mistakes and failures; and the provision of value for money (Department of Public Service and Administration. <http://www.info.gov.za/aboutgov/publicadmin/bathopele.htm>. Retrieved: 23 May 2006).

This article argues that in order to achieve the desired goals or outcomes of the specific country reforms (i.e. Servicom and Batho Pele); one of the critical elements that must be strengthened is IGR. This is even more so given that there has been increased interaction among the different spheres of government within particular countries, making IGR more complex and intensive. Hence, Wright (1988: 467) describes IGR as a “huge complex building under continual construction and reconstruction. The edifice has no single deliberate overall design or consistent architectural motif. There is a non-stop remodelling and renovation, plus minor and major internal repairs; there is even selective razing and often whole floors and wings are added”.

The article is therefore not in search of an illusive, universal model for IGR, but rather an attempt to understand the intricacies of the management of IGR with a view to making interpretations that smooth out complexities and ensure improved co-ordination of the relationships among governments at different spheres.

In each of the selected countries, four ministries/departments of government were investigated. Their workings were analysed with a view to determining, among other things, the value that IGR brings in addressing service backlogs. In Nigeria, selected activities of the following ministries were investigated: the Ministry of Steel and Power (PHCN), the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, the Ministry of Water Resources and the Ministry of Petroleum Resources.

In South Africa, the departments selected were the Department of Housing, the Department of Health, the Department of Provincial and Local Government and the Department of Agriculture.

## **CROSS-COUNTRY ANALYSES**

In all systems of government (federal, confederal and unitary), there will be some form of relationship between the national government (centre) and the regional governments (periphery). This relationship could be in the form of de-concentration, decentralisation or the devolution of roles as mandated by the constitution of the country. In the selected countries, the relationship between the federal, state or local governments (as in the case of Nigeria, on the one hand) and the relationship between the national, provincial and local government (as in the case of South Africa, on the other hand) has significantly demonstrated that the nature and management of these governmental relationships can affect service delivery.

The effectiveness of decentralisation lies in the strength of the IGR system in a particular country. If there is a weak or ineffective IGR mechanism at one level of government, it may result in government's total or partial inability to achieve the ambitious objectives set. Ademolekun (1999: 50-52) argues that the necessity for decentralisation in modern governments accrues from:

- the need for governments to be visible at all levels and be accountable for delivery or non-delivery of services;
- the failure of the centralised state to achieve balanced socio-economic development; and
- the importance of ensuring that administrators understand the contexts in which they operate and the needs of the people they serve.

### CRITICAL ELEMENTS FOR IGR EFFECTIVENESS IN BOTH COUNTRIES

The analyses of selected activities of the selected ministries or departments suggest that the effective management of IGR requires a mix of critical elements. These elements have been identified by Ile (2006: 200-211) as commitment, communication, co-ordination, capacity, planning, policy management, project management and leadership. IGR management, as underpinned by the crucial elements identified are presented in the configured figure and formula below:



**Figure 6 - Emerging critical elements impacting on the management of IGR**

Successful management of IGR = C+ 3C+ 3P+ L

Where:

- C = commitment (and a critical element hence it stands alone);
- 3C = communication, co-ordination, capacity;
- 3P = project management, planning, policy management; and
- L = leadership.

## **Commitment**

Commitment is a critical element for the effective management of IGR. This relates to the will of the political and administrative class to achieve a common goal. This element provides the springboard from which all other elements must depart. Suberu (1999: 91) succinctly captures Nigeria as “a federation of enormous sociological and cultural diversity ... the federation’s peculiar volatile character derives from its vortex of combustible regional, ethnic and religious cleavages” which has been categorised along various divides. The nature of the centralist structure of government in Nigeria has emerged over time, making the centre very attractive and further leading to the fragmentation of territories through the creation of several weak states, whose input has generally been minimal.

In the South African scenario, it is argued that co-operative government would count for nothing if provinces and municipalities are being told what to do, do not take ownership and are not committed to programmes seen to be from the national sphere. This further reinforces the divides between centre and periphery, making it extremely difficult for players (all levels or spheres of government) to commit to a common course. What has evolved is a weak relationship between spheres, where the level of commitment across all provinces and municipalities cannot be said to be uniform. What has emerged from the above is that the nature of intergovernmental relations is IGR (with a weak emphasis on relationship) rather than IGR, due to inadequate commitment, and ultimately, this level of commitment is translated to weak deliverables.

## **Communication**

Communication has to be effective to have the desired impact on service delivery. An effective communication is one that ensures that the intended message reaches the receiver. In the public service, Levy and Tapscott (2001: 88), note that the executive and administration must communicate better as this builds trust within the sector. Poor communication may lead to service delivery being affected, diminish trust among public officials, and plummeting legitimacy in the relations between citizens and the executive (Wright, 1988: 43). Within that framework, building social partnerships must be understood as a process of trust production (Boguslaw, 2002: 47-48). The reliance on the effectiveness of communication within and across government levels/spheres could lead to high levels of co-operation in the public service, as national, state, provincial or local government and citizens, collectively form a problem-solving group, bringing about increased trust and refined relationships through communication.

Furthermore, the value of communication is critical, as in all relationships, because it helps in the resolution of conflicts and in dealing with contentious issues. In this regard, Rapoo (1995:25) notes, however, that “conflicts between the tiers of government are not necessarily a threat to the democratic order; on the contrary, some would see them as a sign of healthy pluralism and as evidence that the system is succeeding in creating the competing centres of power that are essential to democracy”.

However, conflicts need to be proactively managed through open and transparent communication processes, if the IGR effectiveness is to be actualised.

## **Co-ordination**

Co-ordination has emerged as one of the critical elements that could improve the chances of service delivery success. Service delivery in the realm of public service is anchored on the devolution of responsibilities away from centralised delivery institutions (Kaul, 2003:23). Macrae and Pitt (1985:197-198) further note that in order to attain strategic effectiveness in government activities, it is important to seek harmonisation in the management of bureaucratic or governmental complexities. This harmonisation can be brought about by sound co-ordination across the various spheres/tiers through integrated strategies that will result in improved efficiency and effectiveness, benefits of economies of scale, resources optimisation, striving towards attainment of minimum standards, managing overlaps, ensuring alignment of processes and promoting skills transfer from capacitated levels or spheres of government to other weaker ones.

Nnoli (2000: 48) indicates that the lateral organisation of government institutions makes co-ordination of the activities of the various ministries and departments an important part of IGR. Within the activity of co-ordination, there are other sub-activities, for example, budgeting and development planning, that have to be dealt with as mechanisms for inter-ministerial co-ordination and these can be achieved through various activities and decisions. This implies that the state has to harness the totality of the various networks to ensure that the benefits of economies of scale are actualised through formal and informal mechanisms of IGR.

In South Africa, Chapter 3 of the 1996 Constitution promotes co-operative governance among the spheres of government. However, "it can be argued that while the architecture of the new democratic state is in place, yet in many areas of service delivery, the performance of the public service requires much improvement" (Towards a Ten Year Review, 2003:75). Similarly, the Premier of the Eastern Cape Province (<http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2006/060>, retrieved 29 March 2006) noted that:

"A lot still has to be done to actualise government vision. In growing the efficiency of government, the thrust has been to strengthen the centre through sustained co-ordination and intention. Particular attention has been focused on harmonising the three spheres of government towards seamless service delivery. The programmes bundled in the Provincial Growth and Development Plan (PGDP) have provided fertile ground for effecting this form of integrated planning and implementation. Many lessons have been learnt and it is getting easier. However, more work lies ahead to fine tune the provincial model and to make sure that IGR structures are functional and bear tangible fruits. In particular constructing integrated development plans that embrace the delivery plans of all three spheres of government, including public entities must become the new way..."

### **Capacity**

The management of manpower, budgeting and training needs have remained an enormous challenge as a result of the capacity limitations that are faced at various levels or spheres of government in both countries. The Nigerian Minister for Internal Affairs (1986: 11) openly admitted that his department was understaffed, resulting in capacity shortages that affected delivery. In the South African situation, the transfer of mandate without a corresponding transfer of funds together with an assessment of the human resource capacity of various spheres to deliver may have, at times, led to the government's inability to deliver. This situation is such that the blame cannot be laid squarely on one of the spheres. All spheres must take responsibility for it and work together, taking advantage of any IGR opportunities that may be present or even creating them in order to meet the expectations of the people. Furthermore, in South Africa, with regard to human resource capacity, both the IGR Audit and the Presidential Review Commission of 1998 recognised the importance of intergovernmental human relations as a political approach towards managing tensions in government (Levy & Tapscott, 2001: 11), as poor IGR co-ordination is frequently a problem of capacity and management rather than purely one of procedure. What this suggests, is that appropriate capacity has to be developed with regard to recognising the value of the human or individual element in the management of IGR. The skill of managing human relations in IGR is thus critical (particularly for senior administrators and executives), alongside capacity to efficiently and effectively spend funds allocated, and with due regard for issues pertaining to ethics and accountability.

### **Project management**

While some gains have been achieved in certain governmental activities, efforts still need to be intensified to ensure that the huge delivery needs are met in both countries. The delivery challenges hinge on the performance of all levels of government with a need for operational efficiency and effectiveness. Systems that ensure that resources provided are efficiently and effectively utilised with the aid of project implementation may be critical, as is the development of appropriate monitoring tools. In South Africa, several project management challenges remain, especially in the housing sector. In the Nigerian context, Akobundu (1995: 8) notes that,

“we do not appear to have fashioned out a systematic and a clearly defined approach towards project implementation, let alone imbibing the culture. All efforts at ensuring effective project-monitoring have generally not yielded any meaningful results.”

## **Planning**

In order to deliver on promised and expected services, Oshisami and Dean (1999: 88) note that, for the system to work, there must be adequate contact between those who plan and those who are responsible for both budgeting and implementation. This makes the element of joint planning and consultation with relevant stakeholders a delivery imperative. With three spheres/tiers of government in both countries, the structure makes planning a very complex task, requiring effective communication and co-ordination. Ayida (1987:30-32) argues that for planning to be successful, the following elements have to be successfully managed:

- the will to plan;
- statistics;
- budget;
- co-ordination; and
- research and development.

The above may not be adequate but should also take into consideration the technical planning apparatus. In Nigeria, planning has been problematic as “past censuses were not only exaggerated, but claims were made that counts included fictitious elements”(Ajayi, 1985:9). Likewise in South Africa, a challenge remains of getting accurate and timely data and information, a position which may have also contributed to a number of failed or poorly executed projects. Planning therefore plays a pivotal role in ensuring the success of intergovernmental relations. In South Africa, the government has since introduced a National Planning Framework to enhance areas of strategic policy prioritisation and to improve the policy decisions of government (Towards a Ten Year Review, 2003:13). To ensure the alignment of service delivery at all spheres of government, the Provincial Growth and Development Plans (PGDP), for provinces and the Integrated Development Plans (IDP) for municipalities were introduced. Despite the introduction of these strategies, the integration of service delivery still faces some challenges.

## **Policy management**

The development of a policy framework and its management are important. In South Africa, the IGR Framework Act, 2005, only came into being eleven years after the attainment of democratic government. This meant that most of the interactions (although broadly promoted by the Constitution) did not have the specific guidelines and muscle to ensure implementation. Macrae and Pitt (1985:197-198) note that in order to attain strategic effectiveness in government activities, alignment in the management of bureaucratic or governmental complexities, which can be brought about by a sound policy framework and implementation strategies, is vital.

In the Nigerian case, (given that Nigeria had been under military rule for over 22 years of its post-independence existence) the governance style that has emerged is one that stifles democratic values - such as participation on the part of officials and citizenry, and a culture of inclusivity. With the struggle for state power by the different polarised units, Udoji (1975: 157-166) argues that “there is a growing desire for participation at all levels and that local government has an important role in fostering rapid economic growth. Participation will thus decongest the centre and thereby free national leaders from the onerous details as well as bring management close to the site of operation”.

He adds that the problems include the reconciliation of central government’s responsibility for policy direction and its management of the inherent tensions in a manner that ensures effective performance and stakeholder participation in governance. This demonstrates the importance of the systems approach. Hence

it is argued by Almond, Powell & Mundt (1996: 44) that the system propensities approach, which determines a government's legitimacy rating by citizens, is likely to be more effective in making and implementing policies and in overcoming hardships in most modern societies. This approach requires an assessment of the extent to which the political and administrative systems are open, and participation is high, in public debates in an effort to shape the future of the country.

Furthermore, while it may appear that it makes senses for implementation and monitoring to be located within the same agency, (as they complement each other), this may not be the route to go, as separation of the roles could allow for greater levels of probity and accountability of resources deployed. The need for improved project monitoring and evaluation certainly remains one of the challenges that the present governments in Nigeria and South Africa have to grapple with and find solutions to or develop management strategies for.

In this regard, it is crucial that project management be strengthened through effective monitoring of implementation, especially with regard to developing a data base of tried and tested project partners who may be from the private sector. These need to be monitored in a bid to manage unscrupulous contractors and service providers who may defraud government; and systems have to be put in place to ensure that such elements are blacklisted as a deterrent to others.

### **Leadership**

A weak relationship among the various tiers or spheres of government needs strategic leadership across the political and administrative spectrum. The question of striking a seamless interface between the political and administrative domains still remains an area of challenge for both Nigeria and South Africa. In the Federal Republic of Nigeria, leadership across the tiers of government are expected to play complementary roles. Ayida, (1987: 40-42) notes that the "role played by the federal government civil service in nation-building is essentially the role played by the state in the state civil service in the overall development of their respective states and the local government civil service in their respective areas".

In the South African case, what seems to emerge is that the current leadership is clear on its vision but there seems to be a dislocation between that top level of leadership and the middle/administrative leadership. Consequently, there are several challenges with policy implementation and frustrations over the pace of delivery which President Mbeki has pointed out in his State of the Nation address for two years in a row (i.e., 2004 and 2005).

Other elements related to leadership such as corruption by senior officials suggest the need to uphold ethical standards. If left unchecked, corruption will spread and become entrenched, a situation which is usually difficult to reverse. This is a complex problem that nevertheless has to be tackled as attitudes and values of both political leaders and appointed officials at the different levels of government has influenced the substance and style of IGR (Adamolekun, 1999: 104). Within the framework of the governance principles and philosophies, public officials must be publicly accountable and responsible for their activities. Both countries require accountable and responsible leadership that is committed to rooting out bribery and corruption in positions of power as indicated by David-West (1985:9), a former Nigerian Petroleum Minister who noted that "one heard about illicit oil, people making millions in oil, but a lot of the unethical behaviour were from people who were privileged to be in the corridors of power or who were linked to the seat of power".

The attitudes and values of some public servants are disturbing, as allegations of corruption and lack of accountability abound. In South Africa a range of non-delivery issues such as dissatisfaction with the poor or slow rate of housing delivery led to several country-wide riots in 2005.



In Business Report (2006), the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) is reported to have criticised the manner in which the housing grant was administered. This parliamentary financial watchdog noted that about R2,5 billion had been handed out as subsidies since 1994 from which the Auditor-General's investigation identified that R323 million had been spent on irregular applications. This included monies that were granted to employees who were earning salaries well above the subsidy assisted group, to people who had died, to people with invalid ID documents, duplicate payments, and payments to applicants under the age of 21. These inefficiencies were largely due to a weak system, as administrators could easily override any objections that the system had put forward. "These overrides talk to the heart of the matter, it is not a problem of capacity, it is a problem of system, it is an attitude, it is designed for corruption" (Dreyer, 2006: 1).

The current nature of the leadership is critical. For instance, it is clear that Nigeria has endured more military than democratic rulership since independence. This history has suffocated democratic and good governance principles such as accountability and responsiveness to the needs of the population. Ethical principles have been replaced with values that are autocratic in nature such as curtailment of constitutional rights and massive corruption. In essence, the country's leadership has exploited the resources of the country (effectively playing the exact role of the colonisers) for their own advantage and at the expense of the ruled. Given the deep-rooted unspoken leadership philosophy (of governments serving the ruled), it is little wonder that the general perception is that the public service in Nigeria is not there to serve but to be served.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

There may be different benefits and challenges in the management of IGR in various countries. However, some critical elements that underpin the success of such management have been identified and discussed in this paper. These will strengthen governmental systems, enable the achievement of the desired goals, minimise overlaps, create synergy, lead to higher levels of harmony among sub-systems, bring about the effective and efficient utilisation of resources, and improve co-ordination and integration.

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