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THE NEXUS BETWEEN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY: A LITERATURE ANALYSIS

Lance Barbier* & Robertson K. Tengeh

ABSTRACT This paper analyses the relationship between Public Administration, Knowledge Management and Service Delivery and to understand if improved Knowledge Management in the South African Government can improve public sector service delivery. This paper is a systematic analysis of 150 secondary literature sources. Even though not all the secondary literature sources analysed are used or cited in the paper, they nonetheless contributed to the identification of several key issues. The main finding of this paper is that improved Knowledge Management in the South African Government would ultimately result in improved public sector service delivery. There is a dearth of empirical research on Knowledge Management in the South African Government, including whether the public sector's adoption of private-sector methods to better itself is effective. From a Public Administration standpoint, none of the literature analysed explains how to successfully integrate Knowledge Management in the "South African Government to improve service delivery." More research on this subject is necessary. Especially, to determine the impact of Knowledge Management on investor confidence, and the inflow of Foreign Direct Investment. The research will benefit governments of developing countries, particularly South Africa, Public Administration scholars, and Knowledge Management professionals.

KEY WORDS: *Financial development, Income inequality, ARDL, BRICS*

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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Despite having the most developed and sophisticated economy in Africa, South Africa, a mixed country with a mostly black population of around 60 million people, has suffered from inadequate development and extreme social inequality for many years. This means that if you're black and you live in South Africa, you're more likely to live in poverty, be unemployed, and have less access to public services than white people (Cook, South Africa: Current Issues, Economy, and U.S. Relations, 2020). As a result, such relative deprivation frequently results in violent and angry outbursts expressed through service delivery protests, validating Breakfast and Normarwayi's (2019) assertion that unmet expectations and service delivery protests are associated.

Cyril Ramaphosa is the President of South Africa. When he took office as President on February 15, 2018, he inherited an administration riddled with corruption and mismanagement allegations, stemming from his predecessor, Jacob Zuma's term in office (Cook, South Africa: Current Issues, Economy, and U.S. Relations, 2020; Dassah, 2018). President Ramaphosa promised South Africans that his administration will work relentlessly to address the triple challenge of poverty, inequality, and unemployment, including the issues, discussed further below on corruption, state capture, political instability, etc. that are impeding South Africa's path to a unified and thriving country (PwC, 2018). President Ramaphosa said significant financial backing, notably from foreign investors, i.e., Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), is necessary for success (OECD, 2002; PwC, 2018). Because South Africa has a relatively low savings rate, FDI is crucial, and whatever money South Africa has will never be enough. That is why regular inflows of foreign money are crucial, and why FDI will always be an important component of South Africa's economic policy (Sunday Times, 2018; South African Institute of International Affairs, 2020; PwC, 2018).

At the start of his five-year term in 2018, President Cyril Ramaphosa set a high goal of \$100 billion in new investments (Daily Maverick, 2021), and has received promises totalling more than \$55 billion since taking office (Cook, South Africa: Current Issues, Economy, and U.S. Relations, 2020). However, the upward trend was short-lived in 2020, when FDI inflows into South Africa fell by 15% or half of what they were in 2019. The inflow of FDI dropped from \$4.6 billion in 2019 to \$2.5 billion in 2020 (UNCTAD, 2022; Daily Maverick, 2021). According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) report

(2022), the significant reduction can be attributed to the Covid-19 outbreak. In 2021, South Africa had around 2.5 million confirmed coronavirus cases and over 70,000 deaths, making it the African country with the highest number of coronavirus infections (Daily Maverick, 2021). However, investor confidence in South Africa was already shaky due to the following governance factors, and Covid-19, according to the researcher, was just the icing on the cake:

- **Corruption Allegations:** *Corruption allegations stemming from President Jacob Zuma's term in office e.g., allegations of the illegal awarding of contracts and tenders (Cook, South Africa: Current Issues, Economy, and U.S. Relations, 2020; PwC, 2018);*
- **State Capture:** *State capture became a heated topic in South Africa when the then-Minister of Finance, Nhlanhla Nene, was dismissed on 9 December 2015 (Dassah, 2018);*
- **Political instability:** *South African Presidents, since 1994, have not been able to serve more than two terms in office. For example, President Mandela served only one term in office, from 1994 to 1999. The ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC) recalled Presidents Mbeki and Zuma to resign after just one term, and President Motlanthe had to step in and take charge as head of state from September 2008 until September 2009 (The Presidency, 2018). While the peaceful nature of the transfers may be taken as a sign of growing democracy, it is interpreted as an indication that people have lost trust in elected Presidents over time. These changes had an impact on South Africa's financial strength (The Presidency, 2018);*
- **Energy crises:** *Eskom, South Africa's electricity utility, is one of the world's largest power companies, but due to poor governance, it is unable to keep the lights on in the country (Daily Maverick, 2021). For instance, the demand for power supply has grown, but Eskom's capacity to deliver a steady supply to fulfil household and industrial demands has deteriorated. This consequently led to the implementation of energy and demand control measures, termed load shedding (Fortuin, 2022). South Africa had the worst year of load shedding on record in 2019 (Trace, 2020);*

- **Service delivery unrest:** *South Africa has one of the world's highest rates of public protest. Because of this South Africa is known globally as "the world's riotous protest capital" (Breakfast & Nomarwayi, 2019; PSA, 2015; South African Institute of International Affairs, 2020; Lodge & Mottiar, 2015; Daily Maverick, 2021). Citizens know that the only way to get a quick response from the government is to protest, often violently. According to Susan Booysen in Lodge and Mottiar (2015), South Africans frequently turn to riotous tactics to obtain prompt responses from the government. She adds that riotous protests are more common in places with a very poor track record of public sector service delivery (Breakfast & Nomarwayi, 2019; PSA, 2015; Lodge & Mottiar, 2015).*

According to President Ramaphosa, most of South Africa's issues stem from the government's inability to provide excellent services, which is a result of weak governance. He says that if you address this, you would be able to solve not only the triple challenge but a lot of South Africa's problems, including those listed above (Daily Maverick, 2021; SABC News, 2022; PwC, 2018). Good governance is a critical component of this process. The South African Institute of International Affairs (2020) endorses this assertion, stating that the government must prioritise strengthening its capacity first and foremost, especially since poor service delivery reflects adversely on international investors. Investors are paying close attention to the way this country is governed. Their yardstick is service delivery. (Sunday Times, 2018; South African Institute of International Affairs, 2020; PwC, 2018; Cook, South Africa: Current Issues, Economy, and U.S. Relations, 2020). Hence if the president wants to attract large sums of money from foreign investors, he must take decisive steps to rebuild investor confidence by prioritising service delivery (PwC, 2018). Consequently, the researcher feels that to accelerate the government's capabilities and increase the government's potential to provide exceptional service delivery is to leverage Knowledge Management. Especially when financial resources are limited. Over the years, Knowledge Management has gained significant momentum as a critical component of private-sector success (Jayasingam, Ansari, Ramayah, & Jantan, 2020; Zack, McKeen, & Singh, 2009; Rowland & Syed-Ikhsan, 2004; Ming Yu, 2002; Davenport & Prusak, Working Knowledge, 2000).

In a speech, World Bank President, Jim Yong Kim said that the foundation of success in service delivery is the unspoken knowledge of implementers,

referring to Knowledge Management as the bold action that will address the magnitude of current global service delivery challenges (World Bank, 2012). According to various scholars, Knowledge Management will:

- *Speed up an organisation's ability to make them work smarter (Wiig K. M., 2002);*
- *Enable organisations to “do more with less” (Wiig K. M., 2002);*
- *Address the skills gap (Sawe & Rotich, 2016);*
- *Empower employees to grow and innovate (Sawe & Rotich, 2016);*
- *Facilitate organisations to be faster and more efficient (Theriou, Maditinos, & Theriou, 2011);*
- *Reduce duplication of effort (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2019);*
- *Prevent mistakes or malpractice (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2019);*
- *Improve processes and work methods (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2019); and*
- *Reduce dependency on consultants (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2019).*

The following is how Knowledge Management made its way into the public sector. All governments will face pressure from their citizens to implement reforms to enhance the way how services are delivered. As society progresses and individuals' expectations change, such pressures are more likely to emerge. That's why, as society changes, so too must the way services be delivered. Hence, it would be misleading to assume that public sector service delivery must stay stagnant as society evolves. Government deals with these pressures through the instrument of Public Administration (Boyle & MacCarthaigh, 2011). “*The machinery and integral processes through which the government performs its functions*” is how public administration is defined (Lamidi, 2015). Thus, as the world evolves, so must Public Administration (Robinson, 2015; Fatemi & Behmanesh, 2012; Stefanescu, 2012; Lamidi, 2015). Between 1890 and 1980, Public Administration evolved from “*Traditional Public Administration to New Public Management*”. An additional Public Administration model that appeared in the year 2000 is called New Public Governance (Boyle & MacCarthaigh, 2011). Governments worldwide either embrace New Public Management or Public Governance as their standard for modernisation and reform (Hope, 2001; Lapuente & Van de Walle, 2020). Although these models introduced new

concepts to Public Administration, they share certain features with the previous model. An example is the adoption of private-sector practices, like Knowledge Management, which was initially implemented during the New Public Management era and has since remained (Boyle & MacCarthaigh, 2011).

Consequently, the purpose of this paper is to analyse the relationship between Public Administration, Knowledge Management and Service Delivery and to understand if improved Knowledge Management in the South African Government can improve public sector service delivery. To achieve this objective, a systematic review was performed. The theoretical context, which is the framework that supports the theory of this paper, was developed using De Wet Schutte's Dendrogram Technique as a guide (Schutte, 2020). The question "is reflected in?" was asked after the key research question of this paper, "Can improve Knowledge Management in the South African Government improve public sector service delivery?" Of this, the theoretical context of this paper was identified and is underpinned by Public Administration, Knowledge Management, and Service Delivery, which are also the keywords of the paper.

2. PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

According to Leonina-Emilia and Ioan (2010), as well as Olla and Aderibigbe (2014), Public Administration is so vast and contentious that it is much easier to describe than to define it. The authors' reason is that the boundaries of Public Administration were never precisely demarcated. This resulted in several definitions being proposed, to try and explain its meaning. However, most scholars of Public Administration agree Public Administration is predominantly governmental in nature (Olla & Aderibigbe, 2014). This means Public Administration cannot function in isolation from its political context and it is because of this context that it is public, as opposed to private. Also, another way to understand Public Administration is to look at the words Public and Administration separately. The word "*Public refers to government activities and actions. Administration is derived from the Latin word administrare, which is to serve, to lead, to govern, to care for, or to look after. The management of public or private affairs is what the word Administration means. As a result, Public Administration refers to the management of public affairs*" (Thapa, 2020).

For this study, Public Administration defined by Lamidi (2015) is used: "*Public Administration is the machinery and integral processes by which the government*

conducts its functions.” Machinery in this context implies “instrument” and integral processes imply the key activities of government known as POSDCORB i.e., “*Planning, Organising, Staffing, Directing, Coordinating, Reporting, and Budgeting*” (Osborne, 2010). POSDCORB are common government activities to turn policies and plans into action (Uchem & Erunke, 2013; Page, 2020; Osborne, 2010; Thapa, Public Administration: Meaning, Scope and Its Nature, 2020; Shafritz, Russell, Borick, & Hyde, 2017). Even if a definition of Public Administration is selected, fully comprehending it can be challenging (Uchem & Erunke, 2013).

1.1. Public administration reform

Public Administration reform is defined as “the tool government uses to improve its efficiencies or to amend what it deems substandard” (Merriam-Webster, 2014). Whereas according to Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011) in Ingrams, Piotrowski and Berliner (2020), it is defined as “deliberate changes to the structures and processes of public sector organizations to get them (in some sense) to run better”. Hence, Public Administration reform is a powerful concept that attempts to both relieve citizen pressure and ensure good governance (Ingrams, Piotrowski, & Berliner, 2020; UNDP, 2015). Citizens, for instance, use protests to lobby governments to correct inefficiencies and services of poor quality. Apart from corruption, political manipulation, lack of accountability and transparency, inefficiencies and poor services occur, because governments fail to keep up with the rest of the world, by remaining relevant and competitive (Boyle & MacCarthaigh, 2011; Robinson, 2015; Fatemi & Behmanesh, 2012). To remain relevant and competitive, Public Administration reform must happen to meet new expectations. That is, the government must go through changes to keep up with the latest technology, comply with ever-changing laws and regulatory prescripts and regulations, protect against fraud and corruption, etcetera. As a result, Public Administration must evolve in tandem with the changing world (Stefanescu, 2012).

Public Administration reform generally amends and updates four elements: “human capital, policy-making process (Hallsworth & Rutter, 2011), government machinery, as well as revenue and expense management systems” (UNDP, 2015). An explanation of each is as follows.

- **Human capital:** People's knowledge, skills, and qualifications are referred to as human capital. These are regarded as economic assets. Nothing is more vital to organisations than intelligence, according to Peter H. Diamandis. It is the fundamental key to problem solving and wealth generation, and it serves as the foundation for the human capital that propels every business and nation ahead (Merriam-Webster, 2014). Hence, the ability of the government to carry out its mission is a key component of Public Administration. With shrinking budgets, Public Administration reform is motivated by the need to find creative ways to lower the cost of human capital and at the same time ensure a government workforce with the right balance of scale and capability (UNDP, 2015; Page, 2020).
- **Policy-making process:** When the government starts talking about Public Administration reform, one of the first topics that come up is the improvement of the policy-making process. The reason for this is that the primary goal of making policy in the first place is to better the lives of citizens, and if citizens are complaining about poor and substandard services, it is apparent that their lives are not improving. The policy-making process, also known as policy formulation, involves various stages, from inception to conclusion. This is assessed during the Public Administration reform process (UNDP, 2015; Hallsworth & Rutter, 2011).
- **Government machinery:** The allocation and reallocation of duties between government departments are referred to as "machinery of government" also known as MOG. This entails modifications to departmental internal structures, work assignments within offices, and role assignments to entities other than government departments (UNDP, 2015; Government of South Australia, 2019). Government machinery is also referred to as all of the institutional arrangements adopted by national, provincial, or local governments to provide their legally required services and programmes (Johnson, 2015). According to Johnson (2015), when it comes to Public Administration reform, most debates revolve around whether to fine-tune government machinery or to completely reform the whole government.
- **Revenue and expense management systems:** Falling government revenues have put pressure on and stretched government finances across the world. Along with rising budget deficits, total global public debt rose by \$9.9 trillion in 2020 (United Nations, 2021). This is the greatest growth in

government borrowing since World War II (United Nations, 2021). Recently, governments across the world borrowed from the future to lessen the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on the current generation. As a result, it is the responsibility of the present generation to ensure that the borrowed money is wisely invested so that the present generation's well-being does not come at the price of future generations' well-being. The current crisis's urgency and immediacy cannot justify denying future generations of their entitlement to prosperity (United Nations, 2021). As a result, governments are experiencing severe financial difficulties. Therefore, government expenditure has become even more critical. Hence, when it comes to reforming Public Administration, the revenue and expense management system is a critical aspect. Finding ways to tweak this system so that all intended objectives may be met at the lowest feasible cost as governments' budgets shrink even further is a key goal of Public Administration Reform (UNDP, 2015).

As previously said, Public Administration reform is primarily concerned with making the government function better and be responsible for public resources and finances, among other things. The four elements described above are usually the first to be addressed in this respect (UNDP, 2015; Robinson, 2015; Fatemi & Behmanesh, 2012). Consequently, three Public Administration models have emerged as a result. The next section delves more into these models and centres on how the government came to adopt private-sector practices.

2.2. Public administration model

Public Administration has been around for over 130 years. It all started in 1887 when Woodrow Wilson published a paper titled "The Study of Administration". This according to Public Administration scholars marked the beginning of Public Administration (Vignieri, 2020). Several developments have taken place since. That is, Public Administration experienced a paradigm change over the years, according to Cronje (2010) and Stefanescu (2012). Between 1890 and 1980, Public Administration progressed from Traditional Public Administration to New Public Management. New Public Governance is a new Public Administration concept that emerged in the year 2000. This is elaborated below.

2.2.1. Traditional public administration

In several respects, Traditional Public Administration is founded on Max Weber's formulation of bureaucracy's essence. Max Weber, a German sociologist was

considered one of the most influential Public Administration academics of the last century. Max Weber defined and theorized "bureaucracy" throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, and his work is known as Weberian bureaucracy. Weberian bureaucracy is the cornerstone of Traditional Public Administration (Vignieri, 2020; Pfiffner, 2004). It is distinguished by the fact that it is a formal administration ruled by political leaders. It follows a strict hierarchical administration system. According to this system, public officials are permanent, neutral, and anonymous, and their motivation is exclusively for the common good. These officials serve all ruling parties equally, and they do not set policy but rather just administer policy that has been set by political leaders (Denkova, Lazarevski, & Denkova, 2018; Robinson, 2015; Chipkin & Lipietz, 2012). Although many Public Administration scholars contend that Max Weber was the leading thinker of Public Administration of his day, if not all times, according to Chipkin and Lipietz (2012), beginning in the late 1970s, the Weberian Public Administration system, came under increasing criticism for failure to deliver on its promises (Pfiffner, 2004; Xu, Sun, & Si, 2015). Due to the hierarchical and bureaucratic structure, Traditional Public Administration was seen as a rigid model designed to work only in a safe, probable, and systematic manner in a fairly constant environment (Katsamunska, 2012). However, the world was evolving, and this model was having difficulty adapting to the ever-changing, and at times unpredictable environment (Wiig, 2000). Due to its hierarchical, bureaucratic, and rigid structure, outcomes and outputs took an extremely long time to be achieved. This model caused significant delays. Hence, the need existed to transition from a slow, rigid, and overly bureaucratic public service (Denkova, Lazarevski, & Denkova, 2018), to one that was more fast-paced and flexible. Traditional Public Administration was no longer feasible and had to change (El-Ghalayini, 2016). Particularly one that offers fast, innovative, and efficient services (Denkova, Lazarevski, & Denkova, 2018; Robinson, 2015; Chipkin & Lipietz, 2012; PhDessay.com, 2020).

2.2. New public management

In response to the limitations of the Traditional Public Administration model, a modern type of Public Administration known as New Public Management emerged in the 1980s (Falconer, 2010; Promberger & Rauskala, 2003; Vignieri, 2020). New Public Management seeks to address the hierarchical, bureaucratic, and rigid structure of Traditional Public Administration (Strategica, 2018), which, among other things, causes significant delays (Promberger & Rauskala, 2003). While this, along with budgetary constraints on government spending, may be

considered the main objective of New Public Management, Boyle and MacCarthaigh (2011) argue that the model's defining feature is the adoption of private-sector practices. The need to provide fast, innovative and efficient services outweighs all other justifications for this model. Hence, New Public Management is on efficiency (outcomes or outputs) rather than procedures (inputs) (Fatemi & Behmanesh, 2012; Cameron, 2021). Consequently, New Public Management rather than reforming Traditional Public Administration is the strategy to alter the structure and activities of government (Strategica, 2018). This is done to make them economically viable and efficient in terms of resource consumption and service delivery, comparable to the private sector (Promberger & Rauskala, 2003; Lapuente & Van de Walle, 2020). Today, New Public Management is the most widespread Public Administration model (Kalimullah, Alam, & Nour, 2012). Overall, New Public Management is characterised as the approach that adopts private sector practices to be used in the public sector. Cameron (2021) contends that performance management is at the heart of all of this because it is a key component of New Public Management and that while senior public officials are given greater autonomy, as in the private sector, they must also be held to a higher level of accountability. The shift from "Traditional Public Administration to New Public Management," on the other hand, has sparked academic debate and raised some intriguing concerns about whether "New Public Management" is, in fact, a new paradigm (Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2011). Scholars such as Gow and Dufour (2000), argue whether it matters if New Public Management is a new paradigm or not. Nonetheless, an additional model was developed and is discussed next.

2.2.3. New public governance

According to Klijn (2012), New Public Management and New Public Governance have emerged as alternatives to Traditional Public Administration over the last two decades. Although they both learn and adapt to some extent from one another, they can be seen as polar opposites in terms of how governments cope with the increasing complexities of policy processes, implementation, and service delivery (Klijn, 2012). Nevertheless, both New Public Management and New Public Governance reinforce each other, with certain features in each (Klijn, 2012). It was initially anticipated that "New Public Management" would replace Traditional Public Administration as the new form of Public Administration, but recent scholarly literature has raised questions about this approach's intra-organizational orientation and shortcomings (Osborne, 2010). While New Public Management is concerned with establishing the right objectives and then

delegating implementation to various bodies, the New Public Governance is concerned with incorporating different target viewpoints and attempting to improve inter-organisational cooperation (Klijn, 2012; Vignieri, 2020). New Public Governance is defined by Xu, Sun, and Si (2015) as a model of administration in which a pluralistic governance body comprised of the government, private sector, non-profit organizations, and a variety of social groups consults and negotiates to respond to changing social affairs. According to Klijn (2012), the characteristics of New Public Governance are:

- *Strong emphasis on the inter-organisational dimension of policymaking and service delivery, as well as the inter-dependencies of organisations in achieving policy goals and delivering services;*
- *Horizontal forms of steering (network control, meta-governance, and so on) are thought to be more capable of gaining cooperation from social actors. These horizontal forms of steering are intended to ensure that actors use their veto powerless often (enhance support);*
- *Using society actors' expertise to increase the consistency of governance and public services, as well as making greater use of the information disseminated by different actors (enhancing quality and innovative capacity); and*
- *Early intervention of social actors, stakeholders, and community organisations to increase the credibility of decisions (enhancing democratic legitimacy).*

New Public Governance is not meant to be viewed or considered as a substitute or only viable option for either Traditional Public Administration or New Public Management (Osborne, 2010). Also, while all three models introduced new ideas and concepts to Public Administration, certain features of the previous model can be seen in the subsequent one. An example is the adoption of private-sector practices, like Knowledge Management, which was initially implemented during the New Public Management era and has since remained (Boyle & MacCarthaigh, 2011).

3. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

According to Koenig and Neveroski (2018), Knowledge Management was born when two key variables combined: (i) the start of the Internet and the almost universal recognition of the Internet's value as a resource for sharing information and knowledge, especially for geographically distributed organisations; and (ii) the realisation of the value of an organization's information and knowledge assets. Ever since, Knowledge Management has been defined by several writers and researchers in several ways (Igbinovia & Ikenwe, 2017). In 1994, Tom Davenport coined the phrase "*capturing, distributing, and using knowledge*" to define Knowledge Management (Davenport, *Saving IT's Soul: Human Centered Information Management*, 1994). Years later, the Gartner Group came up with a new concept of Knowledge Management, which is still the most widely used: "*Knowledge Management is a collection of approaches that involves identifying, capturing, evaluating, retrieving, and sharing all of an enterprise's information assets*" (Koenig, 2018). Information assets are papers, procedures, strategies, databases, and uncaptured experiences and knowledge of employees. In the WCG, particularly the Department of Transport and Public Works, Knowledge Management is defined as the "*explicit and systematic management of vital knowledge and its associated processes of finding, creating, capturing, organising, storing, sharing, and applying knowledge that requires turning personal knowledge into corporate knowledge (intellectual capital) via the inclusion thereof in departmental strategy, policy, and practices*" (Western Cape Government, 2020). Because of its diverse and complex nature, there is no universally accepted definition of Knowledge Management (Theriou, Maditinos, & Theriou, 2011; Koenig, 2018; Igbinovia & Ikenwe, 2017). Nonetheless, the critical aspect of Knowledge Management is getting the correct knowledge to the correct person at the right time. Aside from that, it's crucial to remember that Knowledge Management isn't only about accumulating knowledge to accumulate knowledge. The ultimate purpose of Knowledge Management is to add value to an organisation so that organisational objectives are achieved (Hajric, 2018). Knowledge Management consists of at least three core lifecycle elements: (i) capture knowledge; (ii) store knowledge; and (iii) use knowledge.

3.1. Knowledge management DIKW Pyramid

It is important to understand the term "knowledge," specifically how it differs from "wisdom", "information" and "data". The DIKW Pyramid, depicted in Figure 1

below, has been used for several years to show this difference (Fernanda & Salwa, 2018).

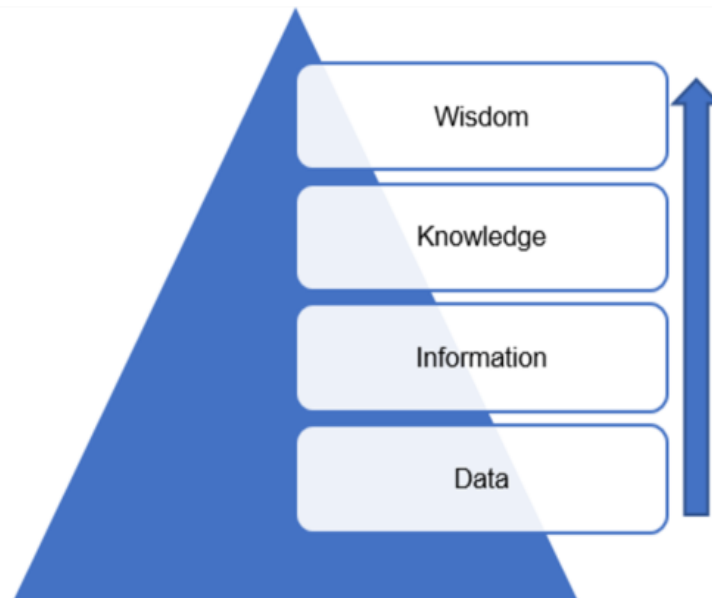


Figure 1. DIKW Pyramid

Source: Adapted from Fernanda and Salwa (2018)

Fernanda and Salwa (2018) explain the meaning of the terms Data, Information, Knowledge, and Wisdom as follows:

- **Data:** *A symbol, signal, or sensation associated with something is known as data. Data is the starting point for achieving a concrete outcome in the end. Logging, documents, measurements, and so on are all types of data;*
- **Information:** *According to Davenport and Prusak (2000) in Hajric (2018), data must be contextualized, classified, computed, and condensed to become information. Also, the conclusion reached because of the data gathered is referred to as information (Fernanda & Salwa, 2018);*
- **Knowledge:** *The sense of information that has been manipulated by humans is known as knowledge. According to Fernanda and Salwa (2018) as well as Igbinoia and Ikenwe (2017) knowledge is divided into two categories: tacit and explicit knowledge. Tacit knowledge is defined as knowledge acquired via direct observation and experience. It is the*

knowledge that is most challenging to record, impart, or portray in a tangible way (Igbinovia & Ikenwe, 2017). Explicit knowledge is the knowledge that can be readily shared because it has been written down, it can be easily learned and transmitted to others, it is codified, and archived for future use (Fernanda & Salwa, 2018); and

- **Wisdom:** *The highest level of ability shown by a person's ability to use his or her information efficiently and appropriately is known as wisdom. In this scenario, the individual makes informed and wise decisions.*

Although the DIKW Pyramid provides a basic framework on how data evolves into information, knowledge, and ultimately wisdom respectively, it does not make a distinction between wisdom and knowledge explicitly. That is, having knowledge does not necessarily lead to improved decisions or actions, and more crucially it does not make one wise (Intezari, Pauleen, & Taskin, 2016).

Aside from data, information, and knowledge, wisdom is reliant on a variety of other characteristics. It takes a mixture of experience, judgment, intellect, cognition, values, and beliefs, among other things for an individual to be wise (International Labour Office, 2011). Hence, these characteristics are linked to wisdom (Intezari, Pauleen, & Taskin, 2016). It is therefore fair to assert that to implement Knowledge Management in the South African Government, public employees would require more than mere knowledge of how to do this.

Consequently, getting public officials from "knowing" to "doing" is one of the most difficult challenges in developing countries, particularly those with a history of structured socioeconomic deprivation (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2013; International Labour Office, 2011). Nevertheless, this will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter section.

3.1.1. Knowledge management components

The Knowledge Management components consist of the Knowledge Management Critical Success Factors and the Knowledge Management tools. Implementing Knowledge Management in any organisation is not an easy task (Hai Sin, Gan Goh, & Eze, 2009). It is a complex undertaking and to be successful, requires well-thought-out criteria (Winkler & Mandl, 2007). Over the years, criteria considered important for the successful implementation of

Knowledge Management were identified. They are called Critical Success Factors (see Table 1) (Theriou, Maditinos, & Theriou, 2011).

Table 1. Knowledge Management Critical Success Factors

| Author | Year | Knowledge Management Critical Success Factors |
|--|-------------|---|
| <i>“Arthur Andersen and APQC</i> | 1996 | Leadership, organizational culture, technology, and measurement. |
| <i>Earl</i> | 1997 | Information Technology, people, and corporate culture. |
| <i>Skyme and Amidon</i> | 1997 | A strong link to business imperative, a compelling vision, and architecture, knowledge leadership, knowledge-creating and sharing culture, continuous learning, well-developed technology infrastructure, and systematic organizational knowledge processes. |
| <i>Holsapple and Joshi</i> | 1997 | Managerial influences, Resource influences, and Environment influences. |
| <i>Davenport et al.</i> | 1998 | A clear purpose and language, a standard and flexible knowledge structure, multiple channels for knowledge transfer, organizational culture, technical and organizational infrastructure, change in motivational practices, and senior management support. |
| <i>Liebowitz</i> | 1999 | Strategy with the support of senior management, CKO or equivalent, and a knowledge management infrastructure, knowledge ontologies and repositories, knowledge management systems and tools, incentives to encourage knowledge-sharing, and supportive culture. |
| <i>Arthur Anderson Business Consulting</i> | 1999 | Information Technology, people, and corporate culture. |
| <i>APQC</i> | 1999 | Leadership, organizational culture, measurement, and technology. |
| <i>Stankosky and Baldanza</i> | 2000 | The organization, technology, leadership, and learning. |
| <i>Holsapple and Joshi</i> | 2000 | Culture, leadership, technology, organizational adjustments, employee motivation, and external factors. |
| <i>Andrew et al.</i> | 2001 | Information Technology, organizational structure, corporate culture, knowledge obtainers, knowledge, transfer, knowledge application, and knowledge protection. |
| <i>Chourides et al.</i> | 2002 | Strategy, human resource management (HRM), IT, quality, and marketing. |
| <i>Hasanli</i> | 2002 | Leadership, organizational culture, structure, roles and responsibilities, IT infrastructure, and measurement. |
| <i>Davenport and Probst</i> | 2002 | Leadership, performance measurement, organizational policy, knowledge sharing and acquisition, information systems structure, benchmarking, and training. |
| <i>Bixler</i> | 2002 | Leadership, organization technology, and learning. |
| <i>Mathi</i> | 2004 | Culture, knowledge management organization, systems, and IT infrastructure, effective and systematic processes, and measures”. |

Source: Adapted from Theriou, Maditinos and Theriou (2011)

As already stated, Knowledge Management terms are used interchangeably. In some literature, the Knowledge Management Critical Success Factors are also referred to as Knowledge Management Enablers (UKEssays, 2018). In this study, however, the Knowledge Management Critical Success Factors are three distinct but interrelated components: Knowledge Management Objectives, Knowledge Management Pillars, and Knowledge Management Enablers. Collectively, these three factors collaborate to embed a Knowledge Management Culture in the organisation (see Figure 2 below).

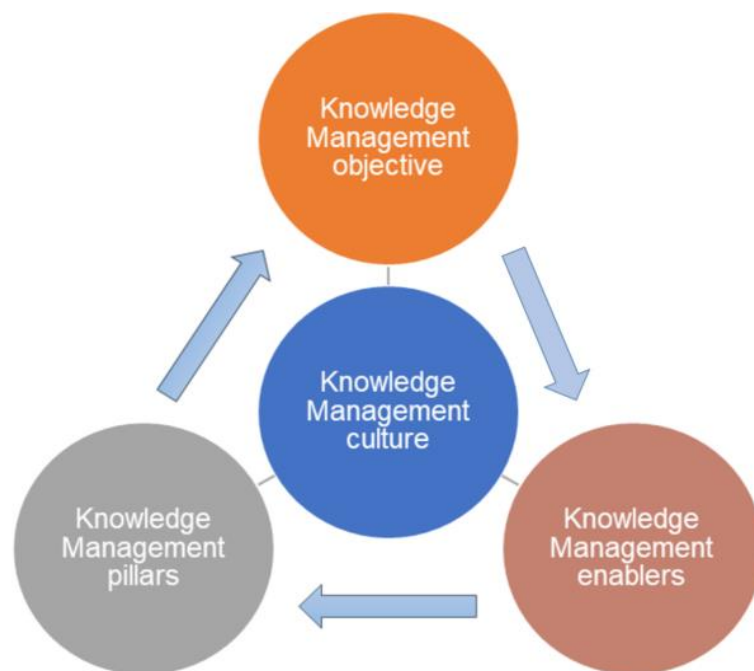


Figure 2. Knowledge Management Critical Success Factors

Source: Researcher’s own construct (2021)

The Knowledge Management Critical Success Factors are briefly explained below.

- **Knowledge Management Objective:** *The strategic goal to be achieved;*
- **Knowledge Management Pillars:** *Supports the achievement of the Knowledge Management Objective. The three well-known Knowledge Management Pillars are People, Process and Technology (Chan, 2016):*
 - *People at all levels of the organization, from the top to the bottom, are involved in Knowledge Management (Chan & Lau, 2021);*
 - *Organisations utilise the intentional Knowledge Management Process Pillar to capture, store and use knowledge (Chan & Lau, 2021); and*

- *Technology promotes quick knowledge flow and exchange among employees and organisations. Knowledge Management is more successful in organisations that make technology-related services widely available to their employees (Chan & Lau, 2021).*
- **Knowledge Management Enablers:** *Knowledge Management Enablers support the Knowledge Management Pillars in achieving the Knowledge Management Objective.*

Ignorance and oversight of the Critical Success Factors can deter an organisation's effort to successfully implement Knowledge Management (UKEssays, 2018). Hence, the crafting of the Critical Success Factors is an extremely important activity not to be taken lightly.

3.2. Knowledge management tools

The instruments that capture, store, and utilise knowledge are known as Knowledge Management tools. According to Koenig (2018), the basic tools are as follows:

- **Enterprise Content Management (ECM):** *An ECM system is the most visible and immediate aspect of Knowledge Management and is a document management technology system. These systems aim to help with documents and organisational records publishing, storage, indexing, and retrieval. There are several ECM systems available, each with its own set of advantages and disadvantages. A disadvantage to consider when choosing an ECM system is that the more data, information, and knowledge stored on it, the more difficult it can be to find things quickly and effectively. Hence, an ECM system must produce results fast (Hajric, 2018);*
- **Expertise Locator System:** *An expertise locator system is used to categorise and identify employees who have expertise in a particular field. Several software solutions allow employees to find and engage with specialists within their organisations, letting them benefit from combined expertise (Wells, 2016);*
- **Lessons Learned:** *This is the process of collecting personal experience and making it available for others e.g., video logs. The goal is to gather and use*

lessons learned to avoid reinventing the wheel or making the same mistakes again. According to Buttler and Lukosch (2013), lessons learned may be defined as “knowledge obtained through successful or unsuccessful experience for the goal of enhancing future performance”;

- **Communities of Practice:** *This is a platform for professionals to share tips and best practices, ask questions about problems and opportunities, explore best practices, review lessons learned, and offer each other encouragement (Wenger, Communities of practice: Learning, meaning and identity, 1998; Wenger & Snyder, Communities of practice: The organizational frontier, 1999; Hajric, 2018);*
- **Knowledge Retention and Retirees:** *This entails ways to retain the knowledge of skilled employees and those who are retiring, e.g., Learn from Leavers and brown bag sessions (Lunch and Learn initiative) programme.*

Expertise locator systems and lessons learned are the two most widely discussed types of explicit knowledge sharing tools in the Knowledge Management literature. The type of implicit knowledge sharing tool that has received the most attention is communities of practice (Virkus, 2011). It's worth noting that reliance on primitive Knowledge Management tools has often resulted in unsuccessful Knowledge Management implementations in the past (Hajric, 2018). Additionally, according to Snowden (2002), determining if someone is sharing their knowledge is difficult, but determining whether they are complying with the systems in place is possible. Consequently, Knowledge Management tools collectively can be used as a benchmark to ascertain the extent of the implementation of Knowledge Management in an organisation.

3.3. Knowledge management in the South African government

South Africa aspires to offer a better life for all (Cook, 2020), and in 2012, the South African Government produced the "*National Development Plan (NDP) 2030*" to reach this goal (National Planning Commission, 2011). The NDP is South Africa's guiding document positioned as a blueprint to eliminate poverty and reduce equality. Overall, to address the well-being of its people. According to the NDP: "*South Africa can realise these goals by drawing on the energies of its people, growing an inclusive economy, building capabilities, enhancing the capacity of the state, and promoting leadership and partnerships throughout*

society" (National Science and Technology Forum, 2018). But, South Africa, a majority-black, multiracial country with a population of more than 60 million people, despite the implementation of the NDP, has not only endured low economic development for several years, but its socioeconomic divide, instead of narrowing, has become even wider (Cook, 2020).

Because Knowledge Management has gained traction over the years as a key to success in the private sector, particularly in the consulting community, and because of the significant benefits Knowledge Management was seen to deliver, the South African Government included it in its NDP. For instance, the NDP demands that all government employees' skills and knowledge be current and future-oriented. Plus, all government departments had to "*institutionalise lifelong learning, provide continued professional advancement, as well as develop knowledge and innovation*" (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2019). However, according to the 2018 OECD Better Life Index, this Knowledge Management activity is either not being implemented properly or has not happened at all. In any case, if current trends continue, South Africa will fall short of meeting its NDP 2030 service delivery targets (Sawe & Rotich, 2016; Jayasingam, Ansari, Ramayah, & Jantan, 2020; Adler, 2019; Department of Public Service and Administration, 2019; Zack, McKeen, & Singh, 2009; Rowland & Syed-Ikhsan, 2004; Ming Yu, 2002; Davenport & Prusak, Working Knowledge, 2000).

3.4. Knowledge management and service delivery in South Africa

According to Reddy (2016), the word "service delivery" is a common term to define the provision of essential public needs, such as housing, water and sanitation, land, energy, and infrastructure, as well as the provision of basic public infrastructure. Hence, service delivery is crucial in the relationship between government and citizens. Citizens believe that because they pay taxes (Regional School of Public Administration, 2018), they have a right to fast, accessible, excellent quality, and affordable services wrapped in friendly treatment from their government (Sawe & Rotich, 2016). As a result, the government strives to live up to this ideal (Ondari-Okemwa & Smith, 2009). But, living up to this ideal, is not always the case. The supply and continuous upkeep of these essential services in South Africa have shown to be inconsistent at times, significantly inconveniencing and threatening people. As a result, there has been an increase in the number of service delivery protests, or rallies calling

for improved service delivery, in recent years (Reddy, 2016).

Wiig (2002), as quoted by Ondari-Okemwa and Smith (2009), believes that Knowledge Management may assist countries, namely South Africa, to provide better service delivery, and points out how Knowledge Management can help:

- *Enabling informed decision-making within the public service reduces knowledge duplication i.e., it addresses time, money and resource wastage (Ondari-Okemwa & Smith, 2009; Koenig, 2018);*
- *Assists citizens in successfully participating in public decision-making;*
- *Increases the competitiveness of society's intellectual powers; and*
- *Creates a knowledge-based workforce that is competitive.*

Some academics listed below feel that Knowledge Management is the lubricant that will improve service delivery, namely:

- *Speeds up the ability to make organisations work smarter (Wiig K. M., 2002);*
- *Enables organisations to “do more with less” (Wiig K. M., 2002);*
- *Addresses the skills gap (Sawe & Rotich, 2016);*
- *Empowers employees to grow and innovate (Sawe & Rotich, 2016);*
- *Facilitates organisations to be faster and more efficient (Theriou, Maditinos, & Theriou, 2011);*
- *Reduces duplication of effort (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2019);*
- *Prevents mistakes or malpractice (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2019);*
- *Improves processes and work methods (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2019); and*
- *Reduces dependency on consultants (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2019).*

Zamir (2019) and Paprika (2001) also add that service delivery is directly influenced by Knowledge Management in several ways. These include employee learning and agility, job performance, process effectiveness, and process efficiency. Knowledge Management also influences the development of knowledge-based solutions that offer value (Zamir, 2019; Paprika, 2001).

Furthermore, according to Heck and Rogger (2004), Knowledge Management when correctly implemented, in other words, when knowledge is efficiently captured, stored, and used in government, the following medium- and long-term benefits may be achieved (Ondari-Okemwa & Smith, 2009):

- *Significantly improved efficiency, transparency, and quality of service delivery;*
- *Improvements in the transparency and agility of information flow;*
- *An equitable and more equitable division of tasks;*
- *Properly organised government;*
- *Properly organised internal business operations;*
- *Technologically effective internal business operations; and*
- *Optimised workflow-related skills.*

4. SERVICE DELIVERY

The provision of essential public needs and services, such as housing, water and sanitation, land, electricity, and infrastructure, is a term that is frequently used to define public sector service delivery (Reddy, 2016). It covers all aspects of when, how, and where a service is given to a client, as well as whether or not it is fair (Martins & Ledimo, 2015; Nel & Masilela, 2020; Regional School of Public Administration, 2018). Consequently, in this paper service delivery is defined as a product or service provided by a government to its citizens in fulfilment of a promise made (Crous, 2002).

4.1. Private versus public service delivery

According to Gildenhuis (1997) in Crous (2002), services delivery is categorised as either private or public sector services and will be considered as public service delivery if they:

- *Cannot be provided by the private sector due to their social existence;*
- *Are needed to achieve the objectives and goals of a government and are not supplied by the private sector for any reason; and*
- *Group work, rather than individual effort, can result in a more cost-effective and superior product.*

4.2. Service delivery transformation in South Africa

Before 1994, South Africa was run by an apartheid government that tried to separate people of different races. In 1994, there was a general election, and things began to shift dramatically after that (Moloto, Mkhomazi, & Worku, 2020). The *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996*, which is the highest law of the land, was drafted shortly after the 1994 elections by the newly elected Parliament. The constitution was signed into law by President Nelson Mandela on December 18, 1996, and it came into effect on February 4, 1997 (ConstitutionNet, 2016). The *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996* sets the rules for how government works (ETU, 2020), and according to the constitution, South Africa is divided into three levels of government, which are national, provincial, and local government (Moloto, Mkhomazi, & Worku, 2020). The *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996* says the three levels of government are autonomous and should not be seen as hierarchical (ETU, 2020). Section 40 (1) of chapter 3 of the "*Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996* mentions these three interrelated government levels as distinctive, and interdependent, each with its own legislative and executive authority (South African Government, The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, (Act no. 108 of 1996), 1996; Moloto, Mkhomazi, & Worku, 2020). At the same time, they all operate according to the *South African Constitution, 1996*, and the various laws and policies made by National Parliament (ETU, 2020). In 1994, when the new government of South Africa took office there was a special mandate to provide all citizens of the country with adequate services. However, the public service was not citizen-focused at the time, and its Public Administration needed to be reformed (Chandrashekhar, 2020). In particular, human resources, policy-making processes, government machinery, and revenue and expenditure management structures were the main areas that were distorted and needed to be redressed to appropriately serve all South Africans, not just a select few (UNDP, 2015). Hence, the people of South Africa were assured that they will be served without discrimination, upholding the integrity of everyone and ensuring efficient and successful fulfilment of the bulk of the population's prior overlooked needs (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2013).

4.3. Current state of service delivery in South Africa

The South African government is responsible not just for maintaining law and order, but also for ensuring that people have access to services that meet their needs. However, the current state of service delivery in South Africa, according to Moloto *et al.* (2020) and Gossel and Koelbl (2021), is not good, as not

everyone's basic needs are being met, which is a cause for worry. According to them, the South African government is failing horribly in its efforts to offer the most basic of services to all residents of the country. Here are a few examples:

- **Water:** *In South Africa, at least 54% of homes do not have access to clean running water (Amnesty International, 2021). By 2030, urban water demand is predicted to exceed supply, posing one of the most critical challenges facing cities in South Africa in the next decade (Prins, Etale, Ablo, & Thatcher, 2022). However, water is carelessly lost because of leakage, unmonitored water usage, urbanisation, insufficient infrastructure management, metering errors, substandard repair and maintenance procedures, budgetary constraints, old infrastructure, and water theft. All because of bad water management and governance (Mathye, Scholz, & Nyende-Byakika, 2021). Consequently, those that need water can't get water due to runoff;*
- **Housing:** *According to Amnesty International (2021), 14% of South Africa's population live in crowded informal settlements;*
- **Electricity:** *Demand for power supply has grown, but Eskom's capacity to deliver a steady supply to fulfil household and industrial demands has deteriorated. This consequently led to the implementation of energy and demand control measures, termed load shedding (Fortuin, 2022). South Africa had the worst year of load shedding on record in 2019 (Trace, 2020); and*
- **Education Infrastructure:** *According to Amnesty International (2021), the South African government was surveyed in 2018 to ascertain the present state of the country's 23,471 public schools' infrastructure. The results were then communicated through the National Education Infrastructure Management System. Of the 23,471 public schools surveyed, 19% were identified as having illegal pit latrines for sanitation, with 37 schools having no sanitation facilities at all. Additionally, 86% lacked a laboratory, 77% lacked a school library, 72% lacked an internet connection, and 42% lacked sports facilities. Additionally, 239 schools lack electricity. Amnesty International (2021) asserts that several problems contradict not just the government's international human rights obligations, but also its*

own "basic norms and standards" for educational institutions. Furthermore, when it comes to the Covid-19 epidemic, the schools that suffer the most from deficient infrastructure are also the most likely to have found it difficult to provide continuous education for children in poorer communities who already had little or no access to the internet and computers. Only 22% of families in South Africa have a computer, and 10% have an internet connection. As a result, most children have a limited chance of participating in online learning, and their parents or carers are rarely in a position to home school (Amnesty International, 2021).

In addition to the aforementioned, according to the South African government's Finance Minister Tito Mboweni's 2021 Budget speech, 59% of South Africa's 278 municipalities are in deep financial trouble, 14% are unable to provide basic services, 37% adopted budgets that they cannot repay, and what's more, 57 of these municipalities are unable to account for their 2020 spending (Gossel & Koelble, 2021). These are merely a few examples of the current state of service delivery in South Africa i.e., the numerous critical service delivery challenges that South Africa is currently experiencing. Since the South African government has struggled to deal with the provision of services, the number of service delivery protests demanding more and better services has increased dramatically over the past decade (Campbell, 2014). So much so, that the term "service delivery protest" has become synonymous with South Africa (Breakfast & Nomarwayi, 2019; PSA, 2015; South African Institute of International Affairs, 2020; Lodge & Mottiar, 2015; Daily Maverick, 2021). According to Moloto *et al.* (2020), the police are constantly relied upon to preserve order and enforce the law when protests occur. They contend, however, that the solution to the problem does not rest in policing, but rather in addressing the current state of service delivery in South Africa (Moloto, Mkhomazi, & Worku, 2020).

5. DISCUSSION

According to Fraser, Andrews and Williamson (2021), many governments are good at coming up with plans, policies and strategies, but not many of them are good at putting them into action. Because of this, they say governments waste public funds, fail at service delivery, and most importantly lose investor confidence and decrease their public support (Fraser, Andrews, & Williamson, 2021; PwC, 2018). In South Africa, such outcomes commonly manifest in public protests. Since South Africa has one of the world's highest rates of public protest

and is known globally as "the world's riotous protest capital" it may be asserted that the South African government fall into the category of failing at its job (Breakfast & Nomarwayi, 2019; PSA, 2015; South African Institute of International Affairs, 2020; Lodge & Mottiar, 2015; Daily Maverick, 2021). According to Susan Booyesen in Lodge and Mottiar (2015), South Africans frequently turn to riotous tactics to obtain prompt responses from their government. She adds that riotous protests are more common in places with a very poor track record of public sector service delivery (Breakfast & Nomarwayi, 2019; PSA, 2015; Lodge & Mottiar, 2015). Additionally, if voting numbers are any indication of (i) decreased public support; and (ii) the government failing at its job, then it's fair to assert that this is happening. For example, South Africa's two largest political parties, the African National Congress and the Democratic Alliance, which are currently in power, have been on a downward trajectory since 1994 (i.e., votes are decreasing), and if this downward trajectory continues, these two political parties will be voted out of power in the country's next general elections in 2024 (Nhlapo, Anderson, & Wentzel, 2017). Aside from that, the voter turnout in South Africa's Local Government elections in 2021 was the lowest it has been in years (Gounden, 2021).

The South African Institute of International Affairs (2020) states that investor confidence in South Africa is at an all-time low due to its bad image. They argue that if the president intends to attract big amounts of FDI, this must be addressed (South African Institute of International Affairs, 2020). Which explains why President Ramaphosa is on this steadfast drive in taking "decisive steps to address public sector service delivery challenges to strengthen his government's capabilities and in turn rebuild investor confidence" (Daily Maverick, 2021; Kanyane, 2014; PwC, 2018). If this is not achieved, one could argue that President Ramaphosa's political party can say goodbye to being South Africa's ruling party come the next elections. Consequently, according to Eden Getachew in Fraser, Andrews and Williamson (2021), the South African government is under severe pressure to deliver and save a deteriorating public service. On a positive note, one of the most significant achievements to date has been the radical reform of the South African public service that has occurred since the dismantling of the apartheid public service in 1994. Before 1994, the apartheid public service was geared toward serving the needs of the white minority group, and in the process, all black people were marginalised (The Presidency, 2015). Since the apartheid Public Administration model was not developmental in nature, the most pressing challenge for the post-apartheid

government in the years after 1994 was to build a developmental public service. This means the South African public service had to evolve to keep up with society's changing needs, which included changes in the way services were delivered. All to correct the injustices of the past and bring about equality and fairness. Hence, it would be incorrect to suggest that public sector service delivery must remain static in the face of societal change (Lamidi, 2015). In other words, what the researcher is getting at, the new South African Government selected a new Public Administration model (Stefanescu, 2012).

As stated between 1890 and 2000, three distinct Public Administration models emerged, namely "*Traditional Public Administration, New Public Management, and New Public Governance*" (Boyle & MacCarthaigh, 2011). Today, governments worldwide either embrace New Public Management or Public Governance as their standard for modernisation and reform. While all three Public Administration models bring new ideas and concepts to the table, certain characteristics of the preceding model are seen in the subsequent one. A distinguishing feature is notably the adoption of private-sector practices (Hope, 2001; Lapuente & Van de Walle, 2020). A combination of these two models was chosen by the post-apartheid government because they believed that making their Public Service more business-like will result in a wide range of significant improvements, like, as improving the efficiency and quality of existing government functions, decreasing taxes, and limiting the size of the government, among other things. They reasoned this would result in cost savings and increased consumer satisfaction (Hope, 2001; Lapuente & Van de Walle, 2020; Goodman & Loveman, 1991; The Presidency, 2015). Knowledge Management is an example of a private sector practice that was initially implemented during the New Public Management era and has since remained (Boyle & MacCarthaigh, 2011). Over the years, Knowledge Management has gained significant momentum as a critical component of private-sector success (Jayasingam, Ansari, Ramayah, & Jantan, 2020; Zack, McKeen, & Singh, 2009; Rowland & Syed-Ikhsan, 2004; Ming Yu, 2002; Davenport & Prusak, Working Knowledge, 2000). In a speech, World Bank President, Jim Yong Kim said that the foundation of success in service delivery is the unspoken knowledge of implementers, referring to Knowledge Management as the bold action that will address the magnitude of current global service delivery challenges (World Bank, 2012).

Service delivery is crucial in the relationship between government and citizens. Citizens have a right to fast, accessible, excellent quality, and affordable services wrapped in friendly treatment from the government. This is a condition for the good image of the government (Sawe and Rotich, 2016:894), and as stated in the introduction, something President Ramaphosa needs to see happen in terms of boosting investor confidence. So that he may attract FDI. The following authors advocate Knowledge Management is the lubricant that will improve service delivery (Sawe & Rotich, 2016; Theriou, Maditinos, & Theriou, 2011; Wiig K. M., 2002).

Additionally, Sawe and Rotich (2016:889) and Kimani (2013:8) state that Knowledge Management is not new to the government and can deliver huge service delivery benefits, but several government departments are slow in its implementation. About 15 years ago, when Knowledge Management was identified as a key component of growth in the private sector, notably in the consulting community, the post-apartheid government adopted it for implementation in their National and Provincial Government Departments (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2019). Today Knowledge Management is a Core Management Competency (CMC) of the South African Government's Senior Management Staff, as well as a "Key Performance Indicator in their Performance Agreements". Knowledge Management also made its way into their long-term plan, the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030, to institutionalise lifelong learning, provide continued professional advancement, and develop knowledge and innovation in South Africa (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2019). Many would argue that the introduction of Knowledge Management was prompted by the need to improve service delivery in the south African public service (Dikotla, 2014; Mothamaha & Govender, 2011).

However, although Knowledge Management was introduced into the South African Government approximately 15 years ago, and although Knowledge Management is included as a Key Performance Indicator in the Performance Agreements of all Senior Management Staff, the implementation of Knowledge Management remains extremely slow and disjointed (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2019), and it would be correct to argue that it has not translated into improved service delivery in the South African public service. To underscore the stakes, Sawe and Rotich (2016) and Kimani (2013), note that while Knowledge Management is not new to the government and has the

potential to significantly improve service delivery, many national and provincial government departments remain very sluggish to adopt it. Consequently, further research on this is encouraged.

6. CONCLUSION

While one of the most notable achievements has been the dramatic reform of the South African public service after the end of apartheid in 1994, today the South African government now finds itself under great pressure to deliver and salvage a deteriorating public service.

Since public administration is a body of knowledge that turns government policies into action, literature was reviewed to explore how and why it has changed over time and where it is now, especially considering South Africa's public service crisis. As a result, the following was identified: The goal of Public Administration reform is to respond to citizens' ongoing requests for better service delivery, which is dependent on a well-functioning Public Administration. Between 1890 and 2000, Public Administration evolved from Traditional Public Administration to New Public Management and then to New Public Governance. Governments worldwide either embrace New Public Management or New Public Governance as their preferred method of modernising and reforming themselves. South Africa employs a hybrid of these two models because they believe that transforming their public service into a more business-like organisation will result in a slew of significant improvements. Having said that, the fundamental problem that has led to South Africa's present service delivery dilemma is that the government is not evolving quickly enough to meet the continually changing needs of its citizens. Furthermore, most of their problems arise from their failure to deliver excellent services as a result of poor governance.

Given that investors consider service delivery when making investment decisions, government capacity building must be prioritised so that frequent service delivery protests used by South Africans to express their dissatisfaction and seek prompt responses from their government can be avoided in future, potentially attracting significant FDI.

To address these critical issues, accelerate capability development, and increase its capacity to provide exceptional services, the South African

government must leverage Knowledge Management. Knowledge Management is an example of a private sector practice that was initially implemented during the New Public Management era and has since remained. Since Knowledge Management gained traction as a key to success in the private sector, it has been embraced by the South African government. However, despite entering the South African government more than 15 years ago, the implementation of Knowledge Management has been slow and disjointed, and as a result, the benefit of Knowledge Management cannot be fully realised in the South African Government.

Overall, the literature revealed that service delivery is directly influenced by Knowledge Management. Hence, to sum up, the main finding is based on the premise that improved Knowledge Management would ultimately result in improved service delivery.

Furthermore, according to Akuku, et al. (2020) and Chawuke (2018), Knowledge Management has received insufficient attention, and *“there is a dearth of empirical research on Knowledge Management in the South African Government”*. There is a dearth of research on whether the public sector's adoption of private-sector methods to better itself is effective. By and large, none of the examined literature specifically examines how to successfully integrate Knowledge Management in the *“South African Government to improve service delivery”* from a Public Administration perspective. As a result, additional research on this topic is required, particularly on the *“impact of Knowledge Management on investor confidence, and the inflow of Foreign Direct Investment”*.

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The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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