

**CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY: RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND SERVICE DELIVERY**

**INTRODUCTION**

The term public administration has always meant the study of the public service (Dye, 1987: 324). The purpose of the public service is to provide services to society. However, before any services are provided, certain functions should be undertaken within the public service. The public service is required to execute the policies of the government. In this system, public administration enables and supports the activity of public management. The public management function is related to public administration and gives direction to the administrative conduct of public servants, to ensure the effective execution of policies by the public service.

Since the 1980s, a new direction emerged in public administration, in response to the political changes, and increasing needs and demands from society. In this regard, Nicholas Henry in Thornhill (2003: 297) brought it to the attention of scholars of public administration that the discipline is not static, but dynamic. A more efficient and effective approach to public administration was clearly necessary to meet the increasing needs and demands of society. This further necessitated some sort of market-based mechanism to replace the classical public administration model. In a search for excellence, the importance of the new public management (NPM) paradigm became evident for effective service delivery. The NPM paradigm is manifested through the adoption of different approaches. Within the NPM paradigm, leadership and governance are viewed as tools or mechanisms that will ensure the effective execution of public administration. This shift embodied a sense that public servants within the public service should lead rather than manage processes, for transforming the public service to better serve the policy direction provided by the political leaders. Governance is essential, through the engagement of different role-players in public service delivery. These role-players should include; namely: individuals, communities and businesses.

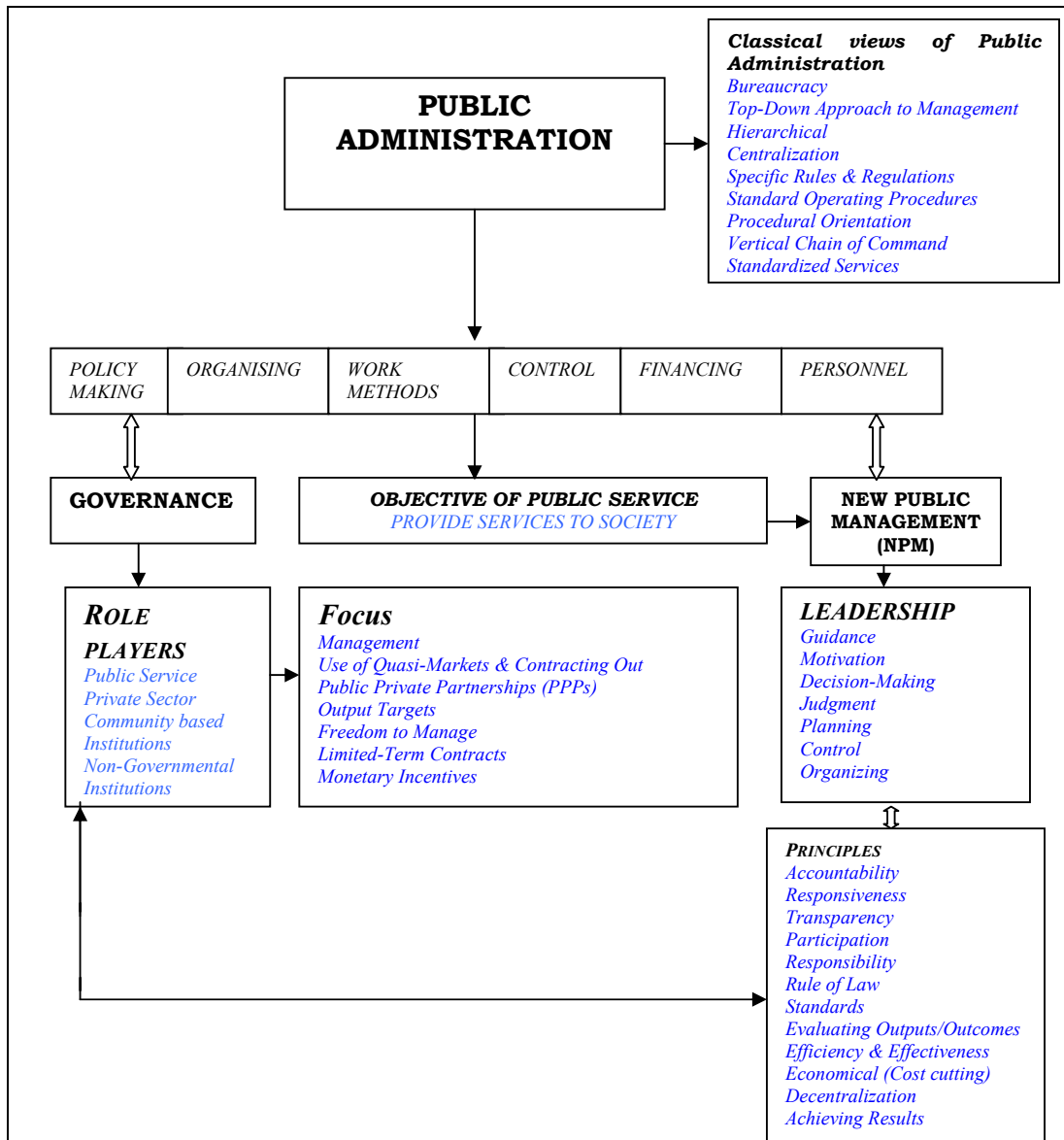
In this chapter an overview is given of the concepts of public administration, public management, NPM, leadership and governance in relation to service delivery. A relational model was designed by the author, which clearly reflects the trends in public

administration and the relationship between public administration, public management, leadership, governance, and service delivery. The shift from a classical public administration model to the NPM paradigm is reflected both in the relational model and the discussion that follows. The trends in public administration within the South African context are deemed important and are thus highlighted in this chapter. The mechanisms to promote a sustainable South African public service for effective service delivery are covered in-depth. In this regard, the South African Constitution (1996), the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), the White Paper on the Transformation on Public Service (WPTPS) (1995) and the Batho Pele- 'People First' White Paper on transforming Public Service Delivery (1997) are discussed.

#### **PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND SERVICE DELIVERY**

The public service is responsible for the provision of services to society (Du Toit, 2002: 82). The process of enabling the public service to deliver services and products depends on the execution of a series of functions. The public administration functions are mainly grouped into six processes, which include; namely: policy-making, organising, financing, staffing, determining work procedures, and the exercise of control (Cloete, 1986: 2). The public management functions are planning, organising, leading, control and coordination (Van de Walldt and Du Toit, 1997: 16). The execution of public administration and public management functions is essential for this purpose. The adoption of an appropriate leadership and governance framework by the public service, are tools or mechanisms towards the effective execution of public administration and public management. The execution of these functions is a very comprehensive process. Figure 3/1 is a relational model that was designed by the author to depict the trends in public administration and the relationships between public administration, leadership, governance, and service delivery.

Figure 3/1: Relationships between public administration, leadership, governance and service delivery: A relational model



(Source Naidoo: 2004)

The most important theoretical principle of the classical model of public administration is Weber's theory of bureaucracy. This is reflected in Figure 3/1. The key tenets of this model are discussed within the context of the evolution of public administration. Public administration began as the study of government administration (Denhardt, 1991: 13). Denhardt (1991: 13) defines administration as the thought process and the action necessary for setting and achieving an objective. The study began in the mid-nineteenth century as part of efforts to reform governmental operations (Hughes, 1998: 23). Weber stated that bureaucracy was the most efficient form of organizing, and one, which applied to all large undertakings.

According to Gildenhuis (1988: 9), most of the scholars and practitioners date the beginning of the study of public administration to an essay by Woodrow Wilson in 1887. Wilson's recommendations involved first isolating the process of administration from potentially corrupting influences of politics. Wilson argued that administrative questions are not political questions. In other words, although politicians decided policies they were to be carried out by a politically neutral bureaucracy. Moreover, political control, as argued by Wilson, is problematic in ensuring genuine accountability. Hughes (1998: 39) argues that political control is inadequate and illogical. In this way, Wilson argued that the conduct of government would be isolated from the potentially corrupting influence of politics. Wilson's essay was thus designed to address the inefficiency and open corruption that had become part of the government of America during the late 1880s. Wilson favoured the idea of concentrating power in a single authority, referring to a highly integrated and centralized administrative structure within government. Wilson wanted the work of the public service to be accomplished more effectively, and thus argued that government operations should be reformed to promote efficiency. Public administration has however experienced various changes since Woodrow Wilson's article was published in 1887.

The classical model of public administration had been fully formed by the 1920s (Self, 1977: 19). From 1910 to 1940, Frederick Taylor's scientific management theory became a key influence in public administration (Van Der Waldt and Du Toit, 1997: 58). Taylor focused on two main issues in respect of standardizing work: Firstly, finding one best way of working and secondly, maintaining this standard. These ideas fitted well with the theory of bureaucracy. From the 1930s through to the 1960s, bureaucracies were

large and followed a top-down, centralized way of doing business with the public. The public service was hierarchical, and tasks were broken down into simple parts (Hughes, 1998: 39). The responsibilities of public servants were defined by specific rules and regulations. Furthermore, the public service was rigid with standardized operating procedures, vertical chains of command and standardized services. It could be argued that public servants have an important role to play, which is more important than merely following rules, regulations or instructions. The inadequacies of the classical model became apparent.

The classical public administration model is thus not necessarily the most efficient model for the modern public service. It can be argued that bureaucracies are ideal for extensive control but not necessarily for achieving service delivery outcomes. Furthermore, the theory of bureaucracy is no longer universally seen as applicable to the modern democratic public service. It allows for certainty, but is slow and cumbersome. If the work is standardized, it limits on the much-needed innovations. It seems inevitable that there would be a conflict between bureaucracy and democracy. The classical public administration model is inadequate to effectively meet the needs and demands of today's society.

### **Public administration**

The term 'Public Administration' (with a capital P and a capital A) refers to the academic discipline studied in universities, technikons, technical colleges and polytechnics (now called universities of technology in South Africa). The term 'public administration' (with a lower case p and lower case a) refers to the activities, both strategic and operational, within the public sector (Van Wyk, *et al.* 2002: 60). Within this context, public administration came to be viewed as the activities of the executive agencies of government, which in South Africa, are the national, provincial and local spheres of government (Venter, 2001: 66).

According to Du Toit (2002: 5), public administration is "that system of structures and functions, operating within a particular society as environment, with the objective of facilitating the formulation of appropriate government policy, and the efficient execution of the formulated policy." Roux, *et al.* (1997: 9) indicates that public

administration implies "...a combination of generic functions and functional activities". The generic functions of public administration can be subdivided, for analytical purposes, into policy-making, organizing, financing, personnel, determination of work procedures and control (Cloete, 1986: 2). These generic administrative functions are reflected in Figure 3/1. The generic administrative functions of public administration are also regarded as so-called higher-level (order) functions (Roux, *et al.* 1997: 9). These generic functions are increasingly used at the higher levels of the hierarchy of the public service, namely by management, and are concerned with producing goods or rendering services. Examples of functional activities are the building of roads, providing postal services and providing health services. The generic functions are thus enabling processes.

According to Cloete (1986: 2), the generic administrative functions will always precede or accompany the functional activities. The public service has, within the administrative and functional activities, the task of executing public management functions to promote effective public administration. The main function of the public service is to render services to its citizens through the execution of public administration functions, such as policy-making, which also entails implementation (Gildenhuis and Knipe, 2000: 56).

According to Cloete (1986: 2), policy-making is closely interlinked with the other generic functions (organizing, control, work methods and procedures and financing) of public administration. The classical view of public administration is that policy is determined by political leadership and implemented by administrative leadership within the public service (Gildenhuis, 1988: 9). Policy involves action as well as inaction, and is often referred to as a desired state of affairs, through specific proposals. For instance, the desired objective of the public service is the effective implementation of public policy (Van Niekerk, *et al.* 2002: 6). Wessels and Pauw (1999: 27) argue that the real core of public administration is the provision of basic services to the public through the effective implementation of public policy. Such services are, for example police services and the protection of property.

The leaders in the public service should have the necessary interpersonal skills, as well as knowledge about the specialized functions in public administration to direct the generic administrative functions (tools or means) (Du Toit, 2002). This is essential, so

that the predetermined institutional goals of service delivery to society can be realized in a meaningful way.

It can be argued that public administration is an activity aimed at serving the public and translating policy into action. Public administration is essentially the execution of various functions, namely: policy-making, organising, staffing, determining work procedures and control. The public management function is regarded as an integral part of public administration. For example, public management gives direction in the form of leadership to the administrative conduct of public servants. Public servants are required to execute government policies. During the execution of public administration, environmental influences interact continuously and affect service delivery outcomes.

### **Public management as an integral component of public administration**

Hughes (2003: 45) considers the public management functions to be merely a continuation of the practice of public administration. Rhodes (2003: 48) re-iterates that public management is a continuous activity, only made possible by public administration. Public management can be seen as the execution of different categories of functions categorized as delivery (managerial/operational) functions, auxiliary functions, instrumental functions and line functions. Du Toit (2002: 5) states that public management, as a component of public administration is very important. In this respect, public management is the skill of converting resources into services and products for use by society. This conversion takes place when the management, auxiliary, instrumental and line functions are executed. Public management, however, does not comprise the whole ambit of public administration but is used to denote a minute part of the very broad subject of public administration (Du Toit, 2002: 5).

In this regard, Roux, *et al.* (1997: 10) indicate that, “public management becomes a human capability to perform public administration effectively.” In fact, public management is a social process, which involves aspects such as judgment, decision-making, guidance, and motivation. The whole object of the exercise called ‘public management’ is to manage public resources in such a way that public goods and services are delivered to a given individual, group, community and society in an efficient, responsive, sustainable and optimal way (Knoree, 2004: Discussion).

Therefore, the external and internal environments of public management should be managed efficiently and responsively to ensure optimal benefit to society.

Daft (1988: 8) defines public management as “the attainment of institutional goals”, such as the achievement of service delivery objectives. They ought to be attained through the public management functions of planning, organizing, leading and controlling institutional resources. In this regard, Smit and Cronje (2003: 88) state that planning means defining goals for future departmental performance and deciding on the tasks and use of resources needed to attain such goals. A lack of planning or ineffective planning can impact negatively on a department’s performance. This in turn will hamper service provision to communities.

Cloete (1986: 112) states that organizing in public management typically follows planning, and reflects how the department tries to accomplish the plan, for example through the application of mechanisms or tools to achieve this end. In this regard, the application of an effective leadership and governance framework to improve service delivery to specific communities in society can be cited as an excellent example. Organizing therefore involves the assignment of tasks, the grouping of tasks into departments, and the allocation of resources to departments.

Controlling is an important function of public management (Daft, 1998: 9). Controlling implies monitoring employees’ activities. Controlling also entails determining whether the public service is on target towards its goals and making corrections as necessary (Cloete, 1986: 180). Leadership is an increasingly important management function in public administration (Smit and Cronje, 2003: 255). Leaders ought to communicate departmental goals to employees and then to ensure that their departments achieve their goals. Leaders should infuse employees with a desire to perform well. Du Toit (2002: 5) indicates that the leader should make policies, plan, organize, lead, motivate, control and evaluate. The leader ought to apply certain management skills in the execution of public management functions. The leader should also undertake appropriate applications, such as strategic management and policy analysis, to assist in the task of managing within the public service. Moreover, the leaders should make use of supportive technologies and techniques. For example, information and communication technology could be used to promote effective service delivery. In an era of change and



growing diversity, such as is the case in South Africa, the ability of the leader to shape the institutional culture, communicate departmental goals, and motivate employees, is critical to promoting service delivery by the public service.

From the discussions above, it is evident that public administration and public management are not synonymous. The outcomes of public administration, in the form of policy (acts), enable public management to take place. Public management includes public administration, but also involves the adoption of different functions, such as leadership to achieve its objectives with maximum efficiency, as well as accepting genuine responsibility for results. These elements were not present in the classical public administration model.

### **A new approach to public administration**

Since the mid-1980s there has been a transformation in the management of the public service of advanced countries (Hughes, 1998: 3). There was a shift from an administrative to a managerialist mode of operating. This gave rise to a phenomenon now referred to as NPM under its various names: ‘entrepreneurial government’, ‘managerialism’ and ‘market-based public administration’. This suggested that a new paradigm was impacting on the classical public administration model (Turner, 2002: 1493), challenging classical administrative views of the structure and functions of public services. The Wilson dichotomy between politics and administration, the Weberian ideal type of bureaucracy and the Taylorian idea of ‘one best way’ were supplanted by the goals of financial efficiency and effective service delivery. Kroukamp (2002: 465) argues that this trend could be described as “the transformation from public bureaucracy to a model of public administration that is business like, but is not a business.” This new model is outlined and analysed below.

### **New public management**

Rhodes (2003: 48) refers to a theory of the most recent paradigm change in the classical public administration model. It focuses on the way the modern public service must be managed and led. Its central doctrines are reflected in Figure 3/1. Turner (2002: 1495) identifies specific features of NPM. These include; mainly: the need for leadership,

setting explicit standards, performance appraisal and efficiency within the public, greater competition in the public service and the usage of private sector management techniques, use of quasi markets and contracting out of services, cost cutting and the involvement of different role-players, such as the private sector, civic-based organisations (CBOs) in the delivery of services.

Turner (2002: 1495) emphasizes the importance of leadership in the public service. Leadership deals with the interpersonal aspects of a manager's job, as well as with change and inspiring, motivating and influencing employees to achieve the goal of the public service. Leaders, through their actions and personal influence, need to produce change, often to a dramatic degree, such as spearheading transformation and reform in the South African public service towards improved service delivery.

NPM is outcomes-based and citizen-oriented, focusing on empowering leadership, while holding them accountable (Peete, 2001: 14). Another important feature is that it sets explicit standards and measures of performance. The focus is placed on performance appraisal and efficiency within the public service (Turner, 2002: 1495). There is greater emphasis on output control and disaggregation of units, which mainly entails decentralizing authority to local government. In this way, the public service is brought closer to the public whom they serve. Furthermore, decisions are made closer to the point of delivery, thus increasing efficacy of service and resource allocation. There is greater competition in the public service and a greater use of private sector management techniques. Other important phenomena are the use of quasi-markets and the contracting out of services, whose purpose it is to promote cost cutting, achieve output targets, have limited-term contracts, promote monetary incentives and allow the freedom to manage. Furthermore, there is greater discipline and parsimony in resource allocation. Other common features include entrepreneurial government, which includes such functions as empowering communities to be actively involved in public service delivery, rather than the public service simply delivering services. Within the NPM paradigm, governance is the capacity of leadership to get actions performed, by applying various principles, functions and involving different role-players, such as the private sector, civic-based organisations (CBOs) and citizens in public service delivery (Rhodes, 2003: 48).

NPM focuses on a set of values such as productivity, profitability, competitiveness and quality, which are considered to be crucial (Ferlie, 1996: 10). There is an emphasis on downsizing, a search of excellence and public service orientation. This logic underlines the core values of public administration (efficiency, effectiveness and economy), without however replacing the traditional values of legality, impartiality and equality. It aims to develop partnership practices, fight corruption, and promote citizen participation in public affairs. Hood (1995: 93) argues that its objective is to turn public administration into a tool for development and social change. The emphasis throughout is on performance and a greater concern for the general welfare of society by promoting moral values and civic trends.

NPM principles are extensive. Public service reforms began in the 1980's in the United Kingdom, United States, Australia and New Zealand (Kickert, 2002: 1472). The public service systems in countries such as the United Kingdom have adopted more 'managerialist' and 'business-like' approaches to public administration within the new public management (NPM) framework to promote efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. Kickert (2002: 1472) indicates that the British public service systems have introduced techniques of business administration in the public service. For instance, it has adopted a greater service and client orientation, and introduction of market mechanisms and competition into its public service. While this trend originated in developed economies, notably the United Kingdom, it has been extended to both transitional and developing economies, including South Africa.

It can be concluded that a public service based on administrative concepts is very different from one based on management principles. The classical model of public administration has gradually been replaced by the NPM paradigm. The classical model is inadequate in promoting service delivery outcomes. Within the new, expanded and broader approach to public administration, leadership and governance are integral components. It focuses on achieving results and taking responsibility for doing so. This form of public administration involves a change in the role of government in society and in the relationship between government and its citizenry. The outcomes of the new approach are to deliver services for the improvement of the general welfare of society.

**Relationships between public administration, leadership, governance and service delivery: A relational model**

The evolution of the leadership discourse in public administration may be divided into three overlapping phases (Otobo, 1997: 5). In the first phase the tendency was to ascribe leadership to the politicians. As part of the second phase the tendency was to relegate the act of leadership towards managing complex functions of the public service. Finally, the third phase public services began the challenging task of reforming their governments along the principles of effective governance.

In the initial phase of the 'Administrative Sciences' discipline, the tendency was to ascribe and limit the notion of leadership to politicians (Gildenhuis, 1988: 9). The leadership construct was seldom used to describe administrative leadership (public servants). The basic assumption was that public servants were involved in the administration of state regulation and the provision of public services, in accordance with prescribed rules and procedures in public administration. The shift from a procedural orientation has been marked by the utilization of the leadership construct as an element in the overall public management function for managing complexities in the public service. This shift embodied an awareness that public servants within the public service had to lead processes that would transform the public service so that it was better able to follow the policy direction provided by the political leaders. The focus in this context was on exercising some form of autonomy in institutional functions. This shift is clearly evident in the South African public service.

With a departure from the initial 'Administrative Sciences' orientation, then the tendency in this area was to relegate the act of leadership towards having to manage complex internal institutional and operational functions of the public service (Service Delivery Review, 2002: 17). When this new construct appeared in the NPM literature, it encouraged leaders to take greater responsibility for their decisions and actions and to exercise autonomy in shaping the public service to serve specific and defined policy orientations. This emerging shift was reflected in the notion of 'governance' and increased emphasis was thus placed on the need for leadership within the public service. This is rooted in the understanding that effective leadership requires ongoing engagement with policy imperatives and essential governance engagements. This

implies a commitment to engage responsibly with substantive policy issues and provide active leadership on the strategic value, location and operations of the public service (Service Delivery Review, 2002).

According to Gildenhuis (1988: 9), political and administrative leaders are mandated by the people to manage affairs of the public service. This management takes the form of public policy. The public service is essentially a vehicle for the delivery of public policy to society. This furthermore means that public service reform should be about the improved implementation of public policy to promote and improve service delivery (Service Delivery Review, 2003). A clear focus on accountability to the public is required, if reforms in the public service are to be effective. Moreover, a consistent review and analysis of policy implementation is essential to promoting service delivery. The emphasis should be on effective governance practices, such as accountability, participation, openness and transparency, which are the key to regaining public trust in the provision of public services. According to Kaul (2000: 52), many public services in recent decades have been faced with a crisis of legitimacy. This needs to be addressed by winning the public trust. It can be argued that this can only be done through re-invigorating the public service. Kaul (2000: 52) indicates that there is no more apt a place for this re-invigoration to begin than at the level of policy-making and implementation and the involvement of the public therein.

In this regard, efforts are indeed being made by the South African public service to promote public participation and responsiveness (Service Delivery Review, 2003). Furthermore, innovative governance approaches focus on improving strategies to promote service delivery. In the latter half of the twentieth century, many countries have begun the challenging task of reforming their governments along the principles of effective governance. Leadership in public administration views policy making as a complex function of interaction between all kinds of actors; namely: individuals, private sector, government and social groups, such as civic institutions. This setup is clearly reflected in Figure 3/1.

According to Kauzya (2003: 53), it is empirically wrong to assume that only one actor has, by definition, the central position in policy-making and policy implementation. The policy implementation process entails the translation of policy into action. In this

regard, the traditional assumption that government is the central change agent of society and is able to control social functions has had to be relinquished. However, effective and legitimate policy making is to a large degree dependent on the capacity of government to stimulate processes of co-operation between the various stakeholders. Plumptre and Graham (1999: 53) argue that a number of examples of the inability of government to play this role have been documented.

Somoleka (2002: 53) states that recent studies suggest that the degree to which government succeeds in co-operating with relevant non-governmental actors is a strategic variable of successful policy-making. Most actors involved in policy making are dependent on other actors. Although government may have the authority to decide, it may lack the financial means or the expertise. In this regard, finances and expertise are usually not available from a single source in most countries. 'Resource dependence' is thus a crucial concept associated with the notion of governance in public administration (Flinders, 2002: 53). This is clearly evident in South Africa, and is examined further in Chapter Five of the study. Governance is therefore more than institutional design in public administration. It considers the interactions between both the public and private institutions. Governance, concentrates on issues such as transparency, control, and accountability.

Governance also underlines the increasing inter-dependence between different governmental spheres. According to Rhodes (2003: 48), this refers to the relationship between the three spheres of government (national, provincial and local). A range of factors, such as the transfer of policy competencies away from central government and increased institutional fragmentation within the state, has exacerbated tensions within the South African government (Service Delivery Review, 2004). Kauzya (2003: 53) indicates that the state-centric approach asserts that the nation state remains the key political actor in society and the predominant expression of collective interests.

Within the context of this study, it can be argued that governance denotes a conceptual or theoretical representation of the co-ordination of social systems and the role of the public service in that process. Drawing on the above distinctions and paraphrasing the above discussion, governance in public administration can be defined as the study of the structural and procedural manifestations of the public service adaptation to its external,

internal, social, cultural, political, economic and technological environment. There is particular reference to the evolving processes and mechanisms of control, co-ordination, accountability and the location of power within complex relationships between the public service and different role-players.

Governance highlights the development of new instruments of policy implementation with the capacity for transferability (Kuye, 2003: Discussion). For example, with Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) there can be transference of skills, from the service provider to public servants. Governance in public administration demands that flexibility and institutional learning be an ongoing process. Governance provides a suitable conceptual and theoretical framework for analysing the attempts to increase inter-institutional policy making and policy implementation in public administration.

One of the most conspicuous trends in governance is the need to internalise public service reform, in keeping with the NPM paradigm. Public administration across the world appears to be converging around this new paradigm (Peters and Pierre, 1998: 223). According to Minogue, *et al.* (1998: 59), NPM is based on management sciences and public choice theory. Dunleavy and Hood (1994: 9) consider NPM as a collection of more flexible strategies in terms of service delivery. The enhancement of the measurement and monitoring capacity of government over public service delivery actually lies at the core of NPM.

This new approach requires more than effectively and efficiently managing 'government's business' (Rhodes, 2003: 53), but falls within the broader context of public governance. According to Kickert (2002: 1472), public governance has a broader meaning than the restricted business-like, market-oriented interpretation of the term NPM. Kuye (2003: Discussion) argues that public governance is also related to legality, equality and legitimacy rather than only strict business values.

In public governance, the context of political democracy plays a crucial role, as does the external orientation in the socio-political context (Rhodes, 2003: 53). The complexity of social policy networks leads to the recognition that the public service is not in a position to 'steer' such functions unilaterally and hierarchically. However, governance cannot be

separated from its institutional context, which is the public service and functioning of public administration.

It is argued that governance is an approach to strengthen the public service, and to make it more responsive to the needs of society. In this respect, leadership and governance are two components of public administration. It is in effective governance that the efficiency concerns of public administration and NPM, combined with the accountability concerns of leadership for service delivery performance can be identified.

#### **TRENDS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION WITHIN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT**

The South African public service prior to 1994 had been structured according to the classical model of public administration (Peete, 2001: 14). Its most prominent characteristic was the emphasis on formal aspects of organizing. Its focus was on the design of the structure, authority and work methods (Service Delivery Review, 2002: 7). It was characterized by a centralized control of management. Decisions were made at national government level. The changes in public administration in South Africa prior to 1994 and after 1994 are summarized in Table 3/1, as interpreted by the findings of the study. The need to improve service delivery in previously disadvantaged communities in South Africa called for a shift away from inward-looking, bureaucratic systems, processes and attitudes (Batho Pele-‘People First’ White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997: 10). The classical public administration model, based on the Wilsonian dichotomy, Taylorist scientific management and Weberian hierarchical control, was not very effective in the public service. This is clearly articulated and summarized in Table 3/1.



**Table 3/1**

**Public administration in South Africa (pre-1994 and post-1994)**

<b>Principles Prior to 1994-Apartheid Era</b>	<b>Towards A New Approach After 1994-Post Apartheid Era</b>
Authoritarian, dictatorial, totalitarian leadership	Democratic leadership
Tactical, opportunistic	Strategic, sagacious, innovative
Driven by force, militaristic	Driven by shared values and principles
Power-centred, investing in forces of coercion	People-centred, investing in social capital
Transactional leadership	Transformational leadership
Inequalities	Socially responsible and equitable
Parochial, closed	Selectively interdependent, open and networked
Rules and process-oriented	Service and result-oriented
Authority-based	Knowledge-based
Techno-phobic	Promoting technology
Lack of protection of human and majority rights	Respectful of rule of law and human rights
Institutionally weak, disconnected	Institutionally strong, rooted
Bloated, bureaucratic, resistant to change	Right-sized, agile
Corrupt, ineffective or non-existent national integrity system	Promoting an effective national integrity system

(Source: Naidoo 2004)

Table 3/1 indicates that prior to 1994 the South African public service was rigid and bureaucratic (Service Delivery Review 2002). It was based on processes rather than outcomes. The South African public service was based on setting procedures to follow instead of focusing on results. Against the backdrop of classical public administration in South Africa (prior to 1994), new trends have emerged in the post-1994 era.

**Towards a new public administration model for effective service delivery by the South African public service**

When the first democratic government came into power in South Africa in 1994, it precipitated the need to advance a new model of public administration in the South African public service (Peete, 2001: 14). This led to the creation of alternative schools of public administration. In the search for excellence, the South African public service took a keen interest in the NPM approach. As a result of the inefficiencies of the classical public administration model in South Africa under the previous dispensation,

elements of the new approach emerged, focusing on new principles, such as accountability for outcomes and enhancing and promoting service delivery.

Some of the principles of the new paradigm have since been adopted in the South African public service. With the NPM paradigm came a revised menu of reforms for the South African public service (Chandu, 2004: Discussion). These reforms focused on the transformation of the public service. There was a greater emphasis on service delivery outcomes and the involvement of different role-players in service delivery. The focus of the South African government was on thus transforming and reforming the public service that had been inherited from the previous South African public service. In the pursuit of efficiency, effectiveness and economy, a host of administrative reforms were introduced (Service Delivery Review, 2003: 20). One of the objectives of the South African public service is stated in terms of service delivery. Public administration in South Africa is forced to address the needs of society in order to promote the principles of democracy such as responsiveness.

The transformation of service delivery to meet the basic needs of South African society was crucial to the entire transformation process. The democratisation of the South African public service by inculcating principles such as equity in service delivery was amongst the most significant of these. The transformation of the South African public service has centred on a review of policy outcomes, management reforms, efficiency, budgeting and financial management, value for money, quality of services, and accountability (South Africa Yearbook 2000/2001, 2001: 2).

In moving towards actualising its vision for the new public service, the South African government has identified a number of priority areas for the transformation process (White Paper on the Transformation of Public Service, 1995). What is significant in this respect is that the South African government's public service reform programme includes a gamut of NPM measures, including a move towards rightsizing or downsizing. A reduction in the size of the public service was a long-stated objective of President Mandela's government from April 1994 to May 1999 (Vil Nkomo, 1998: 136). President Mbeki's government (1999) has reiterated its intention to reduce the numbers of public servants (Peete, 2001: 13). The public service was thus rationalized and restructured to ensure a unified, integrated and leaner public service. Other reform

initiatives are the outsourcing of work, the introduction of performance management systems and the assignment of greater autonomy to public service departments.

From 1994 until the end of 1998, many new policies were gazetted in South Africa (Ncholo, 2000: 90). Within the NPM paradigm the focus is on modernizing operations (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2003). The priorities identified are institution building and improvement in the management of public affairs. It aims to focus less on bureaucracy, procedures and regulations and more on decentralization and delegation of authority to leaders and managers. Emphasis is placed on increased delegation of management responsibility to operational managers, at provincial and local levels of government. It is argued that decentralization and increased delegation should redress service delivery imbalances and inequities in South Africa. In addition, flatter structures, greater recognition of effective performance and less tolerance of poor performance are recognized as essential ingredients for success (Soobrayan, 2004: Discussion).

Following the elections of May 1999 in South Africa, the African National Congress (ANC) government was returned to power (Ncholo, 2000: 90). The priorities of the newly re-elected government did not at the outset lead to new policy directions, but rather to the intensification of transformation and reform that had begun during 1994. At the beginning of the second democratic term of government in South Africa in June 1999, a shift in emphasis took place, from restructuring and policy-making, to efforts to improve service delivery through effective policy implementation. The years 2000 to 2003 have thus seen the intensification and consolidation of the initiatives adopted in the first term of office and continued in the second term (Soobrayan, 2004: Discussion).

These developments embraced some of the core tenets of effective governance (Service Delivery Review, 2004). There has been the evolution in management thought and practice, which resonates with NPM and governance principles. The concept of the 'learning institution' and continuous improvement are highlighted as priorities for the South African public service (Fryman, *et al.* 2000: 5). Leadership in the South African public service is expected to create a climate in which innovation and continuous improvement can take place.

There are other developments in public management thinking in South Africa, which also affect the public service (Towards a Ten Year Review, 2004). The public service, for example, focuses on quality in service delivery. This is clearly outlined in the South African government's 'Batho Pele' White Paper (Batho Pele-'People First' White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997: 10). The management principles relating to empowerment and increased participation in decision-making are also now central elements of the new paradigm, which are also emphasized in the South African government 'Batho Pele' policy.

With the essential policy framework in place, as the product of the past few years of government in South Africa, the focus of President Mbeki's administration (1999 to 2003) is to enhance fundamental social transformation to improve service delivery (Service Delivery Review, 2003). This significantly includes approaches to promote economic growth in South Africa, as the impetus for job creation (South Africa Yearbook 2003/2004). The South African public service is also focusing on a tougher approach to dealing with issues such as law and order (Towards a Ten Year Review, 2004). This also includes partnerships between the public service, communities and business, in preventing and combating crime and corruption. The drive to promote service delivery is evident in greater accountability and efficiency in the South African public service's current efforts to eradicate endemic corruption within its ranks. At a national, anti-corruption summit held in Durban in October 1999, and at subsequent meetings held by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), a number of far-reaching resolutions were taken. This included a decision to establish a national structure to co-ordinate, monitor and manage a national anti-corruption programme. The elimination of corruption, which is embedded in certain sectors of the South African public service, impedes effective service delivery. This is explored further in Chapter Five of the study. The South African public service is indeed endeavouring to curb corruption in public service departments.

The South African public service delivers services directly to society (Hughes, 1998: 7). It also uses autonomous agencies, or contracts the services to the private sector. There are three distinctive categories of service delivery institutions developing, namely government institutions, private institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (Service Delivery Review, 2004). The ultimate aim of each institution is

different: The public service, NGOs and CBOs aim to improve the general welfare of its citizens. Conversely, the primary aim of private institutions is to make a profit on investments in their businesses.

Despite these contrasting objectives, the South African public service is purchasing the services it requires from a variety of providers, public and/or private (Dye, 1987: 324). Public-private partnership (PPP), are increasingly becoming a feature in the hospital and other public services in South Africa. The involvement of communities and the private sector in assisting the public service in delivering services to communities is also evident in South Africa. These institutions are more in tune with the challenges and constraints experienced by the communities. Furthermore, they often have the necessary know-how to correct, overcome particularly complex service delivery challenges.

These new forms of public service delivery in South Africa ought to establish what parts of the public service rules and regulations will continue to apply and to whom, when services are contracted out by the public service (Kickert, 2002: 1473). It should also be essential for the public service, to determine the extent to which government services are to be contracted out of the public service. The public service should also bear in mind that the development of market competition within the public service will challenge the framework of public accountability. In this environment, it is essential to rearticulate the vision of public accountability. If adequate mechanisms are not in place to ensure protection for the public, there is the danger that considerations of public policy and public interest will be marginalized by commercial and competitive considerations.

In this regard, Rhodes (2003: 51) argues that, in outsourcing public service delivery from those employed in the public interest to those motivated by commercial gain, there is a risk that public interest might become subverted by private interest. In this regard, NPM recognizes that the modern public service is about more than just achieving the goal of efficiency. Turner (2002: 1495) argues that NPM is also about the relationship of accountability between the public service and the people. In this respect, people are treated not merely as consumers, but as citizens. As citizens, people have the right to hold their governments to account for the actions they take, or fail to take.

In addition to wanting efficient public services, citizens also want their rights protected. In this regard, citizens want their voices to be heard, and to have their values and preferences respected (Kickert, 2002: 1473). The ultimate sanction of a dissatisfied citizen is to remove from public office those who are politically responsible for inadequate service provision to society. The public service delivers programmes, such as the provision of health service, that are in the public interest and are paid for out of the public purse (Cameron and Stone, 1995: 18). Governments obtain funding from citizens, redirecting this towards the provision of goods and services to society. If services are not delivered properly, it will negatively affect service delivery outcomes. Van Niekerk, *et al.* (2002: 6) argue that, since the citizens fund the programmes, the scrutiny to which the public service is subject, is therefore significantly greater than that which occurs in the private sector. Kickert (2002: 1473), similarly, argues that public servants are subject to discipline and bound by ethical standards. This in turn protects citizens from abuse and excess.

In examining the fundamental characteristics of NPM, Turner (2002: 1495) views its rise in the South African public service as a shift from bureaucracy to a system based on market principles. Effectively, the South African public service is shifting away from systems in which public servants are accountable for following rules and procedures to a system in which they are accountable for results achieved. In this regard, a series of changes are being introduced, such as the replacement of internal systems, processes and procedures, and new mechanisms are currently being established. Efficiency, effectiveness and economy provide an important impetus for these changes. The main aim of this approach in South Africa is to reduce government cost and improve efficiency and effectiveness within the public service for the promotion of service delivery.

It can be argued that there are several rationales for replacing the classical public administration model with the NPM model in South Africa. Firstly, it implies a response by the public service to the criticisms by the South African public on the ineffectiveness and inefficiency of the previous government (pre-1994). Secondly, it involves a response to the need to improve service delivery in previously disadvantaged communities in South Africa. Thirdly, it can be argued that the classical model of public administration would not have been effective within a changing democratic South

African environment. Lastly, it was not conducive to promoting a sustainable South African public service. This research study does, however, suggest that there are continuing and unresolved tensions between the two kinds of public administration models in South Africa (Soobrayan, 2004: Discussion). There are many South African public service departments in place in which public administration concepts are so imbued in traditional classical public administration approach that change is hard to implement (2003). These challenges are discussed in Chapter Five of the study.

The dominant discourse and operational mode of public administration prior to the democratisation process in South Africa (prior to 1994) was rooted in the traditional Weberian notion of public administration, which predominantly focused on ‘procedural’ issues. In the post-apartheid period in South Africa, however the public administration discourse has shifted towards building the legitimacy and relevance of the public service, the focus being on democratising the South African public service and improving service delivery.

### **Mechanisms to promote a sustainable public service for effective service delivery**

There are a number of mechanisms in South Africa that aim to promote a sustainable public service. The promotion of equity in service delivery is specifically highlighted in section 195(1) of the Constitution of South Africa (1996). The values and principles of the interim Constitution of South Africa (1993) laid the foundation for equality, equity and social justice. The South African public service is focused on developing an appropriate climate and policy framework to improve and redress service delivery imbalances and inequities, especially in previously disadvantaged communities in South Africa (National Conference on Public Service Delivery, 1997: 1).

The need to improve service delivery is highlighted in a number of important documents prepared by the South African government (Van Niekerk, *et al.* 2002: 96). The key document is the RDP (1994) White Paper, as well as a number of subsequent policy documents from the DPSA, and a wide range of sectoral discussion documents and Green and White Papers from different government ministries, departments and provinces in South Africa (Van Niekerk, *et al.* 2002: 96). The DPSA is the central national government department for the South African public service, and it prepares

governmental policies and advises the South African public service on implementation of these.

The White Paper on the Transformation of Public Service (WPTPS) (1995) expresses a vision of service orientation and commitment to the provision of high quality services to all South Africans. According to this document, service delivery in South Africa ought to be effected in an unbiased and impartial manner. Furthermore, service delivery is to be characterized by responsiveness to the needs of the public, as well as being human and caring in its dealings with the public. The policy also states the need for fair labour practices for all public servants, irrespective of race, gender or class. It further states that a sustainable (efficient, effective, economical and equitable) public service is essential for improving service delivery to the South African society. This is a tremendous departure from the policies and values adopted by the South African public service prior to 1994.

These initiatives, set in motion by the RDP White Paper in 1994 and reinforced by the WPTPS in 1995, culminated in the most important intervention that is the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, under the title of 'Batho Pele' or 'People First'. This Paper set out to establish a national policy framework on public service delivery in South Africa. Its aim was to guide the introduction and implementation of new policies and legislation in transforming service delivery by the South African public service. The 'Batho Pele' principles are sufficiently flexible to allow government departments to implement them according to specific conditions and circumstances. The 'Batho Pele' White Paper (1996) is directly applicable to those parts of the South African public service, both national and provincial, which are regulated by the Public Service Act, 1994.

It is important for all South African public servants to know, understand, support and implement the vision of the new government in accordance with each department's vision in the public service (Report of the Presidential Review Commission on Reform and Transformation of the Public Service in South Africa, 1998: 2). In pursuit of its vision, the South African government developed the following mission statement: "The creation of a people centred and people driven public service which is characterized by equity, quality, timeousness and a strong code of ethics." To give effect to this vision,



the South African government envisages a public service, which is goal-and performance-orientated, and encourages popular participation and transparency.

The 'Batho Pele' White Paper stresses that it is important for public servants in the South African public service to be honest and accountable (Batho Pele-'People First' White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997: 11). Moreover, the South African government argues that public servants in South Africa ought to be guided by an ethos of service delivery. It is indicated that public servants ought to be committed to the promotion of service delivery, in an unbiased and impartial manner. This is particularly important in light of the policy of exclusion under the previous government in South Africa (prior to 1994).

The relevant mechanisms to promote effective service delivery are briefly elaborated in the discussion below. These include the Constitution of South Africa 1996, (Act 108 of 1996), the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (1995) and the 'Batho Pele'-'People First' White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997).

### **The Constitution**

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, enshrines the concept of public administration. Section 195(1) of the Constitution (1996) states that "public administration in South Africa must be governed by the democratic values and principles." These include a high standard of professional ethics, which should be promoted and maintained. In addition, services should be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias. Moreover, resources should be utilized efficiently, effectively and economically. The Constitution (1996) further states that people's needs should be met or responded to and that the public should be encouraged to participate in policy-making. Another crucial principle that is stipulated in the Constitution (1996) is that public administration should be accountable and development-oriented. In this regard, it can be argued that the South African public service is embarking on initiatives to promote these principles.

Section 7(1) of the Constitution (1996) sets out the basic values, rights and obligations, of all citizens, the state and all public servants. It attempts to protect human rights, entrench the democratic principles of governance, and ensure ethical conduct in the public service. In terms of constitutionalism, there are basically three important principles to promoting effective public administration in South Africa, namely, political supremacy, public accountability and the tenets of democracy. These principles imply that public servants should not abuse their authority and that there ought to be joint consultation and deliberation with society. Furthermore, public servants ought to be accountable and responsible for service delivery performance. Moreover, the principles of equity ought to be taken into account overcoming service delivery imbalances and inequities.

According to Sections 32(1) and (2) of the Constitution (1996), citizens have certain rights to take action against the state if they believe their constitutional rights have been infringed, and to have access to information held by the state, which they need in order to be able to do so. This ensures that the rights of individuals are protected and that institutions are established to ensure that government does not abuse its power. This, in turn, protects the rights of each individual.

Section 2 of the Constitution (1996) establishes enshrines the Constitution as the supreme law of the country and creates a solid foundation upon which the activities of public service are executed. To this end, it creates an empowering environment within which the various structures of the South African state can execute their functions (Van Niekerk, *et al.* 2002: 1). Section 6(1) and Section 7(1) of the Constitution (1996) define the powers and structures of political executive decision-making bodies, such as the Cabinet and the Executive Councils of Provinces (EXCOs), as well as the principles under and the context in which public administration and management should operate.

Section 40(1) of Chapter 3 of the Constitution (1996) establishes the structures of the South African government and specifies the powers the government has in the process of executing its activities. Section 40(1) of the Constitution (1996) makes provision for an integrated, inter-sectoral and co-operative approach to government. These provisions commit all three spheres of government to be transparent in policy making and inclusive in their approaches. However, despite these provisions in the legislation, the

relationship between the three spheres of government is problematic in practice (Van Niekerk, *et al.* 2002: 3). There is inadequate co-ordination and co-operation between the levels of government (Service Delivery Review, 2004). This has clearly impacted on effective service delivery in South Africa. This is elaborated on in Chapter Five of the study.

In this respect, Section 92(2) of the Constitution (1996) states that political leadership (members of the South African Cabinet) is accountable, collectively and individually, to the South African Parliament for the exercise of its powers and the performance of its functions. In its broadest sense, it can be stated that accountability is an obligation to expose, explain and justify actions. It can be further stated that public accountability demands that the actions of the public service be publicized to encourage public debate and criticism. Efforts are being made to promote accountability and transparency in South Africa. Consequently, politicians have been directly involved in community concerns and needs (Service Delivery Review, 2003). A number of campaigns have been launched towards this end. Nonetheless, it is not yet fully operational in all quarters of the South African public service. Again, this is discussed in Chapter Five of the study.

Section 133 of the Constitution (1996) similarly provides for the accountability of members of the Executive Council of a Province in South Africa (EXCO). Sections 215 and 216 explicitly require transparency and accountability in the budgetary processes of all three spheres of the South African government, and on both the revenue and expenditure sides. Section 216 requires the treasury to ensure expenditure control. Section 195(1) moreover requires the public service to provide the public with timely, accessible and accurate information about finances, to encourage transparency.

The Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999) (PFMA) (as amended) and the Treasury Regulations (2001) further strengthen these provisions. They include a high standard of professional ethics and demands for increased accountability. This also entails the efficient, effective and economic use of resources. PFMA provides a firm legal framework in respect of the accountability by managers in the public service and in respect of transparency in national and provincial spheres of government in South Africa.

The provisions of the Constitution (1996) indicate that public administration ought to respond to the needs of the country's citizens, which promotes their participation in policy-making. The Constitution (1996) also focuses on human resources management and career-development practices. Human resources management and development is necessary to maximize human potential. Human resources practices ought to be based on ability, objectivity, fairness and the need to redress the imbalances and inequities of the past to achieve broad representation. In this regard, the need for representivity is the focal point in public administration (A Report of the State of the Public Service, 2001: 11). These principles are applicable to every sphere of the South African government. A range of dynamic mechanisms has been put in place to promote human resources development and representivity, in particular the Skills Development Act, 1998, (Act 97 of 1998) and the Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act 55 of 1998). The former aims to develop human resources through various initiatives, such as training, mentoring and coaching. The South African public service too has intensified training and development to improve its ability to effectively deliver services to society. The latter aims to promote representivity in the South African public service to, address existing personnel imbalances and inequities.

It can be stated that the political leadership (politicians) and administrative leadership (public servants) in the South African public service ought to be held accountable for their actions to their constituencies and their superiors, respectively and, more broadly, to the public. Accountability should focus on compliance with rules and ethical principles, and on the achievement of results. Moreover, mechanisms for ensuring accountability ought to be established for use internally in the South African public service. Mechanisms promoting accountability can be designed to provide adequate controls, while allowing for appropriately flexible management. This clearly needs to be strengthened (Service Delivery Review, 2003).

Another important principle that the Constitution (1996) enshrines in order to promote service delivery is responsibility and responsiveness. Responsibility in its simplest form means the duty of a leader to carry out a specific piece of work allocated to him or her (Cloete, 1986: 17). Responsibility can also mean the manner in which a leader carries out tasks, the values he or she attaches to these tasks, and in what way he or she considers the values of followers within the institution. The purpose of responsible and

effective leadership and governance in the public service is to improve the general welfare of the public through service delivery. Therefore, the actions of political leadership (political office-bearers) and administrative leadership (public servants) in South Africa should be to the advantage of the individual as well as the community.

The Constitution (1996) is an important mechanism that can be used to promote service delivery in South Africa. It is important that effective tools be used to promote this end, such as the adoption of efficient approaches. The adoption of a leadership and governance framework can promote the active involvement of various stakeholders in public service delivery community projects. The South African public service is pursuing this avenue. For example, community policing is an important strategy to sustain law and order in South African communities (Service Delivery Review, 2003). These approaches are explored in Chapter Five below. Furthermore, the values of responsiveness, equity, transparency and accountability ought to be integrated within a leadership and governance framework to be adopted by the public service.

### **Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)**

Before the 1994 elections in South Africa, the African National Congress (ANC) produced a document outlining its programme for reconstruction and development to meet the basic needs of all citizens in South Africa (White Paper, Reconstruction and Development Programme, 1994). The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), was adopted after the first democratic elections in 1994. This White Paper expressed the South African government's view of the RDP "Base Document", which re-affirmed the South African constitutional principles of equity, responsiveness, transparency and accountability, while also committing the South African government to greater efficiency and effectiveness in its activities to promote service delivery. The Paper identifies meeting the basic needs of all people through more effective service delivery. The basic needs of people range from job creation, land and agrarian reform to housing, water and sanitation, energy supplies, transport, nutrition, education, health care, the environment, social welfare and security.

The RDP (1994) identified institutional transformation and reform as essential to redressing service delivery imbalances and inequities. A sustainable public service is

essential to improving the ability of the public service to deliver its services to society, and especially to previously disadvantaged communities in South Africa (White Paper on the Reconstruction and Development of 1994). With the adoption of the RDP, a policy framework was developed. This defined the role of the new South African public service, identifying the need to improve service delivery in previously disadvantaged communities in South Africa as its main programme for implementing the RDP. This framework places considerable emphasis on a public service, which is responsive to the needs of all citizens.

The RDP (1994) explicitly identified the need for greater integration between strategic and operational planning and budgeting processes (White Paper, Reconstruction and Development Programme 1994). It also emphasizes the need for performance monitoring systems as part of the accountability mechanism. It emphasizes the need for sustainable macroeconomic balances, in an effort to transform both the South African public service and society. The document stresses the cultivation of effective human resources management (HRM) and career development practices, to maximize human potential. It also emphasizes that public administration ought to be broadly representative of the South African people. Moreover, the document focuses on employment and personnel practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness and the need to overcome the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation in the South African public service.

Given the personnel imbalances in terms of race and gender, which existed in the South African public service prior to 1994, one of the main priorities of the South African government has been to ensure that the South African public service becomes more representative of the demographic composition and diversity of the South African society (White Paper, Reconstruction and Development Programme, 1994). This is an important political and administrative imperative and is also entrenched in Article 9(2) of the Constitution (1996) as follows: “Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. To promote the achievement of equality, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons or categories of persons disadvantaged by unfair discrimination may be taken.” The RDP (1994) does however indicate that these measures are interim measures designed to speed up the process of achieving

equality in South Africa. In other words, these measures will fall away once equality is reached.

It can be argued that public services are not a privilege in a civilized and democratic society, but in fact a legitimate expectation by society. This is clearly spelt out in the RDP, which furthermore reinforces the important principles outlined in the Constitution (1996). In this regard, accountability, transparency, equity and responsiveness are highlighted as crucial elements in improving service delivery in South Africa.

### **White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (WPTPS)(1995)**

The White Paper on the Transformation on Public Service (WPTPS), was released in November 1995. It provides a conceptual framework for the transformation of the public service. Public service transformation is one of the top priorities on the agenda of the South African government (White Paper on the Transformation on Public Service 1995). The purpose of the White Paper is to provide a policy framework to guide the introduction of new policies and legislation aimed at public service transformation in South Africa (White Paper on the Transformation on Public Service 1995). It forms a coherent guide to inform, manage and drive the transformation process. The goals set out in the White Paper on the Transformation on Public Service (WPTPS) (1995) were entrenched in Section 195 (1) of the *Constitution of South Africa (1996)*, which sets out the basic values and principles governing public administration. The principles apply to public administration in every sphere of government.

In accordance with the government's vision to improve and redress service delivery, a number of important aspects are identified in the White Paper on the Transformation of Public Service (WPTPS) (1995). These include the respect for the rule of law and human rights. Other crucial issues that are highlighted include a strong emphasis on normative issues, for example morals and values, such as honesty. The need for a transparent and an accountable government and administration, are key factors that are outlined in the document.

To promote public service delivery in South Africa, a number of objectives have been set out by the White Paper on the Transformation on Public Service (WPTPS) (1995).

The most important objectives are to formulate policies, which are well founded on relevant data, coherent and well coordinated. Furthermore, policies should be fully and prudently costed, to ensure value for money and prioritised within available resources. Another crucial objective is to facilitate the efficient and effective implementation of such policies and to ensure that they are regularly monitored and reviewed.

The White Paper (1995) focuses on strengthening the leadership echelon in the South African public service. The White Paper (1995) indicates the need for a corresponding strengthening of leadership responsibility and accountability for results (Peete 2001:15). Furthermore, the White Paper focuses on intensifying the modernization of the public service. The development of specific implementation strategies is the responsibility of individual departments and provincial administrations in the South African public service. In devising such strategies, such departments and administrations have been able to draw upon a variety of policy and legislative interventions designed to give the transformation process additional momentum in the South African public service.

The White Paper on the Transformation on Public Service (WTPPS) (1995) has been the cornerstone of the South African government's efforts to improve and redress service delivery imbalances and inequities in previously disadvantaged communities in South Africa, since its promulgation in 1995. The vision, mission and goals of the White Paper (1995) is premised on a fundamental redefinition of the role of the South African public service and its relationship with civil society, based on a partnership between them rather than the antagonistic relations that had prevailed in the past. The White Paper (1995) is the base for a major shift from the former mechanical classical model of public administration (White Paper on the Transformation on Public Service 1995). In the previous system of governance (pre-1994), there was an emphasis on centralization, hierarchy, the procedural observance of rules and regulations and insulation from the public towards a more organic, strategic, developmental and adaptive model of public administration under the new dispensation (post 1994).

In this regard, the devolution of decision-making power was considered to be important by the South African government to promote service delivery (White Paper on the Transformation on Public Service 1995). In accordance with the White Paper (1995), there is currently the democratisation of internal work procedures in the public service



(Service Delivery Review 2003:2). In addition, the public service focuses on the establishment of flatter institutional structures. An emphasis is placed on the introduction of improved forms of co-operation and co-ordination (both vertical and horizontal) within the South African public service. The development of teamwork and a programme-based approach to work is also considered to be important by the South African public service. This is similar to the team model approach to leadership discussed in chapter four of the study. In this regard, the development of new forms of task-related rather than rule-bound cultures is being examined by the South African public service (Service Delivery Review 2003).

To improve service delivery, the White Paper (1995) requires national and provincial departments in South Africa to identify a number of aspects (Ncholo 2000:90). These include a mission statement for service delivery, together with service agreements. The paper also requires service standards, defined outputs and targets and performance indicators, which are benchmarked against comparable international standards. Moreover, the paper demands that plans for staffing, human resource development (HRD) and institution capacity building, which are tailored, to service delivery needs be prepared by the public service.

The White Paper (1995), stresses that the effective mobilization, development and utilization of human resources (Ncholo 2000:90). Leadership is not only an important transformation goal, in building individual and institutional capacity for effective governance but is also critical for the success of service delivery. A coherent and holistic strategy for human resources management (HRM) and human resources development (HRD) is therefore essential.

The White Paper (1995), provides a framework to enable national and provincial departments in South Africa to develop departmental service delivery strategies (White Paper on the Transformation on Public Service 1995). These strategies will need to promote continuous improvements in the quantity, quality and equity of service provision. The introduction of a service delivery improvement programmes cannot be achieved in isolation from other fundamental management changes within the South African public service. It must be part of a shift of culture, where leaders see themselves first and foremost as servants of the public of South Africa, and where the South

African public service is managed with service to the public as its primary goal. To implement a service delivery programme successfully, public service leaders require new management tools. In this respect, effective leadership is imperative to promote the goals of the South African public service.

It could be stated that the White Paper (1995), was firmly located within the broad developmental and people-driven paradigm established by the South African government's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). There is however a deviation to the developmental approach to the adoption of new public management (NPM) principles by the South African government. The South African government has privatised parastatals, contracted-out state services on a competitive basis to the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), especially on a partnership basis. Furthermore, the public service is embarking on a number of new public management (NPM) initiatives to reduce the costs.

A draft framework on service delivery innovation has been developed and consulted upon (Service Delivery Review 2003:6). The issues addressed in the framework include shared services, a call centre, corporatisation and commercialisation. Managerialist approaches are implemented in varying forms and configurations and with varying degrees of success, by different public service departments in South Africa (Ncholo 2000:90). Although some of these approaches are being presented as 'the only right way', recent research and evaluation reflects that not all these concepts have universal application. In this regard Ncholo (2000:90), argues that different types of approaches are suitable to different types of institutions, depending on context, type of service, capacity and resource availability. This should definitely be taken into account within the South African public service context. In this respect, the need for the integration of local culture is constantly highlighted throughout the study.

The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) in South Africa is committed to pursuing initiatives that fit with local peculiarities, resource constraints and capacity (Peete 2001:16). It recently planned on adopting the approach of "global challenges, local solutions" to ensure it is not ignorant of global developments but remains equally focused on local solutions for the South African public service (Peete 2001:16).

A framework is sketched out in the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (WPTPS) (1995) and is developed in much greater detail in a number of subsequent policy documents, including the White Paper on Public Service Training and Education (1997), Human Resources Management (1997), Affirmative Action (1998) and the Batho Pele-‘People First’ White Paper on the Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997). The White Paper is only the first of a number of policy documents that guides and informs the on-going process of transformation and reform in the South African public service. This broad policy framework has been translated into specific strategies for change in the South African public service (Public Service Delivery 2003).

In light of the above-mentioned, it can be argued that these initiatives undertaken by the South African public service are important milestones for improving and redressing service delivery. These initiatives are important in improving the ability of the public service to deliver services to the South African society, especially previously disadvantaged communities.

#### **Batho Pele -‘People First’ White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997)**

Whilst there are numerous policy documents on improved, economical, efficient service delivery in South Africa, the most important of these is the Batho Pele -‘People First’ White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997). The ‘Batho Pele’ (People First) initiative aims to enhance the quality and accessibility of government services by improving efficiency and accountability to the recipients of public goods and services. Its purpose is to provide a policy framework and practical implementation strategy for the transformation of service delivery by the South African public service (Batho Pele - ‘People First’ White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997). It is primarily about how public services are provided, and specifically about improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the way in which services are delivered. It sets out what services are to be provided, their quantity, level and quality. In this regard, it can be argued that a transformed South African public service will be judged by one criterion

above all, namely, service delivery that meets the basic needs of all South African citizens (Peete, 2001: 14).

In line with the Constitutional principles, the 'Batho Pele' White Paper (1997) calls on national and provincial departments in South Africa to improve service delivery in previously disadvantaged communities. It calls for a shift away from bureaucratic systems, processes and attitudes of public administration, that were adopted under the previous South African government prior to 1994, towards new approaches of working. The emphasis is placed on better, faster and more responsive service delivery. It puts the needs of the public first, which is clearly evident in the South African government's new strategies of working directly with communities to promote efficiency and effectiveness.

To promote service delivery, the 'Batho Pele' White Paper (1997) requires national and provincial departments in the South African public service to include plans for the introduction of continuous quality improvement techniques, in line with a total quality management approach. The monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and structures designed to measure progress and introduce corrective action are highlighted as appropriate in this study. The redirection of human and other resources from administrative tasks to service provision, particularly for disadvantaged groups and areas, is crucial. Another significant aspect is financial planning that link budgets directly to service needs and personnel plans. More importantly, potential partnerships with the private sector, NGOs and CBOs provide more effective forms of service delivery. The development, particularly through training, of a culture of customer care and of approaches to service delivery that are sensitive to issues of race, gender and disability, are also considered to be also important.

The 'Batho Pele' White Paper (1997) implies making decisions about the services that should be provided. Another important aspect is treating citizens with consideration and respect. In this regard, the public service needs to make sure that the promised level and quality of services are always of the highest standard. The 'Batho Pele' White Paper (1997) requires the public service to respond swiftly and sympathetically when standards of public services fall below the promised levels.

To this end, eight principles were adopted to ensure customer orientation and optimal service delivery (Batho Pele -‘People First’ White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery 1997:12). These principles include:

- (i) *Consultation*: Citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of the public services they receive. They should, wherever possible, be given a choice about the services they offered.
- (ii) *Service standards*: Citizens should be told what level and quality of the public services they receive and should, wherever possible, be given a choice about the services they are offered.
- (iii) *Access*: All citizens should have equal access to the service to which they are entitled.
- (iv) *Courtesy*: Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration.
- (v) *Information*: Citizens should be given accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive.
- (vi) *Openness and transparency*: Citizens should be told how national and provincial departments are run. They should also be told about how much they cost, and who is in charge.
- (vii) *Redress*: If the promised standard of service is not delivered by the public service, citizens should be offered an apology. A full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy are thus necessary.
- (viii) *Value for money*: Public services should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens the best possible value for money. The ‘Batho Pele’ White Paper (1997) thus states that people should be put first, in ensuring effective service delivery. It aims at treating citizens as customers, which implies listening to their views, and taking them into consideration.

The ‘Batho Pele’ White Paper has been enthusiastically received and has become an effective brand name that signifies the intention to improve service delivery; however, its implementation is slow (Service Delivery Review, 2001). A recent study in the South African public service found that fifty seven percent of leaders did not know about the ‘Batho Pele’ principles. A further ninety four percent had not received any training in using the ‘Batho Pele’ principles, and sixty three percent said that they had never received any information about them. The actual implementation of all these principles

in the short-to-medium term clearly remains a challenge. This is re-iterated by Soobrayan (2004: Discussion), who argues that the South African government's 'Batho Pele' White Paper and more importantly the principles espoused in it, have not been effectively implemented.

In 2000, the Public Service Commission commissioned a study to explore compliance with the 'Batho Pele' Policy (Citizen Satisfaction Survey: Overview Report 2001/2002, 2003: 9). The survey found that, contrary to the policy, citizens are seldom consulted about their needs. Citizens are typically not aware of the standards of service they should be demanding. Accessibility to services also remains a challenge, especially in previously disadvantaged communities. Although courtesy standards had been set in departments, where such complaint handling centres existed, the PSC was unable to measure whether these standards are being met, as they had not canvassed the opinions of their clients. There were gaps in communication between the departments and the communities they served. Citizens were not kept abreast of the performance of either provincial or national departments. Limited efforts had been made to establish complaint handling. In departments where they existed, they rarely functioned effectively. With respect to performance and value for money, very few departments undertook meaningful analyses. Evidently, although the South African public service had undergone tremendous changes, by 1997 it was still operating within an over-centralized, hierarchical and rule-bound system, which had been inherited from the previous dispensation. This made it difficult to hold individuals accountable (Soobrayan, 2004: Discussion).

A number of reasons can be cited for the ineffective implementation of the 'Batho Pele' White Paper (Service Delivery Review, 2001). It is clear that the process of setting measurable service standards and adhering to them is a challenge. This is mainly due to inexperience and insufficient knowledge by leadership in departments, about setting service standards and what adherence to service standards aims to achieve (Service Delivery Review, 2001). It can also be attributed to a number of inadequacies, such as a shortage of human resources in key service delivery departments in the South African public service, such as the Department of Health.

The South African government is, nonetheless, committed to “continually improving the lives of the people of South Africa by a transformed public service, which is representative, coherent, transparent, efficient, effective, accountable and responsive to the needs of all.” (Batho Pele - ‘People First’ White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery 1997:12). A strategy was thus being developed by the DPSA to revitalize the ‘Batho Pele’ White Paper during 2001. In addition, to encourage service delivery and service delivery innovation, a Centre for Public Service Innovation was established to incubate and pilot innovative projects developed by public servants and private companies (Service Delivery Review, 2003). The effectiveness of this Centre could not be determined by 2003. It is too short a time to give an accurate assessment. Leadership can also play a critical role by shaping the implementation, management and monitoring of policies as they impact on service delivery. This is essential for ensuring that public policies are appropriately targeted to meet the service delivery needs of the community.

Since 2001, the DPSA requires that national and provincial departments outline their short-, medium- and long-term goals for service provision (Chandu, 2003: Discussion). The public service is also required to provide regular reports on their service delivery achievements to their respective legislatures. The Public Service Commission (PSC) had been monitoring progress in the public service. However, according to Chandu (2003: Discussion) the study suggests a lot more needs to be done to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of the PSC.

The challenge that confronts the South African public service is that of exploring frameworks, which could be utilized to address local issues and challenges scientifically and systematically. Furthermore, there are a number of challenges that directly and indirectly impact on service delivery performance, which ought to be urgently dealt with, for example human resources challenges, communication and co-ordination of policy. It can be argued that the ‘Batho Pele’ White Paper (1997) is an important instrument for transforming public service delivery in South Africa. It is also an important instrument in transforming an inefficient bureaucracy with a focus on rules, to a culture of customer care. In this respect, the needs of all citizens of South Africa should be served irrespective of their race, gender or creed. The ‘Batho Pele’ principles are very broad. Their implementation will thus require concrete and specific strategies.

An effective leadership and governance framework should furthermore be aligned to the 'Batho Pele' principles to improve service delivery by the South African public service.

#### **SUMMARY**

In conclusion, we have seen that the post apartheid South African public service has adopted some elements of the NPM paradigm. However, the model may also vary within the three spheres of government, due to situational factors such as diverse political perspectives. There are several rationales for the replacement of the classical public administration model by the NPM paradigm in South Africa. These include the realization that, in order to improve service delivery performance, the public service ought to be more managerial, rather than administrative. Furthermore, the changes in government in South Africa, the effects of globalisation and the scale and scope of the public service necessitated this replacement. The South African public service has therefore instituted a series of changes and introduced an array of policies to improve service delivery.

The trends of NPM must be considered in the broader context of reform and transformation in the South African public service. However, even though reform and transformation have been advocated in the South African public service since 1994, in certain departments' service delivery remains a challenge. Elements from the classical public administration model are still entrenched hampering effective public service delivery. There are also criticisms and challenges facing the NPM paradigm in the South African public service. In order to increase the validity and reliability of the present research, these issues are explored further in Chapter Five. This study will continue with a literature review in Chapter Four. Such a literature review is necessary to gain greater insight into the different approaches of leadership and governance.