

The impact of the South African apartheid government history to democratic South Africa: The case of eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality

Zamokuhle Mbandlwa

Ph.D. candidate in the

Department of Public Management, Durban University of Technology

DUT, ML Sultan, Durban, 4001

21240964@dut4life.ac.za

ZamokuhleM@dut.ac.za

<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7528-3565>

Abstract

Leaders of various South African government institutions are still referring to apartheid as the reason for inequalities in the society even after more than 25 years of democracy. The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of the South African government history on the daily operations of the democratic government. Using cross-sectional analysis, this study analyzed data collected from ward councilors and community members. The study found that leaders of the democratic government still use the apartheid government as the excuse for poor public service delivery. The history of the South African government must be used as a point of reference and not as a reason for poor public service delivery. The majority of ward councilors of the eThekweni Municipality were selected based on their political history and not based on merit. This study answers the question regarding the correlation between poor public service delivery and the use of the apartheid regime as an excuse.

Keywords: Politics, Local government, Leadership, Apartheid, Democracy

Introduction

The transition from the apartheid government to a democratic government gave hope to citizens for proper public services and a better life for all. The negotiations changed the structure of the South African government. The democratic government introduced a transformed government system. The new government was expected to deliver effective public services and accommodate all South Africans regardless of their skin colour. South Africans had a vision of a new future and expected a government that will attend to the needs of the people. The apartheid government colonized black people in South Africa and the mindset of black people was not automatically decolonized. Democratic government leaders are still using the approach of the apartheid government leaders. Those who are in power are in control of everything and once elected, forget the needs of the people (Transition to Democracy, 2008). The democratic government made a lot of promises to the people such as building low-cost houses for all deserving and qualifying citizens but up until today, many people do not have those houses. The apartheid government has left some legacy that is difficult to erase in the minds of the people. Brook (2017: 03) states that democratic government leaders did not immediately change the government structure.

It was therefore important and necessary to conduct this study to fill the gap in knowledge of the impact of the apartheid government on the democratic government. Many researchers such as Majid, Samad, Tazilah, Sudarmoyo and Hanaysha (2019: 36) focused on the factors that contribute to the effective public service delivery and did not look into the impact of the apartheid system to democratic South Africa. Other authors Jeong, Nam, Park, Shin, Oh, Yu and Kim (2018: 478) discussed the competency of public servants and spoke strongly about the competency of public servants in local government but the transition from apartheid government to democratic government and the caliber of leaders is not discussed. Moreau and Currier (2017: 28) also spoke about the history of the South African government and the negotiations thereof but the psychological impact of apartheid was not mentioned or discussed. Therefore, this article specifically looks into the effect of the impact of the apartheid government to mindset system of leaders that are leading in a democratic South Africa. This study, based on results and findings intends to suggest solutions for local government leaders. Psychological training of leaders in local government is necessary and leaders must be trained to address issues as they come and stop using apartheid as the reason why they cannot provide services. Leaders must be taught to face challenges and learn to provide solutions while admitting if they cannot deliver what people are expecting from them.

The history of the local government in South Africa

The apartheid legacy still exists in South Africa and leaders always talk about apartheid as the stumbling block to effective public service delivery. Govender and Reddy (2019: 83) are of the view that the legacy of the apartheid government can be dealt with by facilitating programs that allow social behavior patterns to change. Using the apartheid government as the excuse for poor public service delivery is used by most leaders to gain public support. Leaders are elected because of promising people that they will reverse the injustices of the apartheid government if they are elected. The apartheid government is no longer in place and leaders need to come with strategies to improve public service delivery. The public that votes for leaders in local government is still voting for people that experienced apartheid and people that talk about apartheid as the reason why black people are poor. Those who fought against apartheid or participated in the fight against apartheid feel like the country is owing to them something. Those who fought against apartheid want to occupy all leadership positions. Those who were not part of the struggle but possess good leadership qualities feel threatened and people on the ground listen to those who were in the struggle. Struggle credentials must not be used as a barometer to measure leadership capabilities (Ziervogel, 2019: 495). Public service delivery in South Africa is held back by those who think they must be in leadership positions and everything must be about them and without them, there is no leadership. Local government institutions exist in societies and societies have capable people who can develop and implement good ideas to improve public service delivery but lack of struggle credentials affect their chances. Even after 25 years of democratic government and democratic society, people are still thinking about apartheid, and countries that were liberated after South Africa are no longer blaming colonialism but life goes on for them. This article, therefore, critic the use of apartheid government as a reason for poor public service delivery and as a cover-up for incompetency (Ababio and Asmah-Andoh, 2017).

Research Approach

Ali and Leeds (2009:03) argued that the research approach identifies the theoretical perspective and further looks at the research methodology and practical approach adopted to achieve objectives. The quantitative and qualitative research approaches differ in the analytical objectives and type of questions posed. The qualitative approach is mainly concerned with an understanding of the meaning people give to the phenomena within a social setting and a small scale is required while the quantitative approach deals with statistics and numbers. This particular paper has adopted a case study and mixed-method approach because the case study which is defined as a method of inquiry is primarily designed to bring out the information from the viewpoint or understanding of the participants. Multiple sources were used for this study, such as real-life events, observation of the behavior of ward councilors in the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality

programs, and the behavior of ward councilors towards the community members. The mentioned sources were used to ensure that reliability is increased (Tellis, 1997: 44).

Castellan (2010: 02) contended that some studies involve different communities. This particular study is also regarded as a diverse study because more than one councilor was studied and the relevant participation of communities and participation of councilors in community development were examined in depth. The capability of the council to provide effective leadership and proper guidance to the municipal officials was undertaken to understand challenges to the service delivery of the eThekweni Municipality.

According to Polit and Hungler (1995: 210), the case study approach allows the researcher to collect information and knowledge about the thoughts, conditions, feelings, and actions directly from the actors in a certain context. The researcher collected all relevant information for the study directly from those involved in their respective communities, including councilors and community leadership.

Research Method

Researchers can choose between the three available approaches to research which is: qualitative research, quantitative research, and the mixed-method approach. Turner and Robson (1993: 307) argued that quantitative research is the approach mainly dealing with numbers. On the other hand, qualitative research is the approach concerned with human sciences and which relies on deductive models of explanation consisting of data that is in words, not in the form of numbers.

Ary, Jacobus, and Razavieh (1990:445) indicated that qualitative research regards reality as subjective and observations play a significant role in ensuring that there is enough and relevant information. The further difference between the qualitative and quantitative approaches is that with qualitative research, data is presented in the form of words, quotations, transcripts, and documents, while quantitative research views reality as objective and observations are done in a standardized manner. Quantitative data are therefore presented with the exact figures gained or obtained from exact measurements.

The researcher chose mixed methods to approach this particular study because the study seeks to discover human actions, institutions, events, and customs to construct what is being studied in sufficient depth and detail. This approach is more relevant to investigate service delivery issues in the municipality; the role of ward councilors and their competency level in service delivery; the capacity of the municipality to deliver and the responsibility of the council regarding service delivery to the people (Robson, 1993:08).

Robson (1993: 67) further argued that case studies provide for in-depth analysis of a situation but they do not define the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Measuring instrument

Quantitative data collection techniques rely on random sampling and structured data collection instruments are used for the pre-determined response categories. The results produced are easily summarized, compared, and generalized. Quantitative research is mainly concerned with testing the hypotheses derived from the theory. A variety of measuring instruments can be used in research, namely questionnaires, interviews, and observation (North Dakota Compass, 2015:04).

Kothari (2004:17) contended that it is necessary to use the correct instrument to collect data for the study. This could be affected by the costs involved, time, and other resources at the disposal of the researcher. The primary data in research can be collected through experiments, observations, surveys, and questionnaires. The questionnaire method is considered the best method because the questionnaires are carefully prepared in advance and pretesting is done. The researcher and the respondents are in contact. The questionnaire was thus considered the best measurement instrument for this particular study.

The primary data was collected through self-administered questionnaires that were personally administered by the researcher to the ward councilors. The advantage of the questionnaire is that it assists to find the accurate and correct information as per the responses of the respondents. Self-administering of questionnaires makes it easier for the respondents to ask the researcher if there is any clarity being sought. The questionnaires were available in both IsiZulu and English for the benefit of some councilors who might not understand the questions in English. IsiZulu is the dominant language in the area (Statistics South Africa 2011:15). The questionnaires were a mix of structured closed-ended and open-ended questions. The majority of questions were closed-ended questions to address the objectives of the study. The questions were informed by the literature review, as well as by developed questionnaires used in similar studies that have been conducted. A leadership characteristic rating scale was adopted from Northouse (2013:2276), which was tested for reliability. This sought to provide a rating score of councilors based on 14 leadership characteristics that are argued to make councilors good leaders. The rating was done by the councilors themselves (self-rating) and also completed by community members (community rating).

Data analysis

Data analysis is the process of systematically applying statistical techniques to illustrate and describe the data in a more meaningful way. Various analytical procedures can be used to provide a way of drawing inductive inferences from the data and also differentiate the signal, which is the phenomenon of interest, from the noise, which is the statistical fluctuation, in the present data (Shamoo & Resnik, 2003:01).

According to Ahmed, Ahmed, McKaig, Begum, Mungia, Norton and Baqui (2015: 50), statistical analysis depends on the objectives of the study, and the most important statistical task to start with is the descriptive analysis of the variables. When the data is analyzed, it is very important to present the results obtained for each type of variable of the study. The software packages, such as SPSS, EPIInfo, STATA, Minitab, Open Epi, Graph pad, and many others, are relevant and very useful in quantitative research. Data analysis is influenced or affected by factors such as age, gender, race, income, and education level and these factors should appear in the data analysis if need be.

Zhu (2013:114) described data analysis as the most popular tool for researchers in public policy and public administration because it allows the researchers to use the same units and could increase the quantity and quality of the empirical information.

Data analysis for this particular study was done through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software because this software was more relevant to the study and displayed all the expected variables of the study. SPSS was also used to analyze the data because it is the best software to address the study objectives clearly and effectively.

Data collected through questionnaires were cleaned, sorted, coded, and captured for analysis using the statistical package, SPSS. The analysis involved descriptive statistics in the form of frequency tables and charts as well as inferential statistics in the form of chi-square tests; t-tests; ANOVA and regression analysis, depending on the research questions being asked and the variables relevant to that question. The leadership characteristic scale was used to calculate the total score, with high scores signifying a better leader. The average of councilor self-rating and that of the community members was used to reduce bias (Northouse, 2013:2778). Open-ended questions provided qualitative data that was analyzed through themes, which is thematic analysis. The results of qualitative data help to explain how and why not adequately covered by quantitative results.

Results and findings

The following results are the findings from ward councilors and community members. The response rate below summarizes how the respondents think the leaders of the local government hide with the ticket of apartheid when they fail to deliver what is expected. The results indicate that most community members are not happy about how leaders are elected and do not think leaders are doing a good job.

The sample and response rate

A total of 30 questionnaires were administered to community members in ten different wards; each ward had three respondents. A total of 86 questionnaires were successfully administered to ward councilors. A 100% response rate was achieved for the study, for both instruments. This response rate is excellent and has the potential to provide effective results. Fincham (2008: 01) suggested that the response rate should be at least 60% and above. The response rate of this study exceeded this recommendation.

Ward Councilors

The demographic and socio-economic variables of the ward councilors who participated in the study are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of the demographic and socio-economic variables of ward councilors

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	61	70.9
Female	25	29.1
Age		
26-30 years	3	3.5
31-35 years	8	9.3
36-40 years	14	16.3
41-59 years	55	64.0
60 years and above	6	7.0
Highest level of education		
Grades 1-8	6	7.0
Grade 12	41	47.7
Certificate	6	7.0
Diploma	19	22.1
Degree	10	11.6
Postgraduate	4	4.7
Marital status		
Single	28	32.6
Married	46	53.5

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Widowed	5	5.8
Divorced	6	7.0
Number of dependants		
1	7	8.1
2	8	9.3
3	5	5.8
4	7	8.1
5	12	14.0
6	15	17.4
7	32	37.2
Are you the sole breadwinner in your household?		
Yes	59	68.6
No	27	31.4
Yes	15	17.4
Are there any family members who have been in a leadership position?		
No	69	80.2
If you answered 'yes' in the above question, which leadership position is/was the member holding?		
Ward Councillor	9	10.5
Minister	2	2.3
Other	4	4.7
Have you ever been employed?		
Yes	73	84.9
No	10	11.6
If you answered 'yes' in the above question, what kind of employment?		
Casual job	10	11.6
Contract	19	22.1
Permanent	27	31.4

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Professional job	16	18.6
Other	2	2.3
What caused the termination of the employment?		
Contract expired	21	24.4
Resigned	44	51.2
Retired	1	1.2
Other	8	9.3

Table 1 illustrates the demographics of ward councilors in all 86 wards. The following analysis provides further information and interpretation of how the ward councilors responded to the questions.

Gender: The majority of the ward councilors, 70.9%, that were part of the study were males, while female councilors constituted 29.1%, which indicates that the gender balance in terms of the national government’s equity is not properly implemented in the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality.

Age: The majority of ward councilors in the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality are above the age of 41 and not more than 59 years of age, which indicates that the youth in terms of creating continuity in the municipality is not properly considered. This also suggests that the majority of ward councilors experienced the apartheid government. These leaders are elected because they have participated or their relatives have participated in the fight against apartheid. There are many ward councilors aged between 41–59. They constituted 64% of the total number of councilors that were part of the study.

Highest level of education: Completing the secondary level of education is considered necessary to be able to read and write. Ward councilors also deal with many documents and matric is necessary for them to be able to read and write. Only 47.7% of ward councilors had completed their matric and did not have access the tertiary education, while 22.1% of ward councilors managed to complete their national diplomas in different fields, 11.6% indicated they have bachelor degrees, and 4.7 had completed postgraduate qualifications. Only 7% of ward councilors in the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality did not complete their secondary education and did not study any other short courses to equip themselves. This negatively affects understanding the policies of the government and also fully participating in the drafting of municipal by-laws. This shows that leaders are elected based on their struggle credentials and not on merit.

Marital status: The family structure is very important because it contributes to how leaders are respected by their communities. More than half (53.5%) of the ward councilors that were part of the study were married. This is a symbol of being responsible in many communities' views; while 32.6% were not married.

Numbers of dependents: Ward councilors are not only leaders of the community but they are also leaders of their families. The majority of ward councilors indicated that they have many family members that depend on them. Most of the ward councilors (37.2%) have more than five dependents. Only 8.1% have only one dependent, which is the lowest percentage in terms of the level of the dependent of the study.

Breadwinner status: The majority of ward councilors stated they are breadwinners in their families and have a responsibility to support their families. A significant 68.6% were sole breadwinners, while 31.4% were not breadwinners. This means that many families depend on the ward councilors.

Family members in leadership: Many ward councilors who participated in the study were the first people to be in leadership positions in their families. However, there were ward councilors with family members who have been in leadership positions before. Ward councilors that shared leadership responsibilities with some family members comprised 17.4% while 80.2% did not have family members in leadership positions.

Leadership positions of ward councilors' family members: Some ward councilors (10.5%) stated they have family members who also ward councilors in different wards.

Previous employment status: Working experience contributes much to one's personal life because a person gets exposed to how to communicate with other people. The majority (84.9%) of ward councilors indicated they have been employed previously, while 11.6% said they have never been employed before. Working experience is necessary because it improves the communication levels of leaders.

Type of employment: Many ward councilors (31.4%) were employed permanently in different sectors, including government institutions; 11.6% of ward councilors were casual workers who do not have job security. Being a ward councilor was the best option for them in terms of salary and job security. However, those who were permanent had left employment which had good job security for leading the community.

Reasons for terminating employment: A majority (51.2%) of ward councilors had resigned from their employment to ensure that they work full-time as ward councilors. Only 1.2% had retired. However, if an individual has retired from a full-time job because of age, it becomes complicated for that particular individual to work full-time as a ward councilor and perform all activities or duties extremely well.

Table 2: Expected appropriate training for ward councilors

Categories	Frequency	Percent	
ABET or Primary education	3	2.9%	
Matric	13	12.7%	15.9%
Diploma or degree	35	34.3%	42.7%
Postgraduate qualification	10	9.8%	12.2%
Leadership certificate	41	40.2%	50.0%
Total	102	100.0%	124.4%

Table 2: lists the results and analysis of ward councilors' responses when they were asked about the training that they think is more appropriate for ward councilors. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) has authorized a Centre for Leadership and Governance (2016:02) to facilitate accredited training to ward councilors, as well as an accredited qualification that assists ward councilors to be able to understand their fundamental roles and responsibilities within the council. Qualifications assist people to have more knowledge about a specific field of study. Half (50%) of the ward councilors stated they believe that a leadership certificate is the most important qualification required for ward councilors and government leaders to be able to provide public services effectively. The National Diploma and Bachelor's degree in leadership-related programs and governance programs were also viewed as necessary by ward councilors since 42.7% indicated that they hold this particular view. These results show that the majority of ward councilors don't see the importance of education because they are elected by the people regardless of their qualifications and the competency to deliver public services. Struggle credentials and participation in fighting against the apartheid government becomes a ticket to occupy leadership positions.

Table 3: Reasons for public protests

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Service delivery	31	54.4%
Demarcation grievance	2	3.5%
Ward councillor election process	8	14.0%
Political party related	16	28.1%
Total	57	100.0%

Public protests are the result of the frustration that the community is experiencing. Table 3 provides some of the reasons for public protests in different wards. Public service delivery is the main reason for public protests and ward councilors are aware of that because 54.4% of them responded that service delivery is the main cause of public protests. Some of the public protests were mainly caused by political parties to settle political points and 28.1% of respondents indicated that they believe that public protests are caused by politicians. Burger (2009:155) argued that the primary reason for public protests is dissatisfaction with the service delivery of basic municipal services, such as running water, electricity and toilets (especially in informal settlements); poor infrastructure; and the lack of housing. Socio-political instability has also played a big role in the contradictions between councilors and the municipality.

Table 4: Actions taken for public protests

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Called municipal officials	22	37.9%
Called public order police	8	13.8%
Convened community meeting	20	34.5%
I Relocated	1	1.7%
Other	7	12.1%
Total	58	100.0%

When people embark on mass action or public protest, they expect authorities to do something about the protests even if decisions have to be taken at a national or provincial level. Table 4 provides an analysis of how to ward councilors responded to the actions they took after public protests. Ward councilors sometimes face public protests that are beyond their control. The majority of ward councilors generally call municipal officials when they face public protests and 37.9% of responses from ward councilors indicated that when facing public protests, they called municipal officials to clarify issues.

The descriptive statistics provided a total leadership score of 84 with a minimum of 16.00 and a maximum of 70.00 with a mean of 56.8810 and a standard deviation of 8.99853. This is a binary logistic regression (dependent variable based on BQ17.1: whether the protests were due to service delivery or not). The model was used to test the likelihood of the protest being for service delivery instead of any other kind of protest.

Variables tested in the model include total leadership rating; AQ1 (gender); AQ3 (highest level of qualification); AQ9 (employment experience); BQ2 (leadership experience); BQ3 (ward councilor experience); and BQ6 (leadership training) which all summarise leadership characteristics.

The researcher observed that without explanatory variables, the model can correctly classify only 66.7% of the cases. The table is compared to the one from a model with explanatory variables as presented below.

Classification of cases improved to 84% due to the controlled variables. This implies that the variables included are important as leaders blame the apartheid government for their weaknesses to explain poor service delivery (performance of local leadership).

The omnibus test also confirms the goodness of fit of the model specified, as the chi-square test is statistically significant ($p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.10$).

Table 5: Omnibus tests of model coefficients

		Chi-square	Df	Sig.
Step 1	Step	41.321	15	.000
	Block	41.321	15	.000
	Model	41.321	15	.000

As in linear regression, binary logistics have pseudo Rs that display how much variation in the dependent variable is explained by the controlled explanatory variables. In this case, the pseudo-R-square range is between 0.40 and 0.56, which is relatively high explanatory power in a cross-sectional set-up (survey data generally has a low variability factor).

Community Members Data Analysis

This section presents the results of the data analysis of responses from the 30 community members. The results are presented by starting with a descriptive frequency table, followed by inferential analysis. As alluded previously in the introduction, the purpose of the survey with community members was to validate the response by councilors.

Socio-demographics of the study respondents

The instrument had Section A, which was basically to capture the demographic make-up of respondents. The information that was requested from the respondents was about their gender, age, marital status, number of dependents, breadwinner, ward number, and number of years a person has stayed in the ward. The results from the section are summarised in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Descriptive statistics of the demographic and socioeconomic variables

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	12	40
	Female	18	60
Age	18-25	6	20.0
	26-30	7	23.3
	31-35	1	3.3
	36-40	6	20.0
	41-59	9	30.0
	60 and above	1	3.3
Highest education level	gGrades 1- 8	6	20.0
	gGrades 9-12	17	56.7
	Certificate	4	13.3
	Diploma	3	10.0
Marital status	Single	26	86.7
	Married	4	13.3
Number of dependents	1	3	10.0
	2	7	23.3
	3	2	6.7
	4	4	13.3
	5	5	16.7
	6	2	6.7
	7 More than 5	7	23.3
Breadwinner	Yes	16	53.3
	No	14	46.7
Ward number	(A)	3	10.0
	(B)	3	10.0
	(C)	3	10.0
	(D)	3	10.0
	(E)	3	10.0

	(F)	3	10.0
	(G)	3	10.0
	(H)	3	10.0
	(I)	3	10.0
	(J)	3	10.0
Number of years' members stayed in the ward	0-5 years	6	20.0
	6-10 years	2	6.7
	11-15 years	7	23.3
	16-20 years	8	26.7
	21-25 years	2	6.7
	26-30 years	2	6.7
	31 years and above	3	10.0
Section B Members who know the councilor and those who don't	Yes	26	86.7
	No	4	13.3
Community members who raised issues with the councilors	Yes	8	26.7
	No	22	73.3

Table 6: above indicates the following results of the analyzed data:

Gender: The responses were from both genders, namely 40% males and 60% females, with the majority of the respondents were females. The South African population is generally dominated by females which have been proven by the results of Statistics South Africa (2011:04). This study's 60% responses from females and 40% from males is a reflection of the country's population distribution by gender.

Age: Results indicate that 43.3% of respondents were still in their youth (18–30 years) which indicates that the majority of the people staying in the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality are in their youth. Households are mainly headed by the youth and sometimes do not have parents but depend on child support grants. This has also been indicated by Schore (2015:1) who argued that the majority of people who are experiencing a lack of service delivery are people living in informal settlements. They are excluded from the economic activities of the society. The majority of people are unemployed and unemployable in the formal business sector and government. However, 30% of the respondents were adults who responded based on their extensive experience, whilst the middle-age group only constituted 20% of respondents.

Conclusion

Based on the results from ward councilors and community members it is clear that leaders in democratic South Africa still use apartheid as the reason for poor public service delivery. There is a need to conduct a voter education in South Africa that will not only focus on steps to be followed when people are voting. The necessary voter education must train voters on how to identify a person that will be equal to the task and a person that will sacrifice for the people. Those who are members of political parties and participate in the nomination process of ward councilors must be equipped with the necessary knowledge on the type of people they must elect to represent the political party. Voting for leaders because they possess struggle credentials must be discouraged in all communities.

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