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MORE THAN AN OPINION

Comment by the Editors:

Professor Dhiru Soni, and
Professor Anis Mahomed Karodia

The New MBA: An Opportunity to Disrobe and Embrace Change

In recent months there has been a flurry of debates in the written press regarding the new MBA and the South African Business School sector.

Whilst the majority of these debates have centred on the reasons for the introduction of the new MBA, others have raised critical questions of transformation within the business sector. In this article the authors wish to concentrate on the responses of a coterie of administrators from the business schools' sector that are of the conviction that issues of transformation are not within the purview of their elitist business schools. More specifically, the emphasis in these deliberations has been on the issues of elitism, racism, access, equity and affordability.

In an epiphany, nay, multiple epiphanies, especially in terms of reflecting on the pedantic responses of these administrators to the critical debates, it dawned upon the authors that the crux of these deliberations had more to do with issue of 'leadership', or the lack thereof. One would have expected that given the problems and challenges that South Africa is currently experiencing, the business schools' sector would have risen to the occasion and provided the necessary transformatory leadership. Instead, these 'senior' administrators from so called prestigious business schools, in an unwavering posture have dug their heads in the sand and like the proverbial ostrich which believes that all is well in its protected elitist space. They either do not appreciate the realities of an emerging South Africa, or are arrogant enough to believe that issues of transformation are beyond the frontiers of their dominion – reminiscent of apartheid-based ideologues.

Whilst these multiple epiphanies were like 'eureka' moments, they equally brought with them some serious concern. Perhaps more so, because these protagonists were supposed to be academics of renown and were supposed to educate our future leaders on how to be pragmatic and 'lead' in challenging times. South Africa, as we all know is experiencing serious problems and challenges in dealing with many of the lingering legacies of a grossly

regulated unequal society – lack of access to higher education, poverty, black youth unemployment and major skills deficits.

In mulling over the issue and contemplating a possible solution to the problematique, the authors are of the opinion that these gatekeepers need to be urgently reminded about transformational leadership, and how it can assist in addressing many of the problems and challenges that confront our country. Is it not ironical that the very people who are supposed to be our business education ‘gurus’, have themselves to be intrinsically re-educated, or is it that they are beyond redemption and will continue being apartheid ideologues?

We are, however, convinced that, if they have the courage to remove their self-donned prejudicial ‘blindfolds’, then they could be exposed to the realities of human frailty, redeem themselves and, become ‘born-again’ academics, in search of the truth. They need to be reminded of Jodi Picoult’s wise saying, "Sometimes we find ourselves walking through life blindfolded, and we try to deny that we're the ones who securely tied the knot." These administrators need to untie the knot and free themselves and the future of our nation, for prejudice is the crutch of the mentally handicapped (challenged).

It is argued that in this changing global environment, leadership holds the answer not only to the success of individuals and organisations, but also to nations. The concept of ‘leadership’ reveals that there are as many theories and definitions of the term as there are authors. Indeed, it has become a contested issue. Considering that the critical issue dealt with in this submission is about the imperative for transformation in the business school sector, the authors are of the opinion that the concept of ‘transformational leadership’ is both appropriate and opportune for the purposes of enlightenment and empowerment.

The goal of transformational leadership is to ‘transform’ people and organisations in a literal sense – to change them in mind and heart; enlarge vision, insight, and understanding; clarify purposes; make behaviour congruent with beliefs, principles, or values; and bring about changes that are permanent, self-perpetuating, and momentum building”. In essence, this concept of leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents.

Transformational leadership requires a deep sense of self and community – valuing diversity, ethics, the individual and the larger collective. In effect, at its heart is a shared emotional intelligence or, as another author on leadership, Alan Wheelis expresses it: “Freedom is the awareness of alternatives and the ability to choose.” Stubborn refusal to

consider alternative and competing approaches, can lead to narcissism - common amongst some of our administrators because it is one of the forces driving them to seek egotistical power in their reign of the business school sector.

It would be in the interest of these administrators to take heed of the changing nature of our society in South Africa and the world at large. Our nation is undergoing an unprecedented period of change and this trend appears to be accelerating. There is an improved awareness of the social and political impacts of our actions; a decreasing allegiance to traditional power structures; an increasing complexity with regards to stakeholders and decision-making; increasing demands from our restless youth; an acute awareness of human rights; and a climate of change and uncertainty.

Our administrators need to learn that it is an imperative that they become increasingly adaptable – making sense of uncertainty and managing complexity. The qualities of openness, empathy, integrity and self-awareness are coming to the fore and demand a more participative leadership style, whereby the leader not only involves all stakeholders, but listens, and is responsive to feedback.

The transformational leadership journey is a never ending one and, that change is constant. Where the journey and the constant come together true leaders will flourish. We implore these administrators to remove the self-donned prejudicial blindfolds and free themselves!

*** *Dhiru Soni and Anis Karodia* are academics and researchers, and write in their personal capacity and all views and opinions expressed in this opinion / comment are attributed to them. They both work at the REGENT Business School, Durban. Professor Soni is the Director of Research and Innovation whilst Professor Anis Mahomed Karodia is a Senior Academic and Researcher.**

ENGAGED SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH: SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE NATURE OF ITS SCHOLARSHIP

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July 2016

Introduction

In this article I reflect on the multifaceted nature and intricacies of social policy research and analysis. I do not here discuss the distinctions between research 'of' and 'for' policy nor do I delve into the a conceptualization of the various stages of the policy process; from agenda setting and policy formulation to its adoption, formulation and implementation - the subject matter of other and more competent writings on these issue.² Here the concern is about how researchers and analysts who are committed to the development of democratic social policy and society should engage with it in scholarly ways. This article therefore reflects, in particular, on:

- How one thinks about policy-relevant applicative research in developing societies and the nature of its scholarly enterprise.
- The limitations of legalistic interpretations of policy
- The ostensible distinctions between academic research and social policy analyst in relation to 'developing countries'³.
- The concept of 'scholarship' and its many characteristics and types.
- Critique as intrinsic to policy research.
- Policy scholarship, public dialogue and engagement.
- Policy research and methodology.

¹ A version of this paper was first published as *Occasional Paper 4 by the Education Policy Consortium in November 2014*

² See in particular Badat S, From Innocence to 'Epistemic Reflexivity': Critical Researchers and South African Higher Education Policy Making Post 1990, CHE, Pretoria

³ Although the nomenclature 'developing country' has a contested meaning I will use it throughout this paper, since I do not wish to digress into a debate about the discourses of development here.

Social policy research as applicative and social scholarship

The domain of policy related research in the social sciences is about knowledge which is applicative and which is socially engaged. It is intended to provide critical insights which might be useful in thinking about some of the most obdurate challenges facing societies. Although many of the conventions relating more generally to research apply to it, social policy research is characterised by the attributes of applicative research more generally. Yet it must be distinguished from other applied scientific research which relates for instance to the development of industrial technologies for manufacturing or other materials because the purposes and outcomes of such research and development are different from those of social policy research. The implication of this is that policy related applicative research cannot be evaluated in the same way as basic or fundamental research, like research about the nature of the universe which is germane to the work of physicists and astronomers, or for instance research about epistemological systems. Nor indeed does it have all the characteristics pertaining to the application of the theoretical principles of the physical science for applied research and product development.

Social policy research, while it draws on basic research and its theoretical foundations, is essentially about statecraft, the prescripts of a democratic state, the activities of a government in areas within its jurisdiction and, as we would argue, about the nature of power relations and their effects on the ideological and conceptual proclivities of policy and decision-makers. It is about the conditions which circumscribe the behaviour of policy makers in relation to the particular issues they address in the context of evolving social and economic production systems, the contradictory tensions which these produce, the mode and methodologies of policy making and its processes. And, it is about how these policies are implemented and what its effects are on the general population and on specific communities and social classes, genders and other markers of social stratification. It is of necessity based on complex analysis because it must draw on the social sciences more generally and produce a body of theories about social-policy making and its processes. In doing so it must be mindful of the problem of nomothetic approaches and the purported 'universality' of its theorization since, as we will show, the business of policy analysis is largely contextual and not easily given to generalization. Of greater importance to policy research its analytical categories and its critical impact.

Potentially, applicative social policy research has great social value. Even without adopting Gibbons' perspectives on the Modes of knowledge,⁴ it is possible to assert the social value and importance of applied knowledge. The only condition must surely be that it must have coherence and integrity based on the objectively validated criteria by which it is produced i.e. in ways that are not self-serving.

Social policy research should not be legalistic even though it is based on laws and policies

Underlying the assumptions of much social policy analysis in South Africa are the values and rights bequeathed by the Constitution⁵ and a reliance on legalistic interpretations of rights and the injunctions of the Constitution.⁶ This is a powerful impulsion to the analysis of policy and for many it constitutes the condition precedent for the evaluation of both the precepts of policy and its implementation. But that should not be the end of the matter, since some analysts of the Constitutional state have pointed to its very limits, to its foundational qualifications, and in South Africa to its 'negotiated' brief and its limiting effects on social transformation.⁷ Especially important are the arguments about the failure of legalistic interpretations of the Constitution to penetrate the structural attributes of race, class and gender as fundamental barriers to the realization of its imprimatur. They argue that social policy research must adopt a critical stance to the constitutional legalism underpinning more conventional research.

The implication of this critique is that analysis which is derived from legal principles alone is inadequate and must be augmented by a broader range of political, economic and social categories of analysis. This is not to suggest that the analysis of education itself is unimportant or that it can be substituted by a more general approach. What has been learned through research in and about education [or any other disciplinary domain for that

⁴See HSRC Review Young M:2004, supra and Muller J, 2000, *Reclaiming Knowledge*, Routledge Falmer, London and the various references to the Gibbons Debate in Chapter 3

⁵ The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

⁶ This issue is discussed more fully in Zafar S and Motala. E, *Education, Human Rights and Law*, CEPD October 2005 where the limits of legalistic interpretations of rights are dealt with. Also Gotanda Neil, *A critique of 'our constitution is colour-blind'*, in Crenshaw K, Gotanda N, Peller G and Thomas K, [Editors] *Critical Race Theory: The Key writings that formed the movement*, New Press. New York 1995; Harris Cheryl I, *Whiteness as Property*, in Crenshaw K, Gotanda N, Peller G and Thomas K, [Editors] *Critical Race Theory: The Key writings that formed the movement*, the New Press. New York 1995; Ronald Dworkin, *Taking Rights Seriously*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass, 1978

⁷ Alexander Neville, *An Ordinary Country: Issues in the Transition from Apartheid to Democracy in South Africa*, University of Natal Press, 2002, See also the paper by Zafar and Motala supra

matter] remains extremely valuable and the theoretical perspectives derived from these disciplines have great value in their own right. Here the relationship between the disciplinary knowledge and the social sciences more generally – especially as these arise in questions about social policy research, is reasserted.

This implies that especially in countries that are categorized as ‘developing countries’, education policy research should be approached by reference to the relationship between education and other social issues more generally. Its analytical framework must in some senses be synonymous with the political economy of democracy, development and the ‘national question’⁸. Yet in most analyses about education in South Africa, this relationship is rarely taken into account except in the reductionist arguments about the role of education in ‘responding’ to the demands of the labour market.⁹

This relationship is profoundly ‘political’, ‘economic’ and ‘developmental’ because of the central role the state plays as the critical agent of ‘development’ in democratic societies.¹⁰ Hence a broader canvass of analytical categories, derived from state and society impacted upon by global political, economic, ecological, cultural and ideological systems - and not limited to educational issues alone - produces a deeper, fuller, more textured and qualitatively thoughtful view of the issues affecting education.¹¹

Despite the considerable volume of literature about education in South Africa, ranging from treatise on pre-school to adult education and from technical and vocational to higher

⁸ The ‘national question’ was classically about the contradictory impulses of ‘national self-determination, language and culture, ‘ethnicity and social class and the contestations about their meaning and effect in the determination of emerging ‘nations’. Debates about this were particularly vigorous at the turn of the end of the 19th century but there is no doubt that these issues continue to have resonance even now as indeed the debates about the nature of the apartheid state showed. In that debate, characterizing the state as a ‘racial’ state or as an ‘exploitative capitalist’ state gave rise to differing interpretations of the ‘national question’ and implied that an analysis of apartheid and its relationship to capitalism was critical to any view of the ‘national question’. And this in turn affected what strategies were appropriate in the struggle against apartheid. Wolpe H, *Race, Class and the Apartheid State*, James Currey, London 1988, Legassick M, *Capital Accumulation and Violence, Economy and Society*, Volume 2 (3), 1974, Legassick M, *Legislation, Ideology and Economy in Post-1948 South Africa*, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Volume 1 (1), 1974 [A], Wolpe H, *The Theory of Internal Colonialism: The South African Case*, ICS Seminar Papers, Volume 5 undated, Alexander N [No Sizwe], *One Azania, One Nation*, Zed Press, London 1979

⁹ Labour market outcomes for education and training are very important but that does not mean that the purposes of education can be reduced to that alone. In this regard see Vally and Motala (Eds.) (2014) *Education, Economy and Society*. UNISA Press, Pretoria and the extensive critique of such reductive approaches.

¹⁰ See for instance the discussion of Neoliberalism as a political and economic perspective and its influence in shaping the global agenda for development in the post 1980’s in Harvey, D. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, OUP, Oxford, 2005

¹¹ Michael Young in *An old problem in a new context: Rethinking the relationship between sociology and education policy*, Paper presented at the International conference on the Sociology of Education, London January 2-4 2004, refers to the need to ‘cross the boundaries’ between the discipline-based theoretical debates about policy and political debates about ‘the efficacy and goals of actual policies’. (page 4)

education in all its diversity, this issue is not fully understood. Although nearly all of it is concerned with policy related issues its orientation to the 'externalities' which influence education policy and its implementation is limited even while questions about social and historical 'disadvantage', 'marginalization', 'exclusion', poverty and inequality and such abiding social phenomena are often referred to. These writings point out, quite rightly, that the educational system is characterized by deep inequalities, especially noticeable in relation to poor communities where there are considerable 'backlogs' arising from the discriminatory and racist history of South African education and the deliberately distorted distribution of educational expenditures to favour 'white' minorities. Yet few of these texts have dealt specifically with the political and economic imperatives which inform state policy making and its choices. Where these are referred to¹² the discussion is essentially about the *effects* of educational reform but not about the underlying political, economic and 'developmental' (or indeed the absence of environmental) conceptions informing such policy in the post-apartheid period.

Hence any attempt at understanding educational policy and how it is implemented must reckon with what informs the 'developmental' perspective of the state, its political and economic ideology and especially its orientation to the 'best models' for fiscal, monetary, trade, industry and economic and environmental policy more generally, i.e. the perspectives which delineate the political economy of educational alternatives. The strategies of emergent democratic states in education are always referred to by policy makers as intrinsic to the achievement of 'development'. In that regard, in most developing countries the relationship between education and the goals of modernization are a constant refrain in the pronouncements of politicians and business leaders alike despite the serious contestations about their modernist discourses preoccupied with questions about economic efficiency alone.¹³

This does not mean that social policy analysts must interpret the pronouncements of decision makers concerning 'development' literally. These too must be examined critically since the regnant ideological constructs about democracy and development are not universally shared. An evaluation of social policy which sanitizes such critique out of the

¹² Chisholm L [Ed.], *Changing Class*, HSRC Press 2004 is an important exception in this regard. The title of the book 'suggests both the active process of effecting change within social classes and classrooms and the nature and process of that change'. [page 2] And the 'major conclusion' of the book relates to how present policies favour and 'expanding, racially-mixed middle class.' [Page 7]

¹³ We refer extensively to the literature about the 'modernization' debate in one of the papers produced for this research Programme. Enver Motale and Tsakani Chaka, The Case for Basic Education, CEPD Occasional Paper No. 4, 2005

reckoning leaves social theory improvised and policy analysis lifeless and unresponsive. The relationship between the framing concepts of 'development' are often contradictory and complex as the evidence about post-colonial nationalisms, whose positive attributes have mainly been undone by the hegemonic agenda of post-liberation elites.

As Shivji has argued these contradictory developments are in part ascribable to the unreconstructed continuities of state forms bequeathed to post-colonial states.¹⁴ The ideological ascendancy and sovereignty of former colonial powers have been supplanted by new forms of social and political privilege, transforming conceptions of freedom and justice to meet self-serving interpretations of nationhood and liberty. These approaches to national reconstruction have served mainly to extend the global reach of dependency-seeking regimes acting in the interests of their multinational corporations through the agency of such post-colonial states. Bose and Jalal talk about the failure to grasp the paradox of the inclusionary rhetoric of singular nationalism contributing to a rage of exclusionary aspirations. Instead of acknowledging the flaws in the idioms of inclusionary nationalism, state managers have responded to exclusionary challenges by reinforcing the ideational and structural pillars of the nation-state. The disjunction between official policies and societal demands and expectations has never been more critical¹⁵

The implication of this is that the analysis of social policy is either vitiated or strengthened by its orientation to the broader conditionality's imposed by political, economic, cultural, religious and other factors. Especially in developing countries there is every reason to understand the context in which social policies are applied as conjunctural to the broader developmental challenges which face such developing states and societies. For instance, policy analysis which makes no attempt to comprehend the effects of political turmoil or upheaval, (as in the case of the states of the Middle East, central Africa or the former Soviet Republic) high levels of social disintegration, rampant inequality, unemployment and poverty as in most underdeveloped countries in the world; or extreme vulnerability to trade and financial regimes as in the case of most of the countries of the South; would simply be too uninformed and could not illuminate the critical factors determining the path of social policy. Global and national effects impact on societies not merely through one arena of social policy but are pervasive and wide, muting the power of individual states and their social interventions and practices. An analysis of the categories of political economy enhanced by

¹⁴ Issa G. Shivji, Revisiting the Debate on National Autonomous Development, Faculty of Law, University of Dar es Salaam Tanzania issashivji@cats-net.com

¹⁵ Bose and Jalal 2006: page 2

other more contingent notions about culture¹⁶, tradition, religion and relativism remain salient in providing a deeper understanding of social policy and history.

Academic research and social policy analyst: a questionable distinction for developing countries

I now deal with the distinctions between academic researchers and policy-analysts in rapidly changing societies such as South Africa. In his contribution to *Educational Research: Methodology and Measurement: An International Handbook*¹⁷ Martin Trow traces the origins of policy analysis and explains more fully the relationship between research and policy. He speaks of the emergence of policy analysts in the 1970s in the US:

Whose training, habits of mind, and conditions of work are expressly designed to narrow the gap between the researcher and the policy maker and to bring systematic knowledge to bear more directly, more quickly, and more relevantly on the issues of public policy¹⁸.

Drawing on the writings of Weiss and Kogan et al¹⁹, he refers to two types of models of policy related research. The first is the 'percolation' model 'in which research somehow ... influences policy indirectly, by entering into the consciousness of the actors' to shape the choice of policy alternatives and the second is the 'political model' which is about 'the intentional use of research by political decision makers to strengthen an argument, to justify the taking of unpopular decisions.'²⁰ He argues that in contrast to conventional academic research in the social sciences, policy researchers are trained to assess and to conceptualize problems in ways that are not suitable to academic enquiry but to suit the needs of decision- makers and to examine considerations such as questions of efficacy, costs and benefits, trade-offs, and alternatives. Indeed 'not all policy analysts are "researchers" as the university conceives of research', though he does not go so far as to

¹⁶ Although 'culture' has assumed an increasing importance to analysis one needs to be mindful of how it is understood. As Bose and Jalal argue, 'culture quite as much as nationalism has always been a contested site where social groupings of differential power and privilege have vied for supremacy. To treat it as a seamless web binding the "nation" to revive faltering development agendas is to invite even greater polarization than already elicited by the state's flaunting of a singular and uncompromising nationalist ideology. ... This is not to say that democracy and development ... can be wholly devoid of cultural moorings. But to present culture as the panacea for all that has gone wrong with past strategies of development is to reify it as an autonomous and undifferentiated category rather than view it as a process which is inextricably connected with the changing material domains of politics and economy.' Ibid: page 5. As regards the question of religion see Mamdani: *Good Muslims, Bad Muslims*, Pantheon Books, New York, 2004

¹⁷ Edited by John P Keeves, Pergamon Press, Oxford, 1988

¹⁸ Page 197 et seq.

¹⁹ See page 197 of his article for references

²⁰ Page 197

say that the application of intellectual and analytical skills is not required by policy analysts. As he puts it:

In a word they try to see problems from the perspective of the decision maker, but with a set of intellectual, analytical and research tools that the politician or senior civil servant may not possess. They are ... at the elbow of the decision makers, or if not in government, then serving the 'government in opposition' or some think-tank or interests group which hopes to staff the next administration ...²¹

Trow also draws a distinction between 'faculty members' and the policy analysts who are trained them. The 'former are almost without exception academics with PhDs' who are 'specialists' in the domain of public policy, researching issues in that area but differently from what 'their students' will do once in government. He regards them, *a la Wilson*, as 'policy intellectuals' and as distinct from 'policy analysts'. Moreover researchers perform their work at universities, 'according to the paradigms' of their graduate studies; that they operate at a high level of specialization (and consequently do not deal with 'global problems'), and are less constrained about what issues in policy they might investigate. Conversely policy analysts 'serve the client', through work that has no peer review system, their work is 'interdisciplinary' and pursues issues thrown up by a defined problematic rather than through the theories chosen by them and they are constrained by studies within 'circumscribed policy areas'.²² Because policy analysts do not use ethnographic research they are the victims 'of official statistics' since they are not inclined to question these while university trained analysts would. Their analysis is sharply constrained by the boundaries they and their clients define for the research and are therefore likely to reflect the tension between their client and the needs of their professional commitment and integrity. The relation between analysts and intellectuals also has a bearing 'on the nature of communication and persuasion in the political arena'.²³

Even if one agrees with aspects Trow's analysis and his typology for the characterization of the differences between policy analysts and academic researchers in the US, it is hardly an adequate description of the complexities and attributes of policy research and practitioners in developing democracies like South Africa, nor of their social and intellectual orientation, their training, methodological choices or social location. In fact Trow's might be no more than a caricature of the work of policy analysis in South Africa which, it must be said, ranges from

²¹ Ibid:Page 198

²² Ibid:Page 199

²³ Ibid:Page 201

consultancy work contracted to audit and accounting firms to critical social research undertaken in academia.

Trow's characterizations refer to the relatively established arena of practice in the US and one in which the distinction between policy analyst and researcher has come to be defined through years of practice in a comparatively stable environment for policy making. Policy related research in 'developing' countries like South Africa is more complex because of the dynamic of the political and social change process itself. This complexity arises not only from the process of legislative reform but also because of the identities of the actors involved in the process of policy engagement and the specificities of the conditions for policy formation prevailing at any time. As Fritz Ringer speculated in relation to academics in France at the turn of the 20th Century in asking the question whether intellectuals are 'prophets or sages; or are they scientists, specialized researchers or technical innovators? Are they critics of power or expert advisers of politicians, direct or indirect moulders of public opinion?' He argues that these positions are in fact 'a vital force of the cognitive dispositions at work in the intellectual field'.²⁴

The simple dichotomy between researcher and policy analyst is not wholly tenable not only because of the interchangeability of roles and functions requiring fluid descriptions of intellectuals who are involved in policy applicative research but also because of the specific 'conjunctures' defining these roles. Particular roles are shaped largely by the conditions of their production. Hence formulaic typologies are not very useful here because the work of social policy analysts reflects a much more complex array of intellectual and scholarly functions. This is true of policy related analysis in fields other than education, such as health, housing, land and local government to mention some of these other fields.

Policy research in rapidly changing societies like South Africa is therefore heterodox relative to what is normally ascribed to the regimen of policy analysts. It engages in analysis beyond the formal conventions of policy analysis and attempts to offer not only policy briefings but also intellectually stimulating ideas, critique and the possibilities for public engagement in issues of policy together with academic writings and consultancy type reports when commissioned to do so. This complex of activities reflects more accurately the work of policy analyst in South Africa and especially the tension between technicist and critical modes of policy research and suggests that in each case, how the projected research is

²⁴ Muller J, Reclaiming knowledge, 2000 [page

conceptualized is fundamental because on this would depend the nature of its outcome, its audience, qualitative requirements, form of dissemination and use of resources.

Scholarship and its diverse forms

The concept of scholarly research is not completely resolved. The Concise Oxford Dictionary's definition of scholarship refers to 'the quality of having attained learning' and somewhat teleologically it refers to 'methods and achievements characteristic of scholars'.

For Feldman the idea of scholarship is conventionally 'described in terms of the trio of teaching, research, and service functions' although he says that in practice it often refers to 'just research and publication.'²⁵ And Atkinson argues strongly for the 'scholarship of teaching':

The scholarship of teaching is a concept with multiple ramifications. It is at the core of the current transformation of higher education. The scholarship of teaching challenges the existing stratification system within the academy. The scholarship of teaching and learning is a much larger enterprise, a movement that can transform the nature of academia.

Bitzer advises us that the concept of *scholar* originates in the 11th century and was interpreted as having a social rather than an individualistic meaning. By the 16th C it came to attach to 'a learned and erudite person; especially one who is learned in the classical (i.e. Greek and Latin) languages and their literature'²⁶ He refers (*a la* Talcott Parsons) to the 'competence in mastering knowledge and the techniques of its advancement' and with this is associated the 'obligation of integrity, a commitment to the values of the academic profession' which according to Booth²⁷ 'are personal qualities that he calls '*habits of*

²⁵ Feldman, Kenneth A. *Toward a reconceptualization of scholarship: a human action system with functional imperatives*. Journal of Higher Education, November 1, 1995 see also Atkinson M.P. *The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Reconceptualizing Scholarship and Transforming the Academy*: Social Forces June 1, 2001 in which she argues that:

The scholarship of teaching is a concept with multiple ramifications. It is at the core of the current transformation of higher education. The scholarship of teaching challenges the existing stratification system within the academy. The scholarship of teaching and learning is a much larger enterprise, a movement, that can transform the nature of academia'

The University of Cape Town is also discussing a revised definition of 'responsiveness' and its criteria for assessing the performance of academics to reflect a systemic embedding of the notion of social responsiveness in its core activities. This would offer academics the possibility of using outputs associated with social responsiveness for the purposes of ad hominem promotions and performance reviews.

²⁶ Bitzer E.M. (2006): page 274 referring to the Shorter Oxford Dictionary 1933, OUP, Oxford 1933

²⁷ Referred to by Bitzer: 374 [Booth W.C 1988 The vocation of a teacher: Rhetorical occasions 1967-1988, Chicago University Press, Chicago]

rationality'. These include courage, persistence, consideration, humility and honesty, which are to be considered as virtues of great consequence in shaping the intellectual work of the scholar.²⁸

Bitzer refers to Boyer's (1990)²⁹ categories of scholarship for who the *scholarship of teaching* was about the creation of knowledge through the process of debate and 'discourse' and which was a 'continuous process' of re-examining knowledge associated with the idea of 'discovery'. The *scholarship of discovery* was the 'process of intellectual excitement' and not about the 'outcomes of knowledge', while the *scholarship of application* was about 'professional activity and service' – subject to the same rigorous criteria as teaching and research while the *scholarship of integration* was about connecting various disciplinary knowledges. All scholarly work though 'could be appraised by qualitative standards that needed to be explicitly articulated'.³⁰ Boyer's categories, we are told, lacked any orientation to the 'socio-economic contexts and historical purposes' of universities and were criticized for that.³¹

Bitzer's main interests lies in the *scholarship of teaching* which he discusses by reference to various authors and their views on issues like what scholarship implies for those who are taught, the criteria for its evaluation, the 'nexus' between teaching and research. He concludes by wondering why 'higher education institutions do not regard the scholarship of teaching as an area of priority'.³² And argues that research will continue to dominate higher education 'at a systemic level', although there are 'encouraging attempts to promote and enhance the teaching-research nexus'³³ especially in the UK. He complains about the lack of useful criteria for evaluating the scholarship of teaching and calls for a 'proper balance with other forms of scholarship in higher education'.³⁴

This issue appears to be the subject of discussion and debate in South African universities too and will hopefully provide academics the opportunity to raise issues about a broader range of intellectual commitments with which they might be associated. In my view the measure of academic outputs [such as a fixed number of approved journal publications for a

²⁸ Bitzer's Italics

²⁹ Boyer E, *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. Princeton New Jersey, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

³⁰ Ibid: 374

³¹ Bitzer ibid 374

³² Ibid: 377

³³ See his useful discussion on the varieties of links between teaching and research characterised as 'research led' or 'research oriented' or 'research based' and 'research tutored'.

³⁴ Ibid:Page 388

year] is an inadequate measure to evaluate or understand the work of academics who are often engaged in a wide array of scholarly activities viewed on a continuum between consultations with policy makers to directly commissioned 'expert' consultancy advice to dialogue and public engagement activities through intellectual debate and social critique, and to the publication³⁵ and dissemination of its research activities each of which could itself take a variety of forms.

For me the idea of scholarship symbolizes the activity of conceiving important issues for research, (fundamental and applicative) producing new ideas, new interpretations of old ideas, adding to the body of human understanding, expanding the horizons of such understanding and understanding phenomena more clearly. It includes and the modes and methods of doing so through the process of engagement in the production and dissemination of knowledge.

Critique as intrinsic to policy research

Conceptions of policy related research are sometimes confused with the role that policy decision makers must play in discharging their roles– in other words, with the work of devising particular strategies to give effects to the intentions of government policies. This relates to an aspect of the possible work of researchers – specifically commissioned for the purpose. It is not the work of policy related scholarship more generally - even if it has consequences for policy and decision-makers. Policy research too can be oriented to the theoretical foundations of critique and this is necessarily so since critique has significance for social change processes, democratic transformation, reform and other very important issues which policy analysis cannot avoid.³⁶

What is the role of critique in scholarly research?³⁷ The idea of critique has long been the subject of theorization and practice and we do not revisit its complexities here. It refers partly

³⁵ The issue of what journals are accredited is itself contentious and there been some debate about it in the media. It has importance because the selection of journals has effects on the formula for research funding and indeed according to the ASSAf report 'on the development of local journals, the behaviour of individuals, the financial sustainability of learned societies that produced the journals and the institutions that received the "output" subsidy' See ASSAf. Report on a strategic approach to research publishing in South Africa, ASSAf, March 2006, Preface

³⁶ David Held, *Introduction to critical theory: Horkheimer to Habermas*, Hutchinson, 1980; Smart B, *Sociology, Phenomenology and Marxian Analysis*, Routledge and Kegan Paul 1976

³⁷ Several tomes are extant on this subject and this is not the place to evaluate and discuss these. I reflect here only briefly on what is important for this discussion.

to how phenomena are investigated and understood and what the implications of understanding might be for practice. Kant's proposition was that knowing and the conditions under which we come to know are inextricable from each other and are contextually bound. Critique is therefore intrinsic to intellectual enquiry. One elaboration of this idea suggests that:

The task of critical theory is to subject ... concepts' received understandings, and cultural categories constitutive of everyday life and public discourse to critical theoretical reconsideration, in order to interrogate the prevailing order of social and political modernity through a method of immanent critique – to advance a systematic and radical critique of society, demystifying how power, position and privilege relate to class, group and personal inequalities.³⁸

Another³⁹ suggests that:

In critique, however, we transcend the strictly technical or practical as we consider how the forms and contents of our thought shape and are shaped by the historical situations in which we find ourselves ... and how history itself will be shaped by our praxis.⁴⁰

Burnett⁴¹ argues that critique is not simply synonymous with the acquisition of knowledge – it is more than that. Although change might be grounded on knowledge the question to ask is to what extent is such knowledge 'critical knowledge' or as he says 'under critical control'.

Has knowledge become simply the supplier of means to non-debated ends or are the ends up for debate too? We do not have to invoke an image of a worn out and unworkable central control to ask whether society can be said to be, in any real sense, steering its changes with the maximum insight that might be available.⁴²

Critique goes beyond research which is responsive to the needs of contracting parties i.e. user driven. It must also provide systematic, analytical and sustained reflection of, in particular, the nature of state and state policies and their implications for and effects on society as a whole or on social categories and groups or communities. It must be differentiated from other forms of writing and thinking which although they might be adjacent,

³⁸ Peter Vale Memo Circa 2004

³⁹ Kemmis, S (1985), *Action Research and the Politics of Reflection* in Bond D, Keogh. R and Walker D (eds.) *Reflection: Turning Experience into Learning*, London: Kogan Page: 142

⁴⁰ Ibid: page 42

⁴¹ R. Burnett, *Higher education: A critical business*, SRHE –Open University, 1997, page 1.

⁴² Ibid:Page 6

have different social purposes, such as journalistic, popular, and even sensationalist agendas.

Critique must be clear and unambiguous, state its underlying assumptions and values, clarify its ideological standpoint, be reflective and analytical, and based on careful study of the facts reliant on good empirical evidence without being empiricist. It must be faithful to accuracy of detail and sources posit its own limits and in the case of policy critique suggest reform alternatives and point to other useful and instructive research.

Most importantly, critique is scholarly because it is about producing complex knowledge and is not disconnected scholarship - isolated from the problems of social change. It must engage with the important issues of relationships – for whom and in what relationship. Research which is predictable, does not raise new and difficult questions about social choices, and simply confirms the pre-existing choices of client agencies (regardless of who these are) is not very useful. It simply avoids the most important questions to be clarified and fails to make any real contribution to knowledge.

Policy critique is also important because although there is a strong association between policy research and the work of government, it is wrong to infer from this that all policy related research must, in the first instance, serve the needs of government alone. It is a false premise that only government is implicated in policy related research even though the remit of some policy research might be to provide intellectual anchorage to existing government policies and even though some of its analytical conclusions could be similar to that of policy-makers that is not its explicit purpose. The concerns of government are no less the concerns of communities and social movements – why else would there be such serious ideological and organizational conflict over these issues? There is also an equally untested (and clearly false) premise that government has no need for proper theorization and scholarly critique, despite the proclivities of some high-level bureaucrats. The purpose of doing research could hardly be to produce work which lacks theorization and scholarship and no serious and responsible (or democratic) government or social movement can ignore the importance of critical enquiry nor should it rely on anything less than that.

I think that for all those committed to the practice of critical social policy research in developing countries; we are obliged to raise a number of questions about social and human questions. We cannot avoid questions about how the emerging democratic state is reconfigured in this phase, whose interests are served by it, the orientation of the state to issues of class and gender, urban-ness and rurality, to the environment, social rights and

individual choice, the powerful and the weak, the articulate and the subdued, about the effects of global capitalism in relation to its effects on developing societies and the multifaceted range of factors which present a daunting complexity of intersecting issues for scholarship through research.

We are obliged to take account of the arguments against the commercialization of knowledge at the behest of powerful and intertwined military-energy interests, not subject to the processes of public and democratic accountability. A critique of the commercialization of knowledge, its commodification and the consequences for research bodies remain important because through it we are reminded about democratic accountability in the use of public resources. The commercialization of knowledge regards practical knowledge (practical solutions to pressing social issues) as subsidiary to its primary purposes - profitability, military capability and supremacy. Commercialization is consequently largely disdainful of, and has little regard for the theoretical foundations of knowledge or its social value. It also implies rethinking the role of research in the context of the post-apartheid state's location in a regime of global production relations, the decline and re-invigoration of organizations of civil society in the period since 1994, the relationship of the state's social and economic (especially fiscal, monetary and employment related) policies and their impact on social policy in general and the setting of state priorities. All of these are bound within the contestation about the ideological suppositions that underpin state policies – especially the weight of economic and technologically determinist views of development relative to other conceptions of development. It implies engagement with a broader canvass of research and knowledge than was previously available, the testing of hypothesis against a global reality, the evaluation and use of networks of intellectual activity in many parts of the world and against the scrutiny of wider scholarship.

For these reasons it would be better to view scholarly critique in social policy analysis as inseparable from the challenges of producing relevant social research. In this way relevance and scholarship are not falsely polarized because of the difficulties of producing critical and analytical research. It should be clear that unlike the policy analyst referred to in Trow's characterization, policy scholars in South Africa must provide systematic, analytical and sustained reflection *and critique* on the nature of public policies, differentiated from other forms of writing such as commissioned report-writing, journalistic and popular writing and text geared to the purpose of academic teaching which, although they might be contiguous, have different purposes.

Scholarship through public dialogue and intellectual engagement

Policy scholarship also raises issues not ordinarily associated with academic research since intellectual engagement through policy dialogue and debate are intrinsic to it. What is meant by 'intellectual' in this instance is itself a matter for discussion since the term intellectual has had many meanings attached to it historically. In Orientalist France [1640-1701] for instance, intellectuals were easily identified by law and through social perception. There is today no such formal recognition by the state nor any substantive definition. In contemporary Western society it is now used *ad hoc*,⁴³ referring to people with university degrees, or in specified professions [writers, journalists, and teachers] or by concentrating on the alleged social roles or function or through their psychological and behavioural traits. Now structural, referring to 'an observable position in the social structure', and phenomenological approaches referring to the 'the self-understanding and perceptions of the individual, as shown by his or her particular ways of thinking and acting', have been used.⁴⁴ How do we understand this role today?

The intellectual role required of policy researchers and analysts makes demands on how the process of engagement takes place in regard to policy related scholarship. It requires a diversity of strategies for the production, dissemination and 'delivery' of the outputs of scholarship, new ways of thinking about its uses and new forms of communication, all of which cannot unthinkingly reproduce the prescriptions of discipline based academic research. Social-policy research raises a different set of questions about the nature of its community which extends well beyond academic communities. Indeed it raises questions about who exactly is its community besides its academic peers and other analysts of policy related research. In South Africa given the historical antecedents of policy making, there is a much wider range of bodies, institutions, organizations and individuals that constitute the 'community' of interests relevant to the work of the social policy analysis. For instance not only must policy researchers engage with policy makers in government (national, provincial, local and in legislative interest groups such as Standing Committees) but also must it engage with other policy making institutions [such as the HRC or the HSRC], interested

⁴³ See the Introduction to *Intellectuals, Universities, and the State in Western Modern Societies*, Eds. Ron Eyerman, Lennart G. Svensson, and Thomas Soderqvist, University of California Press, Berkeley 1987

⁴⁴ And even less complementary perceptions about intellectuals have been expressed such as by Robert Michels in his classic, *Political Parties* suggesting that

From time to time the state, embarrassed by the increasing demand for positions in its service, is forced to open the sluices of its bureaucratic canals in order to admit thousands of new postulants and thus to transform these from dangerous adversaries into zealous defenders and partisans. There are two classes of intellectuals: those who have succeeded in securing a post at the manager of the state, whilst the others consist of those who ... have assaulted the fortress without being able to force their way in.' Ibid: 3

donor agencies who are willing to support such policy work and who are constantly 'on the lookout' for relevance to fulfil their development-cooperation agreements, research bodies internationally, the media whose interests are sometimes provoked by the social relevance of policy related work and others. And of course of great importance is the need to engage with the organizations in civil society that best represent the interests of those constituencies directly affected by policies. These too represent a range of bodies such as teachers and other unions, human rights interests groups, civic bodies, student organizations, social movements, local community groups, and even individuals interested in the work of policy analysts for a variety of reasons; academic, 'political' or organizational.

The manner of engagement with these communities differs quite considerably one from the other. Engaging with a community of academic peers is very different from the practices of policy analysts working inside or outside of the legislative bodies of the country. And of course both these are quite different from the mode, purposes and forms of engagement with local communities, themselves having differences based on geographic location, levels of organization, languages of communication, levels of literacy, local histories, traditions and practices, issues of particular relevance to social science research largely avoided in conventional academic research whose mandate for engagement is more narrowly defined. This means, very importantly, that policy scholars would need to problematize the ostensible separation between academic, intellectual and educational 'activist' in the discourse of social policy analysis.

It may be that academic scholarship has largely resolved its *intellectual* demands through the requirement of the peer review system, the 'publish or perish' imperative and through the expert supervision of academic dissertations. There is, for instance, no requirement that the work be widely read and disseminated or be accessible to those not in the academic community. The constant refrain against such research that it 'lies on the shelf to gather dust' is, to that extent, unreasonable and disingenuous since widespread dissemination is never a criterion of such research. The rationale for this selective and privileging disposition to the availability of academic research lies in the view that the demands of scholarly rigour preclude such inclusivity. We make no judgement on the efficacy of such a view but state it because it is so manifest in arguments about academic scholarship except to say that some institutions are seriously rethinking these criteria for scholarship in the light of considerations about 'social responsiveness' and somewhat ironically, out of considerations about additional income sources.

Policy scholarship should not therefore be limited to academic writing or to academic publication and higher-degree teaching. Universities in particular need to carefully rethink their attitude to socially responsive applied and strategic social policy research and not assume that the criteria of academic publishing are completely adequate for these purposes. They need to think of how to support socially responsive scholarship without diminishing the value of academic and publishable work. More discussion and nuanced criteria are required to take in the various forms of scholarly engagement which characterizes the work of policy researchers since if writing was judged only by its academic merit then the great body of human knowledge acquired over many millennia in the great exchange of ideas throughout human history would have little value, since very little of it was produced within the conventions of academia.⁴⁵

The tests that apply to academic publishing are rigorous tests in their own right and could be regarded as completely adequate to its purposes. It would be a mistake however to assume that they are adequate for all purposes at all times and especially to the forms of scholarship given to relevant-policy-applicative social research. Essentially the criteria for public policy scholarship need to be extended to include the role of research in the stimulation of *public* dialogue and enquiry, public accountability and knowledge, disputation and debate in the Socratic tradition of and in the agora rather than the traditions of the relatively closed society of academia.⁴⁶

Policy scholarship and questions of methodology

The necessity to construct methodologies for a wider sphere of engagement through research is not well understood outside the policy research community. It raises many difficult questions about *how* to engage and the integrity of such engagement through research. To take an instance of this, in the case of the work of the EPC work with the Nelson Mandela Foundation (NMF) in 2005,⁴⁷ it was initially envisaged, by some of the researchers at least, that the primary mode of enquiry would be a survey of the opinions and views of the communities with whom the research was concerned. Over time it became clearer, through debate and discussion that the *relationship* between survey and

⁴⁵ . Of the great 'natural philosophers' and scientists of the past it would be surprising to find any who produced scholarship by the conventions of academic research. See also Conner C.C, *A People's History of Science*, Nation Books, New York, 2005, in which it is argued that nearly every significant advance in science was attributable to the prior experience gained from artisanal, seafaring, navigational, midwives, mechanical, blacksmithing, craft related and other 'ordinary' endeavour.

⁴⁶ We do not engage with the critique about the possibilities and restrictions endured by scholarship within Neo-Liberal regimes although we recognise the force of that view today. See Davies Bronwyn, *The (I'm) possibility of Intellectual Work in Neo-Liberal Regimes*, Discourse studies in the cultural politics of education Vol. 26 No.

⁴⁷ See Nelson Mandela Foundation, *Emerging Voices: A report on Rural Education in South African Rural Communities*, NMF/HSRC, 2005

ethnography had to be explored more fully. Indeed the role of the survey was seen in its proper light as shedding a great deal of important quantitative information which would be strongly augmented by the qualitative voices (however difficult it was to obtain this 'voice' with integrity) of the communities through ethnographic research.⁴⁸ The combination of research methodologies, contrary to much orthodoxy, was likely to and did in fact produce the best understanding of problematic defined by the research project.

This issue also raises important questions about the relationship between research and its methodologies because of the dangers of 'objectifying' communities in research.⁴⁹ Increasingly policy analysts have come to understand the value of ethnographic approaches to research, to satisfy the criteria of 'non objectification', to understand subjectivities and to integrate the methodologies of enquiry in mutually enriching ways.

Bearing in mind the conflicting research traditions that abide in the social sciences we can nevertheless assume an orientation to policy research which is synonymous to the position adopted by Popkewitz⁵⁰ who refers to this conflict of intellectual traditions. For him, understanding this conflict requires:

An inquiry into the social, political and epistemological assumptions that shape and fashion the activities and outcomes of research, must be clearly understood and projected upon. One of the ironies of contemporary social science is that a particular and narrow conception of science has come to dominate social research. That conception gives emphasis to the procedural logic of research by making statistical and procedural problems paramount to the conduct of research. This view eliminates from scrutiny the social movements and values that underlie research methods and which give definition to the researcher as a particular social type. As a result, the possibilities of social sciences are at best limited, and at worst mystifying of the very human conditions that the methods of science were invented to illuminate.⁵¹

⁴⁸ The term 'ethnographic' is used here to signify more than 'a branch of anthropology concerned with ethnic groups' but rather the idea that researchers need to investigate social phenomena within the socio-cultural context in which it occurs using qualitative methods and approaches.

⁴⁹ Dani Wadada Nabudere, TOWARDS AN AFRIKOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION AND AFRICAN REGENERATION mpai2005@yahoo.co.uk; Dani Wadada Nabudere PROFESSOR CHEICK ANTA DIOP ANDTRANSDISCIPLINARITY

⁵⁰ Popkewitz Thomas S, Paradigm and ideology in educational research, The Falmer Press, London 1984 page ix.

⁵¹ Ibid page 2

Social policy research requires its methodological approaches to pay particular attention to the relevance and appropriateness of particular research methodologies which especially if it hopes to adduce the voice of the communities in which research was conducted.⁵² This is essential to the authentication and validation of qualitative data and in addition to use the experiences of those communities for thinking about the potential solutions to their educational challenges.

The necessity to engage and to construct methodologies for such engagement also leads to many questions about the *how* and *what* of dissemination of research. And these questions are compounded by the overt and other relations of power which pervade the publication of research more generally. This in turn has a decisive influence on the form of publication and writing that results from such research. In the case of social-policy research there are many possibilities for the publications of research and many modes of doing so. In fact these modes are demanded by the very process of engagement. In addition to the production of written work for the research process itself (training and induction of researchers, to clarify the objectives of the research for communities) there can be a welter of writings emanating directly as a result of the research. These could include reports and policy briefings for decision-makers, media and 'popular' writings, opinion pieces, policy briefings, monographs and advocacy materials, discussion documents, conference presentations and academic writings⁵³.

In fact only a very small part of policy related research is ever published in peer reviewed academic publications although the demands for a variety of written outputs is greater than that of academic journal publication. For instance, while the requirement of an academic establishment might the publication of one journal article per year,⁵⁴ the actual output of written work by policy researchers often consists of book publications, conference presentations, newspaper articles, policy briefs, non-accredited journal articles and of course voluminous research reports.

⁵² Amina Mama, *Strengthening civil society: participatory action research in a militarized state*, Development in Practice; Feb2000, Vol. 10 Issue 1, p59-70, 12p; Mohanty, C. (1988) 'Under western eyes: feminist scholarship and colonial discourses', Feminist Review 30; and Kemmis S (1993) *Action Research and Social Movement: A Challenge for Policy Research*, Education Analysis Archives, Vol. 1, No. 1, January (<http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v1n1.htm>) and Sumara D.J. and Davis B *Enactivist Theory and Community Learning: Towards a complexified understanding of action research*, Education Action Research, Vol. 5, No 3, 1997; Ramadiro B, *Lecture of Participatory Research Methodology*, 2005.

⁵³ For an example of popular writings see booklets produced by the Education Rights Project

⁵⁴ In fact no institution, as far as I am aware, has reached that target while the great majority are way below it and even the HSRC's target is less than 1 per year.

Conclusion

In relation to public policy research it is entirely appropriate to problematize the ostensible separation between the scholarly attributes of intellectual and academic, activist and advocate, policy analyst and critic. The wider and socially relevant interpretation of scholarship it emphasizes, attests to the importance of the space for thoughtful disputation, enquiry and dialogue in ways which go beyond rhetoric, provides content and support to such a role and recognizes its contribution to democratic citizenship and social change.

Policy researchers are enjoined by the very nature of their craft to reflect on the social value and uses of knowledge, on the responsibility of public bodies and intellectuals, and the relationship between knowledge, power and the dominance of ideological positions in and through research. This perspective has always been informed by the view that its work must unambiguously contribute to the social goal of a democratic, informed and thinking citizenry, an objective which does not pretend to adopt a 'neutral' approach to research.

There is a need for a wider debate about these issues since they are relevant not only to issues of policy related research but more importantly about its potential contribution to the development of a critical citizenry, about the relationship between individuals and society, 'public' and 'private', states and markets, the national and global, autonomy and accountability; about the relationship between education and development, rurality and poverty, the discourse of rights, society and violence, gender and reform, epistemological privilege and exclusion,⁵⁵ identity and culture, traditionalism and modernity, ecological and other issues which for us are about the complexities of the democratic undertaking in 'developing' societies. Sometimes these issues are dealt with in terms of the 'knowledge debate' at other times by reference to the concept of 'transformation' or 'engagement' or 'responsiveness'. Suffice it to say that each of these descriptive monikers is ultimately about the future of this society and the possible role researchers play to say that each of these descriptive monikers is ultimately about the future of this society and the possible role researchers, including social policy researchers in universities might play.

⁵⁵ Mkandawire T., *African Intellectuals, Rethinking, politics, language and development*, Codesria Books, Dakar 1988; Zeleza P.T, *The Academic Diaspora and knowledge production in and on Africa: What role for CODESRIA* in Mkandawire above.

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ASSAf (2006). The issue of what journals are accredited is itself contentious and there has been some debate about it in the media. It has importance because the selection of journals has effects on the formula for research funding and indeed according to ASSAf report 'on the development of local journals, the behaviour of individuals, the financial sustainability of learned societies that produced the journals and the institutions that received the 'output' subsidy' See ASSAf. *Report on a strategic approach to research publishing in South Africa*, ASSAf, and March 2006, Preface.

Aston D, and Green, F. (1996). See *Education, training and the Global Economy*, Badat, S. (1990). *From Innocence to 'Epistemic Reflexivity': Critical Researchers and South African Higher Education Policy Making Post 1990*. Council on Higher Education (CHE). Pretoria. Republic of South Africa.

Blitzer E. M. (2006). Page 274 referring to the *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* 1993, OUP, and Oxford 1933.

Blitzer *ibid* 374. *Ibid* 377.

Blitzer, E. M. (2006). See his useful discussion on the varieties of links between teaching and research characterized as 'research led' or 'research oriented' or 'research based' and 'research tutored.' *Ibid*: Page 388.

Blitzer's *Italics*.

Booklets of the ERP. Produced by the Education Rights Project must be seen for examples of popular writings Johannesburg. Republic of South Africa...

Booth, W. C. (1988). Referred to by Blitzer: 374 [Booth W.C 1988 the vocation of a teacher. Rhetorical occasions 1967 – 1988, Chicago University Press. Chicago. United States of America.

Bose and Jalali (2006). Page 2.

Boyer E. Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate. Princeton New Jersey, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

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Chisholm L [Ed.] (2004). Changing Class, HSRC Press 2004 is an important exception in this regard. The title of the book 'suggests both the active process of effecting change within social classes and classrooms and the nature and process of that change.' [Page 2] And the 'major conclusion' of the book relates to how present policies favour and 'expanding, racially – mixed middle class.' [Page 7]

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THE POLITICAL ECONOMY, GROWTH AND REFORM IN SOUTH AFRICA: SOME LESSONS FROM INDIA'S LICENCE RAJ SYSTEM

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"An excessive focus on the role of vested interests can easily divert us from the critical contribution that policy analysis and political entrepreneurship can make. The possibilities of economic change are limited not just by the realities of political power, but also by the poverty of our ideas."- Dani Rodrik.²

Introduction

This paper seeks to draw out some policy implications for South Africa by looking at the political economy of growth and reform with respect to India. It will dispense with detail and get to the broad policy issues. The key question that we confront is whether we can increase the growth rate and, what the impediments is there that prevents us from achieving a higher rate of growth.

The rationale for choosing India – even though Brazil may be a more appropriate country in terms of common characteristics – is that the Indian experience is telling in what it suggests about the relationship between government and the private sector. More so because the current ambivalence between the private sector, trade unions and the government in South Africa cannot continue to persist. Despite the emergence of the National Development Plan (NDP), the different forces in South Africa still need to find a way to work towards a common vision.

The reason for touching briefly on mining, skilled labour and immigration, small business and black economic empowerment, and not on some of the other major challenges like electricity, unemployment, transport, is that we should not lose sight of the smaller areas

of reform which potentially can yield large dividends. The other reason being that microeconomic factors are at times even more significant in igniting growth and prosperity. Marginal changes to the regulatory environment can trigger an investment response. This can change the nature of the conversation as well as the narrative for growth and structural change in the economy.

The Challenge of Inclusive Growth

No matter how intensive the debate one cannot hide the urgent fact that we need not only growth, but inclusive growth, in South Africa. This is particularly so, given South Africa's persistently high level of inequality and unemployment.

Ricardo Haussmann succinctly states that "a strategy for inclusive growth must empower people by including them in the networks that make them productive. Inclusiveness should not be seen as a restriction on growth to make it morally palatable. Viewed properly, inclusiveness is actually a strategy that enhances growth."³

We should do everything possible to achieve a higher growth rate. Our potential rate of growth – that is the maximum that can be attained given favourable internal and external conditions – is determined not only by improving our productivity and efficiency of investments, but also by improving governance in the overall political economy. Whether it can be achieved depends on domestic conditions as well as the global environment. However, potential growth is only part of the story. To achieve a higher and sustainable growth rate, South Africa will have to pursue reforms and eliminate distortions and imbalances in the economy. The budget for the 2015 fiscal year and the measures announced attests to this.

This requires government not only to be proactive but to be innovative as well. If South Africa is to succeed it will have to become more competitive, strengthen its institutions, and integrate its micro and macro-economic strategies in a coherent and coordinated manner.

The failure to grow remains a key challenge. It is unlikely that a single grand strategy – whether it is improving access to finance, regulating capital flows or deregulating the labour market – can unlock the path to rapid, inclusive growth. This challenge highlights the need for government to become ever more agile and responsive. In so doing, it will move on many fronts simultaneously, engaging with the real economy, and learning about the problems

confronting civil society, as well as responding smartly and creatively. Above all it will have to rebuild trust to foster the conditions required for structural change and reform.

Although our economy is subject to movements in the global business cycle, ultimately we have to improve the structure of the economy. Structural reform in the South African economy is essential to increase productivity. But this takes time. Hence, it entails reforms in the product and labour markets. The product market requires that we reduce the barriers to entry by increasing the scope for new entrants and to making the economy more competitive and less concentrated. The labour market needs to become more efficient and labour absorbing for small and medium enterprises. More fundamentally, the economy needs to make a structural shift towards an investment led growth path as opposed to its traditional reliance on consumption as a driver of economic activity. As stated in the Budget Review 2015 “restoring confidence in the future growth of the economy is the key to unlocking the long-term investment commitment of private funds.”⁴ If we do not generate robust inclusive growth by tapping into our indigenous sources in quick time, we will be left worse off both politically and economically. This is a lesson drawn from what is unfolding in the Eurozone at present. While global growth is a major factor in slowing down domestic growth it is not the sole factor. South Africa needs to become more ambitious and raise the bar towards a higher rate of growth. So a fundamental question becomes, how fast can we expect to grow despite the headwinds that confront the global economy? How has India done it? What lessons, if any, can we draw from the Indian case?

The Indian Economy and Economic Growth

Various economists have attempted to explain India's break from its low or, what has been called, the “Hindu” rate of growth. In other words, India was known to grow at a maximum of 2-3% and not higher for a long period of time. This prevailed from the time of independence in the late 1940's until 1980. Some stress the role of “pro- business” reforms that began in the early 1980's (Rodrik and Subramanian, 2005)⁵, while others have noted the importance of the systemic reforms in the 1990s and 2000s in accelerating the growth rate (Panagariya, 2008; Srinivasan and Tendulkar, 2003)⁶. This debate, though not settled, is nevertheless illuminating in a number of respects, mainly that the early reforms in the 80's did play a significant role in igniting growth.

The standard explanation for India's recent growth spurt has been ascribed to economic reforms initiated by Manmohan Singh in 1991. However, the evidence shows that this is not

the case. Economic growth began to double in the mid 1980's. Dani Rodrik and Arvind Subramanian⁷ (currently, Advisor to the Indian government) have argued that the acceleration in the rate of growth was primarily due to a change in the attitude of the national government towards the private sector. It is now conventional wisdom that India's growth acceleration predates the 1991 reforms.

Rodrik and Subramanian have attempted to explain the challenge of igniting growth and the story of how India seems to have overcome it. Their explanation comprises four elements.

- There was an attitudinal change on the part of the government in the 1980s, signalling a shift in favour of the private sector, with this shift validated in a very haphazard and gradual manner through actual policy changes.
- This shift and the limited policy changes were pro-business rather than pro-competition, aimed primarily at benefiting incumbents in the formal industrial and commercial sectors.
- These small shifts elicited a large productivity response because India was far away from its production possibility frontier.
- Manufacturing, which was built up through previous efforts, played a key role in determining the responses to the shifts?

The policy changes in the 1980's were essentially confined to internal liberalization related to industrial licensing. The political logic was to win the support from the business sector as opposed to alienating it. The business sector responded positively, confidence improved and investment by the business sector increased rapidly.

What India's growth experience suggests is that it is possible to unlock growth, and that the route to achieving this is not necessarily the Washington Consensus route. What was the key difference? In India the reforms were in favour of existing business. This approach avoided the creation of losers. It may not be the most efficient, but turned out to have had a positive impact. This was also different from the Chinese approach which opened the economy to new entrants and activities.

The case of India provides an interesting case for understanding what inhibits the growth process. India's growth accelerated in the early 1980's. The change in attitude by the Indian government was key. Quite simply, it entailed eliminating the License Raj System or making

small adjustments such as reducing some business taxes and easing access to imported inputs. India doubled its growth rate from 2% to 4% during the 1980's. Yet India is still plagued with bureaucratic inefficiency and a poor infrastructure. Later, in 1991, India liberalized the economy much further but the initial spurt to growth took place in the 1980's. The point is that when a country is performing below its potential, it does not require much to unlock inefficiency to boost the growth rate. Small changes can turn into big outcomes.

What this kind of reform indicates is that governments do not need to do an enormous amount to unlock the growth potential but simply clean up the regulatory impediment to generate investment. Rodrik and Subramanian sum up their argument in suggesting that the "evidence points to an unleashing of the organized and incumbent private sector sometime in the early 1980s. While it is impossible to pinpoint exactly the source for this, there is circumstantial evidence that the trigger was a shift in the national government's attitude towards the private sector. This evidence also indicates that the beneficiary of this attitudinal shift was the formal sector built up under the earlier policy regime. Hence, to some extent, the learning generated under the earlier policy regime and the modern manufacturing base created thereby provided a permissive environment for eventual take-off once the policy stance softened vis-à-vis the private sector. So, unlike what one may have otherwise expected (from accounts of how costly ISI was), growth occurred where the earlier investments had been made. This is in contrast to the experience of the former socialist economies where post-transition growth was greatest, and where the drag exerted by the previous state sector was smallest."⁸

The South African Economy

South Africa in the post-apartheid phase has witnessed a material change for the better. Welfare gains are tangible in access to social services, housing and infrastructure services. However, it is of concern whether this can be sustained in the midst of low growth persisting as in the recent past. Moreover, since 1994 the economy has become a far more open economy compared to its past, which introduces new constraints but considerable opportunities as well. Compared to other emerging markets, South Africa's growth looks weak and is faced with considerable competitive pressures and constraints. The recent global financial crisis did not spare the economy and South Africa lost about 1 million jobs. The fact that electricity has become the immediate binding constraint simply adds to our woes.

The economy has gone through a whole series of reforms since 1994. Though the economy peaked in mid-2000, at present growth is low and well below potential. Yet, we have the NDP which attempts to embrace the broad population in the country. The question that arises is: what is the problem? Is it an implementation problem or does more need to be done? Is there something wrong with the development strategy in place? Alternatively, what is South Africa's License Raj?

There are numerous responses to this but here we focus selectively on a few factors with the hope of advancing a discussion on the possibility of generating a higher rate of growth.

The South African economy grew at 3.2 percent a year on average from 1994 to 2012. Potential growth is currently thought to be around 3.5 percent, though it was estimated at around 4.5 percent during the four- year period from 2004-2007 when growth averaged around 5.5 percent. Economic growth however, has mainly been driven by domestic demand and financed through a persistent current account deficit. The current account balance was close to zero around 2003 but has subsequently increased, and regularly is at around 6 percent of GDP.

Let us now look at some areas where growth enhancing reforms could take place and which will signal a change in attitude and enable a more dynamic relationship with the private sector and the trade unions. This will require more than a decision from the market or legislation. It will have to involve labour, government and business. Michael Spence suggests while "public and private interests are not perfectly aligned today, they are not perfectly opposed. Relatively modest shifts at the margin could then bring them back in sync."

In economic discussions, the issues that feature predominantly are fiscal policy, interest rates, money supply, etc. While these policy instruments are obviously important, they are not the primary engines that ignite growth and drive innovation and jobs. This comes through new companies and new innovations that create new jobs. More often than not our discourse is dominated by big business, big government and big unions. Though these are dominant forces in most economies, including our own, they do not constitute the sum total of all economic activity.

Subtle changes we re-iterate in economic policy can have significant effects on the nature of the growth process of a developing economy. This area deserves significantly more attention in the policy discussions on economic policy.

Regulatory Uncertainty – The Mining Sector

The mining sector has historically been the bedrock of the South African economy. Even though its aggregate contribution to GDP has declined significantly it is still the largest contributor to foreign exchange revenue. Any negative developments in the mining sector are rapidly transmitted to other sectors. In this sense it can have rapid external effects. This was the case with the outbreak of strikes in Marikana. The impact was felt through the entire economy and not only in the mining sector.

South Africa's mining sector has been plagued with regulatory uncertainty and acute labour problems. The failure to take advantage of the commodities boom and the increasing emphasis on BEE and ownership has undermined the positive role that mining can play in our economic development. Short term redistribution has undermined long-term growth and investment in mining.

Fixing this problem may not result in short term gains, since mining investment is a long-term activity. However, the signal it will send can have demonstrable effects not only for mining but other sectors of the economy as well.

Immigration and Skilled Labour

It is evident that the South African economy is skills constrained. This is in line with global trends as economies are becoming more knowledge intensive and production processes are changing at the same time. South Africa is not isolated from these trends, and we ought to reap the advantages that Globalisation does offer. Skilled labour has become more mobile and can be attracted to new growth opportunities.

New regulations are becoming restrictive for immigrants who want to open a business in South Africa. Whereas previously foreigners had to prove that they would invest at least R2.5 million in the country, now they have to show that at least 60 percent of the workforce will be South African.

The problem we face in this instance is that we have made it more difficult for skilled labour to enter our borders and gain easy access to prospective job opportunities. This again does not require major system-wide reforms in education or the labour market. The solution is simply to ease the administrative difficulty so that skilled labour shortages do not become an impediment to growth.

To produce these skills domestically is a long term project but to tap into the existing global pool of skills is a much more plausible short term opportunity. The high level of global unemployment in developed economies makes this an attractive proposition.

Ricardo Hausmann⁹ made an interesting observation on the skills issue on a recent visit. The Harvard team who came to advise the South African government was not all born in the US. He argued that if the US had South Africa's immigration policy, this team would not exist and probably Harvard as an organisation would not exist. That is why migration is so important to skills acquisition and therefore to growth and job creation. The unintended result of immigration policy has been to choke the flow of skilled immigration as opposed to easing the skills constraint on the economy.

Small Business

An independent private sector development and research company found that the time taken to start a new business is much longer than previous research has suggested. The Index discovered that it took on average 60 to 90 days to open a new business in South Africa compared to the World Bank's Doing Business Survey of 2013 which stated that it took 19 days to start a new business in this country. According to Small Business Project's (SBPs) Professor Neil Rankin, the South African Small, Medium and Micro-sized Enterprises ("SMME") sector is generally slowing down. Business owners identified that some of the top barriers to growth were lack of skills (15 %), red tape (12 %), lack of finance (10 %) and the cost of labour (10 %). The Index found that on average SMMEs spent an average of 75 hours a month dealing with red tape.

The most competitive nations are those that have the highest level of entrepreneurial activity. Small and medium size businesses tend to be the greatest creators of jobs and collectively, the greatest creators of wealth in emerging economies. Aspiring entrepreneurs in South Africa face huge challenges; financial, institutional, infrastructural and cultural challenges. Entrepreneurship is not yet recognised for the impact on growth, and the possibilities it can

offer the South African economy, or for the impact it can have on unemployment and other social tensions in the country.

In South Africa, as in other emerging economies, these potentially transformative entrepreneurial champions must be supported and ignited. In this context we must distinguish between productive and unproductive entrepreneurs. Productive entrepreneurs create social benefits in addition to their private benefits. Unproductive entrepreneurs, in contrast, engage in rent-seeking behaviour that attempts to reduce another person's share rather than increasing the size of the cake. This sort of behaviour is highly prevalent in our context (i.e. the tenderpreneurs) that engages in corrupt practices and generates unproductive opportunities.

Black Economic Empowerment (BEE)

The key idea underlying BEE was to attain a significant shift in economic power to the previously disadvantaged and marginalized. This is a project that will not be achieved through the equilibrating tendency of the market mechanism but requires the state to play a role. However, in an attempt to achieve the objective of redistribution, we should guard against the tendency to use the regulatory power as the only route to solving economic problems. BEE is indeed necessary, particularly in a society that is distinguished globally for its high level of inequality.

We need to identify what factors impede the growth of entrepreneurship and investment in South Africa. It is often argued that BEE is a problem since it militates against more risk based activities and therefore does not incentivize investment in innovation and growth. Rent seeking activity becomes the preferred option as opposed to activities that are growth enhancing.

Entrepreneurship or "entrepreneurial society", a term that is often used by the NDP, is an important objective. It can give rise to new firms and employment generating activities. The important challenge, then, is ensuring the growth of black entrepreneurs in South Africa.

Conclusion

The aim of this article is to suggest some lessons can be drawn from the Indian experience despite the very different context. The primary reason for choosing India as a comparative experience is because of the distrust that existed between the private sector

and government. A similar situation prevails in South Africa which will require adjustments on both sides. A change in attitude can come about through lifting the regulatory burden, or License Raj, and broadening economic activity whereby it becomes more inclusive and participatory. This can change the conversation from pessimism to one of hope and inclusion. The private sector will equally have to demonstrate its ability to invest in a way that is less about the short term but more towards the long term.

The National Development Plan states, “Leadership, unity and cohesion are difficult in our still-divided society. Yet these are the very things that help to anchor successful nations and development strategies. Leadership is required to win broad agreement for the plan, to implement it, and to make sacrifices for a better future. A capable, efficient, and fair state is needed to support it, and partnerships, based on mutual trust are vital. Unless we work together, sacrificing short term gain for long-term prosperity, no single part of South African society can achieve its objectives”¹⁰

The South African economy holds great promise which can be realized if we recognise the flaws and attempt to correct them, and find a consensual way forward with a shared sense of responsibility. We most certainly cannot afford to succumb to pessimism. As Paul Samuelson, puts it, – “every good cause is worth some inefficiency” - equity and social cohesion are among them. While there is a demand for jobs, a hunger for education, and a desperate need for health, growth enhancing reforms cannot be paralyzed. The challenges facing us are immense but so are the policy choices confronting our economy. We have to ensure that the national interest and inclusive growth trumps other impediments, including vested interests.

Though we may not have a perfect formula for igniting growth, we will have to be persistent, determined, pragmatic, and experimental, as in other emerging economies where these issues are being dealt with on a regular basis. We need to draw on some experiences which can strengthen our economy and make it more resilient in the face of adverse pressures emanating from the global economy.

Note:

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author writing in his personal capacity.

The references cited within the body of the paper are tabled hereunder in order of the numbering in the paper.

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PUBLIC POLICY AND SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC: CHALLENGES AND POSSIBILITIES

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ABSTRACT

In 1999, Nigeria once again joined the league of democratic countries after more than three decade of military rule. The return to civil rule came with high expectations from the people that this dispensation will accelerate the process of development and stem the tide of socio-economic and political decline and decay in the polity. But a decade and half into civil rule, only marginal progress has been made in all areas of societal life. Some studies have attributed this below par performance to the uncertainties of the transition ion period the country is undergoing, others point to the schism among the power elite, to mention but a few. The study argued that public policy making processes hold the key to understanding the trajectory of challenges facing the project of sustainable national development in the continent of Africa in general and Nigeria in particular. With the use of multiple advocacy theory, the study posited that national development has not progressed much because critical elements that are vital to its success, are not involved in the process, such as; sound public policy, effective oversight institutions, and effective execution of public policy, among others. It submitted that unless the democratic path of competitive ideas, technical and strategic policy options, political accommodation and compromise among stakeholders are in place, public policy will continue to suffer somersault and national development will remain a lame-duck exercise.

Key Words: Public Policy, Democracy and Sustainable National Development, Progress, Polity, Elite, Advocacy, Stakeholders

1. Introduction

The pursuit of national development is a painstaking and systematic enterprise that should be given the attention it deserves, for it not to lose its essence as an instrument for planning and programme development that, create and promote values that conduce for the good of the general public. In essence, one of the basic characteristic of government in any or all political systems is its right to make and enforce policies, rules and regulations that are legally binding on its citizens and upon those that govern. It is such powers that confer legitimacy on a sitting government not only to formulate policies but to ensure that they meet their targets and impact positively on the welfare and well-being of the people.

In Nigeria as well as many developing areas of the world, government at all levels has fallen short of expectations of the governed, in the area of successful implementation of policies that center on improving the living condition of the people. Where attempts have been made in this direction, they have been half-heartedly pursued and unsustained. Every administration that comes to power in Africa often jettisons its predecessor's policies and programmes for its own, as if government is a stop-gap process. It would seem that lack of continuity in policies is the, bane of development in this part of the world. Perhaps, a more worrisome factor is the pursuit of private gains by the political and economic elites which have rendered the competition for public offices via the Hobbesian formula that, winner takes all. In this circumstance, the long term goal of public policy is to paper over for other parochial interests particularly the quest for material gains.

In the context of prebendal and kleptocratic politics in the continent, national development as a project is bound to suffer or atrophy, as little attention is given to values, procedures and principles that conduce for sustainable national development. Public policy is assumed to be the product of careful study, analysis of available data and pain-staking review of alternatives before they are carried out. These processes need to be prioritized by government in order to achieve sustainable national development. Given the twists and turns that have characterized national development in the country, how can public policy become genuinely the hand - maid of national development? What kind of opportunities do democracy offer the policy making processes? What normative and empirical obstacles stand on the way of public policy making as instrument for national transformation at this, critical juncture in the nation's body polity? These and other questions germane to this study will be unravelled in the course of this investigation, study and narrative.

To address issues raised in this paper, the study is divided into five parts. The first part deals with the conceptual and theoretical analyses. The major terms of reference, in this study is analysed and, a theoretical basis set for the entire work. The second examined the nature and character of public policy and national development in Africa. The third carried out an overview of public policy and national development in the Nigerian Fourth Republic. Also an assessment of President Jonathan's transformation agenda is briefly examined. These dovetail into the fourth part that centered on identifying the normative and empirical obstacles facing the use of public policy in fast-tracking sustainable national development in Africa and, Nigeria in particular. The final part proffers categorical steps needed to accelerate and sustain national development in the country as a basis for making generalizations for other developing areas of the world.

2. Conceptual and Theoretical Considerations

Conceptualizing and analyzing the use of terminology, within the social and management sciences, have often formed the fulcrum of and for academic research. This is because it sets the parameters within which concepts are used in any given context. One such concept is public-policy. Unlike many other concepts, public policy has enjoyed scholarly attention over time. Policy may be seen as a framework put forward to guide a person or group of persons in the conduct of a particular task. Robert Appleby (1984) "conceives of policy in a restricted sense to mean a "guide to the actions or decisions of people". This view on policy, underscores its relevance in guiding or directing the conduct of individuals and human organizations. When taken to the public domain, policy becomes all matters that, fall into the public realm. "Two broad schools of thought have since emerged on the concept of public policy. The first posits that public policy is what government chooses to do or not to do" (Dye 1996). The second school of thought contends that "public policy is not what government chooses to do or not to do but, what it actually does" (Dye 1996). John Pfifner (in Adebayo 1979) from the public interest perspective defines public policy as the "determination, declaration and crystallization of the will of the community". The common good can be regarded as the universal value of governments everywhere in the world. Unless public policy seeks to realize this goal, it loses its relevance and efficacy as a tool for sustainable national development. In line with the above views, Almond et al, (2007)"note that public policies are the output of the political system that is aimed at the development of the people and society."

Also, development as a concept has experienced a conceptual shift overtime. Hitherto, development was seen in pure economic terms such as: increase in per capita income, rise in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or the presence of high rise buildings in State capitals and commercial towns. However in contemporary times, it has gone beyond these relics and now, centres on the people who are the essence of development. Taking a holistic view of the concept of development, Todaro (1989) posits that development is:

“A multi-dimensional process involving the reorganization and reorientation of the entire economic and social systems. This involves in addition, the improvement of income and output, radical change in institutional, social and administrative structures as well in popular, attitudes, customs and beliefs.”

As eclectic as this definition attempts to be, it left out a crucial variable which is people. The people of any society should drive the process of development at any given point in time and, are actually the essence of the process itself. This then puts premium on definitions of development that centres on the people as initiators and drivers of development within and, as a project. The perspective of Rudeback (1997) on development is very apt: “a population should use its own resources in accordance with its cultural values, to resolve its problems by creating in a sustainable manner a frame of life where each stage is superior to the preceding one.” Here, the people are the means and ends of the process of development not just artifacts in the process. When this process is pursued over a longer period of time, it becomes sustainable.

Therefore, sustainable development in the view of Oyeshola (2008) is “a new way of life and approach to social and economic activities for all societies, rich and poor which is compatible with the preservation of the environment”. Similarly, the World Commission on Environment and development “conceives of sustainable development as, “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (in Oyeshola (2008). What should be underscored here is the need to ensure that there is regeneration of finite resources so that, their exploitation today will not prevent others from using the same over a longer period of time. This is particularly important today given the rush for both finite and non-finite resources, by both national and international businesses, desirous of quick profits to line up their own bank accounts.

National development can then be viewed as a composite process that entails socio-economic, political and cultural advancement of a country or nation. It involves progressive change in the life of a people. This change is aptly captured in Williams (1980), in terms of the perceptions of the central concerns of Nigerians, when he asked: “what do we really want for the generality of Nigerians”? The answer most surely is that “we seek to enthrone the welfare of the individuals through providing better educational facilities, housing, health facilities, more jobs and a rising standard of living for the people as a whole” (Ibid). It follows therefore that the people in any polity are the foundation and essence of development. If this is the case, does it mean that development has not been pursued by successive governments in the country? If the answer is in the affirmative, why then is the country far from being developed?

Two issues quickly come to the fore. The first is that the political system in place in the immediate post-independence years that is, military rule, was an anathema to steady development. Secondly, the approach to and method of achieving national development in the past were obstructive of the very processes of development. This is why democracy is widely acclaimed as the best political system for achieving sustainable development. It gives the people the opportunity to choose the government of their choice and participate in the running of the government of the day, according to their own cultural values not through some imported precepts from other parts of the world.

Method and techniques of development are also being based on the specificities and peculiarities of a people. What is suitable for development in Europe may be unsuitable in a different context unless, necessary adaptation is made to what is borrowed. The modernization approach to development in the 1970s did not succeed much in Africa, just as privatization is not working today because of a high dose of foreign ideas, values and methods that permeate them, which are not conducive and appropriate for implementation, in many African societies and nations. Any method of development that would succeed in Africa should first empower the people and, bring them into the mix of the development process as partners in the drive towards social change. A right step in this direction might involve, decentralizing State power and, by making the policy process that would be presented to the people, create, a sense of belonging in matters that affect their lives.

It is against this backdrop that, the multiple advocacy theory to decision making is considered appropriate for this study. It argues that “competition of ideas and viewpoints is the best method of developing policy, not unregulated or neural advocacy but, orderly,

systematic policy making, which for all intents and purposes must be competitive” (Anderson 1984). Such healthy competition is necessary to enable decision maker’s benefit from adequate supply of information about all viewpoints or any subject matter, placed before the government. Under this method therefore, social forces are able to make their contending views known to centres of power and decision making, at various levels of government in any country.

3. The Nature and Character of Public Policy and Sustainable National Development

Public policy provides a guide and direction to what government desires to do in specific areas of the people’s lives. Also, it gives the citizens an idea of what to expect from their government over a period of time. Specifically, public policies are expanded in plans and programmes of government for easy and faster implementation. Public policy may be categorized differently. Almond (2007) “categorizes policies based on the number of people in the society affected by such policies. The categories he identified include: distributive, redistributive, regulatory, self-regulatory and emotional and symbolic policies.” Also, Henry (2005) “classifies policy as either substantive or procedural. Substantive policies deal with specific areas of policy study such as: the environment, insurgency among others. It studies how the policy process works in a given area.”

The second category of public policy deals with the procedure or procession aspect of public policy. Its aim is to come up with theories on how public policy is made and its effects on certain aspects of the people’s lives” (Henry 2005). This category of public policies is concerned with prescribing the best way of making and implementing public policy irrespective of the substantive area being addressed by such policies. “A third category of public policy is said to be evolving and, it is called the strategic planning paradigm. It is an intervening aspect to the study of public policy and, it tries to reconcile the difference between the two categories earlier identified” (Henry 2005).

Having captured and outlined these, it is pertinent to note that public policy making takes place in stages which are aimed at perfecting its content, with a view to making its product beneficial to all concerned. Each stage in the policy process involves painstaking activities directed at achieving better out-comes. Thus, we have “the policy initiation, formulation, implementation, evaluation and decision about the future stages” (Ikelegbe, 2006). Perhaps, an important question to ask is what are the levels of involvement of major stakeholders of public policy in its formulation and, other stages in the policy process? This question is apt

because interest groups for example, might have vital information that could make public policy succeed or fail. Elected administrators take responsibility for the success or failure of public policy though the legislators ensure that they play their oversight role. "The judiciary plays the watch dog role on public policy alongside the media and civil society organizations" (Eneanya, 2013).

This is where development comes into play. Development as a concept embraces a wide area of study and, unless one narrows it down to specific aspects, one may not be able to do justice to it. Thus, development could be studied in three broad areas: socio-economic, political and cultural. "For government to achieve its goals in one or combinations of these areas, it must set up development plans: stating its objectives means of accomplishing them and their time lines. Nigeria has had its fair share of development plans that have produced mixed fortunes" (Maduagbum, 2014). Perhaps, this explains why sustainable national development has been far-fetched in Nigeria since the flag of was raised via independence in 1960. Vision-20:20 is another plan period during which much development would have taken place and the country would have joined the league of developed nations. However, the situation in the country presently does not look quite pleasant for anyone to be optimistic that, the country would meet this "magic year and target." What accounts for this pessimism about sustainable national development in the country? To answer this question, it is needful to first trace the public policy process from two important eras in the nation's life. In the section that follows, the narrative takes a cursory look at this process, under military and civilian dispensation in Nigeria.

4. An Overview of the Policy Process and National Development under Military Rule

Following the military coup of 1966, a fully - fledged military regime was established in Nigeria. The ruling military junta continued with the culture of national development plans, in order to give direction to government programmes for social change. Shortly, after the end of the Civil War, the second national development plan was launched. The three "Rs" Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Reconciliation were inaugurated and pursued by the federal government. The rapid economic development after civil war, according to Ohiomenisan (1980) "was not sustainable because it showed that crude petroleum export and, a general balance of the external sector were not crucial to the growth of the Nigerian economy rather, the secret of economic development at this point in time, resided in a carefully designed policy package within the frame work of a clearly articulated set of objectives". However, the objectives of this plan period were to pursue balanced

development, diversification of the economy, reduction of the level of unemployment among others" (Ibid). To execute this plan, oil resources were to be used to create infrastructure necessary for self - sustained growth and development.

In the absence of political structures, like the legislature and executive arms of government, the role of top civil servants was enhanced. Given the relative inexperience of the military men charged with the responsibility of governance; the civil servants ran the affairs of government. As a result of this elevation, they became well placed to influence "... the choice of contractors for particular projects and the choice of suppliers for particular commodities, and so on" (Ohiomenisan, 1980). As a result of this, senior bureaucrats had extensive relations with the business community. Yet, in this relationship, they were senior partners and, it enhanced the expansion of the State sector. With the expansion of this State sector, they accumulated immense fortunes. These, they invested in the private sector. Little wonder therefore, that they (civil servants) had to push for deregulation of State capitalism, which in any case, increased private accumulation to the detriment of sustainable national development in the country.

Also, in the period under review, State capitalism was enhanced due principally to the emergence of oil wealth with which the military and bureaucrats further expanded their material base and political power vis a vis other classes in the society. With these new positions, they were able to play more prominent roles when they ceased to run the State apparatus. It must be emphasized here that because of the ready oil wealth, there was a rush in public policy that could not be sustained and on several occasions, had to be amended, reversed or abandoned when confronted with concrete realities.

By and large, the point can be made that the level of economic development did not match the level of resources at the disposal of State managers. Much of these resources, it would seem, went into building a capitalist class interested in distributive rather than productive capitalism. This further led to the Nigerian economy becoming a dumping ground for all kinds of goods with little or no sustainable efforts at industrialization. It was not surprising therefore that the return to civil rule in 1979 was characterized by blatant displacement of wealth where, State positions and power went to the highest bidder. Political manifestoes and ideologies did not count for much in the competition for power amongst the political classes. It was clear therefore, that, the military in government did not play the role of a

corrective regime by moderating the appetite of politicians for unbridled power and, wealth at the expense of sustained national development.

Also, the rat-race for political and economic powers among the power elite impacted negatively on the social development of the citizens. The state and its agency government must, have anticipated this when it put forward an articulated social development policy for the country. This social policy (1989) is defined as:

“The process of continuous improvement of the social structure, institutions and programmers of government in order to create a societal condition in which the rights of citizens are advanced and protected their welfare enhanced and their effective functioning and self-actualization ensured.”

From the definition given above on social policy, three objectives can be teased out as follows: it was and is directed towards provision of welfare for the citizenry; it contained and contains or, involves both economic and non-economic objectives, for example: minimum wage and wage administration issues, and achieving some form of redistribution of resources from the rich to the poor in the country. The philosophy of this national social policy hinged on the people as individuals and or groups. Together they are agents of social change. But for them to play this all important role, their capacities have to be built and enhanced. One way to achieve this is through qualitative education particularly at the tertiary level.

Going by the manner and irrefutable evidence, the welfare and well-being of the people have plunged deeper into murky waters in recent times. It would appear that social development policy never existed in the country. However, its failure can be pinned down to several factors, such as: instability in government, the structure of ministries, crises in the educational system occasioned by incessant strikes and poorly structured curriculum in schools that, has led to the production of graduates who seek white collar jobs rather, than being self-employed, among others.

5. The Policy Making Process and National Development under Civilian Rule

In 1999, Nigeria returned to civilian rule backed by the 1999 constitution. This constitution set the basis for the practice of a Presidential system model along, the lines of the United States of America's political system. It reiterated the fact that “the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government...” (1999 Constitution). This laudable

goal is expected to be achieved under a liberal democratic system. With the return of fully - fledged political institutions such as: Parliament and the Executive arm of government, policy making is expected to have the full complement of principal actors. in the public policy process.

Meanwhile, the country retained the West Minister Model of the civil service though the political system is Presidential. This on its own presents some structural challenges. However, under democratic rule, there is supposed to be a cordial relationship between the higher civil servants and, their political bosses or masters, that is, ministers at the center and commissioners at the State levels. Both are expected to be partners in progress. For the higher civil servants, their role in policy making is that of climate setting while, the political masters make policies. It is expected that all actors in the policy process would make their input into the process leading to decisions on public policies: What eventually comes out as public policy should be a reflection of the will of the people, who they are meant to serve.

Essentially, it is on this basis that socio-economic and political policies evolve overtime. The administration of President Obasanjo came out with a comprehensive National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) at the Federal level to fast-track socio-economic and political development in the polity. To some extent some of its policy thrusts are still being implemented. But President Goodluck Jonathan on assumption of office in 2011 came up with his own transformation agenda aimed at bringing about rapid social change. These changes were expected to take place in all aspects of national life which have suffered immeasurably over the years due, to social neglect, mal-administration, bad governance and mismanagement of resources.

The policy making environment however, has not been really cordial. On the one hand, the relationship between the Legislature and Executive arms has been rather frosty with each trying to assert its supremacy or stick to partisan positions. In all these, the civil service remains anonymous. It is to be seen but, not heard. Yet, there is need for countervailing forces that can checkmate both the legislature and executive arms of government and, uphold the sanctity of political accountability in the interest of the electorates. It is only on this basis that policy making; implementation and national development can be accounted for by custodians of public offices. "Given the Pan-Nigerian character of the Federal civil service, it should be the conscience of the nation, by promoting the national interest at all times. However, there are reasons to fear that, this is not the case since independence" (Maduagbum, 2014).

“The transformation agenda of President Jonathan is another policy thrust and strategy that, aimed at accelerating the pace of National Development in the country. In pursuance of this goal, the President set up The Economic Management Team headed by the President as chairman, the Vice President as Vice Chairman and the Minister of Finance, Dr. Ngozi Oconto Ideal as Coordinator” (Gyong, 2013). The transformation agenda of the administration is a five (5) year development plan, 2011-2015 that is, predicated on using the economy as a spring-board for promoting development in other aspects of societal life. According to Itah (in Gyong 2013), “the transformation agenda of President Goodluck Jonathan is a policy package that, proposes the repositioning of the economy by addressing issues of poverty, unemployment, insecurity and most importantly, the diversification of the entire economy, from total dependence on oil, to a significant reliance on a non-oil economy. The National Planning Commission blue print (2011) for the transformation agenda of President Jonathan’s administration had come out with key areas of focus of the strategy. These included: job creation; education; health; power, transportation, Niger-Delta, labour and productivity. Foreign Policy and economic diplomacy; legislature; governance, judiciary and justice delivery; public expenditure management and information and communication technology (ICT). On a prima-facie basis, one would say that this is and was a very ambitious plan of action by any government within the time frame allotted to it. It would seem that some of the elements in the plan are just for public fancy and consumption; as they look too ambitious, to be real. Be that as it may, the administration had since swung into action to realize these goals.

6. The Transformation Agenda: The Journey So Far.

The implementation of President Jonathan’s transformation agenda had been on course and doggedly pursued on all fronts. Meanwhile, some commendable results have and had been recorded particularly, in the economic sphere, as the country had become the largest economy in Africa, (Lost its position to South Africa very recently) as it’s rebasing and reconfiguration has shown. The Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) has been privatized, more roads and railway networks have been constructed, the Niger-Delta Development Commission is working in the Niger Delta region to bring succor to the people, by means of subsidy utilization and the reinvestment programme (SURE-P) is empowering the youth and, creating jobs for the unemployed. Government is making giant strides in the agricultural sector, while the oil and gas sector is enjoying relative peace after the January 2012 fuel price hike saga. Fuel prices have been stable since this incident. But the country has not progressed in the way Nigerians expect, after a decade and half of civilian rule.

There is no doubting the fact that, Nigeria is the biggest market in Africa. The rebasing of the economy together with fiscal consolidation and sound economic intervention, in some parts of the economy, has also shown that, it is the fastest growing economy in Africa. But the phenomenon of growth without development is steering Nigeria in the face once again, as it did in the 1970s, when the country had so much money but, did not know what to do with it. As the World Bank has observed (in The Economy 2013) “Despite the high economic growth reported in official statistics, Nigeria is yet to find a formula for translating its resource wealth into significant welfare improvements for the population”.

The condition and parameters painted above, finds concrete manifestation in the performance of key sectors in the country. The educational sector has been plagued with different kinds of crises. Many children are out of school with over 10.5 million affected in the North as at the last count” (The Economy, 2013). Also, tertiary institutions have been inundated with incessant strikes due to the failure of government, to honour agreements reached with organized labour unions within tertiary institutions. The long run effect of all these is that, the standard of education will continue to plummet downward thereby, constraining graduates from these institutions from competing with their homologues anywhere in the world.

The crisis in the power sector remained largely unresolved in spite, of over \$25 billion sunk into its revitalization programme. The problem in this sector did not just begin under President Jonathan’s administration. It was inherited from past administrations and, in this regard, it has defied all remedies, thrown at the power sectors revitalization strategies. However, without reliable power supply the development efforts of government may run aground. It is yet to be seen what changes and benefits will accrue to the nation, in respect to the recent privatization efforts of this sector. But if previous experiences are anything to go by, the nation may have to wait longer for the ills of this sector to be cured and remedied.

The poverty and unemployment situation in the country is worrisome. According to the World Bank about 70% of Nigerians are poor while the unemployment rates have been increasing” (The Economy, 2013). “Younger Nigerians are encountering increasing difficulty in finding gainful employment” (The Economy, 2013). This situation for any country is a time bomb waiting to explode and, Nigeria is no exception. As prominent constitutional Lawyer, Femi Falana (SAN) notes, “with 10 million young people of school age roaming the streets, you cannot have development but violent eruption and crises” (Ibid).

On the political front, some progress has been made. General elections in the country have been less controversial, some would say free, fair and credible which means that President Jonathan, during his term of office has and had delivered, on his mandates substantially. This is better than what his predecessors in political power did. Also, the staggered elections at the state levels have been widely acclaimed to be progressively free and fair though, many observers still believe that the processes leading to these elections have been less transparent. The 2015 General Elections will show ultimately how much and how well, democratic rule has fared in the Republic of Nigeria.

Given the mammoth damages wrought by the military on the nation of Nigeria, President Jonathan's administration can be credited to have done well on several fronts. Democracy and development is in reality, work in progress that requires the effort of all and sundry, in the process of realizing goals. What then are the normative and empirical obstacles to these processes in Nigeria? To this end, we turn our focus in the ensuing discussion to address some of these issues.

7. Public Policy and Sustainable National Development: Challenges and Possibilities

From available evidence, national development in Nigeria has progressed in twists and turns, leading in most cases to, haphazard and uncoordinated progress, in respect to national transformation. This state of affairs is traceable to a number of factors; some of them are discussed below.

Ugoh and Ukpere (2011) posit that "public policy in Nigeria tends to follow ethnic and religious considerations thereby, frustrating any genuine attempt at national development." Oladimeji and Opeyemi (2013) express similar views when they "fingered corruption, bad leadership and poor funding as some of the constraints besetting the role of public policy in national development." Some of these factors resonate in the findings of this study.

A massive project like that of national development requires huge and consistent financial inflows to drive the implementation of policies and programmes of government. One would assume that, with the potential wealth of the country, this would not be an issue. But it has on the contrary being the major constraint to the fulfilment of the ideals of the transformation agenda of the present administration. Revenue from oil has fallen short of the projected sum in recent times due to oil theft, pipe-line vandalization, profligacy, the global economic crisis

and corruption. Government has tried to tighten the noose of financial management of the State; this effort however, has not reflected in better performance of the economy and other sectors of the society, including the general polity within the nation and, the lackluster performance of an inefficient and bloated public service bureaucracy.

Policy making has not always been informed by sufficient information gathering and analysis. Effective public policy begins with information gathering from targeted areas and this costs money and time. But these elements are not often factored into this process and, into the equation of development. As Oluwo (1999) persuasively argues:

“weak policy analytical capacity in line ministries and the existence of a glass-wall between researchers and policy makers, poor management of available information for policy analysis and little linkage between policy making and implementation, on the one hand, and between implementation and evaluation on the other hand, are some of the banes of the policy process” (emphasis added.)

The above submission underscores the failure of this very important aspect of the policy process. Tertiary institutions are supposed to be the fountain of data collection, analysis and invention. Unfortunately, they are poorly funded and less esteemed in societies, where cheap money from politics is prioritized by the political and economic elites. In other words, the managers of state are more interested in distributing the national cake than baking it.

Also public policy needs the people's participation in all stages of the process for it to succeed. However, many years of authoritarian rule foisted a culture of command and obey on the polity of Nigeria, which made centralized decision making more preferred to the popular participatory model. “However, under a democratic system, the policy stream model is more promotive of development than other available options” (Henry, 2005). “Under this model, interest groups that represent social forces and other actors are encouraged to make inputs into the policy process and, in most cases help to ensure that such policy or policies impact on the targeted goals and, desired outcomes more positively” (ibid).

The Security concern in the country has heightened since the return to civil rule in 1999. The opening up of the political space and the people's assertion of their rights, which were restricted under military rule, has intensified the tension in the political landscape of the Republic of Nigeria. But more worrisome is the failure of government to deliver concrete dividends of democracy through, effective and proactive policies, since the return to civil rule in 1999. Many of the elected officers have failed to deliver good governance thereby,

prompting revolts, militancy, insurgency and kidnapping in different parts of the country. The most intractable of these conflicts is the Boko Haram terrorist activities in the North East of the country that has defied any military solution. In essence, the politics of impunity have taken over consensual politicking. Under this circumstance, it is difficult to pursue and achieve sustainable national development through public policy, which is a vital instrument and mechanism for development and sustained economic growth, within a fractured political entity called Nigeria. This state of affairs has gone on for a protracted period of time, since independence and, it does not seem that, it will abate in the very near future.

Closely related to the above point is the indulgence of elected representatives of the people in prebendal and kleptocratic politics. This has made it difficult for the essence of governance to actually come to the fore and, emerge as the bastion of the rule of law to be invoked and therefore, democracy continues to be overtly compromised in Nigeria, to the peril of the nation and its people. Politicians seek office not to further public policy but to improve their personal and group interests. Matters are made worse by the wastage of resources that has gone to and is channelled to corruption, questionable expenditure and extra-budgetary and fruitless spending. Under these circumstances, public policies are left stranded and national development half-heartedly pursued. Yet, it is not as if the country has not had good policies but, these are often rendered ineffectual by bad governance.

The country is still struggling with arriving at an appropriate structure and organization that is well suited for its peculiar circumstances and needs, for purposes of meaningful accelerated development. While efforts have been made in the past to redress this abnormality, as Fajonyomi (2012) put it, there is yet “any serious thought of restructuring the bureaucracy to re-engineer its fundamental principles and philosophies which were essentially developed in the past for law and order functions. In essence, old attitudes continue to be used in tackling modern challenges.” It is thus impossible to be doing the same thing and expect a different result. Since, the flag of independence was raised, the country has been confronted with continuous policy failures and, slow rate of development; it suggests that things have not been done differently, in order to deal with the entrenched and myriad of challenges and problems that confront the Nigerian State.

Surely, leadership remains a major challenge to the country's policy processes and quest for sustainable national development. In all aspects of societal life, there appear to be a deficit of visionary, missionary and creative leadership that can bring about transformative changes

into organizations in the public realm. The issue of leadership has been well discussed in extant literature. But beyond the theoretical articulation of the concept, it is perhaps only in its practical sense that, we can properly evaluate its actual essence. From the benefit of experience, we can safely say that leadership has been the bane of national and sub-national development in the country. What kind of leadership through public policy, promotes sustainable national development? It must be one “that displays a firm commitment to peace, harmony, and the public well - being that, possess extra-ordinary political skills and that, exhibit practical wisdom” (Madstadt 2006). However, it is not clear how we can get this caliber of leaders in the body polity. Yet, it is inevitable and absolutely necessary, if the country has to be transformed.

8. Public Policy and Sustainable National Development: The Possibilities

Again, there is no easy road to greatness. Every great nation in history has a strong and virile economy. Nigeria presently is one of the biggest economies in Africa and, stands twenty – eighth in the world. Being one of the largest markets in the world” (The Economy, 2013). “There are many positives that can be harvested given past and actual experience, such as: inflow of investments, job creation, rise in the standard of living of the people, provision of infrastructural facilities, among others” (The Punch 7/4/2014). However, the spate of insecurity in Nigeria has the capacity to slow down the rate of development in the country. In the words of President Jonathan “The intensity and diversity of conflicts over the last few years has reached an alarming proportion with the attendant loss of lives and property. Capitalists need a safe haven to invest their money. In countries like Nigeria, where the investment climate is not conducive; it provides fertile ground for business, and investors to go some - where else with their money. This gradually leads to a situation where the country falls into a pariah State” (ibid).

The incongruence between the public policy and the need of developing society makes it difficult for sustainable national development to take place. While over fifteen public service reforms have taken place since colonial, times, the public service still remains lethargic and largely non-committal to challenges of contemporary Nigeria” (Akhapke 2014). For example, the principle of anonymity in the civil service has not allowed the service to serve the need of a developing society and, ought to be abandoned for a more proactive and responsive civil service. Amuwo (1997) has emphasized the fact that “the public service can no longer afford to sit on the side-lines while Nigerians fully bear the brunt of bad governance. While the head of the Federal Civil Service Commission will want us to believe that the civil service is

sticking to its roles of: “advising on policy, anticipating problems and challenges, exploring tactical and strategic options, assembling, storing and retrieving data upon which decisions are taken, and deploying human and financial resources for effective execution of public policy” (The Guardian 24/3/2014).

The fact remains that beyond advising and executing public policies, civil servants actually make policy and by virtue of their experience, technical know-how and access to important information, should play more important roles in changing the pattern, and direction of development in the country for the good of all Nigerians. The fact that national development has been dragging on and on, since independence and, has been very slow (since independence) could be partly due to the conservative stance of civil servants on their roles in respect to development administration.

Furthermore, contrary to the perception of the civil service as subordinated to the control of the existing regimes in power, they are actually very powerful and have indeed, influenced major policies and events in the country. Therefore, there is need for countervailing political institutions to checkmate the powers of civil servants as a political and economic force in developing societies. Fortunately, there has been more than a decade of uninterrupted civil rule that can impact positively on political institutions like parliament and the executive arms of government, in an effort to build human capacities and coordinate information gathering, for the purposes of coordinated and sustainable national development. With the entry into the political arena of men and women of integrity and enlightenment, the prospect of formulating and implementing effective policies for sustainable national development in Nigeria, will be enhanced.

The political elite should always have at the back of their minds that political and economic power belong to the people and must make these their urgent concern. Over time, the populace have been marginalized and alienated from the affairs of governments, as if they are not the reason for their existence in the first place. The need to connect with the people has become more urgent and compelling in view of the enormous challenges facing the nation-state. The participation of the people in the affairs of government should be deliberately sought after and cultivated if any meaningful progress has to be made in improving their welfare and well-being of the nation and its people. No government can understand the people better than they do. So the people should claim monopoly of knowledge in respect to their prevailing conditions and aspirations, rather than government

claiming to know better than they do. The people must be actively involved at every stage of the policy process, for them to claim ownership of its end product.

Public policy making and implementation that can be translated into sustainable national development should be carried out through creative information gathering, effective policy formulation, implementation, evaluation and analysis, with a view to improving its content and capacities to bring about transformational changes in Nigerian and African societies. "In pursuance of these goals, the policy stream approach to public policy making should be adopted, bearing in mind that, the beneficiaries of public policies are the better judges of what they actually need, how they need them and, why they need them" (Henry, 2005). Until this is taken to heart by policy makers and enforced by managers of state affairs, sustainable national development may end up being a pipe-dream and, will elude Nigeria and many countries on the continent of Africa.

9. Conclusion

The quest for sustainable national development remains a daunting challenge that requires a combination of factors, to be factored into the development momentum by governments in general, to achieve meaningful success. The stance taken in this narrative, in respect of addressing this pressing concern is the fact, that public policy must be designed to meet the needs of the people for improving the conditions of living of the people of any nation. This, by implication must be the responsibility of the State and its government. Therefore, it must be drastically improved upon for sustainable national development to take place.

However, many years after Nigeria's independence, not much has been achieved in terms of sustainable national development. This suggests that, there are many issues that are fundamentally wrong with the policy making process, its implementation and evaluation processes within the polity of Nigeria and many African nations, as a whole. It was therefore emphasized that, certain categorical steps have to be taken in order to redress the situation and jump-start the transformation process that will bring about sustainable national development. Some of these steps include: popular participation of the people in governmental affairs, better information gathering and analysis, proper linkages of the policy process, stability in the economy, security in respect to lives and property, restructuring of the civil service to bring about a more proactive and responsive civil service, consolidation of democratic rule through accountable political leadership, among many other necessary variables of public administration that, have to be considered and engineered, in order to

make Nigeria and other African countries, winning nations. These categorical imperatives hold the key to effective public policy formulation and implementation, in order to meet the fundamental requirements for sustainable national development in Nigeria and, indeed the continent of Africa and, generally in the so – called “Third World” or the “developing world,” as a whole. Every effort must be aimed at achieving national development and ridding societies and governments that are entangled into the web of corruption. With commitment, the desire to succeed and by holding the State and governments accountable, it can be achieved.

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MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY OR THE LACK OF IT: THEORETICAL AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORKS; CHALLENGES; AND SOME SOLUTIONS AS IT RELATES TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN EXPERIENCE POST DEMOCRACY

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ABSTRACT

South African municipalities appear to be lacklustre when it comes to service delivery, yet, basic and essential services lie at the heart of municipal governance. Provision of services such as water, housing, health care and electricity are the very reasons for the existence of municipalities and in fact critical for the existence and progress of humankind.

This paper is essentially in three parts. Firstly, it focuses on planning and service delivery processes in the municipal sphere of government. In so doing, the theoretical and legislative frameworks that underpin planning and service delivery are described. These are mainly referred to as the so called 'hard' ingredients. In other words, what is given or expected of municipalities. In the main, it covers the legislation for municipal functioning. Secondly, it discusses the concerns underscored by innumerable demonstrations and protest marches experienced in the country despite the strong legal and theoretical frameworks. Finally, it deals with an analysis of why, given the strong legislative and theoretical frameworks, service delivery is lacking. Some of the measures necessary to enhance service delivery are raised. In this regard, a clear picture of the harmony among stakeholders on the one hand and between stakeholders and systems, on the other hand, is highlighted and discussed as a necessary ingredient to link expectations with actual deliverables.

KEY WORDS: Municipalities, Service Delivery, Theoretical, Legislative, Frameworks, Challenges, Solutions, Governance, Stakeholders, Strategy

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps, in a nutshell, the missing ingredients, *inter alia*, are:

- the involvement of all stakeholders in decisions that affect them; and
- Communications with stakeholders on the main service delivery issues.

These missing ingredients are described as the so-called 'soft' issues that, if neglected, may well result in municipalities failing the very people it hopes to serve.

AIM OF THE PAPER

The paper therefore attempts to situate the subject matter and discussion in this narrative within the milieu of service delivery experiences in municipalities of South Africa, post democracy, in 1994.

METHODOLOGY

The principle methodologies used in formulating the thrust of the paper essentially revolves around a short literature review of the subject matter that encompasses the thrust of the paper. In addition, the author utilizes critical analysis in arriving at some conclusions in relationship to the service delivery quandary, as it relates to municipal governance in South Africa. In the final analysis the narrative posits a way forward to overcome some of the challenges and problems that, confront municipalities in South Africa with particular reference to post – democratic local government in South Africa.

FURTHER RESEARCH

- The paper outlined a narrow understanding in terms of the complexities of the challenges that confront municipalities in South Africa. In this regard it is hoped that further research will be conducted in this direction, by other researchers involved in local government research.
- Such research should pave the way to inform local government in respect of the challenges that confront municipalities in South Africa, post democracy, and to find solutions to overcome these challenges and problems in a coordinated manner for purposes of improving service delivery, in a fractured local government environment.
- The fractured nature of local government and municipalities was seen in the August, 2016 local government elections were after 22 years of democracy, for the first time, that the ruling African National Congress government's majority was reduced

substantially. It further saw that the opposition vested control and power in some of the large metropolitan cities of the country and that, the system saw the reality of coalition governments for the first time, in a number of smaller municipalities throughout the country.

- Given this scenario, it is an indication that local government is definitely maturing in South Africa and that, the issues of service delivery within municipalities must be given real and further attention, in order to consolidate democracy, in order to meet the aspirations of the local populations of the country.
- To this end the paper therefore, calls for greater research in respect of the functioning of municipalities within South Africa and above all for the purposes of strengthening local government, with a view of serving local communities, in respect of important local government delivery issues.

LITERATURE REVIEW

MANAGEMENT HIERARCHY AND PLANNING LEVELS

Just as there is a management hierarchy responsible for the different areas of management in an organisation, so too is there a corresponding planning hierarchy to deal with the various levels of planning. These corresponding hierarchies are depicted in Table 1.

CONCEPTUALISATION OF STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

Top management is responsible for the management of the whole organisation, including strategic management. This involves, *inter alia*, mission, strategy and aims, the compiling of strategic plans and organisational structures, control and decision-making. Some attention in this article is given to the theory and processes involved in strategic management.

Defining strategic management

Hitt *et al.* (2006) define the process of strategic management as the full set of commitments, decisions, and actions required to achieve strategic competitiveness and earn above-average returns. Thus, strategic management is made up of a series of decisions and actions that result in the formulation and implementation of plans designed to achieve an organisation's objectives.

TABLE 1: PLANNING LEVELS IN TERMS OF THE MANAGEMENT HIERARCHY

| | STRATEGIC PLANNING | TACTICAL PLANNING | OPERATIONAL PLANNING |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|
| Alternative name | Long-term | Medium-term | Short-term |
| Responsibility | TOP MANAGEMENT | MIDDLE MANAGEMENT | LOWER MANAGEMENT |
| Time-frame | 3 to 10 years | 1 to 5 years | Less than 1 year |
| Detail | Focus on organisation as a whole: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose, mission, strategies • Alignment to external environment • Future orientation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes functional goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes day-to-day activities • Determines policies procedures and rules • Programmes, budgets and projects |
| Information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad, general guidelines • Vague and qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More detailed than strategic plans • More specific | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fine detail • Specific and quantitative |

Source: Adapted from Smit & Cronje, 1992: 97.

Strategic management in organisations can be viewed as a management approach that enables decision-makers to align the internal organisational environment with changes in the increasingly volatile external business environment in which it operates (Camillus, 1997: 1-7) (Fourie, 2007). Griffin (2005: 238) defines a strategy as a comprehensive plan for accomplishing organisational goals. He defines strategic management as a way of approaching opportunities and challenges as a comprehensive and on - going management process aimed at formulating and implementing effective strategies. He concludes by stating that effective strategies are those that promote a superior alignment between the organisation and its various environments concomitant with the achievement of strategic goals that will realise the vision and the mission of the organisation.

According to Shafritz and Russell (2000:299), all strategic management efforts take an essentially similar approach to planning where an organisation wants to be by a future target date. These are the six features that identify a strategic, as opposed to a non-strategic, management approach:

- Identification of objectives to be achieved in the future (these are often announced in a vision statement);
- Adoption of a time frame (or "planning horizon") in which these objectives are to be achieved;
- Systematic analysis of the current circumstances of an organisation, especially its capabilities;
- Assessment of the environment surrounding the organisation both now and within the planning horizon;
- Selection of a strategy for the achievement of desired objectives by a future date, often comparing various alternatives; and
- Integration of organisational efforts around this strategy.

The overall strategy chosen is, in essence, the package of actions selected after analysing alternatives, assessing the outside environment, and determining the internal capabilities of an organisation to achieve specified future objectives through the integration of organisational effort. The strategic management process is often conducted by a strategic planning unit within the organisation. Eventually, its findings are presented in a detailed document known as the strategic plan.

DISCUSSION

The environment of public service strategic management

Some core elements of strategic management listed above have unique considerations when they are applied to public sector organisations. First, the fundamental difference between private and public sector organisations, of profit motive versus service motive has to be considered in terms of maximally achieving, maintaining and enhancing the general welfare with the (scarce) available resources, which are constantly under pressure as societal needs increase.

Another consideration is the fact that decisions on the priorities of public programmes to be financed with public revenue are largely made by popularly elected public representatives

who often have little or no understanding of the complexities of rendering outstanding public service to a population of millions of people.

According to David (2001:5), strategy formulation comprises the following tasks:

- formulating a vision and mission statement;
- assessing the organisation's external environment as a means of identifying external opportunities and threats (external analysis);
- conducting an analysis of the organisation's internal environment as a means of identifying internal strengths and weaknesses (internal analysis);
- translating the mission statement into long-term goals;
- generating alternative strategies; and
- Choosing particular strategies as a means of achieving the formulated long-term goals of the organisation.

According to Fourie (2007:17), critical managerial actions for the implementation of strategy are as follows:

- Creating an organisational structure with the capabilities, competencies and resources required to implement effective strategy;
- Developing budgets to ensure that resources are allocated for strategic success;
- Establishing policies and procedures to support the implementation of strategy;
- Instituting best practices and striving towards continuous improvement;
- Creating and implementing organisational systems that enable employees to execute their strategic roles effectively;
- Aligning rewards and incentives with the achievement of individual and organisational objectives;
- Creating a culture that is aligned with the strategy of the organisation; and
- Practising strategic leadership that is biased towards the effective implementation of the strategy.

Strategy control or evaluation is the final stage in the process of strategic management and provides feedback on both the formulation and the implementation of the strategy. This feedback should indicate the adjustments and corrections that the organisation will need to make as a means of aligning it more effectively with the continuously changing external environment in which it operates. Evaluating the strategy may lead to adjustments or

corrections in the formulation and implementation of the strategy, or to the content of the strategy itself (Thompson and Strickland, 2003: 19).

Strategy implementation is an integral part of the strategic management process. The implementation of the strategy is often conceptually viewed as the step or stage in the strategic management process that follows the formulation of strategy and that precedes strategic control. The implementation of the strategy is, therefore, viewed as separate from the formulation of strategy and is regarded as an activity that only begins once a strategy has been formulated (Campbell and Garnett, 2000:181-202).

Although depicted as two separate sequential steps in a linear process, in practical terms, the formulation of strategy and the implementation of strategy often overlap in the strategic management process. In the volatile contemporary environment, characterised by high levels of uncertainty, turbulence and discontinuous change, a formulated strategy may be obsolete by the time it has been implemented (Zagotta and Robinson, 2006). Therefore, strategy formulation and strategy implementation cannot be separated, as a well-formulated strategy must take into account the means by which it will be implemented, and it is only through its application that a strategy can be refined and reformulated (Grant, 2002: 25). In order to facilitate the smooth implementation of the strategy, effective top management teams recognise the importance of considering strategy implementation issues during the formulation of strategy (Freedman and Tregoe, 2003: 109). In this regard, Campbell and Garnett (2000:188) state that strategy formulation and strategic control that do not take into account the problems associated with the implementation of these strategies, run the risk of being ineffective.

Lynch (1997: 670) asserts that many researchers and writers have fully supported strategy implementation as a separate stage of the strategic management process.

However, some authors have, on the other hand, expressed significant and well-founded doubts, based on empirical evidence, of the way in which strategy develops or emerges (Pettigrew and Whipp, 1991; Hrebiniak.L.G and Joyce, 1984). For example, Pettigrew and Whipp (1991:26-27) analysed how strategic change occurred in four sectors of British industry. These authors suggested that strategic change could most usefully be seen as a continuous process, as opposed to a process that encompasses distinct stages such as the formulation of a strategy followed by its implementation. In this sense, they argued that

strategy is not a linear process with discrete stages, but rather an experimental, iterative process in which the outcome of each stage is uncertain.

Strategic management can be viewed as a continuous process, in which the conceptually separate acts of formulating strategy and implementing strategy are integrated (Thompson and Strickland, 2003:448). Also, the basic strategic management process is viewed as a series of small steps that occur over time and that incorporate complex learning and feedback mechanisms that appear between the formulation of strategy and its ultimate implementation. This implies that strategy implementation is seen as a process that may well alter the strategy of the organisation over time (Lynch, 1997:670). The formulation of strategy may not necessarily be followed by the implementation of the strategy. Instead, the two processes may become locked in a circular loop of decision-making and problem solving as a result of the assumptions made during the strategy formulation stage (Whipp, 2003:257) (Fourie, 2007).

STEPS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

Van der Walddt and Du Toit, (1999: 185-186) identify a generic planning process consisting of eight steps. These steps are the following, namely:

Step 1 - Opportunity Awareness

Being aware of opportunities necessitates realistically diagnosing the opportunity in the light of the organisation's current capabilities;

Step 2 - Establishing Goals

Goals are formulated to provide direction to organisational plans (Cronjé, 2007);

Step 3 - Drawing up Premises

Drawing premises involve the establishment of planning assumptions, that is, what is the future environment in which the plans are expected to occur (Cronjé, 2004);

Step 4 - Developing Various Courses of Action

Which serves to establish alternative ways in which the identified goal can be achieved?

Step 5 - Evaluating Alternatives

The alternatives established in Step 4 need to be evaluated in terms of various factors, including the planning premises established in Step 3;

Step 6 - Selecting a Course of Action

Choosing a course of action flows from evaluating the alternatives (the previous step);

Step 7 - Formulating Derivative Plans

Formulating derivative plans involve the drawing up of plans which support the initial plan; and

Step 8 – Budgeting

Budgeting serves to establish the resources available for the manager to carry out the plans and achieve organisational goals.

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE PLANNING

Barriers exist which may mar the effectiveness of a manager's attempts to plan. These include, *inter alia*, the following, namely:

- Lack of environmental knowledge (such as possible economic and technology changes);
- Lack of organisational knowledge (such as a lack of understanding of the organisation's strategy and capabilities);
- Reluctance to establish goals (for example, due to fear of failure and lack of confidence);
- Resistance to change, as change is inherent in planning; and
- Time and expense.

OVERCOMING THE BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE PLANNING

Barriers to effective planning may be overcome through:

- Top management's commitment to the planning process, demonstrated through the provision of effective long-term plans;
- Management should recognise the limitations of planning and understand that plans will require adjustments on an on-going basis;
- Management should ensure effective communication of organisational plans at all levels; and
- The benefits of contingency planning should be recognised by organisations operating within a turbulent environment (Cronjé, *et al.*, 2004).

PLANNING TOOLS / AIDS

A number of scientific tools exist which can assist the manager in his/ her planning efforts.

This include:

- Forecasting;
- Budgeting;
- Scheduling;
- PERT (Programme Evaluation and Review Technique);
- GANTT Charts;
- Network-based scheduling; and
- Strategic planning. SWOT?

Planning is a basic process involving every manager to some degree. The higher the post in the hierarchy, the greater the extent of planning and the greater its impact. As a management function, the purpose of planning is to give guidelines to personnel on what they need to do in their sections and units.

The key tool used for enhancing coordination and integration is the integrated development plan as provided for in the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000. Integrated development plans are powerful tools for municipalities to facilitate integrated and coordinate service delivery within their locality. The principles set out in the Development Facilitation Act, 67 of 1995 should guide municipalities in their approach to building integrated, livable settlements (Ministry of Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development, 1998: 19). In essence, municipalities must take into account the economic and social impacts of service provision in relation to municipal policy objectives such as poverty eradication, spatial integration and job creation through public works.

SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Plans mean nothing if they are not implemented. Implementation of plans gives rise to realising visions and achieving goals. Provision of services is supposed to become a reality during plan implementation. However, administration in general and management in particular bridge the gap between a present state of being to a future and better state of being. In other words, administration and management are the means used to move from the present to the future.

Internationally, governments have engaged in numerous reforms and initiatives designed to improve cost effectiveness and efficiency, to improve the quality of public services, to become results-oriented and citizen focussed and to emphasise strategic and business planning (Pollitt and Bouchaert, 1992).

In South Africa, the government had serious challenges following the demise of *apartheid*. This resulted in several policy documents, most notably the following:

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996;
- The Public Service Act, 103 of 1994;
- The White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service;
- The Reconstruction and Development Programme; and
- The White Paper on Service Delivery.

Some of these documents will be briefly outlined due to its focus on public service delivery.

The White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service

According to Van der Waldt and Du Toit, (1999: 384) this document lays down the following guidelines for public managers:

- Service-orientation and the delivery of high-quality services;
- Responsiveness to the needs of the public;
- Representative of all sectors and levels of society;
- Reasonable labour practices for all employees;
- Directed at socio-economic development and the reduction of poverty;
- Objective-orientation and productivity;
- Holistic, integrated and well-coordinated service delivery;
- Participative management in terms of consultation with the community;
- Accessibility and informativeness;
- Honesty, transparency and accountability; and
- Respect for the Constitution and loyalty to the government of the day.

The Reconstruction and Development Programme

This document set out broad challenges to public managers as follows:

- Meeting the basic needs of society;
- Developing human resources;
- Creating economic growth and prosperity;
- Democratising the state and society; and
- Implementing the Programme.

The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was the major policy initiative of the ANC government soon after the 1994 elections. It was intended to be an integrated, coherent socio-economic programme. It attempted to integrate development, reconstruction, redistribution and reconciliation into a unified programme. It was intended to be a vision for the fundamental transformation of South African society (RDP White Paper: 1994: 7). The design of the RDP was to be a social democratic vision for the country with an emphasis on welfare rights for the poor. However, the adoption of the government's Macro-Economic Strategy for Growth and Employment (GEAR) in 1996 committed the government to more orthodox fiscal policies (Seekings and Matrass, 2011:347-349). Hirsch (2005:98, 257-258) points out that GEAR was a macroeconomic strategy primarily aimed at reducing the government budget deficit, *albeit* within a broader growth and development strategy. He argued that the government did not abandon the RDP, but public sector investment remained low during a period of financial consolidation. It was argued that the adoption of the GEAR in 1996 led to public sector reform being implemented in a more budget-driven paradigm with an emphasis on goals such as cost-cutting, rightsizing and privatisation (Bardill, 2000:106-107). However, in reality, large parts of GEAR were not implemented. Seekings and Nattrass (2011) point out that by 2010 only two of the four components of GEAR has been implemented, namely that of the reduced budget deficit and trade liberalisation. The other two, namely labour market reforms and privatisation were not implemented.

Administrative Principles for Public Sector Management

All strategic initiatives in the public sector must be aligned to public policy. The key policy framework in this regard is the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. Section 195 (1) of the Constitution lays down a number of normative tenets serving as basic democratic values and principles in terms which public administration in South Africa should be governed. These are:

Principle 1: PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained.

Principle 2: EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND ECONOMY

Effective, efficient and economical utilisation of resources must be encouraged.

Principle 3: DEVELOPMENT ORIENTATION

Public administration must be development-orientated

Principle 4: IMPARTIAL, FAIR AND EQUITABLE SERVICE DELIVERY

Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias.

Principle 5: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

People's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making.

Principle 6: ACCOUNTABILITY

Public administration must be accountable (to the voters and the inhabitants of South Africa).

Principle 7: TRANSPARENCY

Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information.

Principle 8: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Good human resource management and career-development practices, to maximise human potential, must be cultivated.

Principle 9: REPRESENTIVITY

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, (maintain and enhance broad demographic) representation.

The White Paper on Service Delivery (*Batho Pele*)

The *Batho Pele* White Paper, 1997, is commonly known as the *Batho Pele* (People First) initiative. Its aim was to make service delivery a priority in the public service. It called for an improvement in the way services are rendered. It involved a move away from long-winded bureaucratic processes toward a speedier system which put the needs of the public first. *Batho Pele* comprises eight principles briefly described hereunder (*Batho Pele* White Paper, 1997).

The Batho Pele (People First) Principles

These eight principles set out the required levels of professional ethics in the public service in terms of service delivery, which is based on sound strategic management to achieve, maintain and enhance the general welfare of society (*Batho Pele* Handbook, 2003:10).

Principle 1: CONSULTATION

Citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of the public services they receive and, wherever possible, should be given a choice about the services on offer.

Principle 2: SERVICE STANDARDS

Citizens should know what level and quality of public service they will receive so that they are aware of what to expect.

Principle 3: ACCESS

All citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled.

Principle 4: COURTESY

Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration.

Principle 5: INFORMATION

Citizens should be given full, accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive.

Principle 6: OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY

Citizens should be told how national and provincial departments operate, how much they cost and who is in charge.

Principle 7: REDRESS

If the promised standard of service fails, citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy; and when complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic, positive response.

Principle 8: VALUE FOR MONEY

Public services should be provided economically and efficiently to give citizens the best possible value for money.

The above normative guidelines represent theory that has not translated into practice. South Africa's development on the ethical and value-based public administration continuum has not yet reached acceptable levels of anti-corruption often evident when public funds are diverted from the public good towards private interests" (Newham, 2013).

ANALYSIS OF THE Service delivery quandary

Municipalities in South Africa find themselves in a real quandary when it comes to service delivery. No subject has been more discussed in local governance circles in the last five or six years than the issue of service delivery. Service delivery in democratic South Africa has been characterised by mass protests, demonstrations and petitions (Sebugwawo, 2012). Many of the service delivery turn-around strategies put in place are yet to produce results. These protests have become a characteristic feature of ordinary people's response when municipal governments fail to take action regarding community challenges. According to Allan and Heese (2016), "there is little doubt that service delivery protests have escalated in number and severity over the last few months".

Research shows evidence that most protests in 2016 occurred in informal settlements in the large metros. Cities such as Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni and Cape Town experienced a rash of service delivery protests this year in addition to a number of fairly specific cases in the provinces of the North West and Mpumalanga like the now notorious Balfour (Allan and Heese, 2016).

These regions experienced the highest population growth rates due mainly to high levels of migration. According to Allan and Heese (2016), there is a strong statistical link between high levels of migration and service delivery protests. Urbanisation, essentially the influx of poor migrants to cities, is prompted by the search for jobs and therefore is most noticeable in

areas of economic growth. Regrettably, planning for the influx of people has been relatively poor. Migrants find themselves unemployed, living in one of the many hundreds of informal settlements on the periphery of these large metros, effectively marginalised from both access to economic opportunity, as well as housing and services.

The rapid growth of informal settlements, as well as metros' (until recent) unwillingness to accept them as a permanent reality in their midst, has meant a slow response to the service delivery needs of communities in these areas.

In these cases, a large part of the problem sparking protests has been poor planning as well as poor communication between representatives of metros and communities. This view has also been expressed by Sebugwawo (2016) when he affirmed that, "there is a crucial need for municipalities to prioritise community concerns and create functional communication channels", An assessment of service delivery protests in metros makes clear how a lack of access to information often leads to the rapid spread of rumours of favouritism, corruption, and mismanagement—sometimes true, but often untrue (Allan and Heese, 2016). Added to this, the need for services in these areas is not only greater than any other area of a metro but desperate.

While the violence and criminality often associated with service delivery protests is unacceptable and should be condemned out of hand, it is worth remembering that the communities living in informal settlements are essentially excluded from society – they have access neither to economic nor social opportunity and find themselves on the outside looking in – at a fairly different world from their own.

Research on poverty levels in wards where protests take place shows that while communities in these areas are desperately poor and contain some of the highest unemployment rates in the country, they still have better access to local services than residents in the poorest municipalities in our rural areas and indeed than a national average (Allan and Heese, 2016). However, they are considerably poorer than neighbouring areas. They observe communities in more formalised neighbouring areas benefiting from upgraded services while they wait endlessly for their turn to arrive.

According to Allan and Heese, (2016) it is this sense of relative deprivation, and inequality within an urban context is key to understanding why protests take place. People will wait for

service delivery, but not if it seems that everyone else in their municipality is getting services before them. Furthermore, the marginalisation and exclusion felt by communities in informal settlements and the general desperation for services in these areas, coupled with a lack of information from the municipality have drawn people to take a reactionary stance in a bid for recognition.

Way forward

Much of what is stated above depicts a picture of sufficient mechanisms in the form of laws and planning aids to plan and enhance service delivery on the one hand but a lack of success on the other hand. In view thereof, municipalities have to look, in a number of practical ways, at why service delivery protests are taking place and what can be done to mitigate them. Central to this is a recognition that municipal councils can no longer afford to ignore the plight of informal settlements in the metros where most protests take place.

According to Allan and Heese, (2016) the following should be undertaken:

- Municipalities need to develop a specific communication strategy to include communities in informal settlements in the processes of local councils; and
- The national departments of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, as well as Human Settlements in partnership with local government, should clarify a much needed interim policy on the formalisation of informal settlements and the integration of these areas into those urban municipalities where they occur.

Johannesburg recently took the lead in putting such a policy in place and certainly much can be learned by other municipalities from this experience (Allan and Heese, 2016).

It appears that the so-called 'hard ingredients' in the form of tools; aids; human and other resources are in place but what is lacking are some of the so called 'soft ingredients'. These include, but are not limited to:

- Full and proper communications with all stakeholders;
- Each stakeholder must clearly understand their roles and responsibilities;
- Synergies among key stakeholders must be identified and used (the need to find common ground); and
- Proper and adequate use of the systems and mechanisms in place to enhance planning and service delivery.

These soft issues or ingredients must be coordinated with the hard issues of planning and service delivery. Planning, at the different levels of management, range from strategic by top management to basic operational scheduling by line and/ or lower level managers. Thus, theoretically speaking, the output of one level becomes the input of another level. Collectively, functions of managers at each level contribute toward achieving the overall objectives of the institution. Top management, however, should always be in control and are ultimately accountable for planning and service delivery. This means that after making their input, they are not excluded from the process but remain at the forefront to continuously receive feedback and where necessary make adjustments to fine tune or unblock anything that prevents the organisation from achieving its objectives.

CONCLUSION

This paper focused on planning and service delivery processes in the municipal sphere of government which appears lacklustre at the moment and, after 22 years of democracy. In so doing, the theoretical and legislative frameworks that underpin planning and service delivery were explored and described. Secondly, it discussed the concerns of residents, expressed mainly by innumerable demonstrations, protests, and marches that permeate local government in wide areas of South Africa, despite the strong legal and theoretical frameworks, that are in place. However, it must be clearly understood that mammoth challenges have been inherited from the apartheid government, post democracy. These challenges in many ways have been dealt with by the democratic government, post 1994. On the other hand massive corruption together with a bloated and largely inefficient local government bureaucracy has hampered service delivery compounded by cadre deployment of unqualified personnel to high ranking positions at all levels of the local government administrations throughout the country. This has considerably stymied progress in terms of local government initiatives that have not materialized in a sustained and coordinated manner, much to the detriment of the sum total of local populations, who is crying out for a better life, which the ruling government has not guaranteed. This has seen the burden of poverty rise, the widening gap between the rich and the poor, escalating inequality, poor health and sanitation services, increased housing demands, rising crime and, the inability of the ruling government to deal with the rising unemployment scenario which is worsening with each passing day. All of this threatens the very survival of the so – called revolutionary government that can no longer rely on its past revolutionary credentials. People want services and basic rights not political rhetoric any more.

Finally, it identified and discussed some key measures necessary to enhance service delivery. In this regard, a clear picture of the harmony among stakeholders on the one hand and, between stakeholders and systems, on the other hand, was highlighted and discussed as necessary ingredients to link expectations with actual deliverables, in terms of necessary and plausible outcomes. The so-called 'soft' issues of communications and public involvement must be given attention, if municipal service delivery is to become a reality in the lives of all South Africans. To this end government and opposition parties must gear up and pave the way, for sustained and coordinated service delivery, with a view of consolidating local government initiatives, in order to enhance the mechanisms of local government service delivery. If this does not happen in the very near future, the ruling government under the African National Congress (ANC) faces the real danger of losing control at the national elections in 2019, like it did in the local elections in August of 2016. If this happens, democracy will have been served.

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THE NEXUS BETWEEN CORRUPTION AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AREAS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

There is a consensus that corruption is an evil wind that affects everyone and retards societal progress. While there are several theories that explain its prevalence in society, the point to emphasize is that, it has become a way of life in Nigeria. This explains why it has been difficult to combat its rising profile. Within the framework of the theory of public administration and, critical analysis, the paper rekindles corruption as the major cause of underdevelopment in Nigeria's rural areas. It is the position of the paper that given the effect of corruption on rural development, the fight against corruption is a war that must be won. Therefore, all hands must be on deck to expunge this scourge from the nation's polity. The first fundamental step among other measures is the need for patriotic and visionary leaders and leadership that will show the way out of this quagmire, in the fight against corruption through personal example, irrespective of whose ox is gored. This cannot be

overemphasized. Yet, democratic ethos must be enshrined in the local government system. Democracy is said to be the government of the people, for the people and by the people. Rural inhabitants must be allowed to choose their representatives because it is the only way they can hold them accountable in terms of the rule of law and, within the ambit of the Constitutional democracy within the country.

Keywords: Leadership, Grassroots, Service Delivery, Sustainable Development, Ruralites

1. Introduction

Grassroots government, otherwise called local government in Nigeria, was primarily created to bring government close to the rural inhabitants. The rural areas of Nigeria are inhabited by the bulk of the nation's population. They serve as the base for the production of food and raw materials for industrial use. They are also the major sources of capital formation for the country, and a principal market for domestic and foreign manufactures, as well as the foundation for any economic growth and development within the nation. However, despite the importance attached to the rural areas, socio-economic development seems alien to this segment of Nigerian society, making it unattractive to live in. There is, a virtual absence of infrastructure and social amenities such as: potable drinking water, electricity, communication networks and, good rural feeder roads, amidst a host of other pressing issues. Even where they exist, they are poorly built and managed. Yet, the rural dwellers have low purchasing power as a result of low economic activities.

It would appear that one major factor that accounts for underdevelopment in rural areas of Nigeria is the, observable phenomenon of unspeakable corruption, sometimes fashioned in a way of "political reward" which Onwudiwe (2003) tagged "ubiquitous Nigerian infirmity". "The creation of local government to decentralize political administration, accelerate rural development and the enhancement of the socio-economic wellbeing of the majority rural populace, have been arrested by the perverted looting idiosyncrasy of local government officials" (Thovoethin and Adio, 2011). As is the case at all levels of government, public officials at the grassroots use their exalted positions with impunity to amass ill-gotten wealth. It is along this line of thought, after examining the local governments in Oyo state, Oyedele (2008) posits that "local councils have turned to dens of robbers and a cauldron of corruption

where, large chunks of monthly and other special allocations are shared under different guises. The lack of meaningful development especially in rural areas is because of this orgy of looting. The level of underdevelopment in the rural areas negates the huge amount of money available to local government administrator's nationwide." This makes the situation a paradox, that is, the more money local governments receives the more underdevelopment is witnessed, in the rural areas in Nigeria. In fact, there is absence of service delivery in the rural communities. Indeed, several attempts at solving rural underdevelopment by each successive government in the country had met with severe brick walls. It is against this background that this article seeks to interrogate corruption in the underdevelopment of rural areas of Nigeria.

To address the subject and undertake cogent and necessary analysis, the paper is pigeonholed into six compartments. Aside the introduction, the first section, examines conceptual and theoretical issues relevant to the paper. The second examines the nature and causes of corruption in Nigerian that has made it a lucrative venture. The third, discusses corruption impasses in Nigeria. The fourth focuses on the paradox of local government and service delivery. The fifth x-rays, the implications of corruption on rural development. The sixth chronicles, the way out of the muddy waters of corruption for, better and prosperous rural communities and, finally posits a conclusion.

2. Conceptual and Theoretical Orientations

Over the years, the concept of corruption, like any other social phenomenon has engaged the attention of scholars all over the world. The nature and definitions of corruption varies from one country to the other, in consonance with its peculiarities, cultural, legal and political considerations. Therefore, there is no consensus amongst scholars as to a single, universally accepted and comprehensive definition of corruption. However, the most simplified and popular definition is that adopted by the World Bank (1997) which defines corruption "as the abuse of public power for private benefit." Corruption can also be defined as the breach of ethical rules that bind the conduct of official duties while Lispet and Lenz (2000) define corruption "as an effort to secure wealth or power through illegal means – private gain at public expense." In the same vein, in the view of Khan in (Akhakpe, 2012), is that "corruption is a behaviour that deviates from the formal rules of conduct governing the actions of someone in a position of public authority because of his / her private motives such as, the accumulation of wealth, power, or status." To Akhakpe (2014) "corruption hurts

everyone whose life, livelihood or happiness depends on the integrity of people in positions of authority.”

Various scholars have defined rural development in various ways. For Lele in (Ikotun, 2002), rural development is “improving the living standards of the mass of the low income population residing in rural areas and, making the process of their development self-sustaining”. Also, Mustapha (1989) posits that “rural development is concerned with the improvement of the living standards of the low income population living in rural areas on a self-sustaining basis through -transforming the socio-political - economic structures of their productive activities.” To Akindele (2004), “rural development connotes a determined, and a deliberately planned change in nearly all aspects of rural community living, with a view to attaining desired improvement in all facets of life of these ruralities.” Hence, the catalyst for rural development is the security of bearable, conducive and decent standards of living in the rural areas for all of the inhabitants.

An examination of the above definitions suggests that rural development simply connotes a sustained improvement in the quality of life of the rural people. It implies consistency in approach in which micro and macro-economic, social, political, cultural and technological variables are engineered, combined and implemented as an organic and dynamic whole for the benefit of the people.

There are several approaches through which an issue could be examined, especially in the social and management sciences where perspectives often differ based on a scholar's orientation and worldview. It is in the light of the foregoing that we undertake this discussion and analysis, as we look at corruption and rural development as corrupt practices, the accumulation of ill – gotten gains, at the expense of the people. In other words, it is a nefarious business enterprise. When issues of corruption in the public sector are raised in contemporary times, the state in Africa easily comes to mind. Indeed, “there is virtually no subject that one considers in Africa without emphasizing the role of the state” (Osaghae, 1988:298). This is so because, the state not only leads, it also embodies the sum total of society in Africa. One fundamental fact to note from the onset is that, the Nigerian state, like most African states and, so - called “Third World” countries is and are a product of colonialism. This can take essentially two forms of colonialism – Anglophone and Francophone in Africa (There were other forms of African colonialism, like Belgium, Portuguese, Spanish and Arab colonialism, amidst other forms).

It is not surprising therefore that many theorists of African politics trace the problem of political corruption to the debauchery of colonial rule (Osaghae, 1988; Ekeh, 1975). Among the theories of African politics that has helped in the understanding of Africa's predicament, and more importantly the issue of endemic corruption, include theory of two publics developed by Peter Ekeh, Prebendalism popularized by Richard Joseph and Gurnal Myrdal's soft state thesis.

These theories are credible not only in the understanding of the state and its predicament, in African countries but, also in providing important explanations for the pandemic corruption ravaging African countries. However, the framework upon which this study is underpinned is the theory of two publics. Ekeh (1975) argued that "one of the most striking impacts of colonialism was the emergence of two public realms, the primordial and civic public realms which related differently with the private realm in terms of morality." For Nigeria in particular and Africa in general, Ekeh argued that "only rights (that is, benefits) are expected from the state by its citizens, who owe duties (responsibilities) to a native sector."

The former forms the basis of an "amoral civic public realm" and the latter a "moral primordial public realm". Therefore, the civic public realm was associated with illegitimate and exploitative colonial rule and, had no moral linkages with the private realm. It was an "amoral public realm in which cheating the system was considered a patriotic duty" (Ifidon, 1996). The result is that "as the same actors operate in the two realms, the state apparatus is employed to fatten the nest of the primordial public, thereby making corruption, nepotism and ethnicity to mention a few, the hallmark of the civic public" (Osaghae, 1988). According to Ekeh (1975:108):

"A good citizen of the primordial public gives out and asks for nothing in return; a lucky citizen of the civic public gains from the civic but enjoys escaping giving anything in return whenever he can. But such a lucky man would not be a good man when he channels all his lucky gains to his private purse. He will only continue to be a good man if he channels part of the largesse from the civic public to the primordial public. That is the logic of the dialectics. The unwritten law of the dialectics is that, it is legitimate to rob the civic public in order to strengthen the primordial public."

The relevance of the theory to this paper is that, it has provided a framework for understanding the wide gap between the civic public in local councils and, the primordial

public in rural communities. The disconnect between the politician and bureaucrats at the grassroots and the rural inhabitants is evident. The politicians did not emerge from among the rural people; rather they were imposed on them by 'godfathers' and political parties. And since the elected council officials are not accountable to the people, they (officials) engage in corruption with impunity at the expense of rural development. On the other hand, a corrupt official remains a good man as long as he channels part of the money he stole to satisfy ephemeral yearnings of a few in the rural community, jettisoning programmes and projects that will bring development to the entire community. What is the nature and causes of corruption in Nigeria that have made it a lucrative business?

3. Nature and Causes of Corruption in Nigeria

It is generally agreed that corruption is an evil wind that affects everyone and retards societal progress. It is often seen as a social, economic and political canker-worm that has eaten deep into the fabric of the Nigerian society. Yet, efforts to combat and curtail its spread remain largely ineffectual. What explains its persistence? This is the focus of the discussion, in this section of the paper.

3.1 Leadership Deficit: This is not unconnected to the kind of leadership that has been in place since the colonial period. The Nigeria leaders are corrupt. Therefore, the immoral act performed by a leader is said to be emulated by the followers and, when the followers become leaders they, in turn become even more corrupt than their predecessors. This supports the position of Achebe (1983) that "the main problem of Nigeria is nothing but poverty of leadership."

3.2 High rate of Poverty: This is, as a result of unequal distribution of wealth in Nigeria. This has really widened the gap between the rich and the poor. The gap is so wide that only those who are exceptionally disciplined can afford to go on empty stomachs for days. To worsen the situation, too much emphasis is placed on paper qualifications and salary administration and, government positions. Unfortunately, the poorly and lowly educated ones are people with many wives and children. Most of the irritating corruption revolve within, the lower cadre of the public service and public servants. This type of corruption is made up of different forms of bribery, gratifications and extortions are common among the clerical officers and office assistants. Many of them encourage it and, engage in it because of poverty. While responsibilities are greater, the associated wages and salaries are not

commensurate; hence, the need to devise other means for purposes of survival, which they don't see as corruption but, rather helping themselves.

3.3 Greed is one of the major causes of corruption: This has to do with corruption among the top executives and administrators in developing societies. Some of them are just 'gluttonous' with an untiring avarice for the wealth of this world. If not for greed, how does one explain the reality that, a public officer earning a low salary in the public service, possesses over 20 houses and 100 billion naira? This is all as a result of greed and the absence of accountability and very poor governance in Nigeria. Corruption could be said to be the product of the absence of good and purposeful governance. There is a nexus between greed and bad governance. The absence of the crucial ingredients for stability and development in Nigeria has been long recognized. The recognition has found expression in constant, calls by the press, media and, other pressure groups for accountability in governance but to no avail.

3.4 Improper planning could lead to corruption: There is improper planning for sustainable development in Nigeria. It is unfortunate that nothing works in developing societies; hence as a result of these futuristic uncertainties in both public and private sectors, many who have the opportunity had, used it to amass wealth even at the expense of the state and its people, with a view to saving for their rainy days. Except that, there are sustainable development programmes and proper planning by the administrators in Nigeria to guarantee the future of the nation and those of her citizens, many may be tempted to guarantee their future in a country where people lose their jobs indiscriminately as a result of improper planning or unstable policies promulgated by successive Nigerian governments.

Also, pressure from family and other pressure groups have been identified. No doubt one of the major problems in developing countries is that hunger and starvation are pronounced. Hence, those who are starved put all their hopes and demand on their friends, cousins, uncles, brothers, and sisters who are working. For those who could not resist pressure and temptations, they dip their hands into organizations' purses and continue to deplete the coffers endlessly and, with impunity. Those who have no access to the purse engage in bribery and gratifications. Pressure from all directions on the politicians and bureaucrat has been adduced for the endemic nature of corruption in Nigeria. For example, those who wish to celebrate marriage, burial; naming ceremonies and other social events make contact with politicians and administrators for financial assistance. Yet, it would appear, that one of the reasons why civil societies cannot rise against corrupt officials and politician is that, most of

the stolen wealth is being spent in satisfying their several demands and pressures and hedonistic living standards.

3.5 Hero worshipping in Nigeria is another unparalled factor that triggers corruption:

While Nigerians places little or no value on men or women with virtues and integrity, men and women of questionable wealth and character are hero-worshipped. For instance, some of those currently languishing or who have died in detention where once upon a time, the heroes and heroines (stars) in their various communities. On the other hand scholars / researchers who had engaged in the world of innovations and, had made unparalleled contributions to knowledge and betterment of the society are hardly recognized.

3.6 Poor Remuneration: The salaries and wages of public servants are not sufficient for them to earn a decent living and carry out their personal responsibilities and obligations. As a result of this, stealing of public fund, asking and collection of gifts and bribes becomes a supplementary occupation, more especially, as acceptance of gifts, is not seen as corruption but a culture of appreciation in Africa.

3.7 Life Style of bureaucratic and political officials has been identified: Tackling corruption in Nigeria may be problematic as it has become a way of life. In Nigeria, corruption is the game in town. The most unfortunate aspect of it is that, the elders in the society have made the youth believe that, nothing can be done in Nigeria without the greasing of palms. We make bold to say that corruption in Nigeria has become a culture that is being transmitted or transferred from generation to generation. The time has come for the Nigerian and African governments to conduct life – style audits on public servants and within the private sector, in order to deal decisively and ruthlessly with ill – gotten gains and corruption.

4. Corruption Impasses in the Nigeria

Nigeria presents a veritable case for understanding the connection between corruption and political malaise. Ribadu (2006) gave a graphic summary of the situation when he tagged the period between 1979 and 1998 as “the darkest period” in Nigeria’s history of corrupt regimes. The civilian administration of 1979 - 1983 was bedevilled with profligacy, “wanton waste, political thuggery and coercion, disrespect for the rule of law, bare faced, free for all looting of public funds through white elephant projects.” He contends that:

“Corrupt public servants and others in the private sector bestrode the nation, masquerading as captains of business and power brokers with tainted and stolen wealth and demanded the rest of us to kowtow before them. The period of military regimes was pathetic. Under them, corruption became the sole guiding principle for running affairs of the state. The period witnessed a total reversal and destruction of every good thing in the country” (Ribadu, 2006).

The Nigerian economic and political landscape is pervaded by corruption and abuse of office. The National Planning Commission (NPC, 2005) has noted that “systemic corruption and low levels of transparency and accountability have been major sources of development failure. Unconventional and fraudulent trade, misappropriation and diversion of funds, kickbacks, under and over invoicing, bribery, false declarations, abuse of office, and collection of illegal tolls, among other malfeasant practices, are the forms that corruption takes at all levels of government in Nigeria.” In the international system, “Nigeria is rated as one of the most corrupt nations in the world, a ranking that has denied the country its place of pride in the international system (Transparency International, 2012). After examining the impact of corruption in Nigeria, Adeseyoju (2006) posits that “corruption is far more dangerous than drug trafficking or other crimes because and when perpetrators go unpunished, the public loses confidence in the legal system and those who enforce the law.” Corruption and bad governance were the two major reasons often cited by the military to rationalize their incursion into politics in Nigeria. However, the succeeding military regimes could not stem the tide of corruption, and insatiate good governance. Rather, with the wholesale deployment of force, the Nigerian polity passed through phases of deepening corruption and political instability. For a period of 29 years, the praetorian character of the Nigerian political system stifled the polity of all democratic ethos. The new set of political actors who had experienced military rule also imbibed an autocratic political culture, which provided a veritable environment for corrupt practices. For example, mentality of force, intolerance of opposition, and an unbridled appetite for wealth through the appropriation of state resources for private gain remain the only game in town.

Appetite for the soul of the Nigerian state was exacerbated by government control of the resources (Joseph et al., 1996). Because of the enormous resources, government officials took advantage of the state machinery to manipulate collective wealth for their personal use. For instance, former military head of State, the late General Sani Abacha “paralyzed the

machinery of government and impoverished the citizenry in five years of dictatorship and frenetic looting" (See Tell Magazine, 2006). He was reputed to have "stolen US\$1.13 billion and 413million British pounds sterling, apart from US\$386.2million defrauded through fictitious and inflated contracts" (Tell Magazine, 2006). This, Ake (1995) insists, should ordinarily not happen to a state because when they do happen, the state effectively ceases to exist as a state and compromises its ability to pursue development". The Nigerian state is a victim of high-level corruption causing the retardation of national development and a ceaseless cycle of crisis arising from peoples' discontent with government.

Corruption became legitimized, especially during the Babangida and Abacha regimes (1985-1998), with huge revenues, but wasteful spending, and nothing to show in terms of physical development. The culture of corruption through what Nigerians has come to know as the settlement syndrome became part of the country's political culture. All the positive values for development were jettisoned.

Governmental agencies that are the pilots of socio-economic developments were decimated. In 1988, a special account was opened at the central bank by the federal government to "house" the proceeds of the sale of crude oil dedicated to special projects and to receive the windfall oil revenues from the Gulf War" (Okigbo, 1994). According to the Report:

"Out of the 124 billion US dollars realized in the accounts, 12.2 billion US dollars was liquidated in less than six years: they were spent on what could be neither adjudged genuine high priority nor truly regenerative investment that neither the president nor the governor accounted to anyone for these massive extra budgetary expenditure; that these disbursements were clandestinely undertaken, while the country was openly reeling with a crushing eternal debt-overhang that represent a gross abuse of public trust."

This troubling revelation should serve as a template for apprehending the culprits with a view to bringing them to justice. However, the reverse is the case, as most of the culprits are presently active 'power brokers' in Nigeria's 'god-father politics', seeking democratic avenues to perpetuate their rule (Sklar, Ebere and Darren, 2006). It is in the light of the foregoing that Gray and Kaufmann (1998) argued that "corruption in Nigeria is systemic." According to them:

"Where there is systemic corruption, the institution values, and norms of behaviour have already been adapted to a corruption modus operandi which

bureaucrats and other agents follow the predatory examples of, or even taking instruction from, their principals in the political arena.”

In such a polity, the likelihood of detection and punishment decreases, and incentives are thereby created for corruption to increase. This is exactly what happened after numerous revelations. The military took corruption to its highest levels ever. Ironically, as previously stated, when they seized power from democratically elected governments, pervasive corruption was cited as the justification (Akinseye-George, 2000). It is clear that military regimes were worse than the civilian regimes as far as corruption is and was concerned. This explains the reasons for the multiplicity of corruption and, the further decimation of available resources and potentials for rural development. Hence, political activities assumed a dangerous dimension as contestants see their victory as the ticket to loot and amass wealth.

Sadly enough, the civilian government that took over in 1999 could not even take any positive step towards recovering the loot of the Gulf War windfall, in spite of its resolve to deal with corruption. Instead, corruption continues to grow and the “abuse of public office for private gain, coupled with nepotism and bribery, has killed good governance” (Lawal, 2006). The establishment of anti-graft agencies like the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices and, other related Offences Commission (ICPC) has not done much to rid Nigeria of all forms of corruption and thus failed to promote transparency, probity, accountability and integrity in the public and private life of all Nigerians. Where they have done, their antidotes fall, below expectation.

5. Local Government and Service Delivery: A Paradox

Local government is the third tier of government in Nigeria’s federal system. To underscore its importance, section 7(1) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria specifically guarantees a democratically elected local government system; while schedule 4 of the same constitution defines the functions of local governments. The 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria specifically establishes local government administration as the third tier of government. According to Awotokun (2005), the main functions of a local government as stipulated in the fourth schedule of the 1999 constitution as amended are as follows:

(a) "The consideration and the making of recommendations to a state commission on economic planning or any similar body on: The economic development of the state population in so far as the areas of authority of the council and of the state are affected; and Proposal made by the said commission or body; (b). Collection of rates, radio and television licenses; (c). Establishment and maintenance of cemeteries, burial grounds and homes for the destitute infirm; (d). Licensing of bicycles, trucks (other than mechanically propelled trucks), canoes, wheel barrows and carts; (e). Establishment, maintenance and regulation of slaughter houses, slaughter slabs, markets, motor parks and public conveniences; (f). Construction and maintenance of roads, streets, street lightings, drains and other public highways, parks, gardens, open spaces, or such public facilities as may be prescribed from time to time by the House of Assembly of a state; (g). Naming of roads and streets and numbering of houses; provision and maintenance of public convenience, refuse disposal; registration of all births, deaths and marriages; assessment of privately owned houses or tenements for the purpose of levying such rates as may be pre-scribed by the House of Assembly of a state; and (k). Control and regulation of: Out-door advertising and boarding; Movement and keeping of pets of all description; Shops and Kiosks; Restaurants, bakeries and other places for sale of food to the public; Laundries; and Licensing, regulation and control of sale of liquor.

Secondly, the functions of a local government council shall include participation of such council in the government of a state as regards, the following matters: The provision and maintenance of primary adult and vocational education; The development of agriculture and natural resources, other than the exploitation of minerals; and The provision and maintenance of health services; and d. Such other functions as may be conferred on a local government council by the House of Assembly of the State."

However, in Nigeria, it is well known fact that there is a dearth of published data by the appropriate authorities such as the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) on local government development efforts in the rural areas. Akhakpe, Fatile and Igbokwe-Ibeto (2012) and Yesufu (1996) are among other scholars who have documented "the dearth of data for research in Nigeria as worrisome." So there is lean statistical evidence to argue about the development efforts of the local governments in rural areas in Nigeria. Because of the said dearth of data, we aligned our contention that corruption is behind the vast underdevelopment in Nigeria's rural areas from, the study conducted by Akhakpe et al. (2012:811) and our personal observation till date. The scholars

did content analysis of some newspapers and magazines in Nigeria to determine people's feelings about the local governments' development efforts in communities.

In utilizing the content analysis, the researchers' content analyzed four hundred and sixty-six (466) various newspapers and magazines published between 2007 and 2011 available to them. The purpose was to determine people's feelings as reported by the newspapers and magazines about the developmental impact of the local governments in communities. People's feelings were categorized and differentiated broadly into two: praises and criticisms. Praises were identified in the newspapers and magazines by words of praise used by communities. Pictures of jubilations about local governments' activities such as commissioning of projects, offering of direct free labour to assist local governments, and exercise of vigilance, especially at night, over local government facilities, provided for the communities were also admitted as praises. Also included as praises were; reports on commencement of development projects, and public - private-partnerships (PPPs) by local governments as well, as donations of parcels of land.

Issues bordering on criticisms of local governments were operationalized as follows: critical statements of blame and failure of local governments as well as pictures of demonstrations against local governments. Road blockades by communities to protect the roads they claim to have repaired as a result of the ineffectiveness or insensitivity of the local governments, petitions and appeals to higher authorities and anti-corruption agencies such as Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) on local governments activities, sacking and suspension of local government chairmen and, other principal staff constituted part of the criticisms.

Akhakpe et al. (2012:811) analysis reveals that "out of a total of 466 newspapers and magazines sampled, only 36 representing about 18.1 per cent of the people's feelings were expressed as praises for the local governments in the period 2007-2011. The number of criticisms was 130 representing about 81.9 per cent. Although people's feelings apparently were less reported in the newspapers and magazines, nevertheless it indicates that majority were by far disappointed in local government performance and development efforts in the communities." These findings tends to favour the general opinion in the literature about the unsatisfactory performance of local governments in rural areas in Nigeria (see for example, Imhanlahimi and Ikeanyibe, Ikelegbe, 2005; 2009; Mukoro, 2001; Mabogunje, 1980 in Akahkpe et al., 2012).

Table 1: Symptoms of Underdevelopment in Nigerian Rural Area

| Variables | Primary Cause | Secondary Cause |
|---|--|---|
| High Death Rate and Prevalence of Preventable Diseases | Lack of knowledge Lack of awareness Lack of capital Misplaced priority Dependency thinking | Lack of drugs Lack of clinics Malnutrition Lack of clean water Lack sanitary Facilities |
| Malnutrition, Hunger and Starvation | Lack of knowledge Lack of awareness Lack of skills Lack of capital Drought | Lack of food Wrong type of food Low income Lack of tools Lack of land |
| Lack of Sanitary Facilities | Lack of knowledge Lack of awareness Lack of capital Dependency thinking | Ignorant & Illiteracy Lack of tool Superstitions Lack of Drinking water |
| High Birth Rate | Child mortality Lack of land Lack of knowledge Lack of awareness | No family planning No child spacing Lack of education Low income |
| Illiteracy/Low School Enrolment | Lack of capital Lack of awareness Low income | Lack of schools Lack of teachers Gender discrimination Inability to pay schools fees |
| Poor income | Lack of skill Lack of capital Lack of initiative Joblessness Lack of cottage industries | No electricity Lack of investment Low production Low productivity Poor markets |
| Use of Old Age Traditional Agricultural Equipment for Farming | Lack of skills Lack of knowledge Lack of capital Lack of market | Simple tools Labour intensive Poor soil Lack of fertilizers |

Source: Authors Computation

6. Implications of Corruption on Rural Development in Nigeria

The main objective of rural development is to improve the living standards of the mass of the low-income population residing in the rural areas and making the process of their development self-sustaining. This encompasses reducing poverty; increasing rural productivity and income; meeting the basic needs of the rural people; reducing inequality in income and wealth; Increasing unemployment and stemming rural-urban migration; providing basic rural infrastructure; inducing social change for balanced human and material development. However, it is pertinent to say that despite these rural development strategies, illiteracy, poverty, depression, low life expectancy, poor housing and sanitation are still visible in the rural areas. Chief among the various reasons for the failure of these strategies is corruption.

The implication is that corruption increases the rate of poverty among rural dwellers. It denies rural dwellers basic necessities of life which include food, clothes and shelter. It contributes to high dependency ratios, widespread hunger and malnutrition and high rate of morbidity and mortality in rural communities. This is in agreement with Olaleye (2006) who says that “poverty is prevalent in rural areas, especially among the rural women, because successive governments’ over the years had misappropriated the huge resources meant to alleviate the suffering of the rural communities and the people in general.

Good roads, pipe borne water, primary health care delivery system, electricity supply, quality education are virtually lacking in the rural areas as a result of corruption in the grassroots. Resources that were earmarked to provide these services are being embezzled by council officials. Therefore, the needed development has continued to elude the rural communities. Another implication of underdevelopment of the Nigerian rural areas is the over-congestion of the urban centres, could be attributed to corruption at the grassroots. Because of lack of economic opportunities and infrastructure in the rural areas, the urban centres with rather irresistible attraction hold the “pull” for the rural dwellers. There has been mass exodus of the rural dwellers, especially the young ones, to more pleasing urban centres for better social and economic alternatives. The reason for this is that politicians and bureaucrats at the grassroots redirect allocation and grants meant to develop rural infrastructure to personal accounts.

7. Corruption and Underdevelopment of Rural Areas in Nigeria: The Way Forward

Corruption is an evil wind that affects everyone and retards societal progress. Therefore, all hands must be on deck to expunge this scourge from the nation's body polity in order to enhance development of rural areas. It is in the light of the foregoing that we undertook this endeavour, narrative and research.

Consequent upon the findings of this study, the first fundamental step is aimed to redress the prevalence of corruption in the polity and is also aimed, to transform the state from an alien force, to an entity that caters for the welfare and well-being of the people. Yet, the need for patriotic and visionary leaders and leadership that will show the way out in the fight against this common enemy through personal example, irrespective of whose ox is gored cannot be overemphasized.

For any meaningful development in the rural areas in Nigeria, democratic ethos must be enshrined in the local government system. Democracy is said to be the government of the people, for the people and by the people. Rural inhabitants must be allowed to choose their representatives into local councils. The rural communities should elect people of integrity to represents them in local councils and should not sell their votes to politicians of questionable character. By so doing, they can hold their representatives accountable to the rule of law, to the constitutional imperatives of the state, in order to consolidate and strengthen democracy in Nigeria.

Also, rural dwellers should not stay aloof of governance in their communities. They should participate actively in decision making processes that affect their wellbeing. Popular participation should be able to promote local ownership of projects, thereby mitigating the effect of foreign oriented programmes and, give a sense of ownership, maintenance and the requisite care for facilities" (Anazodo, Igbokwe-Ibeto Osawe and Nkah, 2014). Local intervention projects should involve all sectors of the rural population to avoid their alienation from the development process. The people must hold their council representative responsible for the pace of development in their communities and, develop a framework for a persistent public enlightenment to educate the masses about the evils of corruption in the society as well, as encourage whistle blowers.

Indeed, the old development paradigm in Nigeria and other countries in Africa have given way to a process that empowers the people to make choices and carryout a bottom up approach to development. As Ake (2000) puts it, such development paradigm aims at:

“Making the people the end and means of development by this approach, development ceases to be what the government and international development agencies do for the ordinary people, but what the ordinary people do for themselves. It becomes their possession, their hired experience, not a received experience. In so far as they possess development and become its end, the content of development can be show immense potential, their progressive empowerment and self-realization.”

It is this people - centric approach that can bring about sustainable socio-economic development. This will encourage local commitment and acknowledged benefit to pay the price of continuation of project activities” (Olawoye, 2008). Donor - driven projects can suffer neglect once funds from donors dry up. “Thus, there is the need to design extension services that can improve the income of local populations to enable themselves, to contribute financially to these projects” (Anazodo et al., 2014).

The anti-corruption agencies such EFCC, ICPC and Code of Conduct Bureau should be alive to their responsibilities by prosecuting corrupt public officials while government should strengthen institutions and, ban such officials from holding public office for life. This could serve as deterrents to others engaging or who may want to indulge in corrupt practices.

8. Conclusion

The discussion commenced by first having a look at the meaning of local government, corruption, development in general, and rural development in particular, relying on the views of various authors. The authors relied on various definitions, including some of their criticisms of the definitions because, the summarized views that, were taken together, isolated two aspects of development that is, societal and individual. At the societal level, the indices of development includes; provision of welfare facilities such as pipe born water, good roads, schools, health care centres and facilities, markets, electricity, industries, sanitary facilities and so on. At the individual level, the indices include; level of education, standard of living, poverty, death rate, birth rate, amidst others.

The definition of rural development based on the views of various scholars enabled us to access local government performance with regards development in rural areas of Nigeria. What constitutes rural development which the literature review examined was also relevant because our study involved rural areas. A brighter picture of the development in this area which is the concern of the paper was presented through the use of theory and critical analysis and observations. Issues bordering on some of the achievements of the local governments, such as roads construction, provision of health facilities, and pipe borne water were also examined. The paper established that local governments in Nigeria have only made marginal impact in the rural areas.

From the discussion, it is obvious that corruption has dealt a big blow to rural development in Nigeria. Local councils in the country have not justified the essence of their creation which is the need to bring government closer to the people and, facilitate development at the grassroots. Corruption is a monster that stymies rural development in the country. The prevalence of poverty and under -development in the rural areas is not unconnected with the high level of corruption and, the absence of a democratic ethos at the local government system. Local council officials see their position as an avenue to have their own share of the so -called “national cake”, thereby depriving the rural inhabitants, the necessary infrastructure. For rural areas to experience meaningful development, corruption must be nipped in the bud.

It is essential that African governments’ in general address the issues captured in this paper. That, these governments must pursue an agenda of promoting the general welfare of rural communities, fortify rural development initiatives, deal decisively with corruption and, promote the public good of all citizens, in order to feed into the so – called narrative of ‘Africa Rising’. Failure to action rural development initiatives, Africa, will not be in a position to take its rightful place among the nations of the world.

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EXPLORING THE PROSPECT FOR INCREASED PROFITABILITY THROUGH OVERSEAS EXPANSION: A CASE STUDY OF THE MAURITIUS CHEMICAL AND FERTILIZER INDUSTRY LTD

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ABSTRACT

The Mauritius Chemical and Fertilizer Industry Limited (MCFI) have been striving to sustain its profitability in Mauritius, by being a long-term strategic partner to the agricultural community, large sugar estates, and small planters. However, as a result of decreasing agricultural activities in Mauritius, particularly the sugar industry, the fertilizer market in Mauritius is decreasing year on year.

The study focused on how MCFI can engage in overseas expansion in order to achieve the desired growth and sustain levels of profitability that appeal to shareholders. One main objective of this research was to identify the possible challenges and costs associated with overseas expansion, with a focus on Africa and Madagascar as the targeted destinations. The study was based on a qualitative approach whereby, semi-structured interviews were conducted, in order, to collect relevant data from the participants. The method of thematic analysis was then utilised along with Nvivo software to analyze and interpret and analyze the gathered information.

The results revealed that indeed numerous challenges and costs are associated with overseas expansion including and, related mainly to politics, its environment of engagement, including economics, compliance, culture and logistics.

It was concluded that challenges and costs are crucial elements that need careful consideration when undertaking overseas expansion. A Proper market and business environmental scouting, validation of modelling assumptions, a well-defined business plan with forecast of financials alongside, a full risk analysis which covers business, operational and financial aspects are needed to ensure correct implementation and the necessary modalities for the or any expansion project.

Keywords: Overseas expansion, Africa, Madagascar, Fertilizer business, Challenges, Costs, Profitability.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Mauritius Chemical and Fertilizer Industry Limited (MCFI), operate a fertilizer manufacturing plant in Mauritius where it sells a major quantity of its products. It is listed on The Stock Exchange of Mauritius and, many of its shareholders rely on its constant dividends paid out yearly. However, statistical analyses have shown that, the total area of land under sugarcane cultivation in Mauritius is declining (Ministry of Agriculture, 2005:1). Mauritius is itself shifting away from primary agricultural activities to engaging more in service sectors, such as finance and business process outsourcing. Decreasing local sugar plantation implies dwindling demand for fertilizers. Given that this situation is irreversible, MCFI's performance is likely to be adversely impacted upon, in the near future. A situation of no growth and reducing profits and dividends may eventually occur, which will have an adverse impact on the company value, let alone sustainability.

As such, it is proposed that MCFI explores opportunities for increased engagement and profitability outside of Mauritius, especially, in a country where the fertilizer market is expanding rapidly. This will potentially be an African country such as Madagascar. This study analyses the challenges and costs involved in expanding the business overseas and into a foreign destination.

This study is important for all stakeholders of MCFI, including the shareholders, and the Mauritian economy itself. The study provides crucial information of how MCFI's profitability can be maintained by cautiously seeking growth outside of Mauritius. It equips MCFI management with significant substance to evaluate an overseas investment proposal. Shareholders will benefit from this study, in terms of necessary and important data and, information being generated, as they become cognisant of the potential challenges they may face by following an overseas expansion entry and avenue, in order to sustain company value and, for purposes of creating desired wealth. Other players in the Mauritian economy may benefit by getting access to a reservoir of analytical data and, on recommendations of how to face similar challenges and mitigate costs when attempting to set up business abroad, in particular, in an African country. This study is also of academic importance, on the basis of the possible contribution it makes, or could make, in order to enhance the understanding of the risks and costs of investing in an African country.

This study serves to fill the gaps that exist in the evaluation of an overseas expansion proposal, especially into an African country. There is limited literature that provides a detailed analysis of the risks, challenges and costs associated in entering an African country for pursuing business imperatives. This research attempts to gather as much information from individuals and organisations which have vast on-the-ground experience and knowledge in this field of overseas expansion into Africa, and which have undertaken such ventures.

The problem that this research tries to solve is related to the fact that MCFI is finding itself in a decreasing market for the supply of its manufactured fertilizers. Subsequently, sales turnover and profit have reached a peak and no growth is foreseeable. The company can envisage different growth strategies: one such growth strategy which is presents itself is overseas expansion.

This research will specifically identify the possible challenges and costs associated with such an overseas expansion entry and the processes involved in undertaking such an important venture; the context being the present situation of MCFI and its possibility to venture into an African country such as Madagascar to set up fertilizer operations.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

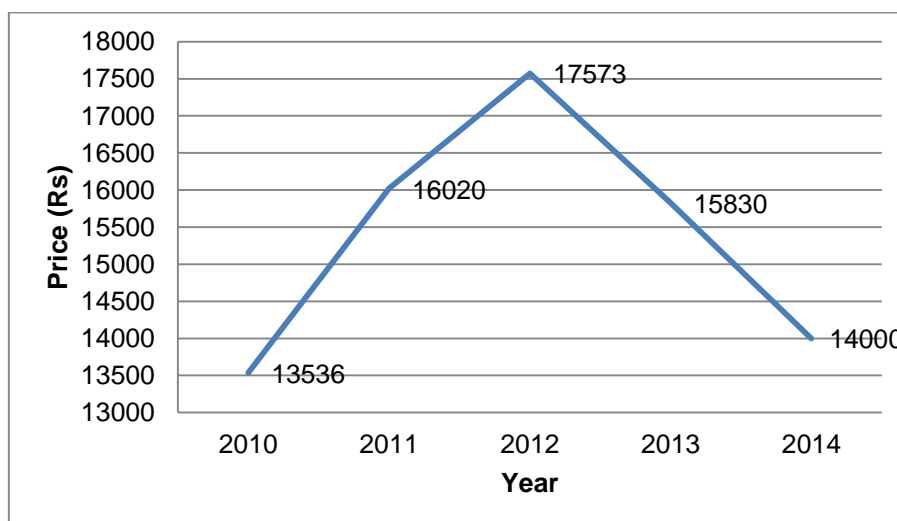
2.1 AGRICULTURE IN MAURITIUS

Sugar cane, tea and tobacco are the main industrial crops cultivated in Mauritius (Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, 2014:26). Recent years have seen the agricultural sector in Mauritius being in decline and, this trend will continue unabated and, therefore urgent intervention is required to reverse this emerging and grave scenario. Indeed, the share of agriculture to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 3.3% in 2013 compared to a value of 3.5% the previous year. The main reason put forth to explain this fall was the significant contraction of 1.9% in sugar cane cultivation and harvest (Ministry of Finance And Economic Development, 2014:20).

Understandably, the sugar sector has been facing several difficulties which have been the repercussions of two main factors: firstly, a dramatic reduction in the price of sugar and, secondly confirmed policy and news of the abolition of sugar quotas within the European Union in 2017 (Africa Money, 2015a:1).

Indeed, as the world's sugar production exceeds consumption, prices continue to fall and the future of the Mauritian sugar sector seems uncertain. As seen in Figure 2-1, the price of sugar per ton has dropped from Rs 17, 573 (Rupees) in 2012 to Rs 14,000 in 2014.

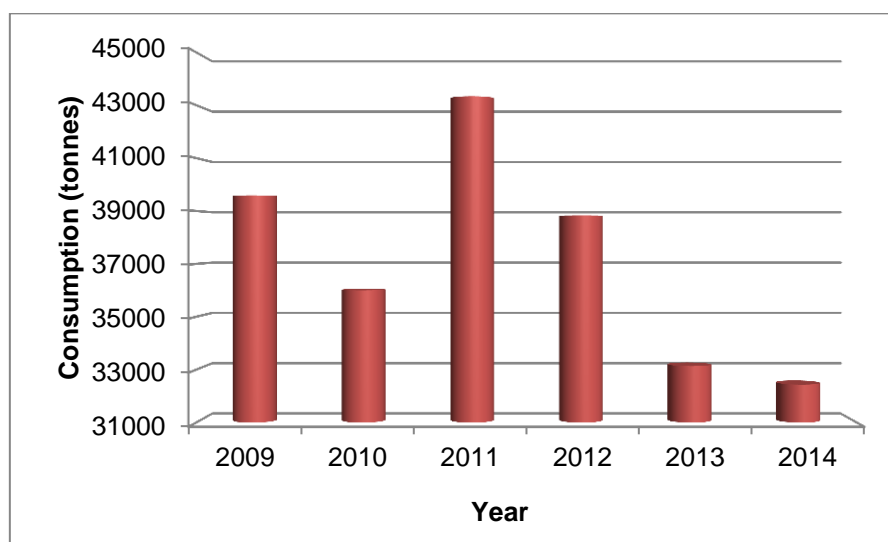
Figure: Price of sugar per ton in Mauritius



Source: Africa Money (2015b:1)

The immediate effect of the above has been the decline in the usage of fertilizers. Figure 2-2 depicts the steep decrease in consumption of fertilizers in Mauritius.

Figure: Consumption of fertilizers in Mauritius



Source: Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (2014:148)

2.2 OVERSEAS EXPANSION

Twarowska and Kakol (2013:1007) explain that overseas expansion involves firms going global in the pursuit of growth via new market development. It has also been highlighted that larger markets represent a potential for greater profit, for new business opportunities, provide possibilities to expand the firm's current portfolio of goods and services. Various factors including motive, location, benefits, risks, and costs, and funding have to be considered when planning for overseas expansion.

Czinkota, Ronkainen and Ortiz-Buonafina (2004:86) also add that "a saturated and shrinking local market can indeed compel a firm to enter foreign markets to ensure survival and continuity of operations." This is the emerging reality that the Mauritian fertilizer industry is confronted with and, which can have a real negative impact on the Indian Ocean Island's economy.

2.2.1 CHALLENGES OF OVERSEAS EXPANSION

Overseas expansion is certainly an opportunity for better organisational performance but it is not without challenges. Prior to expanding internationally, an organisation needs to carry out

a feasibility study in order to assess the different challenges involved. In particular, Friedlein and Murtagh (2012:3) discuss that the following can prove to be tough challenges during overseas expansion:

1. Competitor's information

Other players may be present in the target market selling similar goods and as such, detailed data on their strengths, weaknesses and market position needs to be researched thoroughly. Often times this necessary data for purposes of analysis and risk factors, may not be readily available. This scenario can compromise entry for purposes of expansion into other markets.

2. Market trends

Comprehensive information on the habits of consumers in the market needs to be collected and analyzed to establish market trends. Such information is crucial as they are used to forecast demand. The overt and real challenge is that, collection of such data may take a very long time and, will utilize costly resources.

3. Logistics

The logistics scenario may indeed be very different in the market where a firm wishes to expand. Limited marine transportation, inadequate roadways and railways may all cause significant increases in lead time, seriously affecting the supply chain. High freight costs, expensive fuel prices as well as cross border tariffs may ultimately dwarf the advantages provided by the market. Therefore, logistical challenges have to be minimized, in order to undertake or receive the necessary go ahead for purposes of overseas expansion.

4. Trade agreements

Trade agreements such as free trade agreements signed between the target country and other countries have to be thoroughly read and understood, as they might have unforeseen clauses such as tariffs or duties on particular raw materials or finished goods. Such limitations may have a significant impact on the expanding firm, in respect of the processes involved. If these fundamental aspects are not factored into the equation of expansion and entry, it could prove to be a very costly exercise. This could compromise a firm that proposes expansion and entry into a foreign market. In reality all variables must be analyzed and

computed thoroughly before, expansion is considered. The type of market must also be thoroughly examined before any decision is taken to expand into such markets.

5. Legal system

An unfavourable legal system may prevail in the target country whereby incorporation may take several days, licenses may take months and profits are required to stay in the country for a minimum duration before repatriation. These nuances have to be thoroughly researched and negotiated with the host country and, reduced to paper as finite agreements and protocols, in order to avoid any confusion, which can compromise profits and sustained entry into a foreign market.

6. Political risk

Political risks encompass corruption, fraud during election as well as illogical changes in monetary policy. If such risks exist in the target country, then entry is likely to be harmful for the firm desirous of expanding into such countries and markets. This could have devastating effects on the firm, if not dealt with decisively and would compromise the mandates of the shareholders.

7. Culture and Customs

Adaptation to the local culture and customs is a major challenge when entering a foreign market and is a critical success factor. The necessary attention must be given to this crucial factor. If not taken into consideration adequately, it could harm the firm making such an entry, for purposes of expansion.

8. Currency Fluctuation

Since profits have to be repatriated, fluctuations in the local currency value render profits highly volatile. The major challenge is to develop proper hedging strategies to limit the firm's exposure.

9. Reporting Requirements

Financial statements have to be submitted and in most countries, the use of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) is common. However, some countries may require statements to be submitted as per their standards and, as such accountants with local experience may be required. Otherwise, erroneous forms may be submitted which may lead to high penalties and possible license suspension.

2.2.2 COSTS OF OVERSEAS EXPANSION

According to Spulber (2012:3), there are four main types of costs to be considered:

1. Transactions costs involve the costs of adapting to a new market and to new business practices. For instance, cultural barriers such as language and etiquette differences require additional effort in stakeholder relationship management. Since the overseas market behaviour would initially be unfamiliar, marketing strategies would have to be reviewed. Moreover, the dissimilar government and legal framework would have an impact on how contracts are negotiated and, would therefore, require additional adjustments.

2. Tariff and non-tariff costs involve the costs related to barriers to trade that are introduced as a result of groups of countries belonging to diverse trade blocs. Strict regulations on imports might hinder the processes through which the goods and materials may be brought into the country.

3. Transportation costs involve the cost of maintaining, operating and sustaining the whole supply and distribution chain across countries. When these chains span across different geographies, access to the proper infrastructure and logistics, in order to ensure a timely service for long distances and multiple transits contributes to expenses. Even if online businesses might not require physical logistics, they still need to invest in 'virtual transportation' costs by running servers in different locations as well as ensuring that they are accessible with reliable networks. Furthermore, with global expansion, regular international visits to different office locations would become inevitable and would definitely increase costs.

4. Time costs involve the delays that are created in the progress of the business due to the geographical distance as well as the time zones that separate each international office. Hence, the time required to learn new government formalities, develop new relationships and, deal with the foreigners contribute, to additional costs and, must be factored into the equation, before entry modalities are to be pursued.

2.3 ENTERING AN AFRICAN COUNTRY

Presently, various multinational companies consider the African market as being their next frontier for growth. Indeed, development in Africa is being catalyzed by several factors and these include firstly that Africa is a growing market with increasing purchasing power (Accenture, 2009:3). In addition, not only has Africa's annual per capita income grown significantly in the last decade and over several years but, various African countries have also made significant and outstanding efforts in setting up proper trading platforms through signing multiple trade agreements with various global players and countries.

Six major challenges that firms must identify prior to entering Africa have however been recognised. These are:

1. Understanding local consumers, their needs and patterns of purchases;
2. Finding the proper talent as most African labour is unskilled or lack experience;
3. Identifying the appropriate physical resources such as office space, warehouses, as well as making provision for regular supply of utilities;
4. Resolving logistics issues as fast as possible since, it is known that customs clearing and import processes are very inefficient throughout Africa;
5. Alignment with local product requirements in terms of quality, content, warranty and even packaging; and
6. Access to local funding which foreign firms may find difficult to obtain (Accenture, 2009:3).

2.3.1 MADAGASCAR

Madagascar is the largest island in the Indian Ocean located east of the coast of the African continent. With a population of 23 million people, it has a GDP of about USD 22 billion and a GDP real growth rate of 2.6% (Central Intelligence Agency, 2014:1). Almost 30% of the economy relies on agriculture (Central Intelligence Agency, 2014:1). The Ministry of Economy and Planning of Madagascar (2014:1) "provides five major reasons to invest in Madagascar which include abundant natural resources, low labour cost, strategic location, and member of various regional economic and attractive business environments."

However, caution is required as it is stated that the corruption level is very high in Madagascar with the country being ranked 127th out of 177 countries surveyed by Transparency International (US Department of State, 2014:8). It is expected that this problem may be alleviated by the recent governmental change but an across-the-board change in administration is necessary and not just governmental (US Department of State, 2014:8).

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN AND POPULATION

The nature of the research enquiry was exploratory and the most suited research strategy was expert interviews. A qualitative research approach was utilized in this study. The population was the staff and management of MCFI who have and have had enough experience and expertise in the field of fertilizer business, overseas expansion and doing and undertaking business in Africa. The size of this population amounted to forty two. The methodology also encompassed a critical analysis by the authors in keeping with the limited literature review and in keeping with the objectives of the study, together with the limitations of the research in terms of generalizations being made, not only for the agricultural sector of Mauritius but business in general.

3.2 SAMPLING

A non-probability sampling method was required to make up the sample. One such method is judgmental sampling, a form of purposive sampling, which was used to select members in a non-random manner using the criteria of experience and, expertise in the afore-mentioned fields. A sample size of fifteen participants was used for data collection in this study.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

Interviews were used as the primary and most suited method of data collection, as an instrument, since this enabled the study to gain useful answers. The interviews were semi-structured in which questions were asked that related to MCFI, its overseas expansion and Madagascar as a destination for investment.

3.4 PILOT STUDY

A pilot study was carried out with a sample of two interviewees before the final questions were assembled and subsequently used for data collection, in order to identify any difficulties that may have been encountered at the time of actual interviews.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Information collected via the interviews was analyzed using thematic analysis to generate valuable data. The corpus of data collected was first read through elaborately. Initial ideas of codes were thought of and eventually confirmed. Codes that appeared to fit in a single topic were grouped together to form themes. Sub-themes also emerged as interviewees discussed some questions in further detail.

Nvivo 10 software from QSR International Pty (Ltd) was utilised for the coding and theme development exercise in this study. The software also permitted analyses of the different word structures and frequencies in the data corpus.

3.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness for this research was achieved via ensuring credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

This study utilised the members checking method to ensure credibility. This was done by sharing the collected set of written notes with the respective interviewee for confirmation and comments, if any.

Transferability was ensured by describing in full detail the research background, context and assumptions of the research and, if any researcher wished to transfer the results to other contexts, for purposes of referring to these assumptions.

To achieve dependability, all the methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation have been described fully so that other researchers can conduct further studies by collecting data in similar conditions and circumstances.

Confirmability was accomplished through ensuring that the findings were purely the reflections of the opinions of the participants in the study.

3.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Limitations of this study included the following:

- The research analyzed the response of interviewees with more focus on Madagascar as an investment destination;
- The sample included only senior management and staff from MCFI;
- Results from the study can be generalised to other contexts only if the assumptions are similar. For instance, this may only apply for manufacturing businesses or those involved in the agricultural sector; and
- Results can only be replicated if the macro-economic conditions are similar. The study is thus limited in term of repeatability because of the dynamic nature of business environments.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Because of the direct nature of the research objectives and of the interview schedule, it was able to identify straightforward themes and sub-themes during the coding exercise.

Table 4: Core and sub-themes identified from interview data

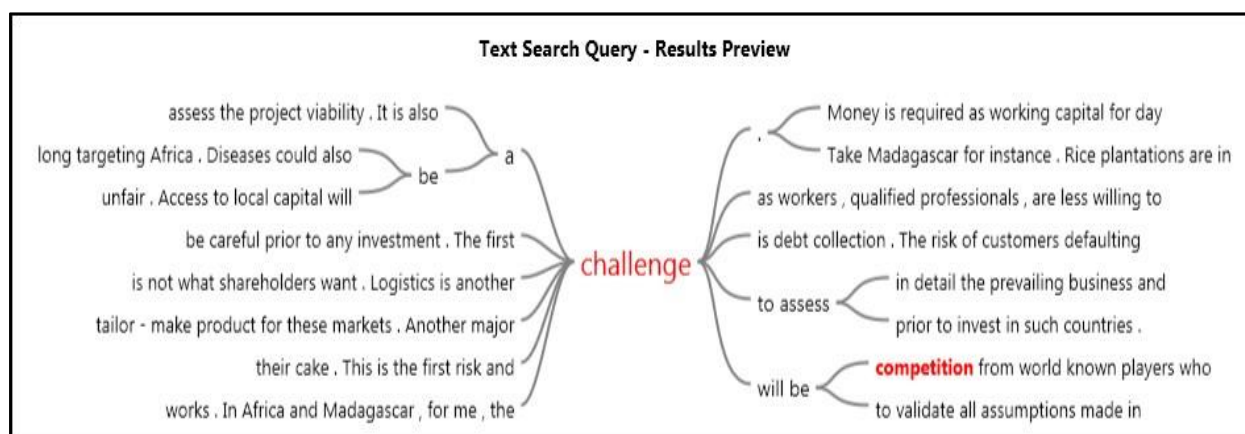
| Number | Core theme | Sub-theme |
|--------|----------------------------------|------------|
| 1 | Challenges of overseas expansion | Madagascar |
| 2 | Costs of overseas expansion | - |

Theme one discusses the various challenges that MCFI may face when indulging in overseas expansion and the sub-theme focusing on Madagascar. Theme two is related to the different costs that overseas expansion may entail.

4.1 THEME: CHALLENGES OF OVERSEAS EXPANSION

This theme identified was related to the challenges of overseas expansion. Figure 4-1 demonstrates that the challenges of overseas expansion were numerous, while Figures 4-2 and 4-3 showed that the challenges discussed were associated to the country, company, market as well as government of the target country.

Figure 4-1: Word tree for theme "Challenges of overseas expansion"



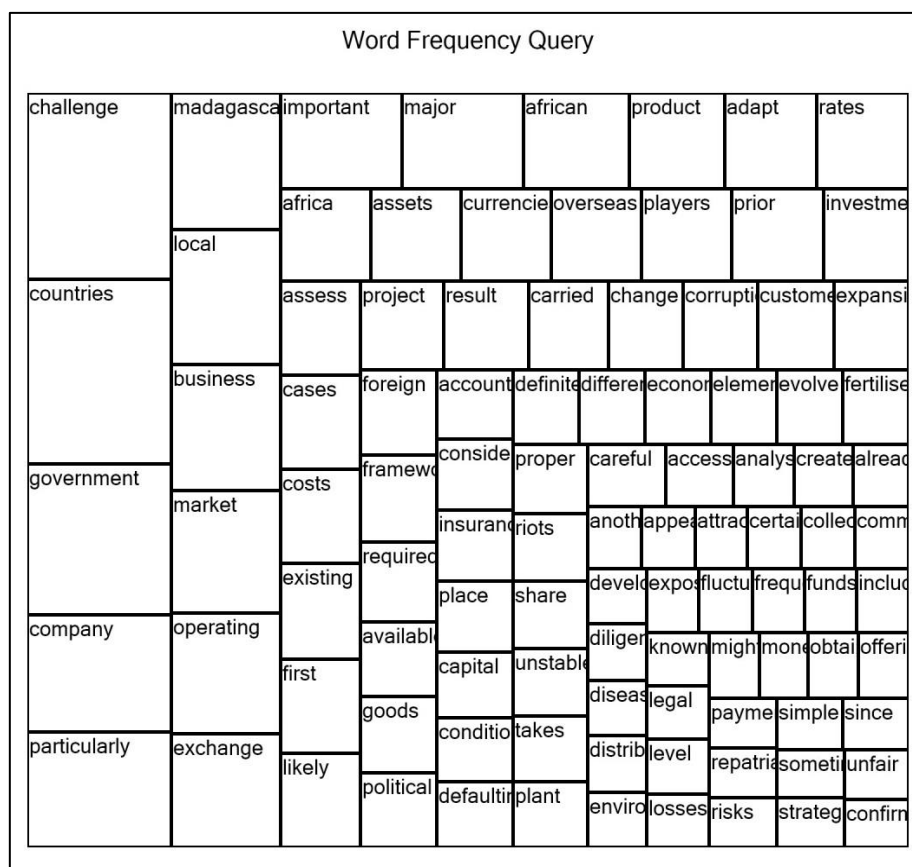
Source: Nvivo 10

Figure 4-2: Word cloud for theme "Challenges of overseas expansion"



Source: Nvivo 10

Figure 4-3: Word tree map for theme "Challenges of overseas expansion"



Source: Nvivo 10

Friedlein and Murtagh (2012:3) discuss that obtaining information particularly on competitors as well as on market trends can prove to be challenging. Schoen (2009:7) states that “there are both internal and external barriers arising when a firm engages in overseas expansion.” Schoen also (2009:7) “describes internal barriers as those being linked to the firm’s resources and abilities and these include functional barriers such as manpower and capital, informational barriers such as data on markets and, partners and marketing barriers which relate to product, price, logistics and advertising.” All of these are indeed challenges that a firm must solve and consider prior to entering a foreign country. As explained by Schoen (2009:7), “external barriers are procedural, which includes processes and transactions that must be accomplished to set up business in foreign countries and, there are also host country barriers which are related to the economy of the target country, including currency policies, political stability, protocols, tariffs, culture and ethics. Indeed, a lot of challenges have been identified by the various respondents.

Respondent one describes:

“A Major challenge will be competition from world known players who are since long targeting Africa. Diseases could also be a challenge as workers, qualified professionals, are less willing to go work there. Incentives will be an additional cost. In some African counties, the environment is sometimes harsh with no internet; no running water or supermarkets are located at great distances.”

Respondent two also points out:

“Those losses in exchange may result particularly from those weaker African currencies. Default from payment is also definitely a reality. Fraud, diseases, riots are major risks that need to be considered before even stepping foot into Africa.”

Availability of information is also discussed by Respondent four who claims:

“The challenge will be to validate all assumptions made in prefeasibility studies regarding the market size, the way it will evolve and costs involved. Be it the whole of Africa or even Madagascar, these are quite difficult to obtain. Authorities could even store erroneous values to attract investors. It is very crucial that the correct figures are used to model the business to assess the project viability”

Respondent Seven speaks of cut-throat competition with existing players and states as follows:

“It will be competing against already existing players. It is important to note that in some African countries, big businesses are controlled by mafia types of organisations. The arrival of a new player will definitely cause a reaction from these organisations. MCFI will be ‘eating’ or taking only a part share of the total cake.”

Uncertainties, tough debt collection, limited access to local capital because of low liquidity in African countries, double digit loan interest rates, time-consuming bureaucratic tasks and, the lack of the availability of skilled labour are some of the major challenges mentioned by respondents eight, eleven, thirteen and fourteen.

4.2 SUB-THEME: MADAGASCAR

Five major reasons to invest in Madagascar that are put forth include its abundant natural resources, low labour cost, strategic location, enhanced regional integration and, an attractive business environment (Ministry of Economy and Planning of Madagascar, 2014:1). Madagascar is described to have proper infrastructure, no capital flow limitations, as well as sound laws and intellectual and property protection rights (Ministry of Economy and Planning of Madagascar, 2014:1). Razafison (2012:1) also points out that “the recently elected Malagasy government has allocated a significantly higher budget to development of its agriculture which will have positive effects on the fertilizer market.” However, the major challenge in Madagascar is corruption which tends to cover all of the above mentioned attractiveness as a destination for investment. Madagascar is said to have corruption indexes, in almost all sectors including tax, customs, land, trade, mining, industry, environment as well as the health sector (US Department of State, 2014:8).

Respondents also gave their views on this topic of challenges that hinder investment in Madagascar. Respondent three explains that:

“Madagascar appears to be an unstable market. Limited concrete data is available on the fertiliser market. The ariary is also a weak currency and infrastructure is underdeveloped. However, since there is no local production facility at this moment, it also appears to be a promising country for this project. But first, the local problems there will have to be resolved and dealt with decisively before any expansion and entry considerations are given. Government and local authorities will have to create the proper framework for business engagement on a sustained manner by foreign

entrants. They could potentially be partners in this project. Madagascar is a country with unclear laws, particularly in terms of foreign companies owing assets within its economy. One will have to be careful prior to any investment.”

Respondent six also confirms the following challenges:

“In Madagascar, there has been a history of political instability. Who knows what again can happen in these countries? High level of corruption prevents ethical businesses from establishing themselves.”

Respondent nine explains how political change could bring about disastrous effects to an organisation as she describes hereunder, as follows:

“Very recently, in Madagascar, a major mining company, made a USD 2.5 billion investment, and had serious issues with the government. Within a day, a law concerning emissions was changed and the company became non-compliant. As you see, it is important that a full due-diligence is carried out prior to investment.”

Respondent fifteen agrees with logistics challenges and explains as follows:

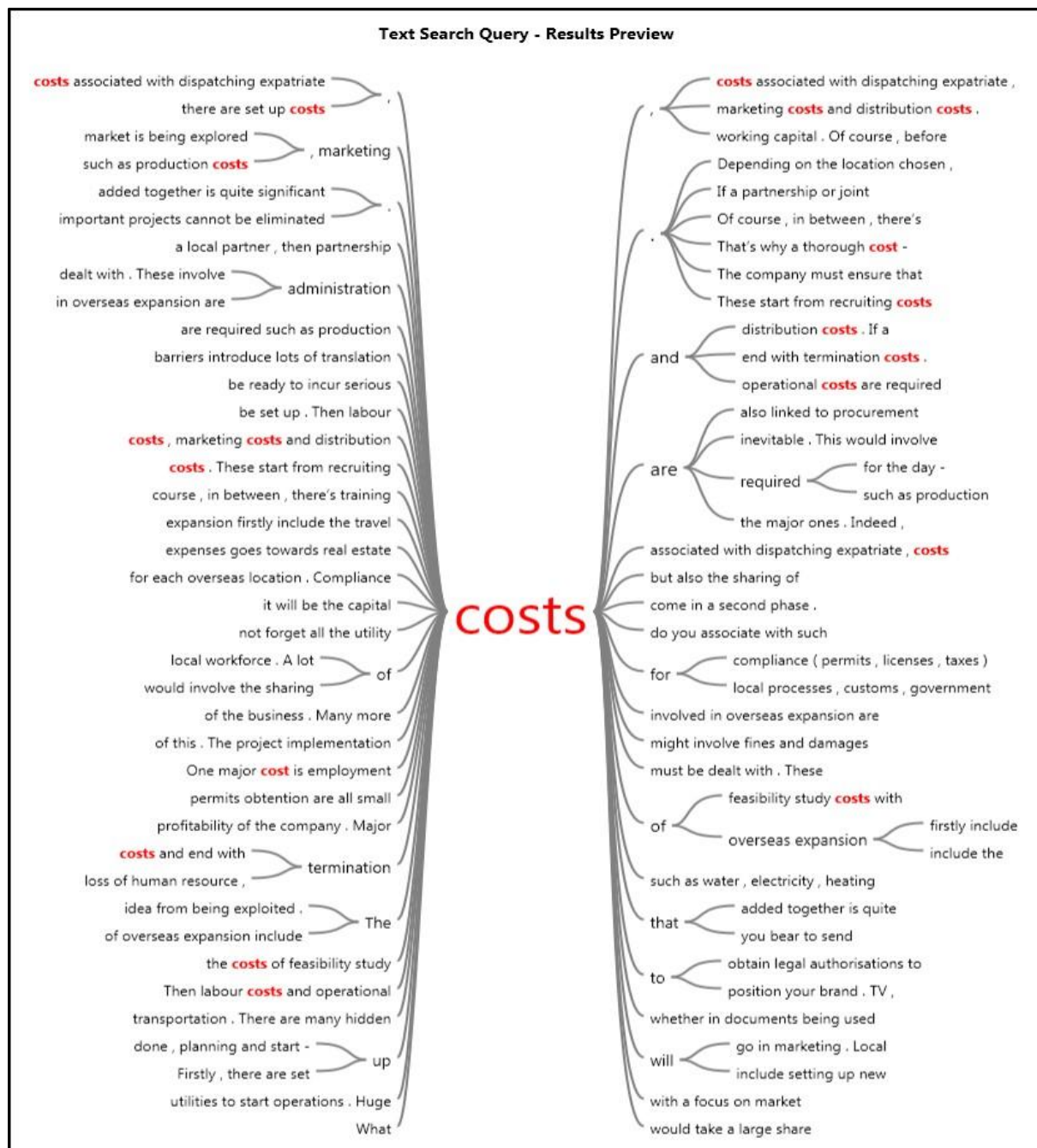
“Rice plantations are in the north and South, while the main port is on the eastern region. If you put or construct a plant, it will have to be near the port to minimize handling costs of raw materials. From there, the distribution of fertiliser is one major issue. Road networks are not good. Small barges will have to transfer the goods from the main port to mini ports round the island. A detailed analysis of such a distribution strategy will have to be conducted.”

Expanding overseas is not an easy task, challenges are numerous. Indeed, a firm has to be very watchful prior to entering a foreign country.

4.3 THEME: COSTS OF OVERSEAS EXPANSION

The second theme analyzed in this study was regarding the costs associated with overseas expansion. Nvivo 10 produced the following figures from the interview data gathered.

Figure 4-4: Word tree for theme "Costs of overseas expansion"



Source: Nvivo 10

Figure 4-4 depicts that respondents identified quite a significant number of costs associated with overseas expansion. Figures 4-5 and 4-6 confirmed that the respondents were indeed strongly relevant in their discussion.

Spulber (2012:3) classified costs of expanding overseas in four broad “T” categories and these are transaction, tariff and non-tariff, transportation and time costs. While transaction costs involve the costs of acclimatizing to a new market and new business practices, tariff and non-tariff costs involve the costs related to barriers to trade that are introduced as a result of groups of countries belonging to diverse trade blocs.” Spulber (2012:3) further explains that “transportation costs involve the cost of maintaining, operating and sustaining the whole supply and distribution chain across countries and time costs involve the delays that are created in the progress of the business due to the geographical distance as well as the time zones that separate each international office.” Nelson (2007:1) also adds that “social costs which include offshore subcontracting, labour exploitation, and ecological degradation must be seriously considered.

Respondent one supports the above and details and states as follows:

“Firstly, there are set up costs, costs associated with dispatching expatriate staff, costs for compliance (permits, licenses, and taxes), recruiting and training of the local workforce. A lot of costs are also linked to procurement and transportation.”

Respondent three focuses on employee related costs as follows:

“These start from recruiting costs and end with termination costs. Of course, in between, there are training costs. The company must ensure that it is hiring the best employees that would suit the job requirements and, the company culture. For this, rigorous recruitment processes must be set up involving, the advertisement of vacancies, processing of applications, aptitude tests, interviews and assessment centres.”

Respondent four identifies land costs and in this regard states as follows:

“There’s a high cost of buying land to set up factories or plants or rental of premises and floor space to set up offices.”

Respondent five discusses language costs and states:

“Language barriers introduce lots of translation costs whether in documents being used or verbal communication with residents and customers. Some expatriates must learn the language before moving abroad and, this cost must be borne by the company.”

Respondent six explains administrative costs as follows:

“Costs for local processes, customs, government bureaucracies, import of materials and export of final products. Secondly, there’s the cost of travelling to and from work within the foreign country and between overseas offices.”

Feedback from Respondent seven to fifteen compute to a list of costs which include expenses related to feasibility studies, cost-benefit analysis, equipment, commissioning, working capital, partnership agreements, marketing, legal, operational and, environmental compliance as well as travel.

Respondent fifteen emphasises that:

“Huge costs will be marketing local customers are unaware of your brand and product. You will have to be ready to incur serious costs to position your brand.”

A firm must definitely ensure that enough capital is provisioned for, to cover the numerous costs prior to expanding and entering into a foreign country.

5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study highlighted what factors MCFI must carefully study when attempting to achieve increased profitability via overseas expansion, with focus on challenges and costs. Such challenges and costs must be worked out well in advance and, prior to implementation of the project.

5.1 FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE

According to Friedlein and Murtagh (2012:3), “overseas expansion is not without challenges. Data on the market and on competitors is very difficult to obtain.” Logistics should also be carefully looked at, particularly when the infrastructure in the country is limited. There could also be constraints on trade via unfavourable trade agreements. The legal system will also

be a challenge in foreign country with regards, incorporation, permits, and agreements could be very time consuming processes. Friedlein and Murtagh (2012:3) also add that “changing political regimes result in constantly changing business environments. Adaptation to culture and customs, currency fluctuation as well as unfamiliar accounting standards in the host country is further challenges to overseas expansion.”

This study also discussed the costs involved in overseas expansion. Spulber (2012:3) identified four types of costs: “transaction costs which including expenses related to adoption to the new markets such as, overcoming cultural barriers and becoming familiar to the legal framework.” Tariff and non-tariff costs are described to be costs related to regulations on imports of goods and materials into the country. Transportation costs encompass costs of sustaining the supply chain from receipt of raw materials to delivering the product to the customer. Lastly, time costs include the delays that arise as a result of geographic position of different stakeholders. Complicated bureaucratic processes are also time consuming. Nelson (2007:1) “also explains on social costs which arise when there is non-compliance to local regulations and mostly includes costs related to labour exploitation and ecological degradation.”

5.2 FINDINGS FROM THE PRIMARY STUDY

Various risks and challenges of overseas expansion, particularly in the African region, were identified in the primary study. Adaptation, time consuming processes, cut—throat competition with existing players, riots, diseases, uncertain market trends are some of the major issues. Indeed, all of these make it difficult to validate assumptions in prefeasibility studies. Weak currencies of the African countries also present a major challenge. Moreover, risk of customer default is high and thus debt collection is a tough task. Added to this, access to local capital will be limited with the existing low liquidities. High level of corruption and unstable government are very frequently heard of in the African region. Unfamiliar legal structures and different communication languages, add to the list of challenges. In Madagascar, absence of concrete data on the fertilizer market, weak local currency, underdeveloped infrastructure as well as a history of political instability, theft, riots and vandalism discourages investors to take the plunge and exploit the difficult possibilities that Madagascar presents as an investor destination. Logistics as well as compliance to frequently changing local authorities are also challenges in Madagascar.

Costs of overseas expansion were also explored in the primary study. These were identified to mainly comprise of consultant fees, feasibility studies costs, travel, transportation, expatriate costs, insurance, employment costs, compliance as well as real estate. Translation costs also contributed significantly when engaging in overseas expansion. Administrative costs for local processes, customs, bureaucracies, and partnership costs were also inevitable. Marketing costs were also considered to be a large share of the budget given that, the firm and brand is still unknown in foreign territory. Project implementation costs which include expenses related to equipment purchase, commissioning, training and working capital were also identified.

Numerous challenges were identified particularly if investment were to be made in Africa and Madagascar. Success relies in overcoming these challenges through evaluating each of them and proposing key mitigating measures to protect MCFI's interest in this process. Keeping well informed of the market, competitors, laws and regulations, financial and bureaucratic procedures are essential. Some challenges, however, are not in control of the investor, but evolve in parallel to the prevailing macroeconomic conditions. Stakeholders, in this case, involve state and parastatal bodies.

Important costs were also documented and the conclusion that can be drawn is that there are both direct and hidden costs. MCFI will have to be cognisant of each of these costs in order to avoid any surprises or liabilities when carrying out overseas expansion. Identifying and controlling these costs are paramount to achieving a successful international expansion.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the aforementioned conclusions, several recommendations are proposed in order to ensure that the process of overseas expansion can be carried out with success. These are as follows:

- First and foremost, a country analysis needs to be carried out to select and confirm the target country. As such it is recommended that a proper political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal (PESTEL) analysis is conducted.
- As far as challenges are concerned, it is recommended that personnel from MCFI be sent to the target country to understand the major obstacles the overall business environment and the local legal framework. They can then propose a plan alongside mitigating measures to avoid mistakes during implementation of the project. A full risk analysis which covers business, operational and financial aspects is also needed. It

is advised that proper legal counsel is obtained to strongly draft agreements between the parties involved.

- Regarding the costs of overseas expansion, validation of assumptions will be required. It is highly recommended that a proper planning and budgeting exercise is carried out whereby, a series of scenarios are considered. Simulated balance sheets, cash flow statements and income statements must be generated and evaluated. It is recommended that cost controlling mechanisms are put in place whilst also putting forth tenders for each cost-incurring task. This will allow making accurate costing and preventing unforeseen cash losses.

6. CONCLUSION

Further research will be required to assess the attractiveness of other potential African countries where agriculture is expected to grow significantly. In addition, the proper financing mechanism to be used to fund overseas expansion may also be investigated to complement this study. Finally, a comprehensive model that details a step by step procedure to be followed by MCFI to take the project from drawing board level, to operational phases could and must be developed before any expansion or entry is considered into Madagascar by the fertilizer industry of Mauritius or, for that matter into any destination within Africa, as a whole.

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INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTS OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ON PERFORMANCE: A CASE OF THE MPUMALANGA ECONOMIC GROWTH AGENCY

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ABSTRACT

Corporate governance plays an important role in the management of public institutions. A continuous failure of MEGA reverie of secondary data sources indicates that there is a positive relationship between corporate governance practices and performance of an organisation. Performance was assessed by investigating the knowledge of respondents on the mission and goals, hierarchical structure, involvement of all stakeholders in decision making, whether respondents can identify jobs that can match their style of work, whether respondents can apply their working style to their current positions, relationships of respondents with their bosses, as well as the reward policy of the Agency. However, performance problems were identified in the implementation of its reward system and, inclusion of subordinates in the corporate level decision making process.

Key Words: Investigating, Effects, Corporate Governance, Performance, Economic Growth Agency, Management, Stakeholders, Decision Making, Reward System, Subordinates

Introduction

The issue of corporate governance has been an important part in global business practices. Good governance, specifically, has become a necessary prerequisite for organisations to effectively manage in the 21st century globalised market. The term 'corporate governance' is in fact a new phenomenon in the present day business environment, although its origins can be traced back to the 1930s. However, during the past three decades to present day, corporate governance became a focal point in the management of businesses, as both the private and public sectors 'are changing towards corporate governance mechanisms' (Borlea & Achim, 2013: 117).

Narrowly defined corporate governance concerns the relationships between corporate managers, the board of directors and shareholders. In addition, corporate governance might as well encompass the relationship of the corporation to stakeholders and society (Shleifer & Vishny, 2009). Broadly defined, corporate governance can encompass the combination of laws, regulations, listing rules and voluntary private sector practices that, enable the corporation to attract capital, perform efficiently, generate profit, and meet the direct demands of both legal obligations and general societal expectations (Mueller, 2009). In a recent study, Cosma (2012) defines corporate governance as "the branch of economics that studies how businesses can become more efficient by using institutional structures such as the constituted act, organisational chart, and legal framework (s).

This study analyses the impact of corporate governance on the performance of the Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency (MEGA). MEGA is one of the Provincial Business Enterprises of the Mpumalanga Provincial Government. The Agency was established in 2010, in terms of section 2 of Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency Act no 2 of 2010. Its establishment came as a result of the merger of three erstwhile institutions or agencies, namely, the Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency of 2005 which, was established in terms of the MEGA Act of 2005, the Mpumalanga Agricultural Development Corporation and the, Mpumalanga Housing Finance Corporation (Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism, 2014).

Objectives of the Study

This research was conducted to fulfill the following objectives;

- To determine the corporate governance practices at the Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency.
- To identify the role played by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism in the corporate governance practices of the Agency.
- To identify the effects of corporate governance and their impact on performance within the Agency.
- To recommend measures that can improve corporate governance at the Agency and eliminate any bad effects or improve performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The study conceptualises literature on corporate governance, performance of an entity and the Mpumalanga Province as well as the Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency.

Corporate Governance

Corporate governance is one of the vital issues to be considered in the 21st century business environment. To date, corporate governance is one of the important moves to ensure that, the organisation is strategically organised and positioned, in order, for its short-, medium and long-term goals to be fulfilled (Borlea and Achim, 2013).

Corporate Governance Defined

Many definitions of corporate governance are identified from earlier research to recent studies. What these definitions have in common is the context in which they are applicable to the organisations concerned. In a narrow sense, Shleifer and Vishny's (2009) study asserts that "corporate governance refers to the ways used by financial corporations to get returns on their investments." In the same vein, another earlier study by Caramanolis-Cotelli (1995) as cited in Shleifer and Vishny's (2009) propounds that "corporate governance deals with equity allocation among investors in a company." These definitions are however narrow as they emphasise governance based on return on investments.

In 2003, the OECD revised this definition and proposed that, corporate governance is a system that consists of formal and informal private and public organisations that, collectively

govern the relationship between the managers of the organisations (also called the corporate insiders) and all their stakeholders. This definition shows a significant difference from the previous one, in that it includes the roles of stakeholders in the governance of an entity.

Two categories of evaluation are identified in literature. These are process or formative evaluations and outcomes, impact or summative evaluation. In general, process evaluation is concerned with how a program is delivered whilst impact evaluation relates to the programs results. In more narrow terms, a response to a question asked of a recipient of a state or local economic development program concerning the number of jobs saved or created by government assistance constitutes "proof" that the program is worthwhile. For the evaluator, however, such responses may be suspect (Brown & Caylor, 2009).

Target Population

Population of the study refers to the total number of units that have the researcher's desired characteristics (Neil, 2007). In this study, population referred to all the employees within MEGA. These employees totalled or summed up to 188. This population was chosen because the researcher needed to enquire into their corporate governance practices so as to answer the outlined hypothesis.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited only to Mpumalanga Economic Development Agency. This may fail to represent the factual scenario of the relationship between measured variables. The results may not be generalised to all the State Development Agencies. It may also be possible that by the end of the research, some other information was not determinable due to the choice of methods used, which did not go into in-depth interviews. Consequently, further studies may need to be conducted making use of a larger sample. Time was also limited in relationship of conducting and completing the research.

STATEMENT OF RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

NOTE: Findings are discussed in detail in order not to dilute the essence of the study, in terms of the results, discussion and interpretation of the findings.

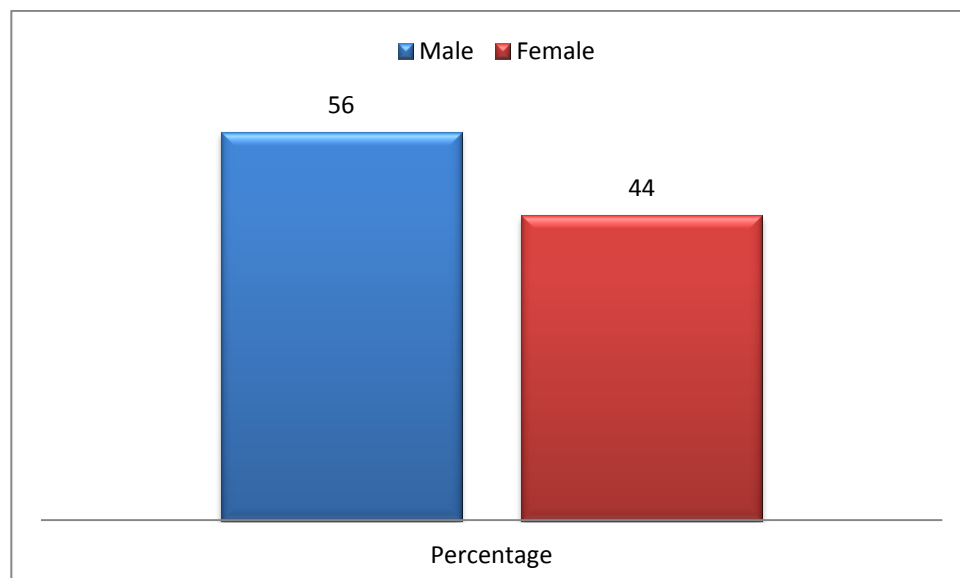
Demographics of Respondents

This section discusses demographics of respondents in the form of gender, age, ethnicity, highest academic qualification, their position at MEGA as well as number of years they worked at MEGA.

Gender of Respondents

Out of 50 respondents, 28 were male and the remaining 22 were female. The results, as shown in Figure 4.1 shows that males accounted for 56% of the respondents whilst 44% were females implying that there were more male respondents than females.

Figure 4.1: Gender of Respondents



Age of Respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate their age. The results are shown in Figure 4.2 that follows.

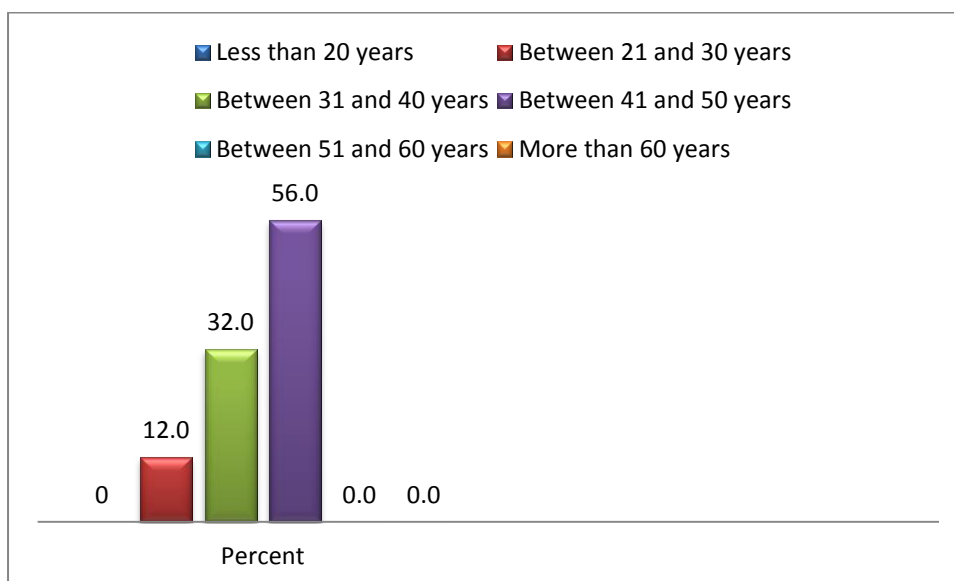
Figure 4.2: Age of Respondents

Figure 4.2 shows the age distribution of employees in percentage. The majority of respondents were aged between 41 and 50 years. This age group had 28 respondents which was equivalent to 56% of the respondents. This age group was followed by people between 31 and 40 years who were 32% of the respondents. Only 6 (12%) of the respondents were aged between 21 and 30 years. There were no respondents under the age of 20 years and more than 50 years.

Ethnicity of Respondents

In addition to age, the respondents were also asked to indicate the best ethnic group that best represented them. There were given options to choose from, which included black, white, coloured, Indian and other category. All the respondents for this study fell under the black population group, hence; 100% of respondents were blacks.

Highest Academic Qualification of Respondents

In order to find out the academic qualifications of employees at MEGA, the respondents were asked to indicate their highest academic qualifications from the five categories namely; below matric, matric, (means matriculation certificate after 12 years of schooling), diploma, degree and / or post graduate degree. The results are represented in Figure 4.3.

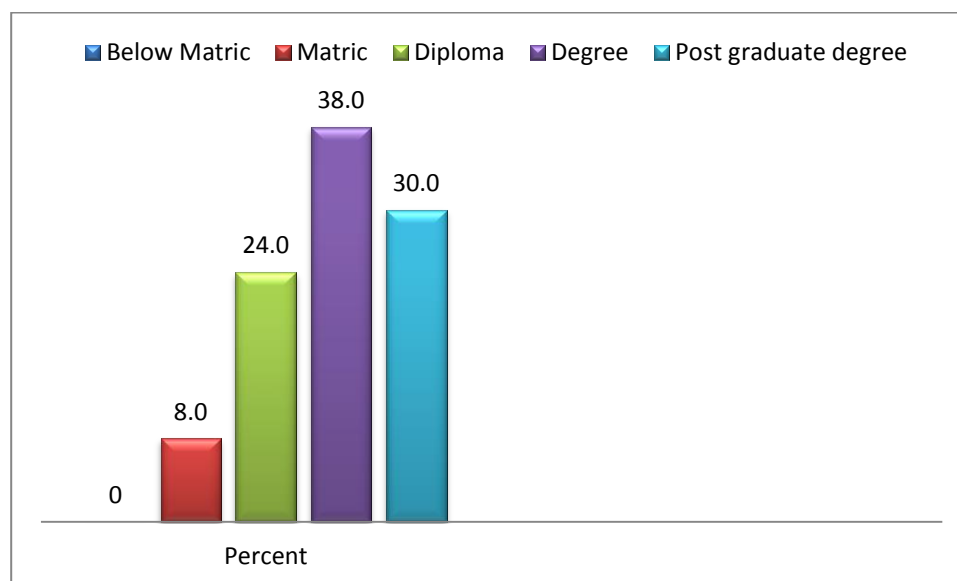
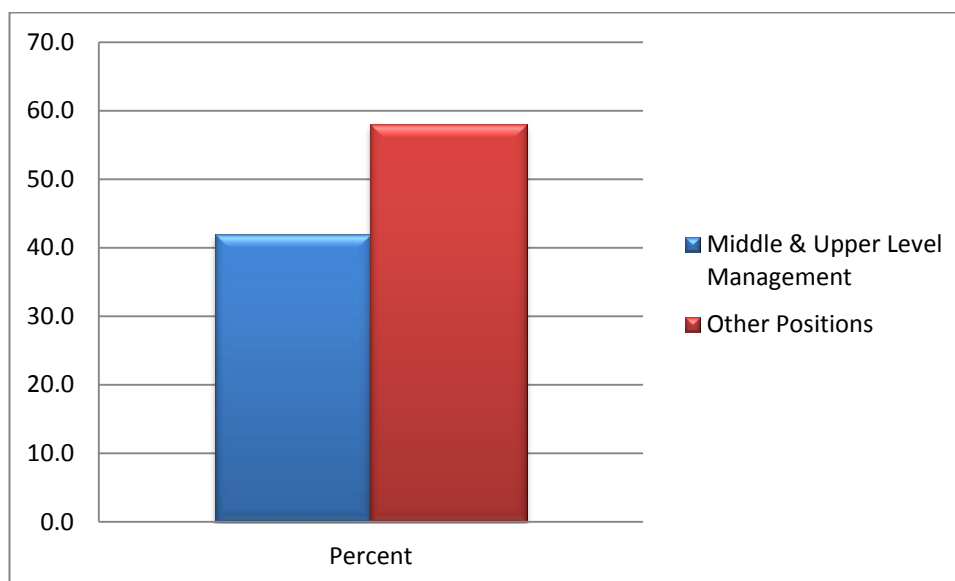
Figure 4.3: Highest Academic Qualification of Respondents

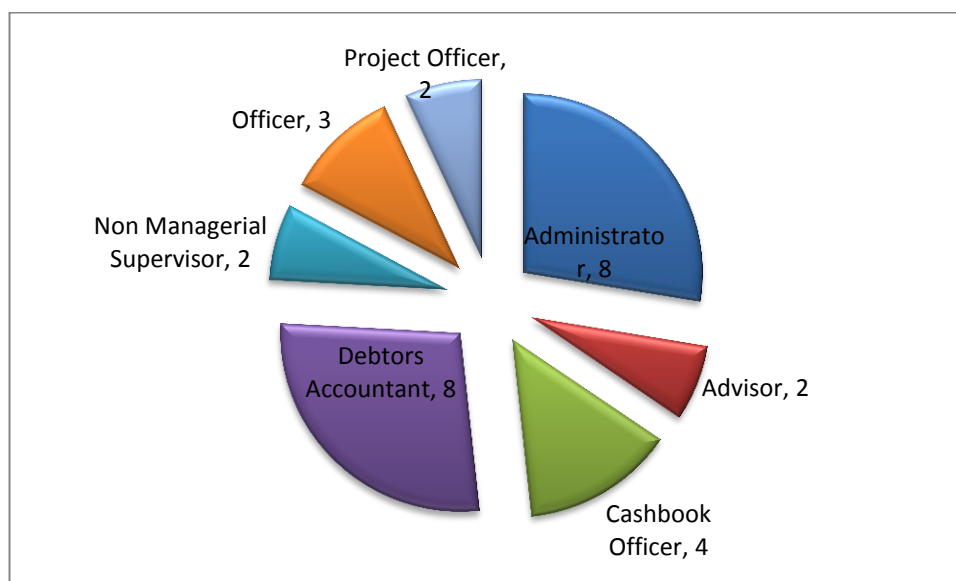
Figure 4.3 shows the highest academic qualification of respondents in percentage. Out of 50 respondents, 19 (38%) of the respondents had degrees. To add on to that, 15 (30%) had post graduate degrees, 12 (24%) had diplomas whilst only 4 (8%) respondents had Matric only. These results represent a high literacy level of the respondents in general and, employees at MEGA in particular implying that the employees are expected to have a better understanding of corporate governance due to their literacy levels.

Profession of Respondents

In addition to the highest educational qualification, the respondents were asked to indicate their positions in the Agency. The results are illustrated in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4: Profession of Respondents

As shown in Figure 4.4, out of the five options given namely; CEO, Upper Level Management, Middle Level Management, Lower Level Management and Other. Out of all these, 42% had their professions between Middle and Upper Level Management. There were no CEOs or Lower Level Managers amongst the respondents. Other respondents (58%) had other positions which are shown in Figure 4.5. These findings were important to this research, as they enabled the study, to identify whether or not, all employees out of the bracket of middle and upper level management were well informed about corporate governance practices.

Figure 4.5: Other Positions of Respondents

As illustrated in the Figure 4.5, 16% of the other respondents outside the middle to top level management were administrators. The debt accountants also represented the same percentage as administrators. The project officers, advisors and non - managerial supervisors represented 12% of the respondents that is, 4% each. There were 6% officers and 8% cashbook officers in this category.

Years of Service at MEGA

In addition to the variables discussed above, the respondents were asked to indicate how long they had worked within the Agency by choosing any one category out of the five given. The results are indicated in Figure 4.6.

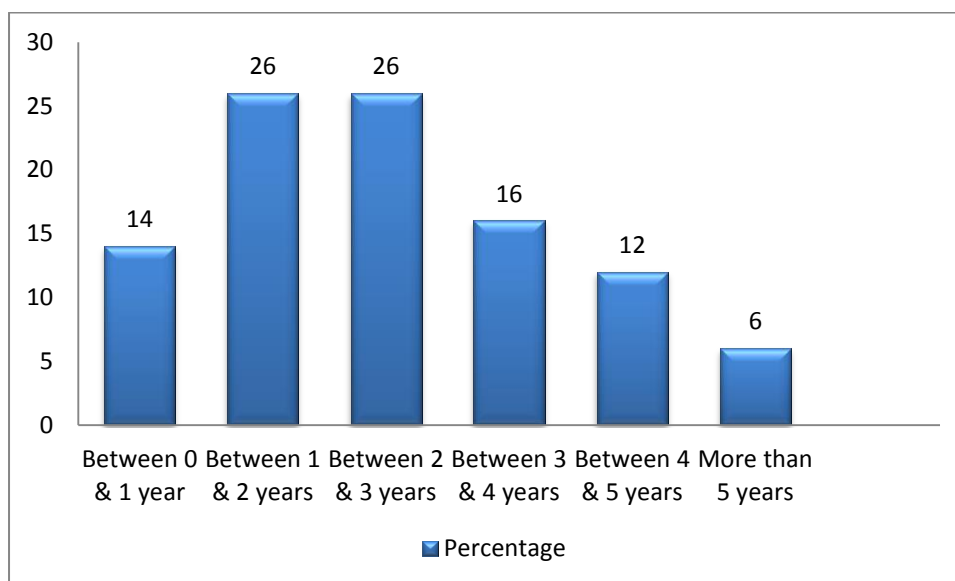
Figure 4.6: Respondents' period of Service at MEGA

Figure 4.6 illustrates that out of 50 respondents; about 52% have worked within the Agency for a period of 1 to 3 years. To add on to this, 16% respondents worked at MEGA for 3 to 4 years, 12% serviced the Agency for a period between 4 to 5 years and lastly, 6% worked within the Agency for more than 5 years. This gives an 86% cumulative percentage of respondents who had worked at MEGA for a period between 1 and more than 5 years. Only 14% respondents worked within the Agency for a period between 0 to 1 year. It is important to note that 6% of the respondents worked at MEGA since the day it was first opened, implying that they had all the necessary information about corporate governance (at this agency) that, might have been required by the researcher.

Corporate Governance Practices at MEGA

One of the objectives of this study was to investigate corporate governance practices practiced at MEGA. The researcher designed the measuring instrument based on a combination of King (II) and King (III) Reports, on Corporate Governance which has seven practices that constitute good corporate governance. These are discipline, transparency, independency, accountability, responsibility, fairness and, the practice of social awareness. Different variables to measure these constructs were compiled and the respondents were asked to indicate their choice in good faith, on a five point Likert scale that ranged from strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree. The results for the practice of corporate governance within the Agency are indicated in the sections that follow.

Discipline

As part of the objectives of the research on the practice of corporate governance at MEGA, the respondents were asked to answer some questions pertaining to discipline of and at MEGA. The choices of respondents are indicated in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Discipline at MEGA

| Measures of Discipline | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| Availability of a mission statement | 15% | 15% | 20% | 42% | 8% |
| Sticking to clearly defined core business | 14% | 30% | 28% | 20% | 8% |
| Declaration of warrants against trespassers | 0% | 28% | 50% | 8% | 14% |
| The availability of disciplinary committee at MEGA | 24% | 26% | 28% | 0% | 22% |
| Annual performance reports. | 0% | 20% | 54% | 10% | 16% |

In order to measure discipline at MEGA, five variables were combined from existing literature (Denhardt, 2010). Firstly, they were asked to indicate how much they were aware of the mission statement of MEGA. Out of 50 respondents, only 42% agreed whilst 8% strongly agreed that, they were aware of the mission statement of the Agency. To add to this, 10 (20%) were neutral about their knowledge of the mission statement whilst, 15% disagreed and the remaining 15% strongly disagreed.

The respondents were also asked to indicate whether at MEGA there is a practice of sticking to clearly defined core business. The results indicated that 14% strongly disagreed, 30% disagreed whilst 28% were neutral about this statement. Only 20% agreed whilst, the remaining 8% strongly agreed. To add on to this, in order to measure whether there was discipline at MEGA, in terms of declaration of warrants against trespassers, none of them strongly disagreed, 28% disagreed, 50% were neutral whilst, 8% agreed and, the remaining 14% strongly agreed.

Moreover, the respondents were asked whether there was / were disciplinary committee (s) at MEGA. The results showed that 24% strongly disagreed whilst 26% disagreed. To add to this, 28% chose to be neutral, exemplified by not agreeing and that, the remaining 22% strongly agreed. One of the discipline (nary) measures used was whether MEGA provides annual performance reports of which neither of the respondents disagreed whilst, 20% strongly disagreed, and 54% were neutral, 10% agreed and the remaining 16% strongly agreed. When the discipline variables are combined for analysis, their findings indicate that there are discipline (nary) issues that need to be taken into account at MEGA. Although some of the variables have statistics that are more than average, they are not significant enough to conclude that, there is discipline at MEGA as supported by (Denhardt, 2010) who is of the view that “there should be fulfilling of all the discipline variables to consider an entity as disciplined.”

Transparency

Transparency is also one of the major issues contained in the King (II) and King (III) reports of Corporate Governance. As a result, the researcher gathered data on the transparency of MEGA based on seven variables. The results are illustrated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Transparency of MEGA

| Measures of Transparency | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Disclosure of performance report. | 14% | 12% | 24% | 18% | 32% |
| Announcement of results in time to the public. | 32% | 28% | 24% | 0% | 16% |
| The provision of clear and informative reports. | 4% | 30% | 22% | 28% | 16% |
| The disclosure of major and sensitive information punctually. | 28% | 40% | 24% | 0% | 8% |
| Easy accessibility to senior management by analysts | 16% | 24% | 28% | 24% | 8% |
| The availability of an English administered website | 50% | 22% | 4% | 16% | 8% |

Table 4.2 shows responses of respondents on issues of transparency of the Agency. When they were asked about their opinion on the issuing of performance reports by MEGA, 18% agreed whilst 32% strongly agreed that, the performance report is disclosed. Based on these performance results, 32% strongly disagreed that they are issued in and, on time, 28% disagreed, and 24% were neutral about this statement. The remaining 16% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the Agency announces their performance results to the public on time. To add on to this, 44% of the respondents agreed that the agency provides a clear and informative report; only 8% agreed or strongly agreed that sensitive information is disclosed punctually. Moreover, the majority of the respondents did not agree with the fact that there is easy accessibility to senior management by analysts, with only 24% agreeing to this and 8% strongly agreed to this. Some of the research findings were that 28% of the respondents agreed and 16% strongly agreed that Mega provides a clear and informative report.

The implication based on these results is that, there are transparency issues within the Agency. Although 50% of the respondents agreed that performance report is issued, the majority disagreed that the results are issued to the public on time. In addition, the majority also disagreed with the fact that sensitive information is disclosed punctually. Lastly, only 16% agreed and 8% of the total of 50 respondents agreed that, there is a website administered in English where information is disseminated. These results are contrary to the requirements of King (II) and King (III) Reports on Corporate Governance.

Independence

Musasike (2005) emphasises the need for independence as a practice of corporate governance within an organisation. As a result, the researcher designed variables to assess the independency of MEGA. The results obtained upon data collection are recorded in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Independence of MEGA

| Measures of Independence | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| The chairman of MEGA is an independent, non-executive director. | 8% | 0% | 18% | 22% | 48% |
| MEGA has an executive or management committee which is substantially different from members of the board and not believed to be dominated by referrals. | 0% | 10% | 8% | 52% | 30% |
| MEGA has an audit committee which is chaired by a perceived genuine independent director. | 0% | 12% | 20% | 22% | 46% |
| MEGA has a remuneration committee which is chaired by a perceived genuine independent director. | 12% | 0% | 28% | 34% | 26% |
| External auditors of MEGA are in other respects seen to be completely unrelated to the Agency. | 0% | 0% | 16% | 32% | 52% |
| The board of MEGA includes no direct representatives of banks and other large creditors of the | 8% | 6% | 42% | 36% | 8% |

As illustrated in Table 4.3, the respondents were firstly asked to indicate if the chairman of MEGA was an independent official, and is an independent, non-executive director. The results showed that 22% agreed whilst 48% strongly agreed. However, 18% were neutral whilst 18% strongly disagreed. To add on to this finding, 52% and 30% agreed and, strongly agreed respectively that, at MEGA there is the existence of an executive committee which is different from members of the board which is not dominated by referrals. More importantly, 32% agreed and 52% strongly agreed that external auditors of MEGA are, in other respects seen to be completely unrelated to the Agency. Neither of the respondents disagreed nor strongly disagreed with this statement but, 16% chose to be neutral. To add on to this, 34% agreed and 26% strongly agreed that, at MEGA the remuneration committee has an independent director as the chairman. In the same vein, 28% were neutral whilst 12%

strongly disagreed. The implication of these findings is that to a greater extent, MEGA is independent in its governance. These findings are in line with the research by Musasike (2005) that an organisation should show its independence, as one of the requirements for corporate governance.

Accountability

Accountability, among other constructs, is one of the dimensions that were used to assess the implementation of corporate governance within and by MEGA. The respondents were also asked to indicate how they best felt about accountability of the Agency. The responses of the respondents are illustrated in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Accountability of MEGA

| Measures of Accountability | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| The board members and members of the executive/management committee of MEGA are substantially different. | 8% | 8% | 20% | 30% | 34% |
| There are foreign nationals on the board of MEGA. | 62% | 26% | 12% | 0% | 0% |
| Full board meetings at MEGA are done at least once a quarter. | 16% | 0% | 24% | 22% | 38% |
| Audit committee at MEGA nominates and conducts a proper review of the work of external auditors. | 0% | 4% | 24% | 50% | 22% |
| The audit committee at MEGA supervises internal audit and accounting procedures. | 0% | 0% | 12% | 42% | 46% |

As indicated in Table 4.4, the respondents were asked to indicate whether the board members and members of the executive / management committee of MEGA are substantially different. Their responses showed that 30% agreed, 34% strongly agreed whilst, 8% each disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. The remaining 20% were neutral about this issue. The respondents were also asked to indicate whether board meetings were held, at least once a year, and in this regard, 16% strongly disagreed, 24% were neutral, 22% agreed and the remaining 38% strongly agreed. None of the respondents

disagreed with this statement. To add on to this, 22% strongly agreed and 50% agreed that the audit committee at MEGA nominates and conducts a proper review of the work of external auditors. In the same vein, neither of the respondents strongly disagreed with this statement, 4% disagreed whilst the remaining 24% chose to be neutral. Lastly, the participants were asked to indicate whether the audit committee at MEGA supervises, internal audit and accounting procedures. The results showed that 46% strongly agreed to this notion, 42% agreed and the remaining 12% chose to be neutral. To summarise the accountability variables, the results indicated that, more than half were in favour of the dimensions asked, hence; there is accountability within the Agency. These findings are in line with the research conducted by Fundanga (2005) who emphasised, “the need for accountability as one of the corporate governance practices, which is essential within organizations.”

Responsibility

In addition to the dimensions explained earlier, responsibility is one of the contracts that indicate corporate governance at MEGA. Table 4.5 shows responses given by the respondents on the responsibility of the Agency.

Table 4.5: Responsibility of MEGA

| Measures of Responsibility | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Since the formation of MEGA five years ago, there were open business failures or misbehaviour and the responsible persons were appropriately and voluntarily punished. | 16% | 38% | 20% | 18% | 8% |
| There is controversy or questions over whether the board and/or senior management take measures to safeguard the interests of all and not just the dominate employees. | 0% | 38% | 46% | 8% | 8% |
| There are mechanisms to allow punishment of the executive/management committee in the event of mismanagement. | 40% | 0% | 24% | 22% | 14% |
| The board/senior management has made decisions in the recent years to benefit them at the expense of the management. | 20% | 30% | 16% | 4% | 30% |

Table 4.5 indicates research findings relating to the responsibility of management of and at, MEGA. Firstly, the respondents were asked to indicate whether there were business failures of misbehaviour within the Agency and, if there was as such, they were asked whether disciplinary action was taken. Out of 50 responses, 16% strongly disagreed whilst 38% disagreed. On this note, 20% were neutral whilst 18% and, 8% agreed and strongly agreed respectively. In addition to this, when the respondents were asked to indicate whether there was controversy or questions over whether the board and / or senior management implement measures to safeguard the interests of all and, not just the dominant employees, 0% strongly disagreed whilst 38% disagreed and 46% chose to be neutral. However, 8% of the respondents agreed whilst, another 8% strongly agreed. Thirdly, when the participants

were asked whether there was any or a sort of disciplinary action at executive or top management, 40% strongly disagreed, and 24% were neutral; 22% agreed and, 24% strongly agreed. Based on this variable, no respondents were neutral. Lastly, the respondents were asked to indicate their view on whether the senior management have made decisions to their own benefit. Out of 50 respondents, 30% strongly agreed and 4% indicated that they agreed with this statement. In the same vein, 16% were neutral, 30% disagreed and the remaining 20% strongly disagreed.

The implication of these research findings is that, although some respondents chose to be neutral in answering many questions pertaining to responsibility of MEGA, most of them indicated that the management of the Agency was not responsible in terms of the desired expectations of employees. This is contrary to the requirements of the King (III) Report on Corporate governance, which calls for the need of management to show a sense of responsibility.

Fairness

The researcher also tried to assess fairness at MEGA, as one of the corporate governance practices within the organization. The responses are indicated in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Fairness of MEGA

| Measures of Fairness | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| All the employees at MEGA have access to their appraisal record. | 27% | 41% | 24% | 8% | 0% |
| At MEGA, criticism/suggestions mechanisms are easily available. | 56% | 28% | 8% | 0% | 8% |
| At MEGA, all necessary information for appraisal criteria is made available prior to evaluation. | 62% | 30% | 8% | 0% | 0% |
| It is true that there have been no questions or perceived controversy over whether MEGA has issued transparency report or not. | 58% | 34% | 8% | 0% | 0% |
| The head of department reports to either the CEO or the board member concerned on employee's equality. | 28% | 36% | 12% | 10% | 14% |
| Over the past five years, it is true that total director's remuneration has not increased faster than employees. | 36% | 8% | 8% | 32% | 16% |

Table 4.6 shows the research findings relating to fair practices at MEGA. Firstly, the respondents indicated how much they agreed to the fact that all the employees at MEGA had access to their appraisal records. On this note, none of them strongly agreed, 8% agreed, 24% were neutral, whilst 41% and, 27% disagreed and, strongly disagreed respectively. In terms of criticism and contributions in decision making, the majority (56%) of the respondents strongly disagreed with this notion whilst, 28% disagreed. On the same note, 8% were neutral whilst, the remaining 8% strongly disagreed. The respondents were also asked whether all necessary information for appraisal criteria is made available prior to evaluation. The research found out that, 62% strongly disagreed to this whilst, none of them agreed or strongly agreed. Of all the respondents, 8% were neutral whilst 30% disagreed. Further, the respondents were also asked to indicate whether it is true that, there have been no questions or perceived controversy over whether MEGA has issued transparency reports or not. The results indicate that none of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed to this. However, 8% chose to be neutral whilst, 34% disagreed and, the remaining 58% strongly

disagreed with this statement. Further, when they were asked whether the head of the department reports to either the CEO or, a board member, concerned with employee's equality, the results indicate that 10% agreed, 14% strongly agreed whilst 12% were neutral. In the same vein, 28% strongly disagreed and, the remaining 36% disagreed. Lastly, the respondents were asked some sensitive information, on whether the total director's remuneration has not increased faster than employees over the past five years. None of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed to this statement where 8% of respondents chose to be neutral, 32% agreed and, on the other hand 8% disagreed. In the same vein, whilst 36% strongly disagreed with this statement, 16% strongly disagreed with it. The results relating to fairness at mega are mixed. The implication of this mixed bag of results indicates that to a greater extent, there are fairness issues at MEGA, implying that to a lesser extent, based on the criteria of fairness, as a factor of corporate governance, there is no fairness at MEGA.

Social Awareness

Lastly, social awareness is one of the constructs that was used to assess corporate governance practices at MEGA. The respondents were asked to rate their ideas on social awareness and their responses are recorded in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: MEGA Social Awareness

| Measures of Responsibility | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| MEGA has an explicit (clearly worded) public policy statement that emphasises strict ethical behaviour: one that looks at the spirit and not just the letter of the law. | 38% | 26% | 28% | 0% | 8% |
| MEGA has a policy/culture that prohibits the employment of the under-aged. | 44% | 0% | 38% | 0% | 18% |
| MEGA has an explicit equal employment policy. | 18% | 26% | 36% | 12% | 8% |
| MEGA is explicitly environmentally conscious | 22% | 28% | 14% | 28% | 8% |

When the respondents were asked whether MEGA has an explicit (clearly worded) public policy statement that emphasises strict ethical behaviour, only 8% strongly agreed to this and, none agreed whilst, 28% remained neutral, 26% disagreed whilst the remaining 38% strongly disagreed. When the respondents were asked whether MEGA has a policy / culture that prohibit, the employment of the under-aged, only 18% strongly agreed that, there is a policy that prohibits employment of under-aged people, no one agreed to this statement and, 38% were neutral. To add on to this, 44% strongly disagreed and, none of them had a score of agreement. Next, the respondents were asked to give their opinion on the availability of an explicit equal employment policy. Out of the total respondents, 36% were neutral whilst, 18% strongly disagreed and, contrary to that, only 8% strongly agreed. Whilst 26% disagreed that MEGA has a clearly worded public policy statement that emphasizes strict ethical behaviour, 12% agreed with this statement. Finally, when the respondents were asked to indicate whether MEGA is explicitly environmentally conscious, 8% of the respondents strongly agreed, 28% agreed, and 14% chose to be neutral. On the other hand, 22% strongly disagreed and 28% disagreed that MEGA is environmentally conscious. To conclude, these results show that to a lesser extent, there is a degree of social awareness at MEGA but, it needs to be communicated to all members within the Agency.

The role of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism

The respondents were asked to give their overall view on the importance of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism in promoting corporate governance at MEGA. Their responses are shown in Figure 4.7.

Figure 4.7: The Importance of Department of Economic Development and Tourism on Corporate Governance

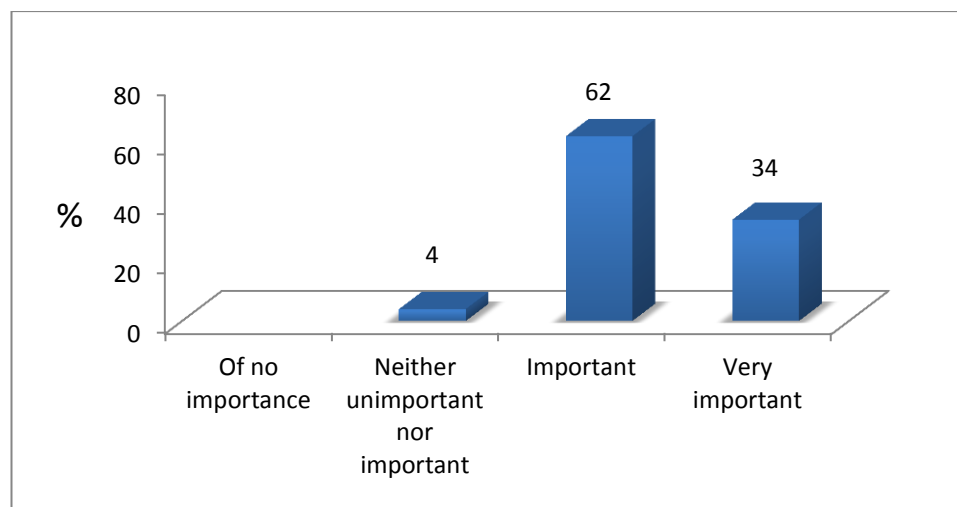


Figure 4.7 show that 62% of the employees consider the Department of Economic Development and Tourism to be important in facilitating the practice of corporate governance within the Agency. Those who considered it to be very important were 34% whilst 4% were neutral. The results are in line with the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (2015) which emphasises that “it assists public institutions in managing their corporate governance strategies and outcomes.”

Performance of MEGA

Another objective of this research was to investigate the performance of MEGA as a result of and in terms of the practice of corporate governance. The questionnaire was designed based on prior studies on corporate governance by Fundaga (2005), Musasike (2005) and Mungule (2005). Performance at MEGA based on corporate governance practices was measured using eleven variables which, range from knowledge of mission and goals of MEGA, chain of command, relationships of senior managers with their subordinates, the reward policy and related systems that are and were implemented. The results are discussed in the sections that follow.

Mission and Goals of MEGA

Knowledge of an entity’s mission and goals is one of the indicators of good performance of management (Fundanga, 2005). In order to assess this dimension at MEGA, the respondents were asked to indicate their knowledge on a Likert scale. Their responses are shown in Figure 4.8.

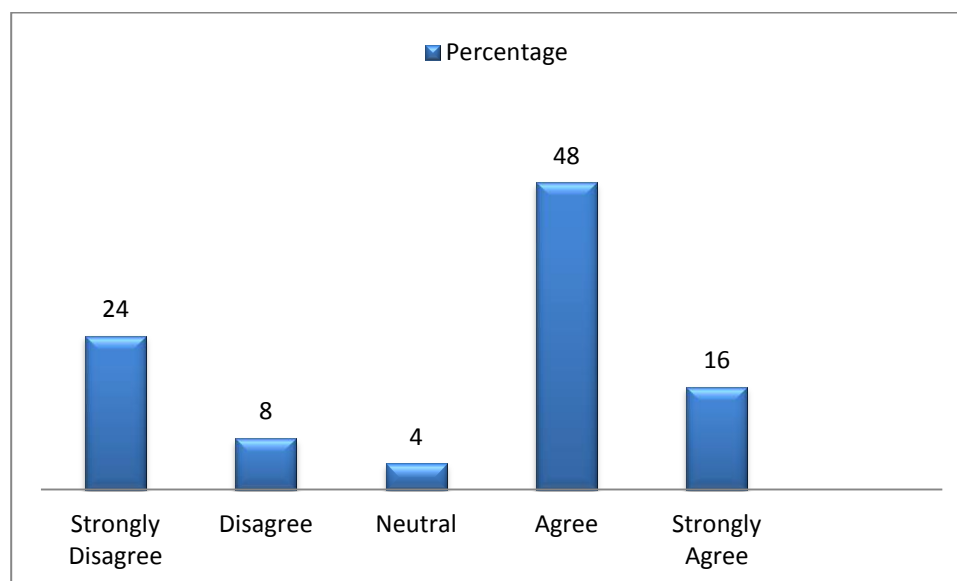
Figure 4.8: Number of Employees who know the Mission and Goals of MEGA

Figure 4.8 shows the percentage of employees who know the mission and goals of MEGA and the associated percentage. The results show that 24% of the respondents strongly disagree that they do not and, did not know the mission and goals of MEGA. To add on to this 8% of the respondents disagreed that they know MEGA's mission and goals whilst, 4% chose to be neutral. Of the total respondents, 48% agreed that they know the mission and goals of MEGA whilst 16% strongly agreed with this statement. Overall, 64% of the respondents scored between, agree to strongly agree that they know and knew the mission and goals of the agency. The implication of these findings is that the employees of MEGA have knowledge of the mission and goals of the agency hence; performance is presumed to be high at this organisation. These findings are supported by Fundanga (2005) that, if more than half of the employees know the mission and goals of an entity, there is likely to be good performance management in the organisation as a whole.

Chain of Command

According to Musasike (2005) performance can also be rated according to how much employees of an entity know and, to whom they report. In this study, the respondents were asked to report whether they know and knew, who they report to in the form of a hierarchical structure. The results are shown in Figure 4.9.

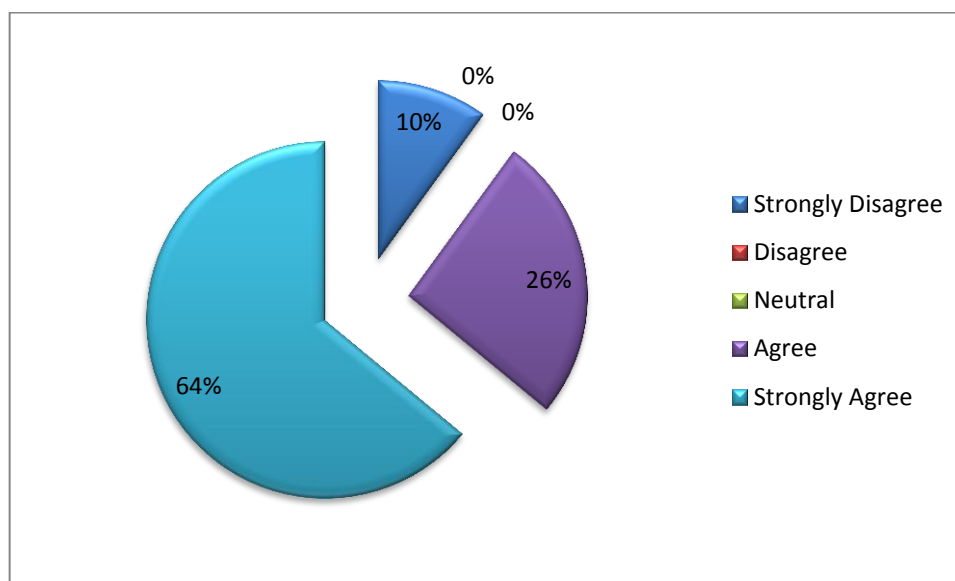
Figure 4.9: Knowledge of Hierarchical Structures at MEGA

Figure 4.9 shows the percentage of employees who were aware of the hierarchical structure or whom they report to at MEGA. The results show that neither of the employees disagreed nor strongly disagreed to this statement. However, 10% of the respondents chose to be neutral, whilst 26% agreed, 64% strongly agreed and, in total 90% of the respondents scored between agree to strongly agree that, they know who they report to. It can therefore be concluded that in terms of the organisational structure, the employees of MEGA know who they should report to and also, the channels of communication of command that is available to them. These results support findings by Musasike (2005) that knowledge and respect of the existing hierarchical structures by management and their subordinates, shows good performance of an entity.

Decision Making Process

King (III) Report on Corporate Governance emphasise that stakeholders should be taken into consideration when making corporate level strategies. Likewise, the researcher tried to find out and determine, if there is this kind of performance at MEGA by asking the respondents to indicate their opinions. Their responses are shown in Figure 4.10.

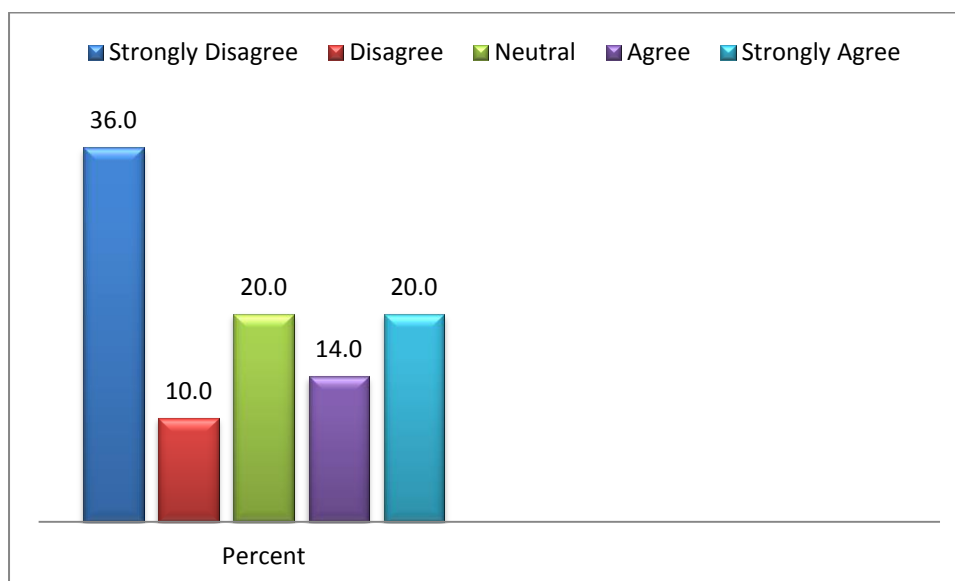
Figure 4.10: Consideration of Stakeholders in Corporate Level Strategies

Figure 4.10 shows the percentage of the extent to which the employees are taken into consideration when making corporate level strategies. The results show that 36% of the employees strongly disagreed, 10% disagreed whilst 20% were neutral. To add to this 14% indicated that they were considered in decision making whilst, 20% strongly agreed with this statement. In general, nearly 50% scored between disagree to strongly disagree in respect to this statement. This is at a tangent with and contrary with the King (III) report on corporate governance and, as a result, in terms of responsibility, it can be concluded that responsibility at MEGA, in terms of corporate governance practices, is poor and, affects its performance.

Identification of Jobs that match a particular Work Style

In addition to the above measures of performance, Neil (2006) indicates that there is a degree of performance, if the employees of an organisation are able to identify jobs that match their work style. As a result, the researcher attempted to obtain answers to this question by asking respondents whether they were able to identify jobs that match their work style. The responses are shown in Figure 4.11.

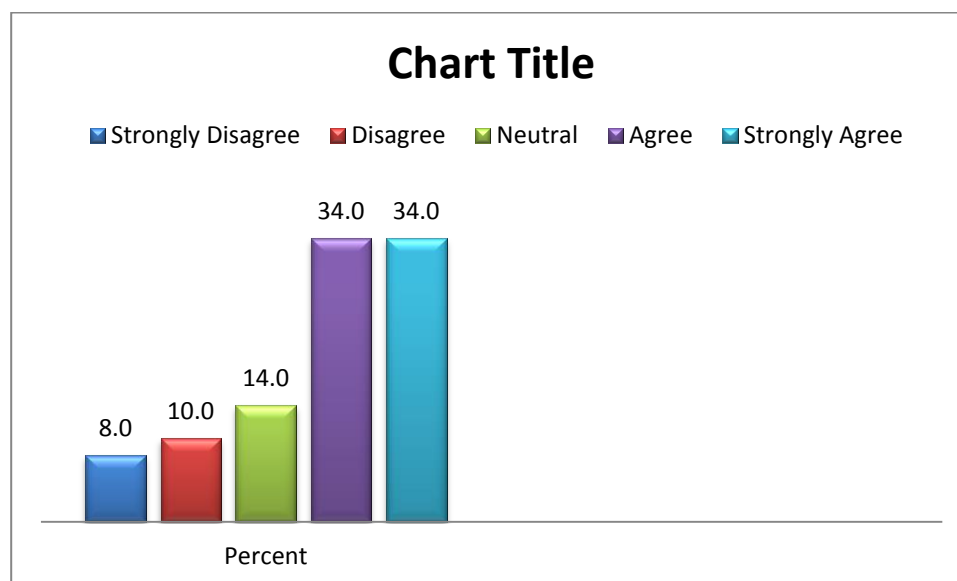
Figure 4.11: Matching of Work Style with Jobs at MEGA

Figure 4.11 shows the frequency and related percentage of employees on whether they are able to identify jobs that match their working styles. The results show that 8% of the respondents strongly disagreed that, they are able to identify jobs that match their work style, 10% disagreed whilst 14% were neutral. Of the total respondents, 34% agreed that they are able to identify jobs that match their work style whilst, another 34% strongly agreed to this statement. Overall, 68% of the respondents scored between agree to strongly agree. In that they can identify jobs that match their work style at MEGA. These results have a positive impact on the performance of MEGA since it shows that the employees are aware of their job requirements. These results support the findings of Neil (2006) that, the existence of many employees who are able to identify jobs that match their work style is a sign of good performance. It can therefore be concluded that, to a greater extent there is good performance at MEGA based on this dimension and variable.

Application of Work Styles to Particular Jobs at MEGA

In addition to the above measures of performance, Neil (2006) also indicates that if the employees of a particular organisation are able to apply their work styles within their current jobs, and that there is performance to a greater extent. As a result, the researcher attempted to get answers to this question by asking respondents whether they were able to apply their work styles to their current jobs. The responses are shown in Figure 4.12.

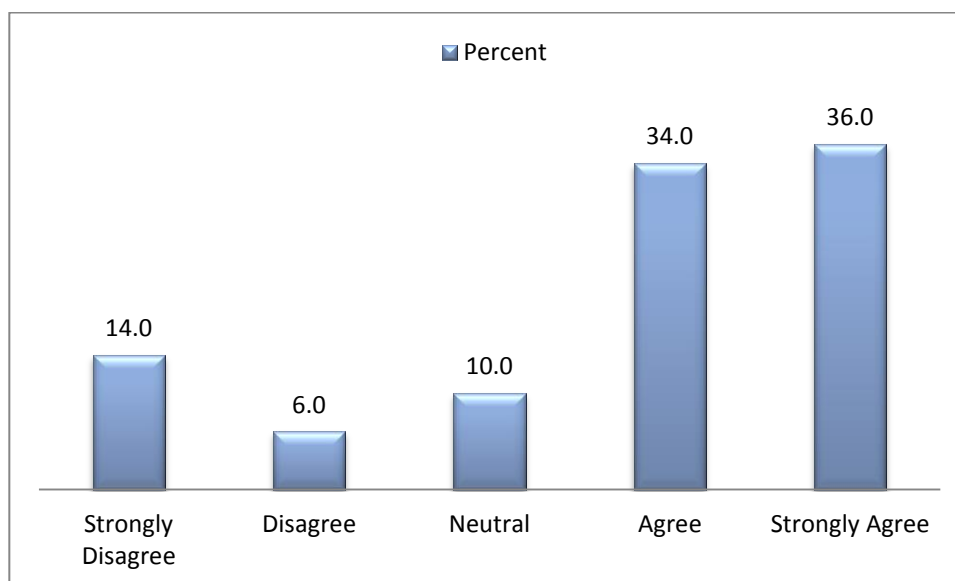
Figure 4.12: Application of Work Styles to Jobs at MEGA

Figure 4.12 shows the percentage of employees in respect to whether they are able to apply their working styles to their current jobs at MEGA. The results show that 14% of the respondents strongly disagreed that they are able to apply their working style to their current jobs, 6% disagreed whilst 10% were neutral. Of the total respondents, 34% agreed that they are able to apply their work style to their current jobs within the Agency whilst, 36% strongly agreed with this statement. In total, 70% of the respondents scored between agree to strongly agree that they can apply their work styles to their current positions within the Agency. These results support the findings of Neil (2006) that the existence of many employees who are able to apply their working styles to their current positions is a sign of good performance. As a result, based on this dimension, MEGA shows good performance.

Good Employee Relations

Mungule (2005) is of the view that performance of an entity can be measured based on the relationship between employees. In an attempt to find answers to whether there were good employee relationships at MEGA, the researcher asked the respondents to indicate the extent to which they have good professional relationship with their bosses. The results are shown in Figure 4.13.

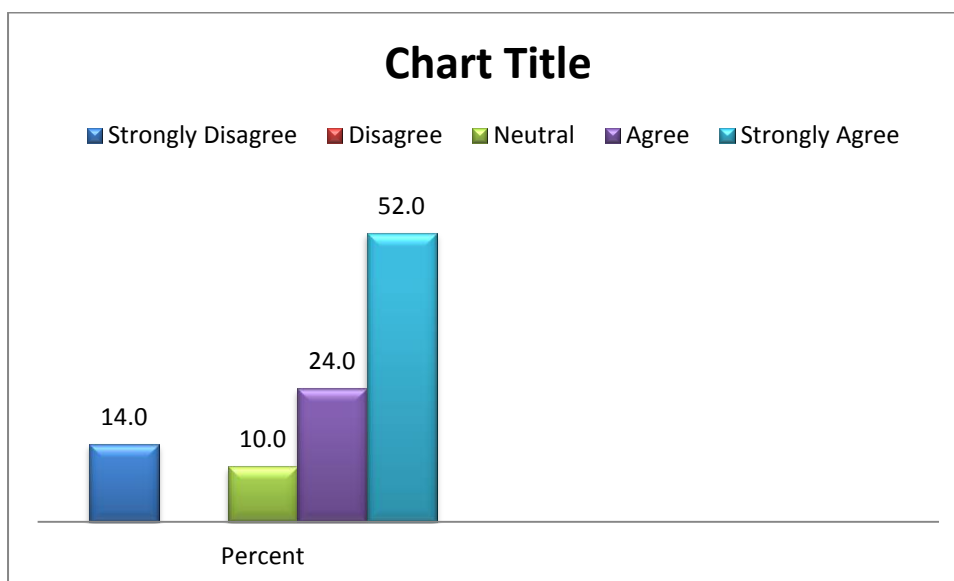
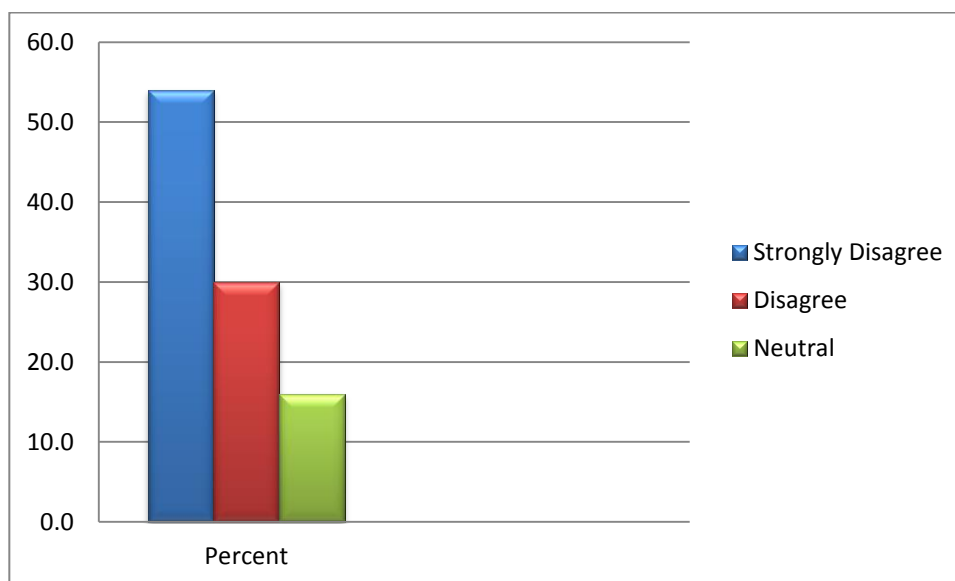
Figure 4.13: Relationship between Employees at MEGA

Figure 4.13 shows the percentage of employees in respect of their relationships with their bosses. The respondents were asked to indicate on a five-point Likert scale that ranged from strongly disagreed to strongly agree. The results show that 14% respondents strongly disagreed that they had good professional relationship with their bosses. None of the employees was neutral, 24% agreed that they had good professional relationships with their bosses and 52% strongly agreed with this statement. In total, 76% of the respondents scored between agree to strongly agree that they had strong relationships with their bosses within the Agency. As a result, it can be concluded that in terms of professionalism, there is good performance at MEGA. These results support the findings of Mungule (2005) that, the existence of good relationships between employees in an organisation is a sign of good performance. However, contrary to this, other research found, a weak relationship between leadership structures and firm performance.

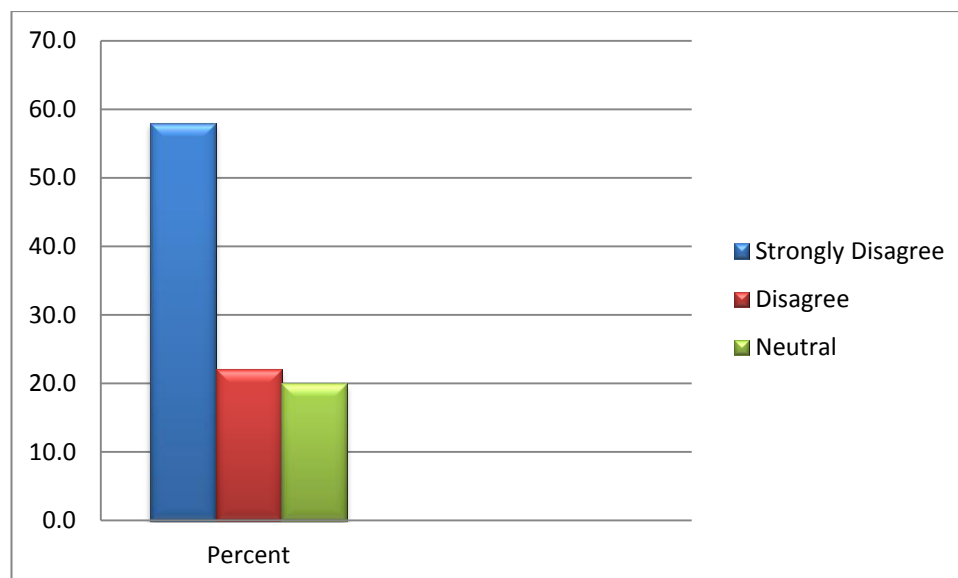
The Reward Policy

The King (III) Report on Corporate Governance indicates that there must be a reward policy within each public institution and, there are distinct ways in which the institution should implement these. In order to get answers on the implementation of the reward policy at MEGA, the respondents were firstly asked if they were aware of the reward policy. Their responses are indicated in Figure 4.14.

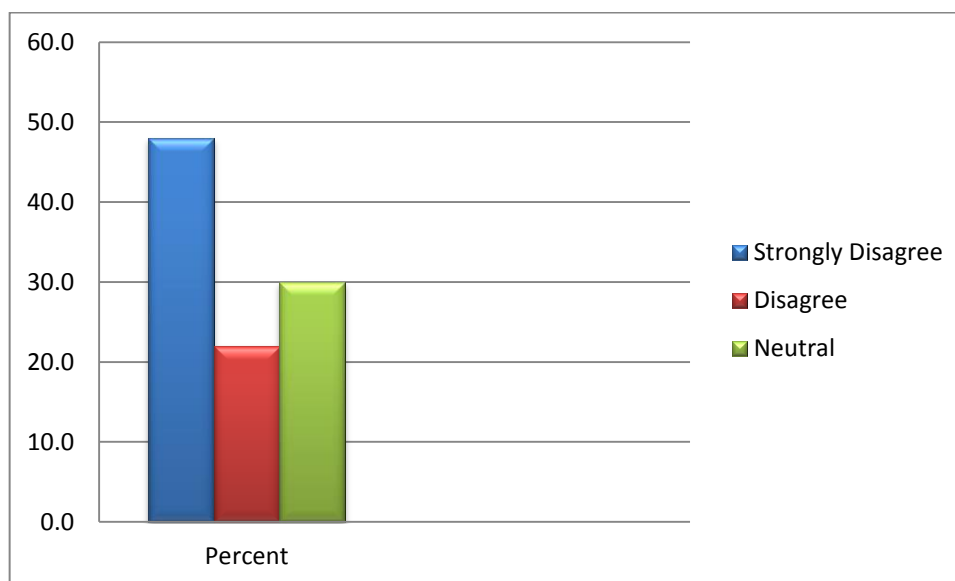
Figure 4.14: The Implementation of the Reward Policy at MEGA

Out of 50 respondents, 16% remained neutral, 30% disagreed and 54 strongly disagreed that a reward policy was implemented at MEGA. As a result, it became clear that the employees were not aware of the reward policy within the Agency. Such findings are opposed by the King (III) report on corporate governance that, there should be reward systems in place, at all public organisations. In addition, these results are also contrary to findings in a study undertaken by Reddy et al. (2010) to investigate the efficacy of principle-based corporate governance practices and firm financial performance. The research findings indicate that there is a positive relationship between the existence of a reward system and firm performance. The following Figures (4.15 and 4.16) also illustrate other responses as concerns reward systems.

Figure 4.15: Reward system at MEGA is properly communicated to all the employees in the organisation



When the respondents were asked whether the reward system was properly communicated to all the employees at MEGA, 20% of the respondents remained neutral whilst, 22% disagreed and 58% strongly disagreed that the reward system is properly communicated. Thus, in addition to the above, these findings are contrary to the King (III) Report on corporate governance that, the reward system of an organisation should be properly communicated to all levels of staff in an organisation.

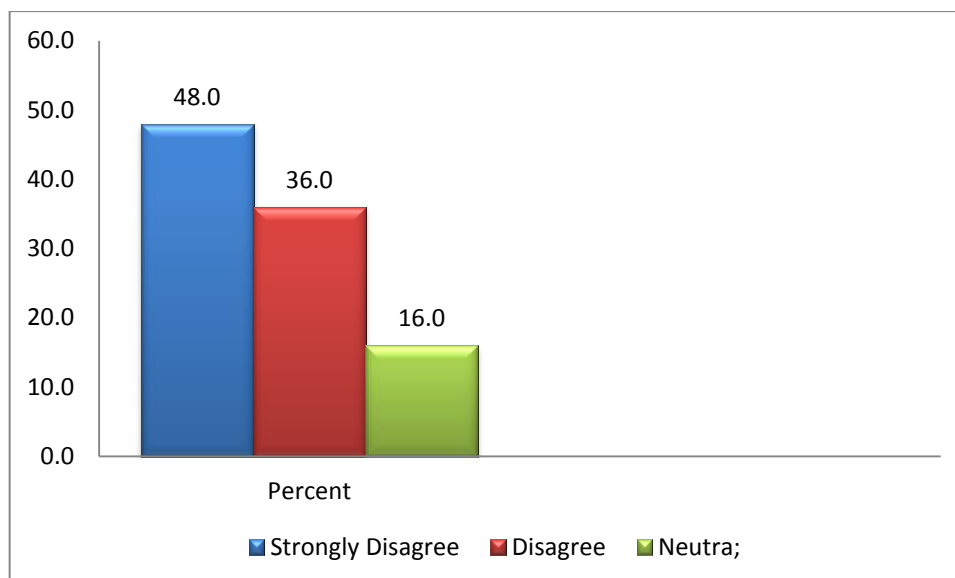
Figure 4.16: An employee is selected for a reward through proper system

In addition to the above issues on the reward system within the Agency, the employees were also asked to indicate whether the employees were selected for reward through a proper system. The results show that 30% chose to be neutral, 22% disagreed whilst 48% strongly disagreed. This construct, combined with other dimensions in the preceding discussion shows that, the performance of MEGA in terms of its reward system is contrary to the requirements of the King (III) Report on Corporate Governance.

Considering Employees in the Reward System

Lastly, the employees were asked to indicate whether they were considered in the reward system by management. The purpose of this question was to assess the extent to which transparency was conducted and performed within the Agency. The responses of the interviewees are shown in Figure 4.17.

Figure 4.17: Are the employee suggestions considered while reviewing the reward system at MEGA?



When the respondents were asked whether they were considered in the reward system, 48% strongly disagreed, 36% disagreed whilst 16% remained neutral. In total 84% of the respondents scored between disagree and strongly disagree that they were considered in the reward system. This shows that as far as transparency and other dimensions that affect the performance of MEGA, performance of MEGA, based on this construct is not ideal.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings from Literature Review

A review of literature shows a significant number as evidence which shows the relationship between corporate governance practices and performance of a firm. Studies tend to focus on how specific areas of an organisations practice on corporate governance affects an institution. For example, Katragadda (2013) is of the view that some studies focus on the role of the board of directors, non-executive directors, and top to middle level management and / or executive labour among, a host of other areas.

In addition, Pineda (2004) used Torbin's Q to measure the impact of corporate governance on the performance of firms. In this study, Torbin (2004) found out that, not all the dimensions of corporate governance have a relationship with performance. As a result, this

study came to the conclusion that there is no relationship between corporate governance and a firm's performance.

However, studies carried out by Claessens (2009) in general concluded that good governance is most likely to improve the performance of organisations. Nonetheless, Gompers et al., (2010) carried out a study on the effects of corporate governance on performance of an organisation. In their study, they came to the conclusion that practice of corporate governance by organisations leads to better performance, which is measured in volume by sales, as well as net profit but, does not have any significance on returns on equity.

Although, there is a mixed bag of results concerning the relationship between performance of firms and corporate governance practices, it can be concluded that to a greater extent corporate governance is positively related to firm performance (Claessens, 2009; Gompers et al., 2010). As a result, this study assumes that the practice of corporate governance leads to good performance of MEGA as supported by the King (III) Report on Corporate Governance. This study concluded that not all the dimensions of corporate governance lead to increased performance of firms as was discussed in the findings from the primary research.

Findings from Primary Research

One of the objectives of this study was to determine the corporate governance practices at MEGA. The researcher assessed the practice of corporate governance based on seven areas namely; discipline, transparency, independency, accountability, responsibility, fairness and practice of social awareness.

What are the corporate governance practices at Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency?

In terms of discipline, although research findings showed that nearly 50% of the respondents agreed that there is discipline at MEGA, in terms of its corporate governance practices, the number is not significant enough to conclude that there is discipline at MEGA.

In terms of transparency, the research findings also show that there are transparency issues at MEGA. This is because the majority of respondents in the Agency disagreed that the performance reports are issued, to the public on time.

Thirdly, in terms of responsibility, although some respondents chose to be neutral in answering many questions pertaining to responsibility of MEGA, most of the responses indicated that the management of the Agency is not responsible, in terms of and, according to the expectations of the governing bodies.

Fourthly, in relation to fairness, the mixed bag of results suggests that there are fairness issues at MEGA. To a greater extent, fairness is not practiced well within the Agency.

However, although there is need to look at this corporate governance construct at MEGA, the research findings concluded that MEGA is independent and, possesses accountability in respect to its governance practices. It can therefore, be concluded that there is accountability and independence in its governance structures and general policies whilst, there is no discipline, transparency, responsibility and fairness at MEGA.

What roles does the Department of Economic Development and Tourism play in corporate governance of the Agency?

Out of the total respondents, 62% agreed that the Department of Economic Development and Tourism plays an important role in corporate governance practice at MEGA. When asked what the department does in order to promote corporate governance, the respondents indicated that they do so by issuing newsletters on corporate governance as well, as the issuing of emails on corporate governance.

What are the effects of corporate governance and their impact on performance within the Agency?

Performance of MEGA was assessed by investigating the knowledge of respondents on the mission and goals of the Agency, hierarchical structure, involvement of all stakeholders in decision making, whether respondents can identify jobs that can match their style of work, whether respondents can apply their working style to their current positions, relationships of respondents with their bosses as well as the reward policy of the Agency.

The research findings conclude that MEGA has good performance in terms, of its workers' knowledge of the overall mission and goals, knowledge of the hierarchical structure and chain of command, knowledge of their working styles and, when to apply them and, good relations between subordinates and their superiors. The only performance problem that was

identified was the implementation of its reward system and, the inclusion of subordinates in corporate level decision making.

Conclusions

The aim of this research was to assess the impact of corporate governance practices on the performance of MEGA. In so doing, the research had to fulfil the following objectives: to determine the corporate governance practices at MEGA; to identify the effects of corporate governance and their impact on performance within the Agency; to identify the role played by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism in the corporate governance practices of the Agency as well, as to recommend measures that can improve corporate governance and, eliminate the bad effects, if any, and improve performance of MEGA. Upon completing this study, primary research found out that there are issues in terms of corporate governance practices at MEGA. Although, the study concluded that there is accountability and independence in the governance of MEGA, there are problems, in terms of its discipline, transparency, responsibility and fairness. Despite the problems in implementing corporate governance practices, the research findings conclude that in terms of performance of the Agency, MEGA performs well in some dimensions of corporate governance such as knowledge of the overall mission and goals, professional relationships between subordinates, knowledge and respect of the hierarchical structures as well as application of working styles on different jobs within the Agency. However, its performance is poor, when it comes to implementing and communicating the reward policies. The study also concluded that the Department of Economic Development and Tourism plays an important role in corporate governance practices at MEGA through, various communication channels such as issuing newsletters and issuing of emails in respect to corporate governance.

Recommendations to MEGA

After analysing the research findings, the researcher found out that there are many recommendations needed to improve the practice of corporate governance at MEGA as well as its performance. In terms of corporate governance practices, the research found out that there is no discipline, transparency, responsibility and fairness at MEGA. In order to deal with this, there is a need to improve management of the Agency. This can be done through the ways discussed in the sections that follow.

Honesty and Responsibility

Review of literature also shows that leaders have a duty to practice ethical leadership in the form of honesty and responsibility. Leaders have to declare any private interests relating to their expected duties. In so doing, they should take necessary steps, in order to resolve any conflict of interests that may arise, in respect to conducting their duties in the interest of the organisation and its stakeholders (Grandy, 2008).

On the other hand, OECD (2010) also noted the need for responsibility as another ethical code, to be possessed by leaders. In the same vein, OECD (2010) emphasised that, it is important for leaders to be responsive when a certain issues need to be identified. Just like objectives set before them, leaders must always try to serve the needs of their stakeholders whilst, maintaining a balance in a timely, appropriate and responsive manner. This provision of feedback ensures that the stakeholders are always informed in respect to their interests. The codes of ethics in the view of Denhardt (2010) are interlinked since responding to matters timely leads to transparency, accountability and honesty.

Integrity

Integrity, also referred to as wholeness, is another ethical issue that should be possessed by leaders in corporate governance (Frederickson, 2005). In terms of corporate governance, OECD (2010) emphasises that, leaders should be consistent in terms of their decision-making and behaviour. In so doing, they should be obliged to abide by the code of ethics and the values based, on the organisation in question. Moreover, Frederickson (2005) emphasises the impact of a coordination of integrity and loyalty in corporate governance. In terms of loyalty, leaders should be loyal to the people they serve, that is, they should, by all means, protect and promote their interests. Thus, as trustees, the leaders' primary loyalty lies in the needs of the stakeholders.

Communication

There is also a need to keep channels of communication open at MEGA. For instance, most respondents pointed out that there is no English website where information for the public is posted. In addition, other shortfalls in terms of the practice of corporate governance are as a result of poor communication between management and subordinates. In order to solve this challenge, there is a need to use various communication platforms available within the organisation such as social media, emails, and focus groups and so on.

Areas for further studies

The study indicated that there is a communication problem between the management and their subordinates at MEGA. As a result, the study found out that there is a problem in practicing corporate governance within the Agency. Therefore, further studies must be commissioned and undertaken, in terms of moderating, the impact of communication, in implementing corporate governance practices at MEGA.

Conclusion

Corporate governance is considered as an important factor in contemporary business practices within and, in all sectors. Similarly MEGA, like any other organisation, is expected to have good corporate governance. As a result, the study attempted to analyse the impact of corporate governance practices on the performance of this Agency, and in this regard made some finite conclusions and, by the same token made some poignant recommendations.

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EXPLAINING THE MANAGEMENT ROLE IN CONSTRAINT

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Abstract

Management in constraint is very sensitive and challenging with respect to life and business conditions in today's world and, involves various constraints and deprivations. Management in constraint is philosophy and, an approach based on limited resources and cardinal to it, is the need to manage them properly to achieve different goals in life and within business.

Keywords: Management in Constraint, Creativity in Constraint, Advantage in Constraint, Utility in constraint

Methodology

The paper essentially uses a limited but pointed literature review in assembling the thought processes of this important subject matter and narrative, as it relates to the management of organizations. The role of management in constraint is an issue that requires more attention and research. In so doing the authors relied on their critical analysis to posit their arguments and, the paper in no way intrudes upon the work in this direction undertaken by others.

Introduction

The real aim of any organization is not to just earn money and make money now and in the future. However, readiness for permanent progress in order to achieve sustainable growth must be an imperative. Continuous improvement processes not only require enough focus to identify, what needs to be developed, but is also required for purposes of change in the decision support system and, therefore, quick and reliable feedback is necessary and required to identify discrepancies and deviations from normal practice within any management environment. "Management in constraint" and "constraint management" are an important part of life and for business management. Life is a set of assets and a lack of these assets, resources and barriers, profits and costs, opportunities and threats, peace and crisis and, and constraints hinder, the progress of any institution. Management in constraint is an approach based on identification, exploiting and overcoming factors, obstacles and circumstances that make it difficult or impossible to achieve goals. Nobody and no organization is perfect, and all people, organizations, institutions and societies have various constraints, obstacles and deprivations and, therefore, constraint is a reality and challenge in life. Therefore, instead of fear, submission, resignation, despair and indifference against constraints, we should try to find different and proper solutions and mechanisms to achieve goals by "management in constraint". Management in constraint is very sensitive and challenging with respect to life and, business conditions in today's complex and ever changing world, in terms of the various constraints and deprivations. They all need to be confronted in a coordinated manner. Management in constraint is a philosophy and, an approach based on limited resources and, the need to manage them properly, in order to achieve different goals in life and within business. Management in constraint includes four key components which include the following basic steps:

Management in constraint

A) Identification of constraints

The first step in the management of constraints is timely and proper identification of various constraints and prioritizing them based on urgency and importance. If we identify and classify constraints properly, their management will be quicker and simpler. Generally, constraints can be divided into internal (individual, group and institutional) and external (environmental and macro) constraints. Constraints are dynamic and are relative phenomenon and, therefore, its management and, its style is not fixed. Understanding the relevant conditions, real and scientific and, the systematic approaches in their classification, prioritization and, proper definition of different types of constraints are a prerequisite for constraint management. One of the best ways to identify and determine individual constraints, is the constraint related to beliefs, interests, values, characteristics, properties or factors related to the type of attitude and insight, vision and knowledge, motivation and behavior, and the individual methods utilized in life and business.

B) Constraint exploitation

Constraint exploitation is to first properly identify and, then use overt and covert opportunities in constraints and deprivation to create new values in life and business. Successful persons are those who provide better and greater momentum and facilities for themselves and others, by their acuteness, alertness, and knowledge of life skills and, the identification of opportunities in difficult situations. When the Japanese people accept that they are deprived of resources and that, they are living in a high-risk country in terms of their geographical location. They strive to overcome these constraints by perseverance, effort, courage, solidarity and development, and they strive to use constraints as a lever for success by increasing efficiency in the value chain of their lives and in their businesses. If one has to find a similar example in Iran, we can refer or take the Yazd people, as an example. It is a known fact that while Yazd people are deprived of climatic resources and, have experienced drought, they have strived to take advantage of this constraint, in order to mitigate their dire circumstances. Accepting these constraints and deprivation, Yazd people have tried to find new solutions and ways to improve their situation. As a result, they have learnt lessons from their plight encountered with such dire constraints by the use of aqueducts and utilize the jug method for irrigation purposes in order to ameliorate their plight for purposes of survival.

C) To overcome constraints

Constraint is not a prohibition in the true sense but, it is a deprivation that must be correctly recognized, exploited and improved or removed over time. A number of successes have been registered in this regard. Some successful and known merchants and manufacturers have had and encountered great economic problems and difficulties in their childhood, but have overcome these with their perseverance, ambition, and hard work, for purposes of success against all odds. For example despite cancer, one of athletics world cycling champions, won several championships by means of a positive spirit, hope, sound practice, resilience, endurance and the spirit to overcome and succeed in the face of adversity. Brian Tracy suffered from grave physical trouble and impediment which, many thought will constrain him in his pursuits but, he showed the world that, he could start afresh and lead a successful life. This was achieved by his determination, reduction of weight, and by means of sound practice and exercise. There are many veterans in Iran, who overcame their grave problems by means of faith, steadfastness, and patience. Faith, hope, optimism, effort, perseverance, determination, self-confidence, love and ambition are the most important success factors for humans to fight against their impediments and, to overcome such constraints. Many firms and companies have been able to turn many threats into opportunities during times of recession, extreme crisis, sanctions, and salient deficiencies that have confronted them over time. This was and is achieved by maintaining a positive outlook in order, to overcome adversity, inculcated by a spirit of confidence coupled, with the sanctity of peace and above all attempting, with confidence, in understanding the realities of constraints and, as to how to overcome them in a sustained, coordinated and meaningful manner.

D) Readiness to cope with new constraints

By reducing and removing constraints, barriers, deprivations, control and other constraining realities, these issues can be overcome irrespective of the problems and challenges that they pose upon and, within organizations and individuals. Life is a repetition of many positive and negative phenomena. The saying therefore goes - do not be proud of what you have and, do not be beaten by what you do not have. Try to find new opportunities for success by speed and accuracy, intelligence and consciousness within the ambit of given constraints. Any human life cycle includes infancy, childhood, adolescence, youth, adulthood, and old age. Each period in the cycle of any life. It has its own problems, constraints and barriers. Successful humans who consider constraint management, as one part of his / her life management and, accepts that by overcoming past constraints, he / she

may be faced with new constraints. All of these will require different and proper approaches to deal with them and thus ameliorate the consequences that might emanate from these constraints. When we consider and think of the last period of life in our journey and, the obstacles, problems and constraints, that we confront, it is obvious that man generally regrets, how much time and energy he / she has spent on issues and things that, have been minor when compared with the new emerging constraints of life. A successful person is someone who is always ready to keep fighting against constraints and obstacles, and copes with his / her constraints realistically, instead of being negligent and filled with fear, anxiety and apprehension. Constraints are endless, but each stage and course of life and business has certain constraints that require a special management style. Overcoming one constraint is the end of one challenge and, the beginning of a new end. Management of constraint is a permanent approach based, on existing and new constraints. All of these constraints must be approached with that of a different approach and different style because, each constraint takes place under a different situation and will require a distinct resolution approach /s and intervention strategy/s

Creativity in constraint

Human beings are very complex but creative creatures and often times, one does not realize that he / she has not discovered his / her talents and capabilities. If you want to know the meaning of creativity in constraint, one needs to focus on the power of "creativity in constraints" in order to understand and deal with worldly issues. If we consider the size of a human face in the form of a 20x30 cm rectangle, we will know the power of God and we realize that the creator has created different faces that have no similarity. This indicates the peak of creativity in constraint. If we accept and believe that the spirit of God has been showered and blown into humans and, if small amounts of this endless and unique power of creativity in constraint has been bestowed upon us, we will discover the undiscovered power and capabilities of our creativity. Thus, instead of being pessimistic, confused, and depressed; we must all strive to cope with constraints in the light of creativity, innovation, and initiative so that, we can reach consensus that, as human beings we can make many impossible tasks, very possible by "creativity within constraint". The first prerequisite for creativity in constraint is deconstruction and 'decolonization' of the mind, in order to and, the necessary and absolute need, to rid ourselves of negativity, the traditional and customized attitudes, and way of thinking, habits, and lives stereotypes. Successful and creative people are those who view phenomena in different and new ways and, do not consider life, within the aspects of dos and don'ts. They consider them based on properly understanding and

evaluating their competences, capacities, and capabilities and, the appraisal of their institutions and organizational conditions and realities and, the communities in which they live. As a result, they do not accept fully every - thing that has to be done or not done and, in response to any question, they are always looking and searching for new responses. One of the new trends in the world of management is open innovation, which means acceptance and, the use of any new idea and, the creative ways to use more opportunities. Open Innovation is based on integrating the creativities and innovations to overcome the constraint and, moreover, the idea of the better use of opportunities to meet their and others' needs. "Creativity in constraint" is an idea that can bring desired phenomena to bear upon individuals and organizations. There are entrepreneurs in our country (Iran) who have been able to provide appropriate conditions to promote and process their and others' ideas by creating innovative and entrepreneurial space. Today's world is the world of networking to integrate ideas, talent, resources and capabilities. Nowadays, even academic books are a result of new, creative and constructive ideas. Successful persons are those who improve their success by combining various ideas, thereby, bringing ideas to fruition in the aspects of creativity in constraint.

Advantage in constraint

Constraint can bring many salient advantages. Japan is a country that proved, despite constraints and deprivation that, advantage can be achieved by means of leveraging the definition of competitive advantage in any economy, and tapping into marketing and business opportunities. Anyone can pave the way for "advantage in constraint" by understanding and accepting his / her constraints, focusing on competency-orientation and his undiscovered talents and, finding advantage in him and others smartly. Today, one of the most important issues in life and business is finding and creating complementary advantage. Constraint makes systems, organizations and individuals, to use and take advantage of constraints by, new and different attitudes of networking. Advantage in constraint is a permanent identification of individual and collective, internal and external advantages to reduce constraints and increase utilities.

Utility in constraint

Utility means proper response to expectations, aspirations, preferences, wishes, goals and desires. Utility in life is the result of five factors including satisfaction, success, excellence, sustainability and social support. Although the ultimate outcome of every one's life and business is to achieve peace, comfort, spiritual and material values, achieving them will be

the result of five basic factors that has been explained elsewhere in this paper and narrative. These are as follows:

A) Satisfaction in constraint

Effort to satisfaction is sometimes simpler than dissatisfaction, but lack of attention to simple factors can bring about satisfaction and, the focus on complex factors that have no outcome cause dissatisfaction among individuals and organizations. Satisfaction is the result of a proper and timely response to a set of expectations. When quality of human performance and behavior is appropriate in life and business, its results will be consent of God, stakeholders and audiences. Quality determines satisfaction levels. As quality increases, satisfaction will be greater and deeply appreciated.

B) Success in constraint

Success in constraint is to gain proper spiritual and material results despite available barriers and constraints. Gaining profit, achieving some fundamental goals, in terms of increased market share, winning the fights and contests in terms of the challenges of business and within management, are some of the successes that are and must be achieved, despite constraints and barriers. Success is the result of the link between seven key factors including thought, reason, emotion, knowledge, determination, performance and environmental factors" that are a mixture of every individual's life. "Success in constraint" is realized when people as individuals accept constraint as not only a barrier to success but, use it as a lever for promulgating new successes. Success in constraint can be found in many humans, organizations, and communities, which cope with their constraints and deprivation rather, than complaining about them.

C) Superiority and excellence

Humans and organizations are constantly looking for excellence and superiority over others. Superiority is an important need in the life of ambitious people's lives, who consider competition, the mother of creativity, development and reconstruction. One must be always ready to fight and contest irrespective of the difficulties encountered. Utility in constraint finds better meaning when we look at being excellent and, superior, rather than being similar or different. Superiority in constraint is the result of identification of unique features and, investing and exploiting these features to one's advantage is of vital importance. Superiority and excellence can be found and created in various areas by means of overt and covert

factors. The important point is the thirst for development and, its maintenance in all of life's stages.

D) Stability

Another factor of "utility in constraint" is to remain stable through sustainable and stable development and progress and, for purposes of continuous improvement. Necessary to stability and sustainability in business is adaptability with and to development. In a world where strength, rate and extent of changes have caused a "development gap," that is, the increasing gap between environmental development and actual development in people and institutions, there is no way of just accelerating development and, adapting with the current situation. In other words, sustainability or stability is the result of future study and readiness for rapid development and, adaptability with new conditions. A prerequisite for stability and sustainability are seven factors that encompass "strategic imagination, strategic thinking, prudence, wisdom, tolerance and development for evolution. When we pay more attention to these seven strategic elements, stability and sustainability will increase and, utility in constraint will find a better and more comprehensive, better and fuller meaning.

E) Social support

Social support and acceptance is the result of observing issues known as social responsibility. "Utility in constraint" finds meaning only with regard to the criteria, norms, beliefs, values, culture, values, including ethical, social and human values. Social support is the result of recognizing and observing his or hers and, others' "rights" and "limits" and, respect for the rights of all people in society. Charitable activities including lasting, useful, effective work, people-orientation, and social responsibility are cases that can bring social support and acceptance for people and organizations.

Result:

Management in constraint approach

Management in constraint is an approach to achieve various goals by accepting constraints and efforts to reduce and eliminate them. Constraint is an undeniable fact in everyone's life. Humans are born in and within constraints. They grow with constraint, and die in constraint. Constraint should not cause submission, resignation and isolation, but it should be used as a lever to achieve success. If it is accepted that all people, organizations and communities are faced with various constraints, and if it is believed that, life is not only concerned with the management of resources in abundance and with peace at all times but, it involves

management of obstacles, constraints and crises, it will become abundantly clear that management in constraint is an approach for a better life for all settings of life. Management in constraint includes four main components. These are "constraint management, creativity in constraint, advantage in constraint, and utility in constraint and that, each of them have certain tools, solutions, and behaviours. The management in constraint key is the proper understanding and acceptance of management as a fact, and managing individual, internal, and external constraints in an integrated and constructive way and manner. Many individuals, organizations and companies can overcome many problems, crises and obstacles in the current situation by focusing on tips, warnings, questions, solutions, and tools of management in constraint. "Management in constraint" is an approach that requires more reflection and thinking to provide appropriate solutions for individual challenges and composite management of organizations, under difficult conditions.

Conclusion

An attempt was made in this paper to unpack the role of management in constraint. It is a delicate and important issue which is a key driver to the proper understanding and acceptance by management and, individuals that drive organizations in dealing with both, internal and external constraints. This must be undertaken in a constructive manner to revitalize individuals and the management of organizations. It is a fascinating subject and, its importance cannot be overemphasized. It is hoped that other researchers will expand on this literature review, conduct in depth research in this direction and, add to the composite role of management and, contribute meaningfully to individuals within the ambit of constraints, in order to enhance the management perspectives of organizations, in dealing with the various challenges they confront on a daily basis in life and, within the work environment.

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EVALUATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONALITY TRAITS AND MENTAL RESILIENCE

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Abstract

The present study aimed to investigate the relationship between personality traits and mental resilience. Using stratified random sampling, from nearly 5,000 women, 150 people who had inclusion criteria were selected by convenience sampling. Using inferential statistics to test the hypotheses and to determine the relationship between variables, statistical methods of correlation and simultaneous regression were used. The results showed a significant positive correlation between mental resilience and extraversion, $P < 0.05$. There was not a significant relationship between openness and psychological resilience, $P > 0.05$. There was a significant positive relationship between agreeableness and mental resilience, $P < 0.05$. There was a significant relationship between personality traits and psychological resiliency in infertile women. To test the hypothesis, the simultaneous regression analysis was used. Multiple correlation coefficients were 0.412 and the coefficient of determination was 0.17. The coefficient of determination shows the explained variance by the model; the numerical value of the coefficient of determination is a value between 0 and 1. The closer this value to 1, stronger is the model relationship.

Keywords: *personality traits, personality structure, character stability, mental resilience*

1. Introduction

The term resilience can be defined as the ability to come out of difficult situations or modify them. In fact, resilience is the capacity of people to stay healthy, strong, and enduring in harsh and high risk conditions in which a person not only overcomes the difficult conditions, but also becomes stronger. So, resilience means the ability to be successful, live, and grow in difficult circumstances (with the presence of risk factors). This process is not created by itself unless the person is in an unpleasant and difficult situation to put maximum efforts to discover and enjoy the protective factors (individual and environmental), internally and externally, which are always potentially there in order to get rid of it or less damage. Individuals' performance is affected by many variables such as personality traits. Personality is a specific pattern of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that distinguishes one person from others and is relatively stable at different times and places (Parvin and John, 2000, as cited in Javadi and Alderman, 2002). Personality structure is determined based on different patterns. Five-factor personality model is considered as one of the most famous and credible models of personality by theoretical, empirical, and research supports. These factors include:

- *Extraversion*: an energetic approach to the social and material world.
- *Adjustment inventory*: a simple and social orientation toward others with no animosity.
- *Deontology*: includes inhibition of impulses under prescriptions by the community, which aims to facilitate aim-oriented behaviors and individual tasks.
- *Emotional stability*: stable and developed emotional status which leads to appropriate and personal reactions to different situations.
- *Openness*: the extent, depth, complexity, and authenticity of experience and mental life of an individual (Shafiee Tabar et al., 2008)

In evaluation of the relationship between personality traits and psychological resilience, the term resilience can be defined as the ability to come out of difficult situations or modify them. In fact, resilience is the capacity of people to stay healthy, strong, and enduring in harsh and high risk conditions in which not only the person overcomes difficult circumstances but also becomes stronger. The current study seeks to answer the following question: is there a relationship between personality traits and psychological resilience?

Research objectives

- Explaining psychological resilience variance by personality traits
- Evaluation of the relationship between personality traits and psychological resilience

The main question

Is there a relationship between personality traits and psychological resilience?

The main hypothesis

There is a relationship between personality traits and psychological resilience

Research background

A study that examined the association between psychological resilience, metacognitive strategies, and creativity; the results demonstrated a positive and significant relationship between creativity and mental resilience and multiple relationships between metacognitive strategies, creativity, and psychological resilience, showing that meta-cognition and creativity are good predictors of mental resilience (Besharat and Abbaspoor, 2010). Beardsley (1989), reviewing three studies, notes the strong relationship between self-understanding and resilience. This study was conducted on children surviving cancer and adolescents having parents with severe emotional disorders. The results showed that self-understanding was associated with real cognitive assessment, action with thought, changes over time, and protection from the effects of stress. Beardsley believes that there is an internal psychological process in resilient people. Rutter (1985, 1979) conducted an epidemiologic study in London and found that a third of people, despite experiencing risk factors, were resilient. Resiliency features that Rutter achieved include: a soft temper, being female, self-control, self-efficacy, planning skills, and a warm and close relationship with an adult. Kinman and Grant (2010), in a research conducted on 240 subjects, showed that there is a significant positive relationship between resilience and stressful environmental conditions. Fine (1991) stated resiliency features as hope and desire to overcome the difficulties, achieving social support, finding meaning and goal setting, and problem-solving strategies.

2. Method

The current research method is descriptive and correlational. The correlation between research variables is studied through questionnaires. A field study is conducted. Data is collected through questionnaires which have required validity and reliability.

Statistical population

The study population included women aged 25 to 40 years residing in Tehran, referred for the diagnosis or treatment of infertility.

Statistical sample

The sample in this study consisted of 150 subjects selected from about 5,000 women referred to women's hospitals of Tehran, having the inclusion criteria, i.e. age range of 25 to 40 years and also referring for women care.

Sampling method

Sampling was carried out as follows:

To select study samples, first, three hospitals were selected using stratified random sampling from specialized hospitals of Tehran. Then, the women admitted to these hospitals, having the inclusion criteria, were selected by convenience sampling.

Research materials

According to research objectives, in order to collect the data required to test research hypotheses, standard questionnaires were used.

A) NEO-FFI test 60-question form

NEO-FFI test having 60 questions was used, which was normalized and used by Haghshenas in Iran, and is designed for concise and quick assessment of five main factors (lack of emotional stability, extraversion, openness, conscientiousness, and agreement) (Haghshenas, 2003). NEO-FFI is made in order to provide the short form of Neo-PRI, and while a new norm is provided for it, but it has the basic same shape. This test is composed of five sets of 12-sentence on each indicator, and there is a five-rate grading scale for each statement which has a value of 0 to 4. In some sentences, "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" is graded 0 to 4, respectively, and for others, it is the opposite (Vahedi et al., 2009).

Validity and reliability

The reliability of the test was reported by Costa and Mc-Kerry, using Cronbach's alpha coefficient for neuroticism (N), extraversion (E), openness (O), agreement (A), and conscientiousness (C), respectively, 0.86, 0.80, 0.75, 0.69, and 0.79, and by Haghshenas (2003), 0.86, 0.77, 0.73, 0.68, and 0.81, respectively. Extraversion, conscientiousness, and neuroticism had the highest reliability, while agreeableness and openness were less reliable.

Openness had the lowest reliability. These were repeated in findings of Bent, Martinez, and John (1998) (John et al., 1991, as cited in Farahani, 2005). Scores of each option are presented in the following table:

| Option | Strongly disagree | Disagree | No idea | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--------|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| Score | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Of course, this scoring method is reversed in questions no. 5, 28, and 33 as follows:

| Option | Strongly disagree | Disagree | No idea | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--------|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| Score | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

B) Connor and Davidson scale (Cd-RISC)

Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (2003) is a 25-question tool that measures resiliency structure in five-grade Likert's scale, 0 to 4. The minimum score of subjects' resiliency is zero on this scale, and the maximum is 100. The results of preliminary studies related to the psychometric properties of this scale have confirmed its reliability and validity (Connor and Davidson, 2003). The internal consistency, test-retest reliability, and convergent and divergent validity of the scale have been reported enough. And although the results of exploratory factor analysis have confirmed five factors for resilience scale (competence/personal strength, confidence in personal instincts/tolerance of negative emotions, positive emotions reception/secure relations, inhibition, spirituality) and since the reliability and validity of the scale are not still definitely confirmed, only the total resilience score is valid for research purposes (Connor and Davidson, 2003). Reliability and validity of Persian resilience scale have been evaluated and approved in preliminary studies of normal and patient subjects (Besharat, 2007). The validity of this structure has been confirmed in Iran in 2007 by Besharat. Mashaalpur in 2010, through correlating it with Ahvaz psychology hardiness scale by calculating correlation coefficient of 0.64 at significance level of 0.0001,

showed that this structure has relatively high validity; however, due to the coincidence, validation did not take place.

Validity and reliability of the test

Before extraction of the factors based on the correlation matrix of items, two indices of KMO (Bartlett's test of Sphericity) were calculated. KMO value was equal to 0.87, and the chi-square value in Bartlett's test was 28.5556. Each indicator of evidence sufficiency has been shown for factor analysis. After this stage, to determine the number of factors, the slope of the graph measure and equity higher than one were used. Based on the slope of the line, one factor in scale was extractable. After extracting the factor, factor loading matrix underwent rotation via varimax, and then factor loading of each question was calculated with respect to the category, and only item 3, because of low load factor, was excluded from the final analysis (Mohammadi, 2005). According to Mohammadi (2005), to determine the reliability of Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale, Cronbach's alpha was used, and reliability of 0.89 was obtained. Jowkar (2007) reported Cronbach's alpha of Connor and Davidson questionnaire 0.93 and confirmed the existence of one factor in this scale through the principal components factor analysis method. The reliability of this test is reported 0.89 in Kordmirza's research (2009).

Statistical methods

Data analysis was performed based on research objectives using descriptive and inferential statistics. To determine the statistical features of the subject groups, using SPSS software, common methods of descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, central tendency indices, and dispersion indices were used. In inferential statistics section, to evaluate the research hypotheses, Pearson's correlation coefficient and simultaneous regression were used.

3. Results

Descriptive section

Using descriptive statistics for each variable, mean, median, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis, minimum, and maximum values were calculated, and the histogram was plotted.

Inferential section

Using appropriate statistical tests (Pearson correlation and simultaneous regression) variables of emotional intelligence, personality traits, and mental resilience were analyzed in

two stages. In the first stage, they were analyzed, considering descriptive data and statistics such as mean, median, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis, minimum, and maximum values and plotted as a histogram with a normal curve. Then, testing the hypotheses was done using Pearson correlation coefficient.

Descriptive scales of extraversion

For extraversion variable, mean, median, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis, minimum and maximum histogram were calculated, and the histogram was plotted. The mean was 25.28, the minimum was 8, and the maximum was equal to 37.

Descriptive indices of openness

For openness, mean, median, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis, minimum and maximum values were calculated, and the histogram was plotted. The mean was 21.59, the minimum was 10, and the maximum was equal to 36.

Descriptive indices of agreement

For the agreement variable, mean, median, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis, minimum and maximum values were calculated, and the histogram was plotted. The mean was 23.51, the minimum was 8, and the maximum value was equal to 40.

Descriptive indices of conscientiousness

For the agreement variable, mean, median, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis, minimum and maximum values were calculated, and the histogram was plotted. The mean was 29.59, the minimum was 13, and the maximum value was equal to 46.

Normal distribution of variable score

For normal distribution of variable scores, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used. The null hypothesis in this test is normal distribution of variables. If the significance level of the test is larger than 0.05, the null hypothesis is confirmed, and it is concluded that the distribution of the variable of interest is normal. Based on significance levels obtained, it can be concluded that all variables are normally distributed ($P > 0.05$).

Hypothesis 3: There is a significant relationship between extraversion and mental resilience. To test this hypothesis, Pearson correlation test was used. The null hypothesis in this test is zero correlation coefficient (no relation). If the significance level of the test is less than 0.05,

the null hypothesis is rejected, i.e. there is a relation between variables. Distribution graph is plotted, showing a significant relationship. Pearson correlation coefficient is equal to 0.295 and significance level is 0.001. Given that the significance level of Pearson test is less than 0.05, variables' independency is rejected, i.e. there is a significant positive correlation between mental resilience and extraversion.

Hypothesis 4: There is a significant relationship between openness and mental resilience.

To test this hypothesis, Pearson correlation test was used. The null hypothesis in this test is zero correlation coefficient (no relation). If the significance level of the test is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, i.e. there is a relation between variables. Distribution graph is plotted, not showing a significant relationship. Pearson correlation coefficient is equal to 0.018 and the significance level is 0.831. Given that the significance level of Pearson test is larger than 0.05, variables' independency is not rejected, i.e. there is not a significant correlation between mental resilience and openness.

Hypothesis 5: There is a significant relationship between agreement and mental resilience.

To test this hypothesis, Pearson correlation test was used. The null hypothesis in this test is zero correlation coefficient (no relation). If the significance level of the test is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, i.e. there is a relation between variables. Distribution graph is plotted, showing a significant relationship. Pearson correlation coefficient is equal to 0.256 and the significance level is 0.002. Given that the significance level of Pearson test is less than 0.05, variables' independency is rejected, i.e. there is a significant positive correlation between mental resilience and agreement.

Hypothesis 6: There is a significant relationship between consciousness and mental resilience.

To test this hypothesis, Pearson correlation test was used. The null hypothesis in this test is zero correlation coefficient (no relation). If the significance level of the test is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, i.e. there is a relation between variables. Distribution graph is plotted, showing a significant relationship. Pearson correlation coefficient is equal to 0.20 and the significance level is 0.014. Given that the significance level of Pearson test is less than 0.05, variables' independency is rejected, i.e. there is a significant positive correlation between mental resilience and consciousness.

4. Discussion and conclusion

1. Irwin (2012) showed that African–American students who were more capable of social and interpersonal interaction revealed more resilience in the face of stressful events. Kinman and Grant (2010), in a research conducted on 240 people, showed that there is a significant positive relationship between resilience and occupational and environmental stressful conditions.
2. There is a significant relationship between neuroticism and mental resilience. To test this hypothesis, Pearson correlation test was used. The null hypothesis in this test is zero correlation coefficient (no relation). If the significance level of the test is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, i.e. there is a relation between variables. Distribution graph is plotted, showing a significant relationship. Pearson correlation coefficient is equal to 0.205, and the significance level is 0.012. Given that the significance level of Pearson test is less than 0.05, variables' independency is rejected, i.e. there is a significant positive correlation between mental resilience and neuroticism.

In similar studies, the following results were obtained: Shafi'zadeh (2012), determining the relationship between resiliency and five main factors of personality, showed that resiliency has a significant negative correlation with neuroticism.

3. There is a significant relationship between extraversion and mental resilience. To test this hypothesis, Pearson correlation test was used. The null hypothesis in this test is zero correlation coefficient (no relation). If the significance level of the test is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, i.e. there is a relation between variables. Distribution graph is plotted, showing a significant relationship. Pearson correlation coefficient is equal to 0.295, and the significance level is 0.001. Given that the significance level of Pearson test is less than 0.05, variables' independency is rejected, i.e. there is a significant positive correlation between mental resilience and extraversion. In similar studies, the following results were obtained: Shafi'zadeh (2012), determining the relationship between resiliency and five main factors of personality, showed that there is a significant positive correlation between resiliency and extraversion. Consistent with this hypothesis, a strong positive correlation was observed between extraversion and resiliency, covering positive emotional style, intimate interpersonal relationships, and high levels of interaction and social activity (Togid and Fredrickson, 2004). These findings are consistent with the findings of Besharat (2007), Langva (2002), Togid and Fredrickson (2004) and Heminver (2003). In explaining this relationship, it can be said that positive emotions increase

active efforts to confront stress and can promote the belief that efforts are successful (Besharat, 2007).

4. There is a significant relationship between openness and mental resilience. To test this hypothesis, Pearson correlation test was used. The null hypothesis in this test is zero correlation coefficient (no relation). If the significance level of the test is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, i.e. there is a relation between variables. Distribution graph is plotted, showing a significant relationship. Pearson correlation coefficient is equal to 0.018, and the significance level is 0.831. Given that the significance level of Pearson test is larger than 0.05, variables' independency is not rejected, i.e. there is not a significant correlation between mental resilience and openness. In similar studies, the following results were obtained: Shafi'zadeh (2012), determining the relationship between resiliency and five main factors of personality, showed that there is not a significant correlation between resiliency and openness.
5. There is a significant relationship between agreement and mental resilience. The null hypothesis in this test is zero correlation coefficient (no relation). If the significance level of the test is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, i.e. there is a relation between variables. Distribution graph is plotted, showing a significant relationship. Pearson correlation coefficient is equal to 0.256, and the significance level is 0.002. Given that the significance level of Pearson test is less than 0.05, variables' independency is rejected, i.e. there is a significant positive correlation between mental resilience and agreement. In similar studies, the following results were obtained: Shafi'zadeh (2012), determining the relationship between resiliency and five main factors of personality, showed that there is not a significant correlation between resiliency and agreement.
6. There is a significant relationship between consciousness and mental resilience. The null hypothesis in this test is zero correlation coefficient (no relation). If the significance level of the test is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, i.e. there is a relation between variables. Distribution graph is plotted, showing a significant relationship. Pearson correlation coefficient is equal to 0.20, and the significance level is 0.014. Given that the significance level of Pearson test is less than 0.05, variables' independency is rejected, i.e. there is a significant correlation between mental resilience and consciousness. In similar studies, the following results were obtained: Shafi'zadeh (2012), determining the relationship between resiliency and five main factors of personality, showed that there is a significant positive correlation between resiliency and consciousness. These findings are consistent with

the findings of Besharat (2007), Langva (2002), Campbell-Sils, Kuhn, and Stein (2006), and Panly, Tumaco, and VIP (2003).

7. There is a significant relationship between personality traits and mental resilience. To test this hypothesis, simultaneous regression analysis was used. Multiple-correlation coefficient is 0.412, and coefficient of determination is 0.17. The coefficient of determination indicates the explained variance by the model. The numerical value of the coefficient of determination is 0 to 1. The closer this value to 1, stronger is the relationship of the model. Shafi'zadeh (2012), determining the relationship between resiliency and five main factors of personality, found the following results: resilience has a strong negative relationship with neuroticism and positive relationship with extraversion and conscientiousness. And there is not a significant relationship between resilience and openness and agreement. Regression analysis showed that only neuroticism is a significant predictor of resilience in this group.

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EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING LIFE SKILLS IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

In 1997 outcomes - based education (OBE) was introduced to overcome curricular divisions of the past, within the basic education system of post – democratic South Africa; but the experience of implementation prompted a review in 2000. This led to the first revision: the Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R - 9 and, the National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 (2002). The National Curriculum Statement represents a policy statement for learning and teaching in post - apartheid South Africa and, comprises of Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) for all subjects. This article reports on a part of a study that sought to identify, what are foundation phase educators' perceptions of teaching Life Skills, subjects to CAPS guidelines. A qualitative research approach was used, making use of a case study design. Participants were purposely selected using non-probability sampling. Semi-structured interviews and diaries were used as data collection methods.

The authors are woefully aware that the sample size in this study was extremely small and narrow and, therefore, not representative of all schools in South Africa or for that matter, the Province of KwaZulu Natal. This could be criticized by other researchers, but we posit that, it is an important study irrespective of the sample size, in order to make plausible inferences because, not many studies of this nature have been conducted in South Africa, concerning

this important subject matter, in terms of educator perceptions of teaching life skills, in the foundation phase within South African schools.

However, the study lends itself to finite extrapolations and, sets the trajectory of understanding this complex issue, in terms of the reconstruction and, transformation of basic education, in post – apartheid South Africa. More importantly, the study will allow other researchers to conduct more in - depth research and studies, on this important and fascinating subject and topic, in the quest of transforming and reconstructing South African basic education. It also contributes to the historical perspective, in terms of educators' perceptions of teaching life skills in the foundation phase in South African schools, in terms of the exercises of curriculum change and engineering, conducted by the democratic South African government to determine, the best education model within the foundation phase in South African Schools. This will emanate, in terms of learnt and necessary experience, in this regard. It was also an honest effort and attempt by the democratic government to remedy the past historical imbalances, created by apartheid ideology over five decades of repressive Nationalist Party rule. Taking all of this into consideration, the narrative contributes to an understanding of government education policy within the realm of South African basic education, post - apartheid.

The data from this study revealed that educators felt challenged in terms of the content, planning and preparation, assessment and dealing with contextual factors in the classroom. It was also found that educators felt that, there was a lack of sufficient training and support in implementing the new Life Skills curriculum. However, a positive view expressed by educators was that they enjoyed teaching Life Skills subjects to CAPS guidelines. It was also found that educators welcomed and embraced the curriculum change, in post – democratic South Africa.

Key Words: Educators, Perceptions, Teaching, Life - Skills, Foundation Phase, Curriculum, Assessment, Basic Education, Training, Policy, Apartheid, Historical

1. INTRODUCTION

The national curriculum is the culmination of efforts by the South African Government over a period of 17 years to transform the curriculum bequeathed to them by apartheid. Curriculum change directly affects educators, who are at the forefront of service delivery. This study therefore, served to explore how educators perceive the CAPS Life Skills curriculum in South Africa.

The curriculum under the apartheid system was replaced with Curriculum 2005 (C2005) in 1997 (Three years after democracy in 1994), in an attempt to remediate the injustices of the past through an outcomes-based curriculum reform process (Cross, Mungadi and Rouhani, 2002, p.1). C2005, which was later revised to form the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), was the vehicle through which OBE was introduced in South Africa (Rooth, 2005, p. 36). Outcomes - based education (OBE) being a new approach, required a paradigm shift in teaching and learning styles, as well as a change in the approach to teaching and learning (Rooth, 2005, p. 31). Educators had to re - orientate their thinking, teaching methods and practices, in line with the demands of an OBE framework for education. However, the experience of implementation prompted a review in 2000. On-going implementation challenges resulted in another review in 2009.

From 2012, the Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 in 2000 and the National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 in 2002 were combined into a single document known as the National Curriculum Statements Grades R-12. The National curriculum Statement Grades R-12 represents a policy statement for teaching and learning in South Africa and comprises of Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) for all approved subjects.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study investigates how grade one educators' perceive the Life Skills curriculum as well as the challenges they experience with curriculum change. Goodson's (2001) framework of the processes of change and, Markee's (1997) model of curriculum change are used in an attempt to, understand the approach used in implementing the CAPS Life Skills curriculum and, how this approach affects educators' perceptions of curriculum change. Dewey's (1938) theory of experience is used to understand grade one educators' perceptions of teaching the CAPS Life Skills curriculum.

The study was located in the interpretivist paradigm of Ponterotto (2005, p.3) whereby, “the nature of truth is subjective.” This study is focused on educators’ perceptions which are subjective in nature thus, making this paradigm appropriate for this study. The ontological assumption of the interpretivist paradigm is that, there are multiple realities and that realities differ amongst time, place and context. Schutte (2006, p. 430) explains interpretivism by stating that “reality is socially constructed and that the goal of research is to understand the meaning that people give to reality.” In this study, the multiple realities of educators will be researched in terms of their perceptions of the CAPS Life Skills curriculum. Since this study is primarily concerned with educators’ perceptions of teaching the Life Skills curriculum, the interpretivistic paradigm therefore, forms the framework for understanding educators’ perceptions of teaching the Life Skills curriculum.

According to Goodson (2001, p.45), three processes occur whenever a change occurs. These processes occur “internally, externally and personally. The internal process involves change agents within the school setting. This can be the principal, head of departments or any other stakeholder involved in the life of the school. These change agents initiate and promote change within an external framework of support and sponsorship” From a curriculum perspective, internal changes occur within the school setting whereby, the policies of the school are changed to accommodate the change in curriculum. This means that there needs to be a change from OBE to CAPS within the school and its practices. The external process of change involves the top down approach of implementing change. This is done through the introduction of policies and procedures. The external process of change has already occurred whereby the Department of Education has made the CAPS policy compulsory in all schools. This was done using a top down approach.

The process of personal change “refers to the personal beliefs and missions that individuals bring to the change process” (Goodson, 2001, p.45). Personal change involves changing one’s beliefs, attitudes and behaviours in order to undergo the process of change. In order for the change from OBE to CAPS to occur, educators have to re-align their thinking, their beliefs about teaching and learning, their attitude towards the curriculum as well as their behaviour.

Curriculum changes are most often based on a model and Markee’s (1997) models of curriculum change will be used as a lens to understand the approach used in implementing the change to CAPS in South Africa. For the purpose of this research study, Markee’s (1997)

Research Development and Diffusion model will be discussed in order to understand the approach used in implementing the curriculum change to CAPS. This model makes use of a top down approach to innovation; it follows a linear pattern whereby, a curriculum innovation is researched, new curricular materials are then developed and diffused to educators for implementation. This model employs an open-mechanistic leadership style as opposed to a mechanistic style of leadership, based on the idea that change is initiated by some central agency which is then introduced to the target audience who are expected to implement the change (Naicker, 1998. p.35).

OBE and CAPS are examples where an RDD model of curriculum innovation was used. OBE was a mandated curriculum introduced by the Department of Education based on empirical research that, OBE would be a successful curriculum. OBE was researched, planned and developed, piloted and then implemented. Educators did not have a choice in whether or not they wanted to implement this curriculum thus, leaving educators with no power and no voice. "The introduction of the CAPS curriculum was done using the expertise of a Ministerial Task team who reviewed the old curriculum and, designed a new curriculum that will address the gaps and problem areas of the previous curriculum" (Department of Basic Education, 2011b, p. 3). The newly designed curriculum was then introduced to all schools using a top down approach. Top down approaches are not readily accepted by educators, which makes the RDD model not suitable for effective curriculum change in the South African context.

According to Davis (2009, p. 17), "this model assumes that the teaching content is transferable from one situation to the next." In the South African context we are faced with a diversity of learners who come from various backgrounds and teaching, and that also, learning occurs in various contexts. What works for one school may not necessarily mean that it will work for all schools. Naicker (1998, 37) points out that "this model also has its advantages in that, it allows for structure and uniformity in all South African schools." Naicker (1998, p.37) also states that "It can be an efficient way to ensure that the central government is in control of the happenings at grassroots level." The OBE Life Orientation curriculum was taught by all schools in the country using the same policy document however, there is no certainty with regards to the standardisation of the content from school to school.

Dewey's (1938) "theory of experience forms the framework for understanding educator's perceptions of the CAPS Life Skills curriculum" in this study. Dewey (1938, pp 44-45) "identifies two principles of experience namely continuity and interaction.

The principle of continuity states that a good or bad experience will have an impact on how the educator deals with the CAPS curriculum (Dewey, 1938)." Change will therefore, be welcomed or resisted. "Continuity also refers to the knowledge and skill gained in the past, can be, useful in the future, however if knowledge has changed, it will affect one's experience with new knowledge" (Dewey, 1938). From a curriculum perspective, all the teaching habits that were used in the past, may not necessarily be effective for new curricular. It has also been pointed out that "the continuity principle also attempts to discriminate between experiences that are educationally worthwhile and those that are of value to an education system" (Dewey, 1938, p.44). Those experiences that added value to one's personal growth as an educator will continue to add value to one's current practices. An educator's interaction with the curriculum will influence the experiences they have in the delivery of the curriculum. An educator that has good knowledge of the curriculum will have a good experience of delivering and teaching the curriculum.

3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Since the introduction of CAPS, there have been workshops and training sessions conducted by the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Department of Education to equip educators to teach Life Skills, a subject in the CAPS curriculum. However, grade one educators voiced the challenges they experienced with teaching Life Skills. The purpose of this study was therefore to explore grade one educators' perceptions of teaching the CAPS Life Skills curriculum.

4. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY

The Life Skills subject as the name suggests, teaches skills for life and involves the holistic development of learners in which they develop the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that, empower them to make informed decisions regarding their health, social development, personal and physical development" (Department of Education, 2002b, p. 4). This means that learners are equipped with the essential knowledge, skills and behaviours that will assist them in their daily living. The job of a Life Skills educator is to equip learners to take their rightful place in society with these acquired skills. In order to teach these skills, educators need to be trained in teaching the Life Skills subject and implementing, curriculum requirements effectively. A study of this nature therefore provides insight into the

implementation of the CAPS Life Skills curriculum by grade one educators, which can be beneficial to school Principals and the Department of Basic Education's policy makers, who are in a position to implement proper structures and procedures to assist these educators to cope with challenges involving curriculum change. In this way, educators can be empowered to effectively teach life skills and equip their learners to take their rightful place in society with these acquired skills.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study is to explore educators' perceptions of the CAPS Life Skills curriculum which are largely subjective in nature. 'Soft' data is collected in qualitative studies" (Neuman, 2006, p.151). This is in the form of sentences, words, impressions, phrases and so on.

A sample is a group of participants from whom data is collected (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010, p. 129). Flick (2007, p.27) further added that "sampling is not only focused on selection of participants, but also on the selection of the sites in which the participants can be found." The selected site for the selection of participants was a Primary School in the Pinetown District in KwaZulu-Natal. There are seven grade one units at this school (Grade 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E, 1F and 1G).

For the purpose of this research project, non-probability sampling was used. "In non-probability sampling, the researcher has no way of forecasting or guaranteeing that, each element of the population will be represented in the sample" (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005, p.206). "Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling whereby, researchers 'handpick' the participants that, will serve an important 'purpose' in the study and, are chosen based on the needs of the study" (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2000, p.103). The sample in this research study comprised of five out of seven grade one educators who are currently teaching the CAPS Life Skills curriculum. This was done as a precautionary measure because, in the event of an educator withdrawing from the study, a replacement was and would be available. Credibility in this study was ensured by using more than one data collection method namely, interviews and diaries. The reason for selecting grade one educators is that, these educators serve a pivotal foundational role in the education of children. A grade one educator is responsible for moulding and developing learners as they begin their schooling career. Since CAPS has only been implemented this year, grade one educators were, one of the first to experience this curriculum change. The current grade one learners would be the first group of learners to complete twelve years of schooling under the

CAPS curriculum. It was therefore appropriate to explore the experiences of the first cohort of grade one educators in implementing the CAPS curriculum.

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison, (2011, p.219) “qualitative research gives a voice to the participants and, has the capability to probe for information that lie below the surface of presenting behaviours and actions.” The qualitative research approach was the most appropriate for a study of this nature. Flick (2007, p. 1) explains “qualitative research as an intention to approach the world ‘out there’, and to understand, describe and explain social phenomena ‘from the inside’”. This was done in this study whereby, educators’ perceptions of the CAPS Life Skills curriculum were analysed. An analysis was done of the interaction and communication between the researcher and the participant during the interview process. The document analysed in this research study was the diary of participants. This study thus attempted to understand, describe and explain the phenomenon of educators’ perceptions of the new Life Skills curriculum using methods that provided rich data for this study.

Neuman (2006, p. 151) maintains that “qualitative research speaks a language of ‘cases’ and ‘contexts’. They emphasize conducting detailed examinations of cases that arise in the natural flow of social life” This study involved a detailed exploration of educators’ perceptions of teaching life skills in its natural setting, being the school. McMillan and Schumacher (2010, p. 485) define “a case study as a study that “examines a bounded system (that is, case) over time in detail, employing multiple sources of data found in the setting.” Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p. 289) state that “case studies are a study of real people in real situations, can be used to establish cause and effect and, one of their strengths is that, they observe effects in real contexts.” A case study was appropriate for this study due to the fact that this study aimed at obtaining data from grade one educators who formed the case for this study. Two methods of data collection namely interviews and diaries allowed the researchers to get an in depth account of educators’ real life experiences of the CAPS Life Skills Curriculum. The case study design also allowed the data that is produced to be contextualised to the school setting. Grade one educators’ experiences were thus contextualised in their school.

For the purpose of this study, a single case design was used. Yin (2009, p.46) defines this “as a study that is focussed on a single, unique, critical or revelatory case.” The single case design used in this study was grade one educators’ perceptions of the CAPS Life Skills curriculum, which is largely revelatory since this is a new phenomenon in South African

schools. Since this research study focused on a selected group of individuals and, how they experience a new phenomenon, a case study design was appropriate.

The strength of case study research as identified by Merriam (1998, p.32) is that “it can investigate complex social units which consist of multiple variables that can assist in understanding the phenomenon better. The school can be seen as a social setting and there are many variables in a school setting that affect the experiences of educators.” This strength of the case study design can work in favour of this research study whereby, the variables that affect teaching and learning will be brought forth through looking at grade one educators’ experiences of the CAPS Life Skills curriculum. A further strength is that, “a case study design can provide rich and holistic accounts of the phenomenon studied” (Merriam, 1998, p.33). For a study of this nature, rich and holistic data was required in order to fully understand the perceptions of educators which are subjective in nature generally.

Transferability refers to the degree to which the results obtained from the research study can be generalised to a wider population, case or situation (Cohen et al, 2002, p.109). Maree (2007, p. 298) states that “interpretive studies aim at providing a rich description of perceptions and therefore, the aim is not to generalise. This research study is embedded in the interpretive paradigm and therefore, aimed at understanding the subjective realities of participants in a particular setting and therefore, generalisations could not be made to other contexts thus, ensuring transferability of the data. Data collected through diaries do not allow for generalisations to be made. It is thus important to state that, the data presented in this study is not fixed and will vary from person to person as well as situations.

In order to ensure dependability in this study, the researcher provided a detailed description of the processes involved in the research, “therefore enabling future researchers to conduct studies of a similar nature in order to get the same results” (Shenton, 2004, p. 71). Shenton (2004, p.71) further suggests “the use of ‘overlapping methods’ to ensure dependability.” This study employed the use of semi-structured interviews and diaries in order to obtain data about educators’ experiences. These two methods measured the same phenomenon thereby, ensuring that the findings were reliable. The data produced by the measuring instruments were also organised into common themes to provide reliable findings.

Whenever human beings are the focus of investigation, a closer look at the ethical implications is required (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005, p. 101). There are four broad categories

of ethical issues to be considered in research (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005, p.101). Participants in this research study were not exposed to any form of harm, risks or situations that disadvantaged them. The identity of the participants was kept confidential throughout the entire process of the study. Participants were asked to provide written consent. The consent form outlined the topic, the aims and purpose of the research, the participant's role in the research, the data collection procedure as well as personal details of the researcher. Participants were also informed that, their participation is voluntary and that they may at any time during the course of the research terminate / withdraw their consent. Permission was also obtained from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education to conduct research at the selected site. Written permission was sought from the school principal in order to conduct research at the selected school.

6. Findings

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO EDUCATORS PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING LIFE SKILLS IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE.

6.1. CURRICULUM CHANGE

Changes evoke emotions and emotions affect our behaviour. Pillay (2006, p.65) stated that "people experience a sense of comfort and security and a feeling of importance with familiar routines and surroundings. If we are taken out of this comfort zone, we immediately feel insecure and uncomfortable." Rooth (2005, p.48) agrees with this statement by stating that "change is a process that may be uncomfortable for some people." "New routines and changes threaten the feeling of comfort and security" (Pillay, 2006, p.65). People then become resistant to change due to their emotional state. A change from a familiar curriculum to an unfamiliar curriculum can therefore lead to discomfort and insecurity. This may even lead to resistance to change. Makhwathana (2007, p.7) further states that "whenever there is a curriculum change, educators often develop certain behaviours in order to defend themselves from the changes that need to occur. "They become anti-everything and everyone who talks about the new curriculum" (Makhwathana, 2007, p.7). This leads to rebellious behaviour. According to Wood and Olivier (2007, p. 182), "educators who have a high level of self-efficacy are more open to change, and are willing to change. Educators with low self-efficacy levels are resistant to change."

Pillay (2006, p. 65) believes that “change and stress are related. Educators, especially in the South African context experience high levels of stress due to various contextual factors facing the schooling sector. In addition to this, constant change in the curriculum adds to this stress. Confusion is an emotion caused when educators are unsure of how to implement a curriculum change. This confusion then leads to stress which results in a negative attitude towards the process of change.”

Makhwathana (2007, p.50) revealed that “a high number of educators believe that there is sometimes a need for curriculum changes. Naicker (1998, p. 103) found that “educators felt that curriculum change was inevitable and significant in a progressive society.” Makhwathana’s (2007, p.51) study also revealed that “educators felt good upon hearing about curriculum changes that were going to occur.” Panday (2007, p. 19) found that “educators saw themselves as change agents and had to force themselves to think about the practical aspects of curriculum change in order to successfully implement the curriculum.” Participants in Naicker’s (1998, p. 104) study stated that “they were unsure of how to make sense of curriculum changes because of everything happening so quickly.” The main concern for participants in Russel’s (1998, p.2) study was that “they needed more time to understand the language of change. A drastic change in curriculum, such as the introduction of new subjects often leave educators, feeling less confident in the teaching of the subject; not being trained to teach the subject.” “They are afraid of starting new things which may result in failure to reach the expected standard” (Makhwathana, 2007, p.8). The change from life orientation in OBE to the CAPS Life Skills curriculum can be seen as a drastic change for many educators and can thus, lead to many feelings and emotions which can affect their perception of the new curriculum.

6.2. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Educator qualifications and teaching experience in the Life Skills area played a significant role in this study as it provided rich data for the second research question addressing the reasons for educators perceiving the curriculum the way they did. If educators are not specialists in teaching Life Skills, then they are bound to have different personal and classroom perceptions than those that are qualified and experienced.

Only one of the educators interviewed indicated that she is a specialist Life Skills educator. Whilst conducting interviews, the interviewer also found that educators were unsure of

whether they are specialist educators in the subject of Life Skills. This meant that educators were unsure of the term 'specialist educator' as is reflected by participants' responses below:

Interviewer: "Are you a specialist Life Skills educator?"

Participant 1: "What do you mean by that?"

Interviewer: "Are you a specialist Life Skills educator?"

Participant 2: "I'd say yes because with the Foundation Phase now you integrating Life Skills, Literacy and Numeracy. Integrating Life Skills in Maths and English."

One of the participants in this study stated that the only reason that she is teaching Life Skills is because, it is part of the curriculum as is reflected by the participant's response below:

Interviewer: "Are you a qualified Life Skills educator? Have you been trained to teach Life Skills?"

Participant 1: "No. I'm just teaching it...Because it's part of the curriculum."

Findings by Rooth (2005) and Christiaans (2006) revealed that "Life Skills was taught by a spectrum of educators who were not specialists nor unqualified." The current status at schools is that educators are assigned to teach Life Skills not because of their qualifications, but because of the needs of the school. Christiaans (2006, p.137) "questioned the effectiveness of assigning any educator to teach Life Skills and, whether these educators would be able to teach positively and develop an interest in this learning area. Assigning unqualified and inexperienced educators to teach Life Skills creates the impression that Life Skills is not important. This lowers the value of this subject in the curriculum. An educator who teaches Life Skills should have certain knowledge, skills and values that are essential when teaching skills for life. Thlabane (2004) "identified skills that educators should have and Christiaans (2008) "identified three kinds of competencies that educators ought to have. These are practical competence, foundational competence and reflexive competence." Undoubtedly, educators without these knowledge and skills will experience difficulty in effectively implementing the CAPS curriculum.

When viewed through the theoretical lenses of the theory of experience, particularly the principle of continuity, three of the educators in this study were able to use their past

teaching experience in the OBE curriculum and, adapt it to the new curriculum. Educators trained in the Foundation Phase and who are specialists in the field would be able to use, modify and adapt their specialised skills in the teaching of any curriculum. In this study, educators that taught the OBE life orientation were in a better position to implement the CAPS Life Skills curriculum by using, modifying and adapting their OBE knowledge and skills to the CAPS curriculum.

7. REFLECTIONS

Through the use of a diary, educators reflected on their experiences of teaching Life Skills. Educators in this study reflected only on their actions after teaching had taken place. In their diaries, educators specifically reflected on the outcome of the lesson but did not reflect on their teaching methods and strategies. Educators did not evaluate how their teaching methods and strategies affected the outcome of their actions on their learners' learning. Educators also did not make attributions for their successes or failures. This is illustrated in the diary excerpts below:

Participant 4

| Day 1 | |
|---|-----------|
| Lesson Topic: Stranger danger | Duration: |
| Reflection: | |
| Stranger danger was discussed, and learners were aware of not talking to strangers, locking up doors and gates etc and not entertaining any strangers. Learners listened attentively to a story based on stranger danger. They were able to answer questions related to the story. I found that learners were unable to really express themselves as I was mainly talking (during the discussion) and asking questions, the learners were just answering e.g.: must we jump into a stranger's car | |
| Learners: No. | |

Participant 2

| Day 1 | |
|---|------------------|
| Lesson Topic: My senses | Duration: 60 min |
| Reflection: | |
| Learners were excited when they had to use their five senses and imagine what they would like to see, hear, smell, touch, taste. Learners took turns to say what they would like. Learners were experimental with their senses. | |

It would appear from this study that educators did not holistically reflect on their teaching and learning experiences in the classroom. Holistic reflections after every lesson can lead to growth and development in teaching and learning. If educators do not reflect on teaching and learning, they would be grounded in their current practices without being able to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Educators need to be able to explain the decisions made in the classroom as well as the actions taken. Reflective practice as defined by Lyons (1998, p.115) is the way in which educators interrogate their teaching practice, question the effectiveness of their teaching as well as how it can be refined to meet the needs of learners. As an educator, it is important to reflect on one's teaching methods, styles, and approaches, the content of the lesson, resources used, relevance of the lesson and the success or failure of the lesson as a whole. Reflection of this nature will allow the educator to assess the success or the failure of the lesson as well, as determine strengths and weaknesses of his / her teaching. When viewed through the lens of Dewey's (1938) theory; "those educators who do not attempt to reflect and, in so doing, discriminate between past teaching experiences that were educationally worthwhile and those that were of value" (Dewey, 1938, p. 44), face the risk of their experiences not leading to personal growth.

7.1. TEACHING

In and when exploring educator perceptions of teaching Life Skills, all the participants indicated during the interview process that, they enjoyed teaching the subject. Two out of the five educators indicated during the interviews that they liked the new Life Skills curriculum and, explained as follows:

"I like the fact that, it gives learners variety in the day. They are not chained to their desks the entire time. They get to go outside...you know more freedom" (Participant 5).

"I think there's music and dance, there's different things. You not just teach Life Skills" (Participant 4).

Data revealed the following aspects that were enjoyed by educators:

- Creativity in lesson planning whereby educators could do different things with learners. *"It's not the same boring stuff as with OBE"* (Participant 5).

- Learners were interested in the lessons. Learners found Life Skills to be an exciting subject unlike Literacy and Numeracy. *"You can see that they are excited when it comes to singing and clapping and drawing"* (Participant 2).

"Life Skills seems to be more exciting for them than the ordinary Numeracy and Literacy" (Participant 3).

- Life Skills allow educators to teach concepts in relation to their learners' environment thus making it relevant and of a personal nature. *"You touch a personal button in them"* (Participant 3).
- The content is liked by educators especially the new areas introduced in CAPS (that is, Creative Arts, Personal Wellbeing, Beginners Knowledge and Physical Education). *"I think the music and dance, there are different things. You not just teach Life Skills"* (Participant 4).
- Educators teaching Life Skills that will empower their learners for life.
"It's getting the children to learn Life Skills in life...empowering them with Life Skills" (Participant 2).

Semi-structured interviews also revealed the following positive experiences of teaching Life Skills:

"When I did the senses with the children, and I did sound. I told them to close their eyes and I had a ball. So when I dropped the ball, so I asked them was it the right hand or the left hand side, where did you hear the ball fall? And they were so interested in this because they couldn't figure out if that was the right ear or left ear they heard something. And also with the senses, I took the blindfold and they had to taste different things. That was also very good. They enjoyed that" (Participant 1).

"The good experience was that half the class showed an understanding about care of the body. They were really interested" (Participant 3).

Educators' diaries also revealed that learners also thoroughly enjoyed lessons in which they were actively involved such as movement, visual arts, music and crafts. Most learners were

not shy to participate in activities and, most learners seemed confident in their ability to perform tasks. Educators also indicated in their diaries that learners responded eagerly to questions asked by the educator. All the educators indicated that the children enjoyed their lessons because they were very attentive, responsive and excited to engage in various tasks as illustrated by participant 4 in the statement below:

“They have fun especially with movements and stuff.” (Participant 4)

Interviews with educators in this study have also revealed that educators enjoy interacting with the CAPS Life Skills curriculum. They have found the structure and the content appealing and enjoyable. They also enjoy the response from learners. If educators enjoy teaching the lessons, learners will enjoy learning from the lesson. At grade one level, the task of any educator is to ensure that learning is fun and enjoyable. It is important that educators find enjoyment in their teaching. Panday (2007, p.8) states that “Emotions are dynamic parts of every individual and teaching is no exception.” Enjoyment can be regarded as a positive emotion. Some educators in Rooth’s (2005, p.259) study indicated that they “received job satisfaction when teaching Life Orientation (LO). They found the subject to be worthwhile and meaningful. Added to this success is the high incidence of confidence and respect that was developed in learners” Some learners according to Rooth (2005, p. 259) “did show an interest in the subject and responded positively. It was also found that learners responded well to participatory and interactive methods used to teach Life Orientation” (Rooth, 2005, p.260). One can thus conclude that, “if teachers feel positive about the expected changes, they will be eager and committed to implement these changes” (Panday, 2007, p.9).

7.2. LESSON PLANNING

Lesson planning forms the foundation for teaching and learning and therefore, plays a crucial role in determining educators’ perceptions of the new curriculum. The following challenges were identified by educators with regards to planning Life Skills lessons:

- Searching for tasks and activities
- Obtaining resources for teaching and learning
- Finding content for the lessons

The excerpts below confirm these challenges:

"It's finding the correct information for the lesson and sticking to the content that they gave us" (Participant 5).

"It is difficult because we don't have it in our books, we have to research it, go to the internet, library and have to look at other books... They just give one guideline example my family, it's for you now to break it down and work on that" (Participant 1).

"We don't have enough resource material" (Participant 3).

Four out of the five respondents felt that the process of planning and preparation was a difficult task. They indicated that planning was not a straight-forward process and, was time consuming. Educators had to research topics through the library or internet to find suitable content to plan their lessons. Educators also had to come up with their own teaching aids, as is revealed by educators' statements below:

"It's not too easy. You can't just look at it and plan. You have to do a little bit of work" (Participant 4).

"It is difficult because we don't have it in our books, we have to research it, go on to internet, and library and, have to look at other books...it takes a bit longer because you are researching it" (Participant 1).

"It is difficult because you have to go and find additional information. Whatever the topic is, or your theme, you have to find the content for it and, make up your lesson...it takes a lot longer than before" (Participant 5).

"No, it's a bit difficult because it's different from the normal mundane thing. Like you have to come up with more teaching aids...it's difficult and costly, you have to look out for more teaching aids, more research" (Participant 3).

Lesson planning and preparation is pivotal for effective teaching and learning. In planning, educators need to design tasks, obtain resources and content for the lesson taking into consideration learners needs, learning styles, prior knowledge and inclusivity. Magano (2009, p.13) stated that "the quality of educators' decisions and efforts in lesson planning are

largely dependent on creativity of educators and their ability to apply learning and instructional theories. If educators don't have the knowledge of learning and instructional theories, they will be unable to plan effective lessons that accommodate for various learners' needs." Magano (2009, p.15) stated that "lesson planning and preparation does take a lot of time because there are a lot of decisions to be made about the sequence, content, methods, activities and the time for activities." Educators in this study felt that the CAPS policy document was somewhat helpful when planning lessons.

7.3. Lesson Content

When exploring educators' perceptions of the lesson content in the new curriculum, data revealed that, educators experienced a variety of content and enjoyed the flexibility of the content. There are, however, aspects of the curriculum that educators did not like. The data revealed that educators' in this study felt that, the content was appropriate but the level of the content was too high for that particular grade. The content was also not found to be contextually relevant. Educators felt that:

- The Life Skills curriculum has too many abstract areas (Participant 3).
- The content is too difficult for children to understand. Dinosaurs and extinct animals are examples of difficult topics as identified by educators. Learners are unfamiliar with these topics and therefore, have difficulties learning the content. This is illustrated in the excerpts below:

"Out of the 20 topics there, I think about 15 is appropriate...maybe we should do current things, topics that children can understand...maybe make it things that happen in their environment" (Participant 2).

"I think they don't really understand....you can try and explain to them but you have to use pictures and really explain to them" (Participant 4).

"It's a bit too difficult...for grade one" (Participant 4).

"I think the content is appropriate but the level of the content is a bit too high in grade one...so maybe if the content could be basic and maybe in grade two you could go further with the same content" (Participant 5).

"I think the bad were just that they don't really understand all the time. Trying to get them to understand" (Participant 4).

"It's more difficult for the children to understand" (Participant 2).

"It's too hard" (Participant 3).

- Children could not relate to the content. This is illustrated in the excerpts below:
"Learners were a little disruptive and bored as they could not relate to most appliances and homes" (Participant 2).

"...they don't have knowledge about it...if you teaching them about the fly or the butterfly, it's a bit difficult because they don't have knowledge about that" (Participant 1).

"Learners were not really interested as they couldn't identify with many animals...limited knowledge also resulted in no interest in to the topic" (Participant 2).

"This topic also did not capture too much interest. Learners could not identify with places like Table Mountain, Robben Island or Ushaka" (Participant 2).

"When we discuss extinct animals, the children cannot identify" (Participant 3).

- One of the educators did not like the Creative Arts area of Life Skills due to the large number of songs that are required in the syllabus (Participant 1).

Tlhabane (2004, p.91) found "educators experienced problems with the content, structure and skills for implementing the Life Orientation programmes and, were uncertain about how to identify relevant concepts for each learning outcome in Life Orientation. The content of any curriculum is the most important aspect to be considered when designing curriculum, especially in the South African context where inclusive education has become mandatory.

The content of any curriculum needs to be meaningful, relevant, contextual and purposeful. According to Van Deventer (2009b, p.128), "Teachers will resent having to teach Life Orientation if they are not knowledgeable about the content." A topic such as dinosaurs may

not be contextually relevant to learners, however it adds to the learner's general knowledge of the world. Educators need to find ways to contextualise the content.

However, Christiaan's (2006, p.141) found "the content of Life Orientation programmes to be relatively easy and in cases where they were unsure, their life experiences compensated for their lack of knowledge." This was not the case in this study. When viewed through Dewey's (1938) "theory of experience and, his principle of continuity, it was evident that educators, did not utilise the knowledge that, they had gained in the past in compensating for their difficulties experienced with regards to the new content in the CAPS Life Skills curriculum.

7.4. Resources

Educators in this study also revealed that they experienced difficulty with regards to the provision of sufficient resources for the CAPS Life Skills curriculum. In areas such as art, educators don't have items such as paint brushes, paint and pastels. Some educators bring their own resources to use in the classroom and, others share resources. One of the educators felt that the school should take the initiative to raise funds, in order to purchase resources for teaching. From the responses in this study concerning educators' challenging experiences in the area of resources, it appears that the Department of Education's plan (Department of Education, 2011b, p. 17) "to ensure that every school has resources to teach the CAPS Life Skills curriculum" has not materialised as yet.

Negative experiences around resources still remain a problem in many South African schools. Research conducted by Rooth (2005), Van Deventer and, Van Niekerk (2009) and Panday (2007) have shown that, "resources in the form of teaching and learning material is one of the major challenges faced by educators in the teaching of Life Skills. Educators in Panday's (2007, p.20) study believed that "the proper implementation of Life Orientation and Life Skills depends to a large extent on the availability of good resource material." This study revealed that educators are still experiencing challenges around resources with the CAPS Life Skills curriculum.

7.5. Teaching Methods

Data from the diaries revealed that educators explored the use of various methods in teaching the new Life Skills curriculum as reflected by their responses below:

- Role-play - *“Learners role-played their actions, for example, handshake, hug”* (Participant 2).
- Visual aids - *“The different pictures grasped their attention”* (Participant 2).
- Participatory methods - *“Learners spoke about themselves, likes and dislikes”* (Participant 4).
- Concrete objects- *“Learners were able to balance a ball on a bat and walk”* (Participant 1).
- Demonstration- *“I brought an old telephone to show learners what they used a long time ago”* (Participant 5).
- In respect to Practical exercises - *“Learners painted designs using their fingers and a sponge”* (Participant 5).
- Orals- *“They enjoyed singing and touching their body parts as they sang”* (Participant 2).

Findings from the diaries reveal that educators approached each lesson differently because of their use of a variety of different teaching methods. Data from the interviews, however, revealed that educators used mainly direct instruction and group work teaching strategies as is reflected in participants' statements below:

“First I teach the whole class... Ya direct instruction and then I go to each group and do group work and then with the weaker ones I have to sometimes sit there” (Participant 2).

“Okay, firstly, I give them the topic, and, I see how much they already know and how much they can talk about from their own environment, their own experiences.... Yes, most of the times we use direct instruction” (Participant 3).

Similar findings in Rooth's study (2005, p. 253) revealed that "methodologies used by educators were one of the most serious shortcomings of Life Orientation and is therefore a call for further urgent action." Rooth (2005, p.289) suggests "experiential learning, facilitation and group work as suitable teaching methods for Life Orientation. Although there may be various teaching methods that can be used for teaching the CAPS Life Skills curriculum, not all educators experiment with these methods." The possible reasons for this could be:

- Educators don't have knowledge of various methods and techniques for teaching Life Skills.
- Educators are too comfortable with their current methods and are therefore not willing to try other methods.
- Educators are afraid to use other methods as they are unsure of the possible outcome of using it.
- Contextual factors such as large class sizes don't allow for variety in teaching methods.

7.6. Assessment

Assessment forms a major part of teaching and learning. This study revealed that educators in this study engage in assessment at least once a month or once a week in some cases. In addition to this, an assessment is conducted at the end of the term. Assessments are either written or oral or via daily observations. The following comments were made by educators in the interviews:

"First orally, observation, checklist and then written work and with the workbook...weekly assessment but observation is every day" (Participant 2).

"They give a monthly test and I think it's a term test...we also do projects" (Participant 5).

"Sometimes you test them in class; you ask them things to see if they understand" (Participant 4).

"Maybe they will write a small test or an exam at the end of the week" (Participant 3).

The CAPS Life Skills policy document (Department of Basic Education, 2011a, p. 66) states that "assessment in the Foundation Phase should consist of one formal assessment per term and continuous informal assessments." From the above responses, it appears that

some educators may be engaging in far too many assessments per term which can be time consuming and daunting for the learners. Rooth (2005, p. 296) states, "An over-emphasis on assessment, especially of the factual type, and on product instead of process, can be detrimental to this learning area." David, Lolwana and Lazarus (2006, p. 98) state that "educators should not just assess for the sake of assessing but, should rather consider its purpose and effect.

In addition, data from this study revealed that educators experienced assessment as challenging in the following areas:

- a) Language as a barrier was identified as a challenge with assessment. This is evident in the following responses from educators in the interviews and diaries:

"I found that learners were unable to really express themselves as I was mainly talking during the discussion and, asking questions, learners were just answering" (Participant 4).

"Learners could not really communicate as they do not speak good English so I had to simplify the topic" (Participant 5).

"Some children don't know how to write, some children don't know how to speak in English" (Participant 1).

"Because the children are IsiZulu speaking, it's hard for them because they don't even know like fairy tales" (Participant 1).

"I think they don't understand the teacher because it's a second language and unless you have a picture or something...concrete to show them then they are lost" (Participant 5).

"Learners did not know English words for body parts such as chest, elbow, and eyebrow." (Participant 4)

Prinsloo's (2007, p.166) research study also found that "learners could not really grasp what was being taught due to them not being proficient in the language of instruction." According to the Department of Education (2005, p.11) "there are normally certain barriers that are associated with the language challenge. Some of these are as follows:

- Learners are forced to learn a subject in a language that is not their home language and they are not competent in using.
- Learners experience difficulty with communication.

Vandeyar and Killen (2003, p. 122) pointed out that “assessments will not be meaningful to learners who don’t have sufficient background knowledge or appropriate language skills.” Tlhabane (2004, p.88) also showed that “educators were uncertain of how to assess learners with barriers.” The CAPS policy (Department of Basic Education, 2011a, p.67) states that “educators need to accommodate all learners’ needs and design programmes to engage all learners in assessment.

b) One of the participants felt that assessment in the CAPS Life Skills curriculum was very rigid. This educator felt that assessment should be practical rather than theoretical:

“Now it’s like an exam that children have to write and have to pass” (Participant 2).

“What we are doing now is that we are testing them on theory instead of the practical part of it” (Participant 2).

Rooth (2005) showed that “educators experienced uncertainty around how to assess learners in the OBE context and Van Deventer’s (2009a, p. 472) found that “educators experienced problems with assessment.” From educators’ responses in this study, it appears that they have an idea of what form assessments should take but they are unsure if their ideas and methods are in line with the policy. According to the policy document, “the purpose of assessment in the Foundation Phase is to assess the development of concepts, skills and values that will help learners prepare for the more formal assessment in the later grades” (Department of Basic Education, 2011a, p.66). Educators in this study believed that, assessment in grade one should therefore, not be focussed on theory, but rather on practical work such as demonstrations, discussions, role-play and so on. Rooth (2005, p.296) “also concurs with the practicality of this subject.”

c) Another challenge experienced by educators is the attitude and commitment of learners towards assessment:

"I find during assessment time, some of them act as though they haven't heard the topic. They do not even complete their work most of the time" (Participant 3).

Learner apathy could be caused by many factors. Testing and assessment practices can lead to student apathy. Thompson (2008, p.54) states that "learners need to see the value of the test in order to take the test seriously."

d) Written assessments according to two participants is a challenge in the classroom as learners are unable to write proper sentences at grade one level as is reflected by educators' responses below:

"It had to be very basic like circle the correct answer, choose the correct word, match it and so on" (Participant 5).

"Some children don't know how to write, some children don't know how to speak in English" (Participant 1).

According to the CAPS policy (Department of Basic Education, 2011a, p.67), "The forms of assessment should be age and development level appropriate." Writing is a developmental skill and should therefore, not be a barrier to learning at grade one level. Learners should be assessed on the knowledge and skills that they have learnt rather on their ability to demonstrate their knowledge on paper.

8. CONTEXTUAL ISSUES

It was found during the interviews as well, as in the diaries that teachers faced many challenges that influenced their perceptions of the CAPS Life Skills curriculum:

- *Large class sizes*

"You could not do Physical Education with that entire class of 48 children. It was impossible" (Participant 5).

"Because we expected to do Life Skills with a class of 48 and Life Skills needs to be hands on. One teacher can't manage to do everything with all those learners" (Participant 5).

Research conducted by Rooth (2005) and Prinsloo (2007) revealed that “large class sizes was a problem” and findings, from this study indicate that it is still a problem that has not been addressed. Research conducted by Blatchford et al (2007, p.158) “revealed the following experiences of educators teaching large classes:

- “Educators were unable to meet the needs of learners and provide individual attention. A disadvantage of not providing individual attention is that educators are unable to identify problems and difficulties early enough to remediate the problem” (Blatchford et al, 2007, p. 158). It was also found that with larger classes, some groups don’t get enough attention.
- If an educator is unable to meet all learners’ needs, it produces negative feelings towards their own work and can lead to professional dissatisfaction.
- “Large class sizes made it difficult to do group work. When the group is too large, educators feel that some learners are neglected or can ‘freewheel’” (Blatchford et al, 2007, p.159).
- Marking, planning and assessing becomes time consuming when educators have large classes. “When the class size gets beyond a certain point, the teachers feel the time spent on marking becomes disproportionate, and there are doubts about the value of it” (Blatchford et al, 2007, p.159).
- Educators have difficulties supplying resources for a large number of pupils.
- The space is limited therefore educators are unable to do certain activities. As a result of lack of space, some educators find that they engage in less active, practical approaches to teaching and learning.
- Behaviour and discipline of large classes becomes a challenge especially when learners cannot relate to the topic.
- “Large class sizes also affect the effectiveness of teaching and the styles used for teaching. Educators are forced to adopt teaching styles that will accommodate more pupils” (Blatchford et al, 2007, p.161).

However Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2006, p.142) stated that “having bigger class sizes does not mean bad teaching and learning. The responsibility lies with the educator in exploring creative ways of dealing with this challenge.” When viewed through Dewey’s (1938) “theory of experience and his continuity principle, educators’ past experiences should equip educators with knowledge of what works and what doesn’t work in a classroom with many learners. They can continue with teaching practices that worked in the past such as discipline strategies and do away with troublesome practices such as group work. They can

use that knowledge in working with large numbers in implementing the CAPS Life Skills curriculum.”

- *Classroom space*

“...just maybe space. We have to take them outside” (Participant 4).

“I think the large number of learners. It’s difficult to work with each group” (Participant 5).

The more learners there are in a classroom, the less learning space there is. Educators are expected to create classrooms that are conducive to learning. However, a classroom that does not have space for movement is not conducive for effective learning to take place. Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2006, p. 141) stated that “the classroom space influences the possibilities for social interaction and active learning. In the South African context, classroom space cannot be controlled by the educator and is therefore a contextual factor that needs to be addressed by stakeholders in education.” “Life Skills is indeed a practical subject that involves movement. Classroom space is thus essential for Life Skills teaching and learning. A lack of classroom space limits the teaching methods that an educator can use and often educators resort to transmission methods due to a lack of space” (Rooth, 2005, p.257).

- *Learner interest and apathy*

“Sometimes you get learners on the other hand that feel that Life Skills is not important, because most of them focus on Numeracy and Literacy...When you go there for Life Skills, they feel like this is something they can have their own ways. They can relax. A relaxation subject” (Participant 3).

“...there were just a few that attempted to learn it” (Participant 4).

Rooth (2005) stated that “Life Skills and its previous constituents have always been given a low status in terms of its importance and priority in the education system.”

- *Learner discipline*

“There are children that wouldn’t want to listen, that become disruptive” (Participant 3).

“And for example songs, when the class goes out of control, it’s uncontrollable. Because they scream” (Participant 1).

Discipline is one of the major challenges that many educators are faced with especially in public schools where there are larger class sizes. These findings are related to in Prinsloo's (2007, p. 167) research study where it was found that "classes with forty or more children resulted in the educator finding it difficult to reach all the children in a short space of time." Mwamwenda (2004, p.276) stated that "large class sizes can also lead to children feeling discomfort which can lead to them misbehaving. Discomfort can be due to poor ventilation or extreme temperature in the classroom." Mwamwenda (2004, p.275) also stated that "poor discipline can be a result of immaturity. Learners at grade one level are still small, immature and playful which could be the reason for learners misbehaving."

- *Lack of parental involvement*

"Most learners did not go home and discuss with older people" (Participant 3).

"Learners were given a week to go home and ask parents to help teach this important information, however there was just a few that attempted to learn it" (Participant 4).

These responses from educators show the lack of parental involvement in their children's education. Similar findings were presented in Prinsloo's (2007), Rooth's (2005) and Van Heerden's (2008) research study. "The selected school has a population of about 400 out of 1900 learners that are OVC's (orphans and vulnerable children) and this is reflected in the response below:

"Many learners also said that grandparents and aunts live with them. Some learners have no parents, but reside with grandparents" (Participant 4).

Nojaja (2009, p.19) defined parental involvement as "the active and willing participation of parents in a wide range of school-based activities which may be educational or non-educational". Nojaja (2009, p.22) further stated that "parents are primary educators as they are involved in educating their children from birth.

- *Poverty*

"Main challenge, especially when it comes to creative activities. They also need like cutting, they need like beads, glitter and stuff like that. Not everybody has i." (Participant 2).

“Many learners come from different homes. It was difficult discussing various appliances as many learners do not have access to these” (Participant 2).

Prinsloo (2007) and Naicker (2008) also found “poverty to be a barrier. Statistics from the selected school show that about 9% of school children pay school fees which validates the view that learners are coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. For many years poverty has been identified as a barrier to teaching and learning.” As discussed in the literature, socio-economic factors have been identified by the Department of Education (2005) “as a major barrier affecting teaching and learning as well as the growth and development of learners.”

The RDD approach that was used to design and implement the CAPS curriculum does not take into account various contexts and their challenges. It assumes that all contexts are the same and curriculum is transferable from one context to the next. However, Davis (2009) argued that “whatever works for one context may not necessarily mean that it will work for all contexts. Top down approaches does not take into consideration the contextual factors affecting schools in South Africa.”

8.1. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

The kind and form of training given to educators determine the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. The responses revealed from the interviews that, four educators in this study did not experience any training in the CAPS Life Skills curriculum. One of the educators indicated that she had experienced a training workshop held externally as well as an internal workshop conducted by the school. According to Participant 2, the external workshop was two to three hours in duration and was not really useful:

“They didn’t really give you planning, on how to plan your lessons and stuff like that. They just read straight from the manual” (Participant 2).

This finding was also revealed in Prinsloo’s (2007, p.164) study “where the competence of the facilitators at training sessions was questioned.” All the participants in this study indicated that they did not receive adequate preparation to teach the new CAPS Life Skills curriculum. Educators were not adequately equipped with all the knowledge and skills to teach this subject. Some of the responses from the interviews were:

“...we weren’t even given workshops on it” (Participant 4).

“We never went for the CAPS training on Life Skills. We went on Numeracy and Literacy” (Participant 1).

“There was more focus on Numeracy and Literacy than Life Skills and for a long time we were not even teaching Life Skills” (Participant 3).

“We had to read and decipher how to go about teaching it” (Participant 5).

Similar findings by Russel (1998, p. 49) showed that “educators did not feel adequately prepared for implementing the OBE curriculum.” Educators in this study felt that if more workshops or courses are offered on how to deliver the curriculum, it will help them in their planning and presentation of lessons. The following comment was made during the interview with the participants:

“Maybe if the school could have more workshops on how do we go about delivering and planning the Life Skills lessons” (Participant 3).

Similar findings were related by Tlhabane (2004), Panday (2007), Rooth (2005), Christiaans (2006), and Prinsloo (2007) “on the importance of training for the curriculum.” One of the recommendations made by an educator during the interview was that a book of themes should be designed together with the content for each theme:

“I would think if they could come up with a book of themes...and give us the content that is to be taught. That would make it much simpler” (Participant 5).

All the educators in this study expressed their views on the importance of receiving training to teach Life Skills. The following justifications were given:

- Educators can get directives on how to teach (Participant 4 and Participant 2).
- To gain a better knowledge of the curriculum (Participant 2).
- Training will ensure better knowledge on planning, presentation and teaching of the curriculum (Participant 2).
- It will provide clarity on the content to be taught (Participant 5).
- It will provide knowledge of methods to teach Life Skills (Participant 5).
- Educators will be skilled and equipped to deliver the Life Skills curriculum (Participant 3).

Dating back to the implementation of OBE, many researchers such as Rooth (2005), Makhwathana (2007), Tlhabane (2004), Naicker (1998), Panday (2007), Maphalala (2006) and many others, have emphasized “the need for vigorous training to assist educators with curriculum changes.” Research conducted by Christiaans (1996, p.167) also found that “educators required training on how to plan effective lessons.” Maphalala’s research study also showed that “the training that was given on lesson planning was not sufficient. Before educators even begin planning their lessons, they need to have sound knowledge of the curriculum, subject and teaching methods to suit the content.”

Magano (2009, p.18) identified three kinds of knowledge that are central to educators’ knowledge base and that, can assist them with planning, that is, subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and curricular knowledge”. Training is required in these three areas so that educators are equipped with the knowledge to plan and teach effective Life Skills. If educators are not equipped to implement an innovation, this could lead to the failure of the innovation. A study conducted by Makhwathana (2007, p.57) showed that “83.3 % of educators in that study believed that the quality of educators and their knowledge is what guaranteed success. An educator has to possess the knowledge in order to transfer the knowledge.” Makhwathana (2007, p. 82) also stated that having “little knowledge and remaining stagnant is harmful to educators and learners. Professional development and intense training is thus required to prepare, equip, motivate, educate and train educators to implement new curricula.” Prinsloo (2007, p.158) concurs by stating that “educators have to be adequately trained to understand the content, aims, outcomes and didactic methods of the Life Skills programme.”

When implementing new curricula, emotional, physical, educational and social support is required. Some educators in this study have revealed that they have experienced some support in terms of the new Life Skills curriculum. This support had come from management members, head of department, peers and school based committees. Two of the educators stated that they had not experienced any support. This was the response from one of the educators during the interview:

“We just had to take the books and work through it ourselves” (Participant 5).

Research conducted by Makhwathana (2007, p.54) also showed that “educators received limited support in the form of workshops, teaching aids and teamwork.” Educators in this

study stated in the interview that peer support is what they would like to receive in order to teach Life Skills effectively as revealed by their responses below:

“Maybe from other colleagues, if we work together” (Participant 4).

“I think maybe grade planning, like as a grade we sit together and plan our lessons. We all do the same thing, maybe put our ideas together, we will come up with better ideas” (Participant 5).

“Life Skills has really changed. It really brought back the fun into learning Life Skills. It’s just that we need more support to teach Life Skills” (Participant 5).

Pillay (2006, p. 69) argued that “educators can become resistant to change if they are not given support.” Findings by Wood and Olivier (2007, p.161) also revealed that “educators are not empowered enough to teach effective Life Skills.” Participants in Panday’s study (2007, p.20) “held the Department of Education is responsible for providing support to educators.” Educators in this study felt that support is not only required from the Department of Education but also from experienced personnel in the field of Life Skills either within the school or outside the school, as revealed by their responses below:

“Maybe if we could have a little workshop, meetings and guidance from somebody who is equipped and experienced” (Participant 3).

“I think someone that has the knowledge and who has done Life Skills” (Participant 1).

9. CURRICULUM CHANGE FROM OBE TO CAPS

The purpose of this study was to explore educator’s perceptions of the new Life Skills curriculum. In order to understand their experiences of the new Life Skills curriculum, it is important to understand these experiences in the context of how they experienced change from OBE to CAPS; including, but not apart from how they experienced change, is most relevant and important.

Data from the interviews revealed that all the participants in this study embraced curriculum change. Educators indicated that they liked curriculum change and, gave the impression that, they were prepared to embrace the change. All the educators also expressed their

agreement of the need for a change from OBE to CAPS in the South African Education System. Educators also expressed that CAPS was the preferred change that our South African Education system needed and that, they were in favour of CAPS rather than OBE. The following reasons were given by educators:

- With OBE, the parent did most of the work at home. There were many take home tasks given to learners with the OBE system of education. This posed a problem for learners who did not have anyone at home to offer assistance.

"The child worked the parent. How do we mark the child for that?" (Participant 1).

- The OBE system of education was confusing for educators. They did not know what they were teaching. Educators found the CAPS curriculum to be more structured.

"OBE was too broad. There were no guidelines. You could do anything with OBE" (Participant 5).

- With OBE, children were not given enough guidance and direction. It is believed that with CAPS, educators have closer interaction with learners.

"Because with OBE, you found that children were not given the proper guidance and direction. Most of the time, the teacher was mainly like a supervisor in the class, and group work and, so it's too much of disruption. And CAPS is going back to the old system where you can have a close interaction with your learners" (Participant 3).

- OBE made children lazy whereas with CAPS they need to work much harder in order to learn.

"...some of the children are going to struggle because OBE was for children that were weak...The children were lazy then and, now they need to work harder"(Participant 3).

Jansen (1998, p.325) also expressed a similar view about OBE when he stated that "the reason for the OBE curriculum failing was due to the flawed assumptions of what happens inside schools, how classrooms are organised and the kinds of educators we have in the system."

Educators in this study also expressed criticisms about the following aspects of the CAPS curriculum as revealed by their responses below:

- The CAPS curriculum should have catered for learners of all levels. (Participant 4).
- The CAPS curriculum is not considerate to public schools where there are large class sizes (Participant 5).
- The CAPS curriculum has not taken into account second language learners and their ability to cope with the curriculum (Participant 5).

According to Mangal (2007), “change evokes many feelings and emotions and thus has an effect on our behaviour and which can affect their experiences of the anything new. People become resistant to change due to their emotional state.” “New routines and changes threaten the feeling of comfort and security” (Pillay, 2006, p.65). If we are taken out of this comfort zone, we immediately feel insecure and uncomfortable” Rooth (2005, p.48) agreed with this statement by stating that “change is a process that may be uncomfortable for some people. A change from a familiar curriculum to an unfamiliar curriculum can therefore lead to discomfort and insecurity. This may even lead to resistance to change.” Makhwathana (2007, p.7) further stated that “when - ever, there is a curriculum change, educators often develop certain behaviours, in order to defend themselves from the changes that need to occur. “They become anti - everything and everyone who talks about the new curriculum.” (Makhwathana, 2007, p.7). This leads to rebellious behaviour.

Educators in this study did not experience any negative feelings towards curriculum change. Rooth (2005, p.48) stated that “the process of change may be uncomfortable for some educators”. None of the educators in this study indicated that the process of change from OBE to CAPS was an uncomfortable transition. It can therefore, be stated that educators in this study have embraced change and experienced a positive attitude towards curriculum change.

According to Goodson (2001, p 45) “three processes of change occur, namely personal, internal and external change. The process of personal change “refers to the personal beliefs and missions that individuals bring to the change process” Personal change involves changing one’s beliefs, attitudes and behaviours in order to undergo the process of change. In order for the change from OBE to CAPS to occur, educators have to re-align their thinking, their beliefs about teaching and learning, their attitude towards the curriculum as well as their behaviour.”

On an external level, the CAPS curriculum has been designed and relayed to educators for implementation. On an internal level, change has already occurred internally within the schools as teaching and learning is now focused on CAPS. On a personal level, it would appear that educators have accepted the change.

The findings of this study and analysis of the data, in relation to other related studies, Dewey's (1938) theory of experience, and Markee's (1997) model of curriculum change and Goodson's (2001) framework of the processes of change are most relevant.

Educators experienced challenges in terms of the content, planning and preparation, assessment and dealing with contextual factors in the classroom. It was also found that educators experienced a lack of training and support in implementing the new Life Skills curriculum. A positive experience was that, educators enjoyed teaching Life Skills. It was also found that educators welcomed and embraced curriculum change.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) It is important that educators are engaged in designing of the curriculum.
- b) The Department of Basic Education must provide intensive training and development for all educators teaching the new CAPS Life Skills curriculum. Continuing Professional Development should focus on the following areas in the new CAPS Life Skills curriculum:
 - The content, methods of teaching and techniques assessment.
 - The kinds of resources to use as well as how to deliver the curriculum should there be an absence of resources. Educators thus need to be trained on how to modify and adapt the lesson when there are no resources and, still achieve the outcome of the lesson.
 - How to use inclusive strategies when teaching the content. Emphasis should be placed on inclusive education at all training sessions so that educators have knowledge of barriers to teaching and learning as well as how to address these barriers in the classroom.

The facilitators conducting the training should be knowledgeable and skilled in that particular area of the curriculum.

- c) Apart from providing training for educators it is also important for the Department of Basic Education provides opportunities for continuing professional development. Bursaries are currently being offered for educators who want to pursue a career in

teaching however; bursaries need to be offered for post graduate studies as well. Incentives need to be provided so that educators are motivated to study.

- d) The Department of Basic Education also needs to develop a partnership with universities where short courses and training modules are offered based on curriculum, teaching, leadership, management and professional development. More emphasis should be placed on curriculum courses where educators can be given the opportunity to major in new subjects introduced in the curriculum. Educators can also become specialist educators in the subjects that they are currently teaching. Modernity has brought about an era of new knowledge where knowledge is constantly changing. In the same way, the curriculum is constantly changing. It is for this reason that educators need to update their professional qualifications to keep up with the trends in education.
- e) Schools need to be pillars of support for educators implementing new curricula. Educators need to be trained on how to implement new curricula in their school setting. An example of this would be lesson planning and preparation and mentoring.
- f) The school needs to make every attempt to get resources to teach various subjects. Naicker (1998, p.31) states that "Unless change agents prepare the implementers adequately to function in the changing environment and provide them with the resources or the skills to produce the necessary resources, their attempts may fail hopelessly."
- g) The school needs to develop partnerships with schools in the area so that schools can work together in implementing new curricula. Professional learning communities (PLC) can serve an invaluable role in this regard.
- h) The monitoring of curriculum should be done on a regular basis by the head of departments as well as the senior management team (SMT) through the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) process. Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) is a system of monitoring and evaluating educator performance at school. Through this process of IQMS, strengths, weaknesses, challenges and successes can be identified and remediated. Educators need to feel this sense of support when it comes to implementing new curricula.

The SMT should encourage peers to work together. Grade planning can be done whereby all educators in the grade decide on how a subject is going to be taught. Peer support is essential especially when implementing curriculum changes. The SMT should also be responsible for drawing up an assessment plan for the year. This should be in keeping with

curriculum policies. If educators have a plan for assessment, it will eliminate the sense of confusion when it comes to assessment. The plan should indicate exactly how many formal and informal assessments there should be per term as well as mark schemes.

Barriers to learning should be identified and mechanisms put in place to try and work around the barrier. Certain barriers such as language barriers and contextual factors cannot be removed from the system and, will continue to be a barrier in the South African education system. However, structures can be put in place to deal with the barrier and ensure that teaching and learning still takes place.

11. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore educator's perceptions of the CAPS Life Skills curriculum. It was important to understand these experiences in the context of how educators perceived teaching life skills in the CAPS Life Skills curriculum. Data from the interviews revealed that all the participants in this study embraced the CAPS Life Skills curriculum. Educators in this study did not experience any negative feelings towards curriculum change. Wood and Olivier (2007, p. 182) stated that "educators who embrace change have a higher level of self-efficacy." It can therefore be stated that educators in this study have embraced change and experienced a positive attitude towards teaching the CAPS Life Skills curriculum. On an external level, the CAPS Life Skills curriculum has been designed and relayed to educators for implementation. On an internal level, change has already occurred internally within the schools as teaching and learning is now focused on CAPS. On a personal level, it would appear that educators have accepted the change. Life Skills as a subject has undergone many changes but it has not been removed from the education system. This indicates the importance of this subject as well as the power of this subject to change the lives of learners through the learning of core life skills that will empower them for life. It will also and can bring about fundamental change that is required now than ever before, in the context of democratic South Africa, given the legacy of apartheid that disadvantaged all of those that were defined Black.

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