

# **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION IN**

**POST**

**Apartheid**

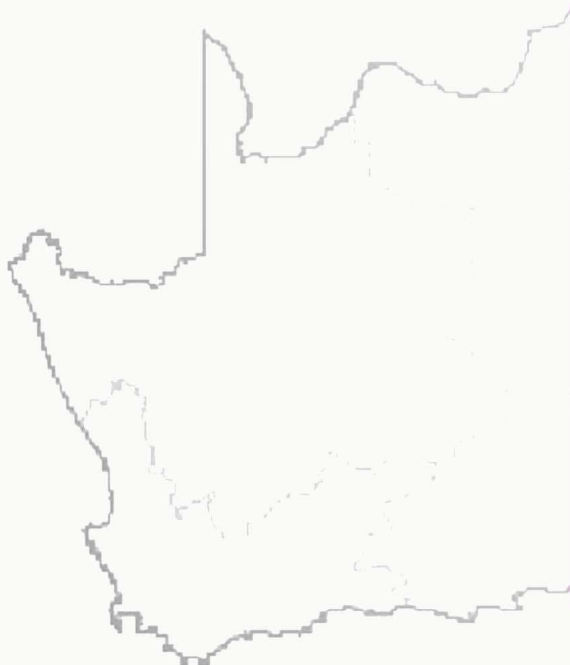
---

**South  
Africa**

---

**Some  
Critical Perspectives**

**Editor: MP Sebola**

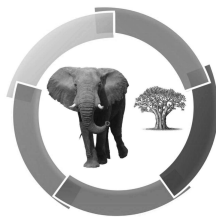


---

# Local Government Administration in Post-apartheid South Africa: Some Critical Perspectives

*First Edition*

*EDITOR: MP SEBOLA*



BATALEA  
PUBLISHERS

---

Published by:  
Batalea Publishers (Pty) Ltd,  
4 Hartbees street,  
Fauna Park,  
Polokwane,  
0700,  
South Africa.  
Email: bataleapublisher@gmail.com

***Local Government Administration in Post-Apartheid South Africa: Some Critical Perspectives***

First Published in 2015

First Edition 2015

ISBN 978-0-620-66678-7

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Copyright © 2015 Batalea Publishers

Layout and Typsetting: Zwiitwaho Ian Maphiri

Cover Design: Truza Productions

Copy Editor: Dr Nwabisa Bangeni

Typset in Cambria 10/14

South Africa recently experienced service delivery protests which targeted local governments of the country. The South Africans complain about the poor level and quality of services that are offered by the South African municipalities. The public protests indeed suggested ignored or unforeseeable problems of the South African post-apartheid local government administration. However, it cannot be ignored that the South African government has acknowledged not only the administrative problems in their local government, but also the political dimensions and the changing culture of the society. Workshops, seminars and academic conferences were held in South Africa to engage on a variety of challenges facing the South African municipalities. As it may seem the implementation of findings were not easy or rather little implementation is suggested. For Example; as early as 1997, the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) presented a needs survey that identified the major problems of local government administration in South Africa as being; Integrated Development Planning(IDP), Budgeting and Financing, Local Economic Development(LED), Human Resources Development and Change Management. However, over a decade after such diagnosis, the same problems still besiege local government in the country.

The publication of this book is necessitated by a need to address the missing gap in local government administration knowledge which does not come out clear in numerous Public Administration curriculums in South African universities. The first chapter in the book captures that aspect clear on an assumption it makes that South African universities do not have or does not offer fully-fledged local government degree programmes but instead relied much on main stream Public Administration degree programmes which do not have a space for local government education. Subsequent chapters in the book focusses on themes that aimed at addressing the 1997 major problems identified by SALGA in local government administration which still have not been fully addressed. The publication of 10 chapters in this book includes concerted efforts by academics with interest in the resuscitation of Local Government Administration education in our time. These academics were drawn from a variety of South African Academic institutions of higher learning. The book provides a fresh perspective of local government administration by proposing the need for a strong Local Government Administration discipline, theoretical discourses in Local Government Administration and Public administration, understanding the theoretical foundation of Local Government Administration as a science, strategic planning and management in local government, community participation and Local Economic Development. Contributors in this book are mainly senior academics in the field of Public Administration and Local Government Administration. The publishers provided the managing editor with a triple blind review reports which helped to improve the quality of the current text. Confirming the efforts and enthusiasm demonstrated by contributors in this book, it came as no surprise that the three reviewers appointed by the publishers were very impressed by the quality of the written work that they unanimously recommended the book for publication. The positive reviewers' comments which led to the successful publication of this book makes me feel proud to have successfully compiled a ten chapter book which was only achieved, not through my individual efforts, but through cooperation and collective efforts of the outstanding colleagues in the discipline of Public Administration and Local Government Administration that I work with in the universities of South Africa. This is a compiled knowledge that we want to share with academics in our country and beyond about Local Government Administration in post-apartheid South Africa about the ignored critical perspectives in local government.

*Professor Mokoko Sebola*

---

**Professor Mokoko Sebola** is a professor of Public Administration and a Director of the School of Economics and Management at the University of Limpopo. He holds a Masters degree in Development Studies from the University of Limpopo and a Doctoral degree in Public Management from the Tshwane University of Technology. His research interest includes local government, public policy, education and governance, migration, emigration and immigration, ethics, ecotourism and local economic development. Professor Sebola has published widely in national and international journals, accredited conference proceedings and book chapters, presented papers at national and international conferences and have successfully supervised a substantial number of masters and doctoral degrees. He is also a previous holder of the following awards: Overall Best Established Researcher, University of Limpopo (2011), Distinguished Academic Awards, SAAPAM (2014) and Overall Best Established Researcher, University of Limpopo (2015).

**Professor Mpedi Madue** is a professor of Public Administration and Head of the Faculty of Commerce at the Independent Institute of Education (The IIE). He holds a Masters degree in Education Management, Law and Policy from the University of Pretoria and a Doctor of Administration degree from the University of South Africa. His research interest includes education management, public policy, legislative oversight, public financial management, intergovernmental relations and local government administration. Professor Madue's research outputs include articles published in national and international journals, conference proceedings, books and book chapters. He has presented papers at national and international conferences and has successfully supervised masters and doctoral students. Professor Madue is widely recognized for his student development work and has received several awards for his outstanding achievements.

**Professor Nghamula Nkuna** is an Associate Professor of Public Administration in the School of Economics and Management at the University of Limpopo. He holds a degree of Master of Public Administration with the University of Pretoria and a PhD in Public Administration with the University of Limpopo. His research interest includes Public Administration theory, complexity, developmental local government, public policy, human resources and public finance management. Professor Nkuna has extensive practical experience of the Public Service having served on various capacities within all government spheres in South Africa. He has published widely in national and international journals, accredited conference proceedings and book chapters as well as presenting papers.

**Mr. Ntwanano Mathebula** is a Lecturer for Public Administration in the Department of Public Administration at the University of Limpopo (South Africa). His research interest areas are Local Government and Public Policy. He has written and published several articles in both accredited and non-accredited journals including conference proceedings. He holds the qualifications, Bachelor of Administration (Public Administration), Public Administration Honours and Master of Administration (Public Administration).

**Mr. Kagiso Pooe** is a Lecturer at the North-West University's Public Administration and Governance programme at the Vaal Triangle Campus and is at an advanced stage of completing his PhD in Local Economic Development policy and institutional development. He holds a Master's degree in Public Policy (Monitoring, Evaluation and Analysis/ Project Management and Implementation). He is also a South African Humanities Deans' Association Fellow. Mr Pooe has a previous lecturing experience

# CONTENTS

---

PREFACE	i
ABOUT AUTHORS	ii

## CHAPTER 1

*M.P Sebola*

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRAINING IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION DISCIPLINE

1.1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.2	UNDERSTANDING PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	2
1.3	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION	3
1.4	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	4
1.5	NEED FOR THEORETICAL DISCOURSE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT	6
1.5.1	UNDERSTANDING THEORY	7
1.6	THE STATUTORY FRAMEWORK OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT	9
1.6.1	The status of local government in South Africa	9
1.7	LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRAINING	10
1.7.1	Capacity building and service delivery	10
1.8	ROLE PLAYERS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRAINING	11
1.8.1	SALGA and capacity building	11
1.8.2	Contextualising capacity building	12
1.9	CHALLENGING REALITIES IN SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS	12
1.9.1	Institutions of Local Government training	13
1.9.2	Knowledge base for Local Government in South Africa	13
1.10	KNOWLEDGE RESOURCES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION	15
1.11	THE POLITICS OF MUNICIPAL TRAINING FOR DEVELOPMENT	15
1.12	DOES SALGA HAVE THE CAPACITY TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL GOVERNMENT CARRICULUM?	16
1.14	CONCLUSION	17
	REFERENCES	17

## CHAPTER 2

*N.W Nkuna and M.P Sebola*

### DEVELOPMENTAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE STATE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION THEORETICAL DISCOURSE IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.1	INTRODUCTION	19
2.2	LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AS A SPHERE OF GOVERNMENT	20
2.3	DEVELOPMENTAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT PRAXIS	22
2.3.1	Developmental state	24
2.3.2	Conceptualization of developmental local government	24
2.3.3	Development	26
2.3.4	Developmental as a concept	26
2.4	CHARACTERISTICS OF DEVELOPMENTAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT	27
2.4.1	Maximising social development and economic growth	27
2.4.2	Integrating and coordinating	28
2.4.2.1	Dimensions of integration	29
2.4.3	Democratizing development	30
2.4.4	Leading and learning	31
2.5	THE NEED FOR A THEORETICAL DISCOURSE	35
2.6	NORMATIVE FOUNDATIONS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION	37
2.7	THE STATE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION DISCOURSE IN SOUTH AFRICA	38
2.7.1	The Mount Grace Debates	38
2.8	APPROACHES IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION	39

at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Howard College). In addition to lecturing, he works as a researcher analysing continental economic development policy with the Thabo Mbeki African Leadership Institute (TMALI) and focuses on economic development planning in South Africa through the Gordon Institute of Business Science (University of Pretoria).

**Mr. Siphwiwe Ndou** is a Lecturer in the Department of Public Administration at the University of Limpopo. He holds the degree Master of Administration (Public Administration) from the University of Limpopo (South Africa). His area of expertise includes Public Administration Education and Training, Capacity Building, Local Government, Civil Society, Political Economy and Governance. Mr Ndou is a committed emerging researcher who has published in SAPSE and non SAPSE journal articles as well as in refereed conference proceedings. He has also presented papers in international and national conferences.

**Mr. Ndwakhulu Tshishonga** is a Lecturer in the Department of Development Studies at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. He holds a Honours degree in Development Studies and two masters degrees in which the one is in Public Administration and the other one in Public and Development Management. His area of expertise is in Development Administration and Local Government. Mr. Tshishonga is widely published in SAPSE accredited journals and has presented papers at international and national conferences.

**Mr. Kennedy Maimela** is a Lecturer at the Wits School of Public and Development Management. His area of expertise is in Leadership Development, Change Management and Human Resources Management. He holds two honours degrees in which the one was obtained in Human Resources Management and the other one in Public Administration as well as a Masters in Public and International Affairs. Mr. Maimela is the current national President of the South African Association of Public Administration and Management and the Director of VARI Consulting.

2.8.1	Modern approaches to public administration	40
2.8.2	Mechanistic Behaviour Approach	42
2.8.3	Behavioural approach	43
2.8.4	Systems Approach	43
2.9	POST-MODERN APPROACH IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION	46
2.9.1	Basic traditions in postmodern thought	47
2.10	MODERNISM VERSUS POSTMODERNISM	48
2.11	CONCLUSION	50
	REFERENCES	52

## **CHAPTER 3**

*S.D Ndou and M.P Sebola*

### **THEORIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AS A SCIENCE**

3.1	INTRODUCTION	54
3.2	THE ROLE OF THEORY IN SOCIAL SCIENCES	54
3.3	GENERAL THEORY AND PRACTICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT	55
3.4	LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AS A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY PRACTICE	56
3.4.1	Politics and Local Government	56
3.4.2	Management Sciences in Local Government	57
3.4.3	The Legal Discipline in Local Government	57
3.4.4	Human Sciences in Local Government	58
3.4.5	Development Sciences in Local Government	58
3.5	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AS META-THEORY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT EPISTEMOLOGY	59
3.6	PUBLIC MANAGEMENT IN THE GOVERNANCE OF THE LOCAL SPHERE	60
3.7	GOVERNANCE AS A THEORY POST-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISCOURSE	60
3.8	DECENTRALISATION AS A THEORETICAL CONCEPT TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT PRACTICE	61
3.9	THE SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT PRACTICE	62
3.10	THE SYSTEMS THINKING	63
3.10	COMPLEX SYSTEMS THINKING	64
3.12	THE COMPLEX SYSTEMS THINKING & CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMMES	64
3.13	CONCLUSION	65
	REFERENCES	66

## **CHAPTER 4**

*N Tshishonga*

### **MUNICIPAL MANAGERS AND THEIR CRITICAL ROLE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

4.1	INTRODUCTION	69
4.2	THEORETICAL GROUNDING OF MUNICIPAL MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION	70
4.3	ROLE OF MUNICIPAL MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION	71
4.3.1	Municipal managers as policy implementers	71
4.3.2	Developmental role of municipal managers	73
4.3.3	Organisational development and renewal	74
4.4	MUNICIPAL MANAGERS AS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENT (COMMUNITY) LEADERS	75
4.5	ROLE IN HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCEMENT	77
4.6	CHALLENGES FACED BY MUNICIPAL MANAGERS IN EXECUTING THEIR ROLE	78
4.6.1	Political interference to the administration of municipalities	78
4.6.2	Lack or limited resources	79



# CONTENTS

---

4.6.3	Lack of team work and cooperation	80
4.6.4	Corruption and culture of entitlement	80
4.7	MUNICIPAL MANAGERS LEARNING THE ART OF LEADING	82
4.8	WEAK DEPLOYMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES	81
4.9	PLACING COMPETENT MUNICIPAL MANAGERS AT THE CENTRE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRANSFORMATION TRAJECTORY	83
4.10	CONCLUSION	84
	REFERENCES	85

## CHAPTER 5

*S.M Madue*

### THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SERVICE DELIVERY

5.1	INTRODUCTION	89
5.2	LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE DELIVERY	90
5.3	CATEGORIES OF LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES	91
5.4	FUNCTIONS AND POWERS OF THE MUNICIPALITY	92
5.5	ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGERIAL FUNCTIONS OF MUNICIPALITIES	93
5.6	THE PRIMARY ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT	95
5.7	DEFINING A MUNICIPAL SERVICE	95
5.8	DELIVERING SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY	96
5.8.1	Payable municipal services	97
5.8.2	Free basic services	98
5.9	OTHER ROLE PLAYERS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE DELIVERY	100
5.9.1	Municipal infrastructure support agency	101
5.9.2	South African Local Government Association	101
5.10	SERVICE DELIVERY CHALLENGES FACING LOCAL GOVERNMENT	102
5.11	CONCLUSION	103
	REFERENCES	103

## CHAPTER 6

*N Tshishonga*

### STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

6.1	INTRODUCTION	105
6.2	STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AND ITS THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS	107
6.3	THE STATE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA	108
6.4	STRATEGIC INTERVENTION THROUGH STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT	110
6.5	BUILDING BLOCKS OF EFFECTIVE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING	111
6.5.1	Common and collective vision	111
6.5.2	Transformative and visionary leadership	112
6.5.3	Team work, innovation and shared responsibility	113
6.6	APPLICATION OF PEOPLE CENTRED AND ASSETS BASED APPROACH TO MUNICIPAL PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION	114
6.7	GROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES AS LEARNING ORGANISATION	115
6.8	INTER-SECTORAL AND PARTNERSHIP APPROACH TO MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT	116
6.9	FACTORS HINDERING EFFECTIVE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AT LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL	117
6.9.1	Lack and poor communication	117
6.9.2	Practice of cadre deployment policy	118
6.9.3	Corruption and clientelism	119

# CONTENTS

---

6.10	Administrative-politico dichotomy and interface	120
6.11	CONCLUSION	121
	REFERENCES	121

## CHAPTER 7

*M.P Sebola*

### ETHICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

7.1	INTRODUCTION	123
7.2	ETHICAL AND UNETHICAL CONDUCT IN PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	124
7.2.1	Ethical conduct	125
7.2.2	Unethical conduct	125
7.2.3	Corruption	125
7.2.3.1	Dimensions of corruptions	126
7.3	ACCOUNTABILITY IN PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	127
7.3.1	Legislative framework governing ethics and accountability	127
7.3.2	Levels of accountability in public financial management	129
7.4	MEASURES OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND ETHICS IN PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	130
7.4.1	Codes, acts and regulations	130
7.4.2	Treasury regulations	130
7.4.3	Public Servants code of conduct	131
7.4.4	Public Service Regulation of 2001	131
7.4.5	Executive Members' Ethics Act, 82 of 1998	132
7.4.6	Corruption Act 94 of 1992	132
7.4.7	Prevention and combating of corrupt Activities, Act 2004	133
7.4.8	Protected Disclosures Act, 26 of 2000	133
7.4.9	Institutions and committees	133
7.4.10	Institutional bodies	133
7.4.11	Public Service Commission	134
7.4.12	Auditor-General	134
7.4.13	Public Protector	134
7.4.14	National Prosecuting Authority	135
7.4.15	Special Investigation Unit	135
7.4.16	Committees	136
7.4.17	SCOPA (Standing Committee on Public Accounts)	136
7.5	CONCLUSION	136
	REFERENCES	137

## CHAPTER 8

*K.K Maimela and N.E Mathebula*

### COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

8.1	INTRODUCTION	138
8.2	THE DISCOURSE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND SCHOLARSHIP	139
8.3	DRAWING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC	140
8.4	COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	141
8.5	PLACING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTEXT	143
8.6	THE BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS	144
8.7	THE IMPACT OF MISCONCEPTUALISATION ON PRACTICE	145
8.8	COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLAN: AN ILLUSTRATION	145
8.9	COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION: A MEANS FOR A TRUSTWORTHY INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT	

	PLAN	1 4 6
8.10	CONCLUSION	1 4 7
	REFERENCES	1 4 7

## **CHAPTER 9**

*N.W Nkuna*

### **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT: FROM SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT TO IMPLEMENTATION**

9.1	INTRODUCTION	1 5 1
9.2	THE NEED FOR PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT	1 5 2
9.2.1	Performance management conceptualization	1 5 2
9.3	DIMENSIONS OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT	1 5 4
9.3.1	Stakeholder perspective	1 5 5
9.3.2	Performance in Dimensions	1 5 5
9.3.3	Performance management in dimensions	1 5 5
9.4	GETTING STARTED: DEVELOPING A SYSTEM	1 5 6
9.5	PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION	1 5 8
9.6	PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT MODELS	1 5 9
9.7	PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT STAGE	1 6 2
9.7.1	Different methods of measuring performance	1 6 3
9.9	MEASURES AND INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE	1 6 4
9.10	CONCLUSION	1 6 5
	REFERENCES	1 6 6

## **CHAPTER 10**

*S.M Madue and T.K Poee*

### **THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

10.1.	Introduction	1 6 9
10. 2.	Defining Local Economic Development	1 6 9
10. 3.	LED and Community Development	1 7 0
10. 4.	Community Development defined	1 7 1
10.5.	Community Development as an extended concept	1 7 1
10.6.	New forms of Community Development and the LED paradigm	1 7 2
10.7.	LED schools of thought	1 7 3
10.8.	The evolution of LED in South Africa	1 7 4
10.9.	LED strategy	1 7 5
10.10.	Institutions for advancing LED	1 7 5
10.11.	Key institutions overseeing LED in South Africa	1 7 6
10.11.1.	National Treasury	1 7 6
10.11.2.	Department of Trade and Industry	1 7 6
10.11.3.	Department of Economic Development	1 7 6
10.11.4.	South African Local Government Association	1 7 7
10.11.5.	Department of Cooperative Government and Traditional Affairs	1 7 7
10. 11.6.	Provincial government	1 7 8
10.12.	Local government case studies	1 7 9
10.13.	Integrated Development Plans as instruments of LED	1 8 0
10.14.	Local case studies of institutional support for LED	1 8 1
10.15.	Challenges of LED implementation in South Africa	1 8 1
10.16.	Enabling structures for promoting LED	1 8 2

# CONTENTS

---

10.17.	CONCLUSION	183
	REFERENCES	183

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRAINING IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION DISCIPLINE

MP Sebola

## CHAPTER OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this chapter you should be able to:

- explain Public Administration and Local Government,
- understand the nature and status of local government in South Africa,
- understand the relevance of current Public Administration training in local government,
- understand the role of South African Local Government Association (SALGA) in local government training, and
- know and understand the different role players in local government training.

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The local sphere of government remains the core for the realisation of basic services within any government dispensation. The South African government therefore, just like any other form of government has assigned local government with the role of delivering those services that are beneficial to the livelihood of local communities and to societal welfare in general. Of course, local government is by its nature closest to its constituents and involved in rendering a wide range of services that materially affect the lives of the inhabitants residing within its area of jurisdiction (Venter, 1998:201). The rendering of a wide range of services in essence require the coordination of a variety of functional areas that are necessary to deliver such services. In the case of South Africa, the area of local government has become more critical due to the fact that the country's constitutional democracy requires local government to be developmental in nature as it renders basic services. In essence, the South African local government system is meant to be developmental or to have what can be referred to as developmental mandate. A developmental mandate refers to the application of inter-related tools and approaches which will assist municipalities to become more efficient. In this case, such tools and approaches are those that promote and require community participation, have requisite integrated development planning as well as performance management systems that can assist in monitoring and evaluating government performance. This arrangement is however different to the traditional system of local government wherein a municipality is expected only to deliver functionally specialised services like the provision of portable water, maintenance of street lights and refuse removal. There is a developmentally oriented role which a municipality must also play. Due to the dominance of the traditional mode of local government, it has been a trend that with the exception of officials or functionaries that are employed within those specialised divisions such as technical and finances services, most local government employees tend to be academic products of the discipline of Public Administration wherein Local Government is treated as a sub-field. Despite the phenomenal landscape that has shown that Local Government remain core to the survival of any government dispensation, it hardly exists as a discipline of knowledge in a modern university or tertiary education.

In South Africa, the training of local government officials have been placed within a semi-corporate government association level with little concerted effort on making it a discipline that may complement the main discipline of Public Administration. In as much as the realisation of the developmental

---

mandate of the state in general relies on local government that has been demarcated into a wall to wall version, the oversight of local government at the national sphere is assigned to a single portfolio. That is also exacerbated by a centralised associational approach to local government training that is reduced just to an element of one a size fits all curriculum approach of the discipline of Public Administration. The supposedly knowledgeable experts in local government are individuals produced within the Public Administration main stream who studied little or no content of local government in their qualification. This in essence impoverishes local government knowledge in general to a level of subordination to the holistic Public Administration as a discipline. Yet local government on its own comprises the scope that is beyond the knowledge space of the average Public Administration expertise more so if activities in local government take place closer to its constituencies with minimal space of idealisation like in the ideal space of the mainstream Public Administration. In local government, incidences happen in quick succession and issues have to be responded to with immediate effect.

On this basis, this chapter serves as introductory to the chapters that follows in this book with the intent of firstly putting forward the argument that the current Public Administration knowledge generation curriculum in South African tertiary institutions minimally addresses local government issues and therefore the space of intervention experts produced through such curriculum cannot fully address a skills problem in local government through training. The chapter goes further to argue that the continued poor performance by local government officials could be linked to improper training offered and received from “knowledgeable experts”. It is argued that in as much as the current Public Administration main stream curriculum addresses the ideal landscape of the practice in general, it does not address the skills problem in local government practice. The holistic intent, therefore, is that of espousing a fully-fledged local government training that has a complete curriculum that is designed to address issues as they unfold in practice. More so if an ideal local government within the South African democratic dispensation has to be beyond the ordinary technical delivery of basic services to that of a developmental agenda.

## 1.2 UNDERSTANDING PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

To understand local government in the context of locating it in a disciplinary space within that of public administration, one needs to understand Public Administration as both the discipline and practice. Traditionally, Public Administration and Local Government are considered inseparable and to be in the same discipline, being that of Public Administration. That is, however, informed by the reigning holistic field of Public Administration that tends to encompass whatever is within the realm of government. More so in that local government has in the past been reduced to a narrow functional sphere of government that has minimal issues related to policy making. Throughout the evolution of Public Administration as both the field and practice, local government has been shown to be complex in relation to its space of knowledge generation within the traditional Public Administration. This has also taken shape within South African tertiary institutions even though they more often demonstrate a character of twin disciplinary need when it comes to practice. Such intricacy of regarding local government as distinct from the main stream public administration has been shown through the challenges faced by South Africa during its negotiated transition to democracy, especially in the years 1990 to the present that it is not a straight forward matter to deal with. A separate arrangement of transformation phases for local government was adopted with more urgency than beyond that of other spheres of government. That had a bearing on the simplicity mode within

which an overarching field of Public Administration can provide for local government phenomenal space. This happened against the back-drop of Public Administration being in quagmire for more than a century (Henry, 2010) in which it had to find its own space within other academic disciplines.

### 1.3 PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Public Administration has been defined both from the simplest terms of its everyday application to scholastic terms for knowledge generation. For example, in the South African context Thornhill (2006) defines Public Administration as “a study of the administrative activities concerned with governing and the administrative requirements to give effect to governmental policies”. This is a straight forward definition that is derived from Cloete’s (1984) view that has been dominant in South Africa since the 1960’s. Cloete (1984) defines public administration as the application of a defined administration process that is found within human endeavour in pursuit to the welfare of the society, a view that has come to be commonly known as “Cloeteism” in Public Administration.

Despite this Cloeteism simplicity as outlined above, Public Administration can also be understood in different ways that are distinctive in context, including but not limited to these below:

- Public Administration can be defined as a scientific discipline which is primarily concerned with the implementation of government policy (Botes, Brynard, Fourie & Roux, 1996:257).
- It is a practice of complex governmental service (Bingham, 1991: 2).
- It can also be regarded as a comprehensive and peculiar field of activity, consisting of numerous activities or functions executed by public officials working in public institutions, and aimed at producing goods and rendering services for the benefit of the community (Hanekom & Thornhill, 1993:57).
- Public Administration can further be regarded as the use of managerial, political, and legal theories and processes to fulfil legislative, executive, and judicial governmental mandates for the provision of regulatory and service functions for the society as a whole or for some of its segments (Bingham, 1991:1).

According to Tshikwatamba (2007:761), Public administration is required to implement new legislation and to administer the consequences of such legislation. Bourgon (2007: 7) put it differently that it serves as a vehicle for expressing the values and preferences of citizens, communities, and society as a whole. Based on various definitions of Public Administration as referred to above, it can be mentioned that Public Administration is a field of activity that involves and deals with complex interactions within a public sphere for the achievement of the welfare of the society. The definitions as outlined above range from conventional to those that are critical in nature and do not cover the most significant aspects played by the modern state in society. These definitions may, however, not exclude the local government sphere as part of the public administration environment. That has been found to be the same with other scientific disciplines that are related to public administration. For example, Coetzee (1988) in his attempt to establish the relationship of the content of Public Administration and other dominant Social Sciences, only concentrates on its relation to Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology (Industrial), History, Political Science, Criminology, Geography, Economics, Business Economics/Administration/Management and Jurisprudence. Other than Coetzee (1988), Virgoda (2008) attempts to deal with these relationships from a broader perspective that is seen to be gaining momentum in disciplinarity classifications. He (Virgoda) classifies the relationships in terms of the core main disciplines that serve as a day to day core for Public Administration. Those core disciplinary areas are (i) Policy Analysis, Political Science, and Political Economy; (ii) Sociology, Cultural Studies, Community Studies and (iii) Management and

---

Organizational Studies (Vigoda, 2008: 8). This relationship reveals the integrated nature of the discipline of Public Administration and that the overall vagueness of this relationship reveals that the discipline may often lack a true academic identity which has been in debate for over a century. Interestingly, there are disciplines that have gained identity overtime that are either derived from Public Administration or complement to it as a full discipline. Such disciplines are few to mention Public Policy Administration, Public Financial Administration, Public Personnel Administration, and International Administration. The space afforded to such disciplines has somewhat had a bearing on keeping the theoretical space of Public Administration alive for over a century. The realm of these sub-disciplines of course is with the main fold of Public Administration that draws a faint line when it comes to practice with more bias to both national and provincial government. The rationale for the development of disciplinary spaces for these subject areas was, among others the need for the development of theoretical interventions on phenomenal space due to the challenges such areas pose within the operationalisation of Public Administration in general.

It should also be clearly remembered that in its development as a discipline, Public Administration has always been either within Political Science or Administrative Law (Coetzee, 1991; Thornhill, 2008). In all these relationships little is said about the confusing relationship between Public Administration and the underdeveloped content of Local Government Training in general. This Chapter therefore points out that Local Government education is extremely ignored in Public Administration and there is a need for the development of an independent curriculum of Local Government training in South Africa in order to address the complex nature of local government administration. It is in this context, therefore, that in as much as Public Administration has provided for this holistic contextualisation for centuries, local government has become under developed due to its peculiarities.

## 1.4 LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In as much as the previous section has attempted to clarify Public Administration, it is a considered point that local government also needs to be provided in perspective. This is done here with an elaboration of its character that necessitates its disciplinary standing. In doing that, attempts are also made to distinguish between local government, local authority, local council, municipal council and a municipality. These conceptions have been used interchangeably in practice and it is a point that this book intends to stress that it has led to the over-simplification of local government and from there to content underdevelopment for training purposes.

Local government is said to be a system consisting of community management and administration (Lockard, 1968; Cloete, 1995). Local government may be described as that sphere of government closest to its constituents and involved in rendering a wide range of services that materially affect the lives of the inhabitants residing within its area of jurisdiction (Venter, 1998:201). It encompasses the political and bureaucratic structures and processes that regulate and promote community activities. In the South African context, the local sphere of government consists of municipalities established in terms of the South African Local Government Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 as provided for in terms of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996. Although the sphere, by virtue of it being at lower level looks insignificant, it remains the most significant sphere that deals with pragmatic political, social and economic affairs of a country. More so as a result of municipal demarcation, all geographic areas in the country fall within a defined local government. It is at the local sphere that practical policy implementation of the state in general takes place. In South Africa, this implementation has been negatively affected by the establishment of the wall to



wall demarcated municipal boundaries that came to effect after the final phase of local government transition in 2002. This exposition defies the traditional form of local government that has evolved through the process of urbanisation that has remained a defining factor in understanding local governments throughout the world. Hence, even after two decades of democracy the issue of borders are still in 2015 not concluded as municipalities exists through a political decision than an evolving process of traditional local government.

Drawing from the conception of Public Administration as “a study concerned with the administrative activities concerned with governing and the administrative requirements to give effect to governmental policies” it stands clear that such activities are taking place within the loci of local government and nowhere else. The other spheres of government are trending within the space of local government in general in order for them to realise their functional mandates. That in essence affirms the notion that whatever Public Administration stands for eventually affects the expression of the local government phenomenal space. The irony here is with the current set-up of content knowledge development for local government in which little is done to refocus the foci as it stands. This eventually does not fully divorce local government administration away from public administration. The most detrimental issue at stake here is that local governments are regarded as context of the everyday lives and the only level of government that has a constant impact on the physical and human social environment within which humans live (Box, 1998:41). They reflect the society that has created them and are perceived to be changing institutions filled with incredible stress and tensions as new demands are placed upon them for attention (Powers, Brown & Arnold, 1974:7). As contexts they are characterised by structures, patterns or constellations of social forces developed out of governance and administrative history (Wamsley & Wolf, 1996:146) that require constant interventions. The domination of traditional ways of viewing local government from a simplistic notion creates a sense of inferiority. Realities in South African local governments create the image of the local government as an inferior sphere to provincial and the national counterparts due to its being base of a proclamation. This is a traditionally ingrained mentality that has also given rise to the authorship of this manuscript. Even if local politics can be regarded as inferior by those at both the national and provincial spheres of politics, local government is the sphere that requires careful consideration both in the context of political and management setting. To an extent, in South Africa local politicians and public officials with good leadership and management skills are absorbed into either provincial or national politics or administration on the pretext that their skills are underutilised at the level of local government, yet that is where there is a constant need for extreme creativity and high level scenario intervention skills are required. Such an approach is ineffective that it implies that local governments do not need as much expertise as the provincial and the national government may require, especially in the rural areas of the country. The growing trend is that sustainable metropolitan municipalities are able to recruit and absorb professionals with excellent skills and expertise. Such practices and attitudes may continue to hide the truth about the existence of the new local government system which emanated from the need to eradicate injustices of the past and to introduce a complete transformation and changed perceptions about the role of rural municipalities in development and service delivery.

Local governments in South Africa carry a legislated mandate which is to serve the interests of the public through equitable service provision. The existence of a municipal office in a demarcated area is not simply to keep councillors and public officials on government’s payroll, but rather to provide services to the public (Gildenhuys, 1997:2). Both councillors and officials should be individuals that are ready to serve and account to the public for their activities in the office. At the same time, it is significant to consider the constitutional mandate of local governments in South Africa which are to:

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

Each municipality must ensure that it administers its affairs to strive to achieve the objectives as set out in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996. Gildenhuys (1997:3) concludes that the objectives of a local government may be categorised as follows:

- control and protection objectives to control certain aspects of the environment and activities of individual citizens, and protect the individual against all kinds of natural disasters and other dangers,
- social and welfare objectives to provide equal opportunities for the social welfare development of each citizen, and
- economic welfare objectives to provide equal opportunities for the economic welfare development of each citizen.

Organisational objectives are set by organisations for very specific purposes. Meeting the set objectives for local governments in this context is dependent on the knowledge base of both councillors and officials about their constitutional mandate. The training and knowledge received by an organisation's employees often, to a certain extent, contribute in making identified organisational objectives achievable.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, assigned new roles to modern municipalities, and most of them are common to the apartheid era city and metropolitan municipalities while some duties are new to specific new occupants of municipalities' leadership in rural areas. They were assigned new powers and functions. The Constitution addresses the issue of municipal powers and functions in two categories (Bekink, 2006:215). It provides for powers and functions of municipalities while it also indirectly incorporates and mandates certain issues that are also important to municipal powers and functions. The constitutional powers and functions are executed within the context of administrative activities which Public Administration scholars, despite the on-going debates within academic circles, categorised into four groups, namely generic administrative and delivery, auxiliary, instrumental, and functional, also referred to as functions (Cloete, 2004:85). Although the generic approach has been criticised in the wake of the repositioning of the state of Public Administration in South Africa, the approach still remains a workable base for the practice of public administration, especially in local government. In practice, the groups of functions are usually carried out simultaneously and are integrated to such an extent that it is often impossible to see where one ends and the other begins (Cloete, 2004:85).

## 1.5 NEED FOR THEORETICAL DISCOURSE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Every-time one engages on the need for the development of specific disciplinary content within any subject field, the first consideration is theory development. Given the holistic nature of Public Administration as a discipline in encompassing Local Government, dealing with such a concern can be rather tricky. This is also exacerbated by that those who have been focusing on local government have their grounding in the discipline of Public Administration. Those that propagate for the non-existence of the theory of Public Administration are striving to swallow it within specific rationally defined disciplinary fields despite its phenomenally intricate practice. The same can be said in the

case of local government.

However, the existence of local government theoretical discourse or what can be called deep rooted disciplinary content knowledge development as was indicated at the beginning of this chapter, does not preclude the role of Public Administration. This is despite the contention that for any discipline to have developed stand-alone subject content it must have defined theories that are from within the discipline. The authorship of this chapter contends that it is a fallacy that had stood in the way of scholarship development within social sciences due to the reigning ontology that is limited when it comes to the current state of affairs. Of course science with its rational positivist ontology has assisted in making a break-through in scholarship theoretical development. However, when dealing with complex matters of local government, such limitations need to be acknowledged. To break away from this point, it is necessary to clarify what is meant by theory development in relation to local government.

### 1.5.1 Understanding theory

According to Hanekom and Thornhill (1994:51), scientific research has two general goals: to increase knowledge and to increase an understanding of the world in which we live in. The increase of knowledge is usually achieved through the discovery of facts and general laws while understanding is increased by constructing explanations of the knowledge discovered and by arranging the knowledge and explanations into systematic generalisations, or into theories. Such theories can be used to predict and bring reforms and ensure the application of relevant interventions to problems including those in real life problems. However it needs to be stressed that there is still no unique, simple criterion or litmus test to decide if a theory is scientific or not (Daneke, 1990; Chu, Strand & Jelland, 2003:20). Scientific activity across the range from botany to particle physics and epidemiology is too diverse. Rather than looking for a universal criterion for being scientific, it is often better to ground criteria within the aim of the theory, which the argument in this chapter views as relevant in relation to the development of theory for the Local Government disciplinary space. There are three aspects central to a theory, namely, the predictive component, explanatory component, and control component. The predictive component attempts to predict the future behaviour of a system given a set of observational data. The explanatory component deals with the theoretical understanding of a system. The control component provides guidelines and control mechanisms for the intervention and manipulation of systems. The theoretical framework provides the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs and theories that informs discourse or research in a given field (Maxwell, 2005; Daneke, 1990; Alasuutari, 1998). Local government as a sphere of government with unique characteristics presents a complex phenomenon that requires a theoretical framework to address it. Public Administration has developed over the time to provide such theoretical frameworks both in academia and in practice (Thornhill, 2007:1; Daneke, 1990) but underscored the intricacy of Local Government. Public administration as a scientific discipline is largely an applied science. It has a very important place not only as an instrument of governance but also as an important mechanism for preserving and promoting the culture of the community (Kumar, 2002:27). The ideals of a state may be very high, but the impact of these ideals upon the life of the people could be gauged only by the way the ideals are put into actual practice. Public administration remains a social process which is charged with the implementation of such objectives and ideals. The phenomenon of Local government instead presents different operating systems that require different applications of varied theoretical forms. The new form of governance becomes confrontational as

municipalities have to realise the mandatory constitutional objectives as additional to the traditional delivery of functional services as expected of them. In realising those objectives, there are also principles and guidelines that must be adhered to. Section 51 of the Local Government Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 provides for the basic principles of local government administration. Such basic principles are as provided for in terms of Section 195 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, which are listed below:

- A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained.
- Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted.
- Public administration must be development-oriented.
- Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias.
- People's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy making.
- Good human-resource management and career-development practices to maximize human potential must be cultivated.
- Public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation.

The principles are applicable to every sphere of government, state organs as well as public enterprises. The principles as outlined above form the basis of the practice of South African public administration and must inform the local government practice in general. Public administration has however, since its earliest historical roots as a discipline in the United States of America (US) and even during its development in Europe, always had its focus was always directly related to events in its area of operation, that is, developments in the public sector in general (Thornhill, 2007:1). The situation in South Africa is not different in this regard. However, a science should always endeavour to determine how contemporary practices and theories could improve the real world as far as its focus is concerned. A theory represents a mental view of a system of ideas or a statement used as an explanation of a group of facts or phenomena and is itself based on facts and values (Hanekom & Thornhill, 1993:48; Alasutari, 1998). In providing for local government in South Africa, public administration as a theoretical framework represents a mental view of a system of ideas. Those systems of ideas are based on the dominant discourse of the time such as the theoretical state of the discipline in South Africa. Lewis (1951) cited in Bourgon (2007:15) posits that there is not anything as practical as a good theory. Bourgon (2007) adds that there is not anything as dangerous as a theory that lags behind the times and yet remains the yardstick for making decisions and passing judgment.

It also needs to be stated that the theoretical paradigmatic underpinning of Public Administration in the South African context is mostly derived from the Minnowbrook conferences that took place in America and Mount Grace in South Africa. The state of the discipline as outlined by Cameron and Milner (2009) coupled with neoliberal policies South Africa has adopted after the 1994 democratic dispensation have created more conundrums in relation to local government. Both Minnowbrook (in America) and Mount Grace (in South Africa) conferences are known as watershed conferences which tried to reshape Public Administration in times of turbulence (Cameron & Milne, 2009:380) with little consideration of local government in particular. The theoretical frameworks adopted in dealing with the phenomenon of local government in South Africa must be able to provide an explanation of the phenomenon and assist decision makers in passing judgment in relation to local government matters. Local government, therefore, needs to be approached from certain theoretical frameworks that are informed by its disciplinary space that deserves attention beyond that of holistic Public Administration. The challenge is that there is no a unified theoretical framework which can

address this phenomenon by itself. Let alone if such theoretical framework has to address the unstable turbulent phenomenon characterised by complex interactions that are playing out in local government. On the other hand, the normative nature of local government that has also drawn its conceptions from that of the main stream Public Administration makes it impossible to develop a unified set of normative guidelines that can be applicable across. On this basis, therefore, there is still a need for the development of local government disciplinary content that can be taught at South African universities or tertiary institutions.

## 1.6 THE STATUTORY FRAMEWORK OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The current political and management system of the South African local government emanates from a complete transformational structure of the pre-1994 municipal administration system. The transformation has taken its toll on a political, cultural, economic and physical level. That transformation came to be characterised by a change from a discriminatory to participatory approach, gender discrimination to equality, apartheid policies to democratic policies, from the perception of local governments as administrative arms of government to public service delivery sites for government, from maintenance of old municipalities to the creation and establishment of new municipalities in rural areas and from the utilisation of the “experienced” to the utilisation of the “inexperienced” in the new municipalities.

This has indeed become a challenging and mammoth task to be carried out by municipalities of the new dispensation in South Africa. The South African government often uses one-size-fits-all approach to deal with rural municipalities’ capacity development as if they are on par with their metropolitan counterparts. The lack of satisfactory service delivery characterises modern South African local government. Most sentiments are around the lack of skills and political loyalty as the cause of unsatisfactory service delivery at the local government level. Training that can change the attitudes of local government officials is likely to increase the level of service delivery in South African municipalities.

### 1.6.1 The status of local government in South Africa

South Africa is a unitary state with little federal features of government. There are three spheres of government which are distinctive, interdependent and interrelated. The local government is the only sphere that is not part of the public service. Only the national and the provincial sphere of government are part of the public service with their employees and activities governed by the public service legislative frameworks. The local government sphere operate on the basis of own legislative frameworks differing from the public service ones. For example, the Local Government Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003 (MFMA) is applied by local government instead of the Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999 (PFMA) which is applied in the public service. Also the provisions of Local Government Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 and Local Government Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 are applicable at local government sphere.

The basis of Public Administration curricula in most South African universities is to a larger extent a response to Cloete’s (2004) generic functions of public administration such as planning, organising, financing, policy making, work methods and procedures. Functional and auxiliary functions are often covered through other subject knowledge that can be factored into the curriculum of Public Administration such as Accounting, Economics and Political Science.

---

The change in the municipal administration of South Africa acknowledged the challenge of skills development in the administration of local governments. This led to the promulgation of various pieces of legislation for the establishment of a statutory framework for providing good governance to South African local governments. It is a hard fact and reality that the implementation of such legislative frameworks plus their complexities in practice requires a professional administrative system and political system that is conscious of the complex local government environment systems. While the local government is considered a significant sphere to carry out the government's mandate of service delivery, it is significant that this sphere should have more skilled and expert administrators and politicians in order to deliver services to local communities effectively and efficiently. Training was seen to be provided through the initiatives of SALGA (South African Local Government Association) which carries a mandate to oversee the skills and capacity development of municipalities in the country. The effectiveness of financial resources spent on the training of municipal councillors was often queried, depending on the education level of the stakeholders involved as beneficiaries of training programmes and the impact of the training provided by the "experts" contracted as service providers.

## 1.7 LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRAINING

The previous section has expounded on that if Local Government has to live up to its worth in responding to challenges that have been bequeathed it in South Africa, the need for training remains paramount.

### 1.7.1 Capacity building and service delivery

Capacity building in general terms refers to the ability to perform appropriate tasks effectively, efficiently and sustainably (Grindle & Hilderbrand, 1995; Cloete, 2002). In the context of the new and adopted service delivery approach by the state it refers to the total (structural, functional and cultural) transformation of government in order to mobilise all the available resources to achieve policy objectives (Savitch, 1998; Cloete 2002). Thus far the realities in local government administration in South Africa dictate that a great deal still needs to be done to improve the level of capacity building for the purpose of service delivery to be carried out appropriately. As Cloete (2002:287) indicates, local governments in South Africa face various challenges which include, among others, the appointment of inexperienced and uncommitted political office bearers, outdated local government structures and lack of a revenue base. In the same vein, Motshekga (1994) has echoed that rural municipalities face various problems which include mostly gender inequality and poor revenue collection. As argued in various pieces of literature on a similar subject, not all of the identified problems within local governments require training as a solution. A change of attitude by municipal officials, politicians and the ruling government may bring about a good solution to municipal capacity skills development problems. That would help to empower local governments to achieve service delivery mandates. In the current political contexts and practices of South African politics it is argued that local governments are not viewed as significant in political administrative terms. Local politicians are using the sphere as a stepping stone to provincial and national level politics. It still continues to be viewed as a primitive sphere which only serves to create and nurture talent required at provincial and national level politics. Ultimately political skills at local government level remain permanently underdeveloped. That also creates a situation where good skills at local level government level need to be nurtured and developed for transfer to either a provincial or national level. Capacity

building at local government level remains a challenge as the function of this sphere continues to be undermined by those at upper political levels. This is despite the fact that the local government sphere remains the most significant sphere where actual service delivery is taking place.

## 1.8 ROLE PLAYERS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRAINING

The White Paper on Local Government (1998) indicates that for developmental local government to be possible with regard to service delivery, municipalities have to develop at least three sets of new capacities such as strategic capacity, integrating capacity and community orientation. It is therefore believed that if these three capacities can be taken care of, municipalities will be able to sustain themselves and their service delivery objectives. The White Paper on Local Government (1998:12) acknowledges that the current training system has been labelled inefficient and unresponsive to the training needs of local government. The role of SALGA in capacity building therefore becomes imperative and it is also believed that it will address the inefficiency and the irrelevance of the existing training system to the benefit of municipal officials.

### 1.8.1 SALGA and capacity building

The objectives of SALGA as outlined in its constitution are to:

- represent, promote and protect the interest of local government
- transform local government to fulfil its developmental role
- enhance the role and status of its members as provincial representatives and consultative bodies of local government
- enhance the role and status of municipalities
- be recognised by national and provincial governments to be representative and consultative body in respect of all matters concerning local government and to make representations to both provincial and national governments in respect of any matter concerning local government
- ensure the full participation of women in organised local government
- be the National Employers Association representing all municipal members and, by agreement, associate members
- regulate the relationship between its members and their employees within the meaning of section 213 of the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995, as amended
- provide legal assistance to its members, in its discretion
- encourage the settlement of disputes among its members and between them and their employees or trade unions through co-operative governance or labour law principles
- affiliate with and participate in the affairs of any international organisation, that will serve the interests of its members
- do such lawful things as may be appear to be in the interest of the organisation and its members which are not inconsistent with the objects or any matter specifically provided for in this constitution; and
- borrow, invest, lend subscribe or donate money for the furtherance of the objectives of the organisation.

From the aforementioned objectives, it becomes clear that SALGA carries a major mandate of ensuring that municipalities carry out their developmental function with the highest level of efficiency and effectiveness. As clearly indicated in the White Paper on Local Government (1998:13), the

---

training of local government is not the responsibility of the Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority, but the responsibility of SALGA. But the question of the capacity of SALGA in fulfilling this mandate is one of the serious concerns raised in this chapter. Bearing in mind the complexities regarding the concept of capacity, the use of institutions for such training and the challenging realities of the typical councillors in South African municipal systems, it becomes difficult to determine and confirm SALGA's capacity in dealing with training for development in South African municipalities. However, SALGA provides capacity building training programmes to councillors and other local government officials, the effectiveness of such is not felt by recipient of municipal services.

### 1.8.2 Contextualising capacity building

Capacity building in the context of this chapter refers to the ability to perform appropriate tasks effectively as expected of one's position in his or her municipality. The concept of capacity has, however, presented itself in a manner which is very ambiguous in the South African context and poses various semantic challenges. The study by the Department of Corporative Government and Traditional Affairs in South Africa (formerly known as Department of Provincial and Local Government) revealed that capacity has various meanings to various municipalities in the country. According to the National Capacity Framework for Local Government of 2008-2011 (Department of Provincial and Local Government, 2008:26), it has been noted that during the implementation of Project Consolidate, it became apparent that stakeholders used the term capacity in a variety of ways. For some people, this means the volume of posts filled, or more definitely, the number of posts filled by appropriately qualified, skilled and orientated people in that institution or sector. To others it simply means technical expertise which may be gained through formal skills training or from experience. Others use the term to refer to change management capability, namely the capacity to transform and improve a system or institution or strategic management capabilities such as the capacity to develop a strategic overview, prioritise interventions, and act in areas of maximum leverage. Some people view it as an attitude, such as a commitment to social and economic emancipation, and a willingness to champion interventions in line with commitment; while others see it as a way of working, such as the stamina and tenacity to make steady progress. Others just view it as a sense of public integrity. Capacity therefore poses serious challenges and misconceptions. This chapter will, however, align its understanding of capacity more with the technical "know-how" than any other meaning that can be attached to the concept. Thus far the lack of technical know-how in both the municipality and the public service has compromised the effective delivery of service to the South African citizenship owed to them by their municipalities. In South Africa service provision is a constitutional right and not a privilege.

## 1.9 CHALLENGING REALITIES IN SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Previously Local government training used to be coordinated by two functioning boards, namely the Local Government Education and Training Board and the Training Board for Local Government Bodies. Both bodies were levying municipalities and therefore there was duplication of activities and objectives by these two bodies. Ultimately, the Local Government Education and Training Board replaced the two bodies in which served as a coordinating body for local government training, but with its activities limited to managing a local government training fund, allocating such funds to the



provincial training structures, setting national training priorities, establishing standards, accrediting service providers and providing training certification. This sounds like a workable solution, in which instance the Local Government Education and Training Board facilitates training processes while SALGA takes the full responsibility of training, but pragmatic realities in the South African local governments environment present a different set of challenges, which makes the impact of training to be minimally recognised as a solution for councillor development for service delivery in South African local governments. Some of the challenging realities that need serious engagement include institutions that provide local government training, knowledge base for local government in South Africa, knowledge resources in local government education and the nature of the politics of South African local government councillors.

### 1.9.1 Institutions of Local Government training

The White Paper on Local Government (1998:13) indicated that a variety of contractors in South Africa qualify to provide training to local government councillors and officials. That is on condition that such institutions' learning materials respond to the needs defined by Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) and Provincial Training Structures. Such institutions include Non-Governmental Organisations, Universities and Universities of Technologies, Private Sector Companies and Centres, Provincial Training Centres, Commercial training and Development consultants, and Professional bodies. A holistic approach to solve training problems in this manner adopted by the country raises doubts of standards and questions the quality of education to be provided. This approach exposes local governments to vulnerability to mediocre training provision. The institutions named as training providers have different approaches of culture and standards of training that they provide. The provision of municipal councillor development training deemed possible by the White Paper on Local Government opens a leeway for different qualities of municipal councillor development training programmes. Universities and the Non-Governmental Organisations may not provide the same quality of municipal development training programmes as anticipated by SALGA. They may use training facilitators of an unequal knowledge base which will also impact negatively on the training provided, especially if the approach to the training of councillors is viewed in business terms rather than in developmental terms.

### 1.9.2 Knowledge base for Local Government in South Africa

Kanyane (2008:519) lists some selected South African higher educational institutions that offer Public Administration and Management as a discipline. These institutions include the University of Stellenbosch (US), University of Western Cape (UWC), University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), North West University (NWU), University of Cape Town (UCT), University of Pretoria (UP), University of Limpopo (UL), University of the Witwatersrand (WITS), Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU), University of Free State (UFS), Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), University of Fort Hare (UFH) and University of Venda (UNIVEN). The University of Southern Africa (UNISA) and the Durban University of Technology (DUT) also offer Public Administration and Management. It is taken for granted that institutions that offer Public Administration and Management as a discipline are automatically capable of providing local government knowledge.

Kanyane (2008:517) further indicates that of these listed universities only three, namely the University of Witwatersrand, University of Fort Hare and University of Limpopo offer accredited degrees and certificates in local government education. It can be argued that the knowledge base

---

in Local Government of South Africa is still lacking behind in terms of the required educational knowledge for skills development in this field. South African Universities offering degrees in local government education may not be trusted with full knowledge content about the local government. At the University of Limpopo, the B. Admin (Local Government) degree which is the only programme accredited to offer Local Government courses in the province, only offers such modules from first year to second year level (University of Limpopo Institutional Research and Planning, 2011: 96). Other universities offering such instructional modules, although accredited, do so in the business schools or centres. In reality, there is no an absolute Public Administration curricula in South African universities that addresses local government education in totality. Thus far, South African universities offer little knowledge of local government education in the discipline of Political Science, Development Management and Public Administration. In general, most Public Administration curricula in South African universities have no content that deals with local government issues. Instead a little content on local government issues is provided in structured masters courses offered in the discipline of Public Administration such as the Master of Public Administration (MPA) degrees. In some institutions, the module on local government in such programmes is an elective and post-graduates students in the programme often do not even elect the module as their choice of learning. It is therefore arguable that the knowledge provided by South African universities on local government education is not sufficient to build an acceptable knowledge base for the beneficiary of such training programmes in local governments.

The needs survey presented by SALGA in 1997 showed that the training needs of councillors are Integrated Development Planning (IDP), Budgeting and Financing, Strategic planning, service delivery, human resource development and change management (Kanyane, 2008:514). Local Economic Development (LED) training also became a critical aspect of local government that required urgent attention. While other modules such as strategic planning, human resource and change management may well be articulated within the Public Administration and Management discipline, service delivery, IDP and LED modules within the local government education are new and require specialised training of providers before they can engage in their instructional offering. Such modules were never addressed properly or catered for within the general mainstream of Public Administration curricula. However, Kuye (2007) noted that Universities have a significant role to play in the training for development in municipalities. Kanyane (2008) noted that in their pro-activeness and engagement of institutions of higher learning, municipalities should ensure that they use reputable schools and departments of Public Administration to design specialised programmes that addresses their limitations. This means that it is recognised by Public Administration scholars that not all Public Administration curricula may absolutely address local government education, except in the relative academic assumption that the sphere cannot be studied separately from the provincial and the national sphere. This is despite the fact that the critics of the assumption in this chapter would agree that local governments in the country are managed through separate legislative frameworks other than those designed for the provincial and the national government. The design of the curricula of Local government should therefore be done by people with expert knowledge in local government administration as an academic discipline.

As informed by the current management crisis in local government, it can only be argued that the discipline of Public Administration has left an enormous knowledge vacuum in local government education. This therefore exposes local governments to administrative scandals in which the administrators in local governments only manage to learn legislative frameworks relevant to the provincial and national government, and miss an opportunity to learn relevant local government legislative frameworks such as Local Government Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 and the Local Government Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998. Thornhill (2010), in his article *The Domain of*

Public Administration questioned the relevance of Public Administration curricula and at the same time recommends that it must be aligned to the current public administration activities which will include alignment to the role of the state, private sector, NGOs and municipal legislation. To this extent, the expertise of South African academics in local government education remains partially acceptable considering that no absolute specialised curriculum in the discipline exists in institutions of higher learning in the country. More so because not all Public Administration curricula address the content of the discipline of Local Government. Even those within the Public Administration discipline that includes Local Government content in their curricula, it remains too limited in scope and little attention is paid to its recognisable existence.

## 1.10 KNOWLEDGE RESOURCES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION

A vast volume of literature exists in the discipline of Public Administration in South Africa. A great deal has been written in the discipline and most researchers address generic Public Administration curricula content such as constitutionalism, public policies, ethics, public personnel management and public finances. There are at least three scientific journals that exist to maintain the credibility of research and scholarship of the discipline of Public Administration in the country. Those include Journal of Public Administration (JOPA), Politeia and Administratio Publica. However the scope of subjects covered in the journals is wide, such that only a few issues published in these three journals annually address critical local government content. Publications are dominated by articles addressing issues of national importance. The Journal for Local Government (supposedly a journal of the Institute of Local Government and Management (ILGM) hosted at the Tshwane University of Technology) which was the only journal meant to address local government issues in the country failed to secure accreditation with the Department of Education because articles published in it prior to application for accreditation were focusing on generic public administration matters instead of critical local government issues. This shows a significant knowledge gap about local government education in the country. There are significantly few books published in the discipline of local government, mostly repeatedly publishing editions of Crythorne and Gildenhuys. Even in this regard, most books published in local government mainly deal with local government finances rather than with LED, IDP, local government politics and the administration of local government. This implies that despite the significance of local government as a sphere that is closer to the people, its significance continues to be marginalised. Based on insufficient knowledge resources in the discipline of local government, it may be problematic to have genuine trainers provide quality training that will impact positively on the beneficiaries of the system.

## 1.11 THE POLITICS OF MUNICIPAL TRAINING FOR DEVELOPMENT

The nature of the politics of local government in South Africa follows the approach of populism than ability or populism combined with ability approach. The system of politics in local government promotes individuals politically while undermining their capacity to perform their political responsibility. Part time councillors were previously allowed in the South Africa local government political system. The majority of part time councillors had good educational background and reasonably benefitted from the training as councillors in order to implement what has been learned at council level. A mix of the educated and the less educated councillors created tension in South African local government politics in which the less literate later demanded the removal of the part

time councillors. The sound argument was that the country could not have people being double employed while others were not employed. The Part time councillors were given an option to either dump their full time career or join politics on a full time basis or to resign from part time politics and do their full time job. Knowing that political career is short lived career, most opted to dump the councillorship career and focus on their full time careers. The government acceded to the demand to remove part time councillors on the sound argument that they are double dipping in government employment. The government's decision on this matter has put SALGA's capacity to train councillors at risk. It is unachievable and difficult for SALGA to attain the objective of capacity building for councillors while the majority of councillors may be dominated in skills and authority by individuals with a questionable educational levels or who are at an educational level at which training is not possible to be of benefit to the councillor.

Rankhumishe and Mello (2011:789) indicate that on-job training is an important intervention that makes employees of a particular organisation productive. That is also dependent on the level of educational knowledge that employees possess at the time of such training. Mafunisa and Tsanwani (2011:82) articulate that apart from formal education, employees still require skills training in order to fit well into the job market. The realities in South African politics are that SALGA may find it difficult to have benefitted councillors with their training programmes because of the level of education of councillors in most South African municipalities. Some of them are at a level at which training cannot be a beneficial means to acquire knowledge. Training is often conducted in English, a language that the intended beneficiaries do not know. Things are likely to get worse when part-time councillors are phased out. Most of them were literate and made significant contributions towards municipal development. Such officials have proved to be knowledgeable in most training conducted for councillors, other than the populists councillors with too low educational levels to understand the teaching provided.

## 1.12 DOES SALGA HAVE CAPACITY TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL GOVERNMENT CURRICULLUM AND TRAINING?

SALGA carries the mandate to ensure that local governments in South Africa achieve their developmental mandate, mostly through empowerment and capacity building. It should be realised that local governments' delivery of services represents the success or the failure of both the provincial and national government. The said two spheres achieve both their political and developmental goals through local government. A failure to build a strong, sound and sustainable local government threatens the national government's ability to achieve its mandate. Thornhill (2010:72) mentioned that the perception about the quality of government and government institutions is mostly measured by the quality and administration of the local government. The neglect of local government education in various South African institutions of higher learning puts SALGA's mandate of empowering councillors through training at risk. SALGA as an institution established by the law to represent the interests of local governments should ensure that its clients get thorough and effective local government training. However, there are courses compiled and accredited through LGSETA and SALGA should guard against the abuse of such instructional offerings for business purposes only by academic and private sector institutions than for developmental purposes. As Labuschagne (2010:96) puts it, in a country such as South Africa where patronage supercedes merit, it could be difficult to consider the valuable outcomes of any project. However, Binza (2010:251) mentions that one of the greatest challenges facing the role of local government with regard to local economic development is the lack of knowledge about local government issues. This still supports the view raised in this chapter that

local government education has not been satisfactorily conceptualised in South African institutions of higher learning. Academic authority on this subject is often difficult to determine and confirm among South African academics. SALGA should therefore ensure that it encourages institutions of higher learning to consider the curricularisation of local government degree programmes in universities to address the challenges of critical local government issues fully. That will help to improve the knowledge base and areas of research in local government.

### 1.13 CONCLUSION

This chapter argued that local government education does not receive adequate practical attention in academic institutions in South Africa. This is believed to have a negative impact on the training provided by such institutions to municipal councillors, through SALGA's initiatives. The chapter argued that there are various challenges facing SALGA in empowering and capacitating municipal councillors through its training programmes. Such challenges can only be dealt with appropriately if local government education and training can be strengthened through credible academic institutions and a change in approach of the election of councillors in the sense that they move from the populist to the ability and knowledge driven approach. There must be specification of the educational level to be reached by an individual to compete in municipal councillor elections. This will avoid a situation where councillors without an educational background benefit less or little from the training which is provided in a language foreign to them.

### REFERENCES

- Bekink, B. 2006. Principles of South African Local Government Law. Durban: Lexis Nexis Butterworths.
- Binza, M.S. 2010. Developmental Local Government in the 21st century. Implementing Local Economic Development as a new mandate. *Administratio Publica*, 18 (4): 241-225.
- Cloete, F. 1995. Local Government Transformation in South Africa. Pretoria: J.L Van Schaick.
- Cloete, J.J.N 2004: Introduction to Public Administration. Pretoria: J.L Van Schaick.
- Cloete, F. 2002. Capacity Building for Sustainable Local Governance in South Africa. In S, Pannel, E, Pieterse, M, Swilling and D, Woolridge (Eds). *Democratising Local Government in the South African Experience*. Cape Town: UCT press.
- Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG). 1998. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Gildenhuys, J.S.H 1997. Introduction to Local Government Finance. Pretoria: J.L Van Schaick.
- Grindle, M.S. and Hilderbrand, M.E. 1995. Building Sustainable Capacity in the Public sector: What can be done? *Public Administration and Development*, 15(5):441-463.
- Kanyane, M.H. 2008. The Role of Educational Institutions in Professionalising IDP Training. *Journal of Public Administration*, 43(3.2): 512-519.
- Kuye, J.O. 2007. A Decade of review of Higher Education in South Africa. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 1(1): 2-6.
- Labuschagne, P. 2010. Local Government and Service Delivery in South Africa. An investigation into the defence of necessity. *Administratio Publica*, 18 (4): 93-105.
- Mafunisa, M.T. and Tsanwani, A.P. 2011. Addressing scarce and critical skills in Limpopo Local Government: The LGSETA option. *Journal of Public Administration*, 46(1.1): 881-811.
- Motshekga, M. 1994. Views on Local Government. In Nthai, S (ed). *Local Government. Focus on rural Local Government*. Johannesburg: The Bookworks.

---

Rankhumishe, E.M. 2011. The Implications of Training Measures to the Development action appointees: Insights from Mpumalanga Public hospitals. *Journal of Public Administration*, 46(1.1):785-797.

Thornhill, C. 2010. Local Government Democracy in Africa. Fact or Fiction? *Administratio Publica*. 18(4):71-90.

White Paper on Local Government. 1998. Pretoria: Government Printer

University of Limpopo. 2010. Institutional Research and Planning. University Programme and Qualification Mix. Sovenga: Turfloop Press

