EXPLORATION OF SERVICE DELIVERY CHALLENGES IN SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

Several issues affect South Africa, including poverty, unemployment, food insecurity, crime, floods, and climate change. These difficulties have led to civil unrest, mass frustration, as well as community protests. The government is generally expected to provide better services in the areas of suitable housing, energy supply, water and sanitation provisions, improved employment and educational opportunities, suitable infrastructure, and workable health facilities. Aside from all these difficulties, South Africa is also dealing with an electricity crisis that is impacting people's daily lives through frequent, advanced, or interval-based load-shedding. The water system needs urgent repair. There are constant leaks from the rusty, old water pipes. Some provincial suburbs go without water or electricity for a few hours or days at a time. There are many items on the list. The article attempts to gather data to support the cause of subpar service performance. There are numerous demands for service delivery, but there aren't enough resources to fulfill them. Insufficient financial, human, technical, and technological resources make it difficult for the government to provide all the facilities that are requested. Protests about service delivery result from unfulfilled demands. To provide seamless services without regard to time or location constraints, the study intends to investigate the challenges facing the traditional mode of service delivery. This transformation will be achieved through the adoption of technological interventions. Additionally, the study investigates a few potential roadblocks to the service delivery procedures. Information for the qualitative study is gathered through documents and literature reviews. Conceptual and document analysis are used to analyse the gathered data. According to the study, by using appropriate digitalised coordination and a sufficient infrastructure based on information technology, interventions related to the fourth industrial revolution (4IR) may be able to completely change the way services are delivered.

*Keywords: **fourth industrial revolution (4IR), qualitative, service delivery, South Africa, technology.***

1. INTRODUCTION

Several injustices were prevalent in South Africa during the apartheid era. There was racial segregation in the educational and employment opportunities. Even after achieving democracy, the nation still has difficulty striking a balance between equality and poverty. As a result, there are still too few opportunities for people to obtain good education, well-paying jobs, and services that meet acceptable standards. Such discrepancies can be attributed to both the colonial era and the democratic dispensation's slow progress to advance quickly enough to offset historical injustices. In the post-apartheid era, policymaking procedures have received greater attention than the needs of the people, which has resulted in implementation gaps that are ignored. This scenario is presented in the official documents highlighting that due to its history of colonised administration, there were inequalities based on racial segregation. The disparities also caused social and economic divide demanding transformation of governance. During this environment of disparities, the needs of the common masses were disregarded (refer to Human Science Research Council (HSRC) 2016:3). The socio-economic challenges result in high levels of poverty and unemployment. This statement is authenticated by the records showing the statistics stating, 'as of 2022', people were making or getting paid $1.90 only as a daily earning. This gross income indicates a poverty line showing the financially disadvantaged situation of households in a country. In total 18.2 million people were recorded to have lived a life under extreme poverty. If the corrective measures or poverty reduction strategies are not implemented, then there is a possibility that this number may rise and by 2025 approximately 18.5

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million will form part of the statistics who require $1.90 a day to live and survive (refer to Statista Research Department, 2023, in Vyas-Doorgapersad 2024:248). This statistical prediction is a poor reflection of a country and South African government need to implement adequate macroeconomic policies to stabilise the economy of the country. This concern is reflected in a statistical graph below showing the national poverty lines in South Africa. The trend reflected is from the years 2006 to 2023. The variables considered are the cost-of-basic-needs and inflammation that has an impact on   households shopping (how much they can consume) and services received (refer to Statistics SA 2023:3), see Figure 1.

Figure 1: Inflation-adjusted national poverty lines, 2006 to 2023 (per person per month in rands)
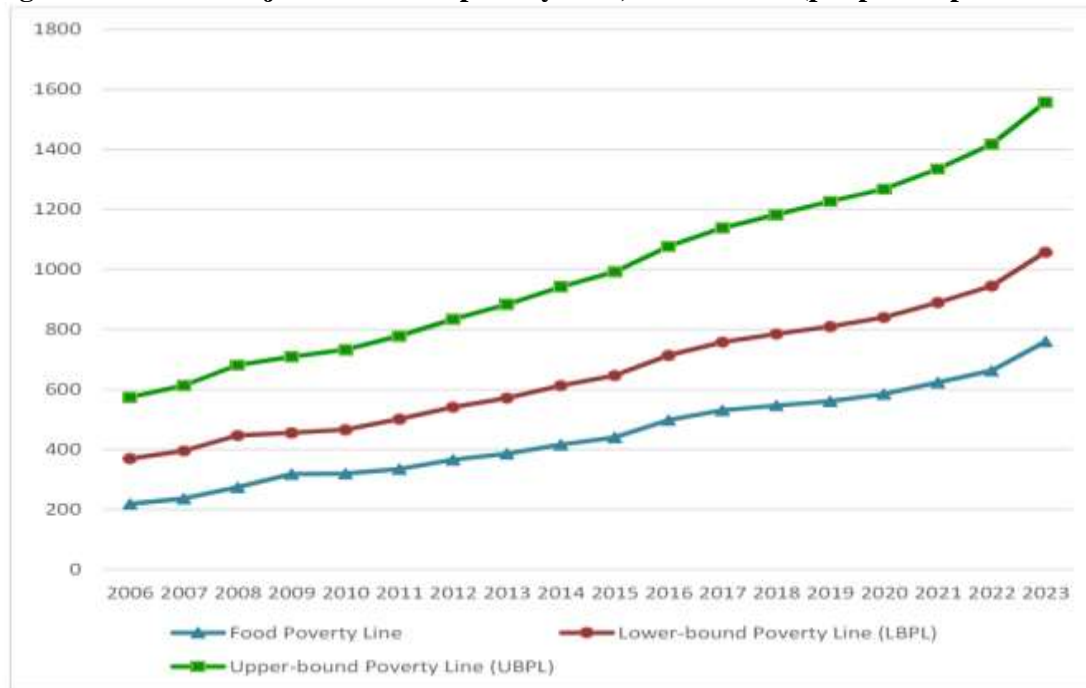
Source: Statistics SA 2023: 5.

Data indicates that the combination of poverty and inflammation has had a detrimental effect on households, leading to an increase in the prevalence of poverty, including food poverty. It is also added by scholars (Van der Berg, Zuze & Bridgeman 2020:19; Hlongwane & Vyas-Doorgapersad 2023:35) that poverty and hunger can be inter-linked. People cannot buy food and experience hunger as they do not have money due to poverty. Households who are living under the extreme poverty lines may not be able to afford basic services such as clean water, sanitation facilities, healthcare, electricity, education, and housing facilities. The people who are impoverished due to lack of financial resources also face food insecurities hence experience hunger (refer to Van der Berg et.al. 2020:19; Hlongwane & Vyas-Doorgapersad 2023:35). An additional challenge is related to unemployment that shows that due to lack of education and employment opportunities, many people were and still are unemployed, and the statistics of unemployment increased from 34.9% (third quarter of 2021) to 35.3% (fourth quarter of 2021). In terms of numbers, a total of 7.921 million people were recorded as unemployed in October-December of 2021 (Reuters 2022:1; Vyas-Doorgapersad 2022:628). In a short span of time, the statistical increase of people with no jobs shows a detrimental image of a country where stability of various sectors is a concern. The reason could be that since covid-19, many construction companies, private businesses, mining businesses, retail shops have faced with facing financial challenges resulting in retrenchments. Many households who rely on salaries through these sectors may have faced job losses and hence financial stress. Households dealing with issues like unemployment and poverty may find it difficult to pay for the necessities of life, including basic services. South African government has

formulated various pro-poor strategies and have economic policies in place; however, the challenges of poverty persist.

There are additional challenges that government is facing such as gender-based violence, technological divide, crime, to state a few. Moreover, service delivery is typically ranked as the highest priority by South Africans, as emphasised by the report of the HSRC (2016:3). It must be considered that service delivery is a comprehensive demand and requires personnel with competence to handle delivery of services in various sectors. This is a challenge of underequipped public service and for public servants who require capacity-building interventions, as per the opinions shared by the Public Servants Association (PSA) (2015:6). Uneven distribution of services, lack of services to geographically far areas, inadequate services to rural townships, all require systemic measures to achieve so-called transformation. Lack of delivery of basic services, inadequate and subpar standards of services, all lead to people losing trust and confidence in chosen representatives (refer to PSA 2015). This may further have a negative impact on the political stability of the country. The article aims to identify service delivery challenges and suggest that technology-based interventions may be considered for improvement.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is qualitative that can be considered significant for a study that aims to examine variables, their relationships, and interpretations in a chosen context, an idea obtained from the works of Denzin and Lincoln (in Zondo 2021:225). Zondo (2021:225, in Mutandwa 2023:23) further explains the significance of qualitative research that can be summarised as a methodology that assists researchers to generate information and data that is descriptive. The information then can be interpreted and/or transcribed using trends, codes, or themes so to categorise in a systematic manner. The information was gathered through literature and document reviews. Fink (2014: 3, in Mutandwa & Vyas-Doorgapersad 2023:379) considers a literature review as a method that is systematic, assists researchers to compile, categorise, synthesise the secondary information that is available in the form of published work by eminent scholars, practitioners, and academics in their respective fields of expertise. On the other hand, Creswell (2013:62, in Nhlapo 2020:38) believes that document review assists researchers to obtain information that is available in the form of official documents. The information obtained is considered as authentic evidence and hence validates facts used in the research works. The information used in the study is anlaysed through conceptual and document analysis. Scholars such as Furner (2006:233-234) cited in Nhlapo (2020:34); and Makhubu (2020:10) have provided detailed understanding on conceptual analysis. It can be deduced that through conceptual analysis, significant concepts used in the study can be considered as important events or relationships to narrate the information obtained through existing knowledge in the related field of exploration. Then this analysis can be used to define the main concepts, by identifying and specifying the conditions under which any entity or phenomenon is (or could be) classified under the concept in question. The other form of analysis, that is a document analysis, assists researchers to collect relevant data and information related to a topic of study. Hence it is a tool that can be considered to extract relevant data, as per the information received from the published work of Nhlapo (2020:38).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study explores the following aspects requiring discussions.

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To adequately lead decent lives, people need services. When services are neglected or ignored, the historical context—where a select few elites were given preference—can occasionally be carried over or replicated in the current setting. The situation in South Africa is similar in that historical injustices persist, and the current administration is still unable to address the issues. A few possible explanations could include insufficient funding, political resistance or unwillingness, and a lack of ability to provide services (refer to Masibigiri 2023). Following the end of apartheid, South Africa was governed by the African National Congress (ANC) under a democratic system of government. The goal was to redress past injustices, and to do so, time and effort were spent developing several policies related to social welfare, poverty, and infrastructure

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development, among other things, opined by Hologram (2003:156; Kanyane 2014: 93).

It can be assumed that South Africa inherited a nation where public administration functions to provide public service delivery were fragmented when it attained democracy, adds Muthien (2013:3-4; Soga 2022:96). When compared to elite-driven White areas, non-White communities received ineffective and unequal service delivery. Geographical obstacles added to this predicament to create gaps between rural and urban areas. Due to the disparity in the provision of services, people became aware that change is required to bring about social equality and eliminate historical injustices, as stressed by Franks (2014:48, in Soga 2022:96). As a result, it can be said that structural difficulties affecting public administration's operations were encountered both in theory and in practice. People expected fast-paced challenges to public administration functions as well as changes to the social-economic and political landscapes, further opined by Muthien (2013, in Soga 2022:96). As discussed by both Muthien (2013) and Franks (2014) and cited in Soga (2022) that this transformation resulted in the new era of new public management (NPM). Although people still had to deal with the challenges caused during and after the transition from apartheid to democracy. These challenges, according to a study by Vyas-Doorgapersad and Masibigiri (2022: 133-134), citing (Chauke 2017:4) were: mostly related to service delivery in the areas of water and sanitation, housing, electricity and backlogs causing delays in delivery of these services; political-administrative interface; lack of strong civil society organisations to fight for the rights of acceptable standards of services; poor communication channels between the government and governed; political party conflicts; lack of capacity and resources; and therefore service delivery protests. An additional obstacle that hindered the processes of providing services was the prevalence of Covid-19. The implementation of lockdowns, the closure of establishments and service providers, and staff layoffs all played a part in the services provided to communities being delayed.

It is also critical to keep in mind that lack of public involvement has an impact on how well services are delivered. To understand the public's needs for service delivery and to incorporate those needs into appropriate policies, programmes, and projects, the government must receive public feedback. The review of the literature demonstrates that service delivery can be enhanced if individuals are aware of the channels for communicating with relevant personnel in their areas of jurisdiction. Employees may take the situation for granted if the public is not made aware of their rights to better services and is not taught about the legal rights and procedures to follow if services are not provided efficiently. This is because there will be no one to hold them accountable for their lack of accountability in providing services (Mdlongwa, 2014:39, in Shava & Vyas-Doorgapersad 2023b:27). However, it should be noted that the situation regarding service delivery challenges still exists because of a lack of awareness, participation, and related factors. Service delivery challenges still need to be taken into consideration and given careful thought, even with the various government interventions for improvement. If not, protests the delivery of services will continue, people will be unsatisfied and may stop trusting their representatives (refer to Reddy 2016:7, in Masibigiri 2023:18).

The situation is even worse in municipalities that struggle with issues like funding, infrastructure, capacity, and support from the national, provincial, and local governments, to name a few. At the local level, the difficulties in providing services during the post-apartheid period were also felt. The review of the literature demonstrates how local government is decentralized and capable of enacting bylaws to address a range of issues within its purview. But most municipalities' residents still lack access to basic services, as per the information obtained from the opinions of Abrams et al. (2022, in Chili, Akbar & Nyika 2023:37). To guarantee that communities must adhere to acceptable service standards, several legislative frameworks have also been put into place. Although local government has put in place a few frameworks to enhance service delivery, the desktop data indicates that most municipalities continue to face difficulties with this aspect of their operations, as stressed by Qobo, Soko, Ngwenya (2022, in Chili et.al. 2023:37).). There are various causes of service delivery failure. In a study conducted by Kemp (2020), it is highlighted that lack of service delivery is still a challenge due to the factors linked to lack of accountability where counsellors and municipal personnel are not willing to be answerable to community. This situation further leads to a lack of transparency in the system. From the administration side, there are issues related to inadequate skills and capacity, human and financial resources, compliance with legislative frameworks, and non-prioritisation of peoples' needs and expectations.

From the peoples' side, there is also a challenge related to lack of participation and make

administration accountable for service delivery (for detailed list of challenges, refer to the reports of the Institute for Democratic Alternatives in South Africa 2010:9, in Kemp 2020:22). Additional service delivery challenges recorded are: inconvenient hours for people to place service delivery requests to administrative desks; long queues to stand to place requests; geographically far offices for people to travel from rural areas; and thereafter personnel responds to peoples' request is not timely, either slow or delayed; all cause frustration, dissatisfaction and protests (Nkosi and Mekuria 2010, in Mawela, Ochara and Twinomurinzi 2017: 149, in Ncamphalala 2020:51). The slow pace of administrative functions, bureaucracy and incompetencies all supported the shift towards NPM whereby the best option considered to improve services was 'contacting out'. This decision also worked for those municipalities that lack technical competencies, and inadequate internal structures, according to Joseph (2002, in Ncamphalala 2020:51). Ncamphalala (2020) proposed that new ways to deliver services should be looked at. The article focuses on this suggestion and proposes the use of technological-driven interventions to improve delivery of services to communities. It was stated in a research report by Baloyi (2022) that the 2021 State of Local Government Report by the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs indicated that municipalities are dysfunctional (64 out of 257); some are at minimum risk (111) and only 16 municipalities are stable. Reasons of such dysfunctionality are linked to inadequate institutional capacity, inappropriate financial management processes, weak governance, political and economic instability, and persistent corruption.

From the review of literature, it is compiled that causes of service delivery challenges are linked to shortage of skilled and competence personnel (human resource challenge); inadequate financial management system and processes, incompetency to handle municipal finances, over-use or under-expenditure, inadequate budget proposals (financial challenge); long standing hours in customer care queues, travelling from geographically far rural areas to place requests to administrative offices (infrastructure/structural challenge), corruption, slow response to peoples' requests and complaints (ethical challenge). The outcome is the occurrances of service delivery protests. According to data collected by the Municipal IQ (2011), a monitor that tracks service delivery protests in South Africa, a trend is recorded showing dissatisfaction by communities. In the year 2010, the number of protests recorded was 218. This number increased in 2011 whereby 237 protests were recorded. The number jumped to 272 showing a tremendous increase in protests in 2012. However, the service delivery processes have not improved, and the public showed high levels of dissatisfaction through increased numbers of protests. The number of protests increased to 480 in 2013. Service delivery challenges persisted and so as the intensity of protests. The number increased to 704 in 2014 (cited in Mamokhere & Kgobe 2023:52). The service delivery protests continue. Figure 1 shows the statistics of service delivery protests since 2014.

Figure 1: Major service delivery protests, by year (2004 –2020)
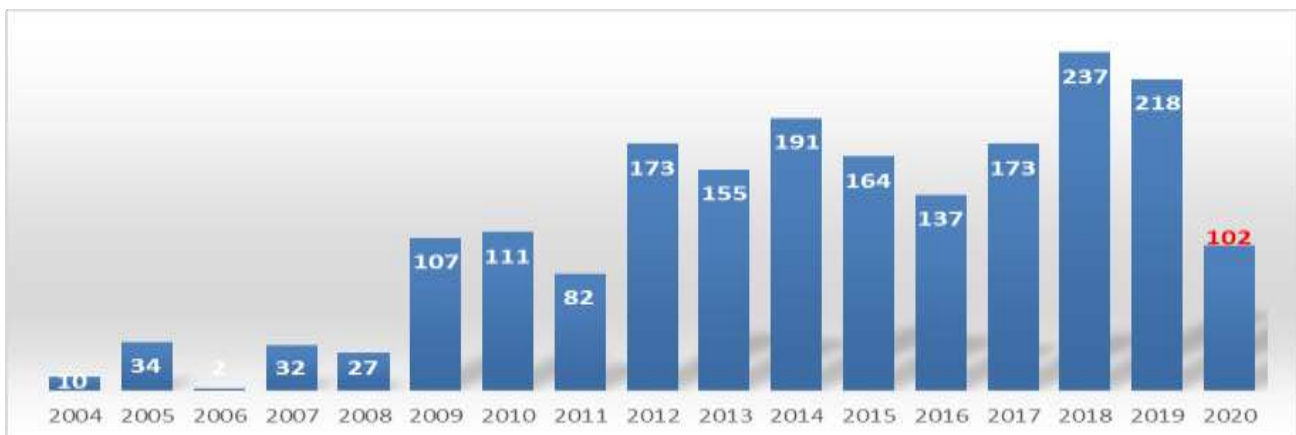
Source: Municipal IQ Municipal Hotspots Monitor 2021

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According to the South African Police Service (SAPS) Incident Registration Information System (IRIS), within the timeframe of 1 August 2020 till 31 January 2021, the rise in protests was witnessed and 909 protests were recorded during this period (Martin 2021:1). The Institute for Security Studies Protest and Public Violence Monitor is in use, since January 2023, to track protests and reports on service delivery demonstrations in the country. According to the reports generated by this monitor, in the period of the past seven years, it is recorded that on average, there have been 2.26 protests occurring on a daily basis. The highest numbers of protests were recorded during the years 2013 and 2014. During this period, more than three protests were recorded daily, as highlighted Martin (2021:2). In July 2020 an average of eight protests occurred per day – the highest in a single month since 2013 (Martin 2021:2).

3.2 CAUSES OF SERVICE DELIVERY CHALLENGES

There are various factors leading to service delivery challenges and hence protests. The article explores some of the causes to make a point of discussion. Weak governance under poor leadership is one of the major problems. To comprehend why service delivery is difficult in South Africa, this statement is examined under several administrations. Following the establishment of democracy, President Nelson Mandela's new administration had to address historical injustices. The new government faced apartheid issues that persisted throughout the democratic era and needed to be addressed with the utmost care. Regarding the democratic rights of the masses that were denied during the apartheid era, the leadership expressed concern. Because of this, there was an influx of historical problems that needed to be resolved, making service delivery the top priority. This led to fragmentation and the need for a unified approach. The new administration was responsible for the reorganisation of services, but it also presented challenges (refer to McLennan & Munslow 2009, cited in Ndlovu 2016:21; Masibigiri 2023:30). Restructuring service delivery was difficult because certain racial groups received preferential treatment in the services offered. To begin service delivery processes anew, people's feelings of deprivation and historical injustice had to be addressed because there was a sense of oppression towards other racial groups.

The system had backlogs because of the services being divided up. To ensure that services are provided equally, the government had to take strategic measures, demonstrating that the new administration can manage this pressure and has an obligation to provide effective services. It's clear from the discussions above that a lot of emphasis was placed on the quantity of services provided to the public (for more details, refer to Ndlovu 2016:21) and not the quality of services. Considering the opinions of Lues (2016:19) it can be added that focusing on service delivery during the leadership of Mandela, a regulatory framework called the White Paper on Transforming Service Delivery ("Batho Pele" is a Sotho term for "People first") was prepared. The document stated eight principles aimed at improving the quality and delivery of services. The document was formulated considering the service delivery demands of people, however, these principles were not abided by all public service departments, hence the purpose of the framework was not absolutely realised (refer to Lues 2016:19). The research works conducted to assess quality-of-service delivery led the administration of Thabo Mbeki to implement new ways and approaches to delivery services.

The transformative approaches were aligned to the wave of paradigmatic shift in the public administration processes. The shift led to the adoption of new public management (NPM) principles and resulted in some services utilising public-private partnerships (PPPs) arrangements. However, the new redefined relationship between the state and the public was heavily criticised as it was seen as a way of passing on the costs of providing essential services to those who needed them the most and could not afford them (Mc Lennan, 2009, in Ndlovu 2016:25). Those who could not pay received only a minimum standard of the services (Bond et. al, 2000, in Ndlovu 2016:25).Lues (2016:20) added that during this era, the Public Service Commission (PSC) (1997) also identified the following challenges or priorities for the SA Public Service: better assessments of the state's capacity and performance; the improvement and strengthening of public management; better fostering and nurturing of public service leadership; a general focus on implementation and service delivery; and the acceleration of social development and effective addressing of poverty. However, the public service is still struggling to have a talent management system to improve the skills and competence base of public servants to ensure effective service delivery.

It became evident that there was a growing dissatisfaction with the way in which services were being provided. This was also evident in the wave of service delivery-related protests which began in 2004. More demands are being made for the state to provide the basic services (Mc Lennan 2009, in Ndlovu 2016:25). During Zuma's administration, service delivery dissatisfaction, protests, demands and expectations continue to persist. These circumstances contributed to more so-called 'service delivery demonstrations', which resulted from a lack of access to clean water, sanitation, and housing backlogs (Twala 2017:159; Masibigiri 2023:31). Kondlo (2010:8, in Kanyane 2014:93) claims that this administration is perceived by the masses as the main responsibility of the government and its administrative bodies. However, continuous challenges may be linked by the masses to the leadership approach. Later, the administration changed, and new government was formed under the leadership of President Cyril Ramaphosa, however, service delivery challenges persisted and resulted in protests. It was recorded by Crisis24 (2023) that service delivery protests were noticeable in South Africa through 2023. It was witnessed in the form of advanced stages of load-shedding, restrictive hours to use water, increase in petrol prices, all contributed financial burden on masses who were already having difficulty making ends meet. The dissatisfaction caused further protests as the masses could not handle the inconvenience of 6 power cuts, during January and February 2023, in total 8-12 hours of no electricity. This scenario caused losses to businesses, affected households to prepare food, caused delays to work as robots were not operational, resulted in more crimes as electric fences were not operational, to state a few (for more information refer to Crisis24 2023). These service delivery challenges are still requiring government attention and corrective measures by bureaucrats and policymakers.

There are human resource challenges municipalities related to with regards to skills and capacity of personnel. Many municipalities across South Africa do not have human resources and lack personnel who are skilled, equipped and competent. This situation is detrimental to deliver effective services to communities, as opined by Mdlongwa (2014:1). Till today, the same capacity-building challenges exist, not only in municipalities, but at all three levels of government (national, provincial, and local). The crisis of resources is most pressing for municipalities, as they lack financial resources, and are not self-funded enough to generate adequate revenue. The rural municipalities struggle more as infrastructure is not adequate to deliver services to geographically far areas. However, there are some municipalities that have more resources, but are under-utilised. The under-utilisation of resources may also be linked to the lack of capacitated personnel hence not aware of the municipal and financial processes to utilise the resources, as indicated by the PSA (2015:1). This was further explored by Chili et. al. (2023:38) that inadequate skills and technical competence cause human resource challenges and affect the quality of services delivered as well. This challenge of skills and competencies was also stated in the Gauteng News (2024). The country and municipalities do not have required skills (technical, technological), and human and financial resource related competencies hence struggle to effectively deliver and manage service delivery processes (refer to Gauteng News 2024).

Additionally, it is important to acknowledge that corruption is multifaceted. It can be linked to individuals accepting bribes for signing and approving requests, but also to administrative processes and structures that can be manipulated by individuals. This situation explores a scenario of unethical organisational culture where systems are corrupted by internal customers (in the form of misconduct in tenders, billing and procurement processes, misappropriation of financial resources, lack of accountability and transparency) and detrimental to service delivery to external customers (for more information refer to Gauteng News 2024). It is stated in the Corruption Watch Annual Report (2023) that persistent corruption has a negative impact on resources that could be used to deliver services and/or cause flows in tapping into resources for service delivery. The level of corruption was even witnessed during Covid-19 that shows the misconduct in administrative processes and structures as follows: corruption in procurement (16%), maladministration (that is sometimes also stated as bad/unethical administration) (18%), abuse and/or misuse of authority (16%), misappropriation and/or mismanagement of resources (12%), negligence of duty (8%), employment related corruption (8%), bribery (8%), and fraud (14%) (Corruption Watch 2021: 31; Vyas-Doorgapersad 2022: 16). The corruption during covid-19 negatively affected the service delivery in various sectors, such as health, and social development. The corruption is also recorded concerning the good governance practices at local government level. At the municipal level, the Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA) is a custodian of maintaining good governance. However,

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according to the Skae Report (2021:44; Mothabi & Vyas-Doorgapersad 2022:368) it is recorded that the LGSETA underwent a forensic investigation during 2018/2019. The reason was related to a situation whereby discretionary grants disbursements took place during 2016/2017 financial year. However, the extent of the irregularities, and the scope for the forensic investigations were not finalised yet, as according to the reports of the LGSETA (2020:65; Mothabi & Vyas-Doorgapersad 2022:368). The trend of corruption is visible in municipalities as well. According to the Corruption Watch Annual Report (2023: 26) corruption is high in three metropolitan municipalities (City of Johannesburg, City of Tshwane, and City of Cape Town) accounting collectively for 71% corrupt incidences. The other two municipalities with high percentage of corruption are Dannhauser (15%) and Matjhabeng (14%). These malpractices, unethical deeds, corrupt behaviours all have a detrimental impact on the service delivery practices.

4. CONCLUSION

The study makes the case that the current model of service delivery needs to be modified and transformed. Because of the shifting technological landscape, the conventional methods might not always be effective. Technology has made several interventions that could lessen bureaucracy and red tape while also accelerating the implementation of processes by using coordinated and integrated digital platforms. Technology can also lessen some degree of misconduct or corruption if it is integrated with all management and hierarchical portfolio levels and all roles and approvals are digitally recorded as proof that good governance is considered from request receipt to approval. This transformation is also aligned with the paradigmatic shifts in the way public administration functions used to be implemented. Public services have undergone radical change because of the adoption of new public management (NPM) concepts and procedures. A few examples of digitalised processes that fall under the category of electronic-government (e-government) processes are tender submission, contract approval, filing, and billing. Municipalities also have their own webpages where residents can check the status of their water and electricity bills and make electronic payments, demonstrating the decentralised nature of these processes.

These procedures work well in terms of both time and cost. These ICT-based (information and communication technology) interventions are also becoming important for networked society development and infrastructure transformation, as they will create seamless smart services and smart infrastructure (refer to Castells 2008, in Sadoway and Shekhar 2014: 1; Ncamphalala 2020:6). Improving the standard and procedures of service delivery is the result of these technological interventions. A new movement in the form of ICT is called Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) that provides adv advanced digital access to households (refer to Nyamukachi (2006, in Kemp 2020:20). These inventions save people from having to deal with inconveniences like waiting in line and wasting time. Therefore, the goal is to deliver services that live up to people's expectations (also refer to Fourie 2008: 561; Maseko 2019:35) through adequate technological environment (Zubane 2011: 17; Maseko 2019:35). A desktop analysis of varied literature review conducted by Shava and Vyas-Doorgapersad (2023b) showed 4IR interventions offer digitalised and electronic platforms for a range of service delivery procedures. These platforms can be accessed on computers, laptops, smartphones, and mobile devices. Still, there are some problems that need to be addressed. Only when people know how to use electronic platforms to access these services will these technological interventions be successful.

To offer e-services to outside clients, employees in public service departments and municipalities must also possess technological proficiency. Future research may include talent management as a means of addressing these problems, which can be very beneficial. There are also various other challenges stated in the article that all require corrective measures. The article only focuses on the use of technology-based interventions to transform traditional modes of working to provide effective and deficient services to communities. Future publications will explore all other stated challenges in the country-specific context and offer policy recommendations for improvements. The contribution will be the database of information exploring challenges (corruption, capacity-building, infrastructure, poor governance, leadership, etc.), causes, and solutions. The publication of articles will be a contribution to the fields of public administration and local government studies. One limitation of the study is that the information is compiled using secondary sources under a qualitative desktop analysis. Future research may focus on the status of service delivery at the local

government level whereby interviews and questionnaires may be included to gather primary data in the form of feedback from staff and community members of selected municipalities. This may assist researcher to better understand the causes and conditions of poor service delivery and hence to offer feasible recommendations for improvement for improved service delivery at the South African local government level.

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