CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides fundamental issues or 'building blocks' in Public Administration. Particular theoretical aspects that are commonly discussed within the Public Administration discourse, are identified. The discourse purports an analysis of some basic elements or theories in the field of Public Administration. The theorists propose and sketch some of the various issues relating to bureaucracy and phenomena in public administration such as management and leadership, governance, decision-making, political and administrative interface, ethics and administrative responsibility.

Analysis of Public Administration and its theories could provide a profound argument for and the basis of what is this 'phenomenon called public administration'. This chapter provides an in-depth overview and analysis of theories that support and encourage debate on the interrogating approach within the field of Public Administration.

3.2 PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: AN ANALYSIS

Public administration needs to be analysed in its context. In one way, Public Administration as a field of study is built up by theories that put it in context, particularly for government institutions. In some situations, scholars find it difficult to understand the original terminology or the framework of public administration, and therefore the role and meaning of the state and government as well. It is also important to understand public administration and its meaning properly, as well as its boundaries, because public administration, through its nature, is different from private or business administration. In its original analysis, the term *administration* comes from a Latin word *administrare*, which means to serve, or to attend to someone's needs. Additionally and to qualify it, *public* refers to something that has to do with general, common and national interest (Lungu, 1997:1).

The above analysis of *public administration* provides some background which encompasses administration and the public. Both administration and people become the cornerstone in the field of Public Administration. What is also critical for public administration is to grow and develop into a co-operative approach between the executive institutions and the public. This co-operative approach in public administration has to be based on a common vision. As Waldo argues (in Sharon 1967:21), *public administration* is 'one phase or aspect of human co-operation'.

From Lungu's (1997) analysis of public administration, it could be deduced that public administration puts an obligation on the official to serve the public. Therefore, an official within a department or agency is obliged to discharge his or her responsibilities in ensuring that services are provided to the society. Therefore, public administration serves the public and is part of or is related to government.

Hanekom & Thornhill (1983:176), in their analysis of the term *public administration* provide a general application of the term *public to function of administration* means that administration is not concealed, it is open to all, it is the opposite of the private administration and affects society. Contextually, the above notion by the two authors imply that the public-administration relationship is brought about by the fact that the public in practice has to do with the delivering of services to people through the performance of administrative functions. Therefore, the output-outcome model as a result of the practical functioning of public administration is necessitated by administrators in their relationship, with accountability to the citizenry. The public and public administration are inseparable, especially in dealing with matters of governance, like accountability, responsibility, transparency and the rule of law. Against this background, public administration, both in theory and in practice, has to be discussed so that public administration's role is understood, as well as practices in public organisations, public service in particular.

P(p)ublic A(a)dministration is broad-ranging and has a combination of theories and practices designed to promote an understanding of government and its relationship with the society. It also has to encourage the formulation of public policies to be more responsive to social needs and institute managerial practices on the part of the public organisations that are substantially attuned to effectiveness, efficiency, and increasingly, the deeper human requisites of the citizenry (Coetzee 1988:18). Different authors within different contexts constantly raise the

theory versus practice relationship. Within this context, the theory-practice relationship in particular, there is an indication of the importance of theory as one of the components within the Public Administration discourse. However, what is most essential is the fact that public administration is not an end in itself because theory plays a very important role in building and nurturing Public Administration and provides a basis to apply in practice.

In their comment and analysis of public administration, Fox, Schwella & Wissink (1991:2) define *public administration* as that 'system of structures and processes', operating within a particular society as environment with the objective of facilitating the formulation of appropriate governmental policy, and the efficient execution of the formulated policy. From this perspective, public administration establishes a bond between the society, public policy and government as key players by using structures and processes accurately. Therefore, public administration without people's involvement in public policy formulation and implementation, and the government's use of its structures and processes, is a fallacy.

Public administration is influenced by external conditions and also influences societies by solving present and future problems. Additionally, public administration is determined by both objective societal elements, and the subjectivity of public administrators (Jun, 1986:16). In practice, it is stated that interest groups and other external forces could influence public administration. As a result public administrators themselves become influential both in policy making and in institutional changes.

In their analysis of scope and meaning of public administration*,* Gaus, White & Dimock (1937:1) comment that wherever people associate for common purposes, the problem of administration presents itself. The authors further comment that the execution of agreed policies is a necessary responsibility of all institutional activities. In this context, public administration is not exempted from association for a common purpose. Furthermore, it takes a joint effort to deliver services to people under a government mandate.

Public administration involves the co-ordination of all organised activities, having as its purpose the implementation of public policy. The co-ordination of organised activity is common to all administrative endeavours, private and public, and the implementation of public policy are key factors within this understanding of public administration. Human co-operation and joint effort are seen as critical in implementing government policies in particular (Gortner

1981:5). In this context public administration should be geared towards serving the public by implementing public policies through an organised and skilful administrative arm. Most importantly, is the fact that the implementation of public policy for service delivery purposes should be a joint effort between the public and government.

Shafritz & Hyde (1992:58) define *public administration* as the management of men and women and materials in the accomplishment of the goals of the state. With reference to Shafritz and Hyde, public administration should make sure that the goals of the state are accomplished through the provision of services to people.

However, the provision of services is the ability of management to apply public service prescriptions efficiently and correctly. Additionally, to make sure that public administration achieves governmental goals, elements of good governance must be in place, such as accountability, transparency, responsibility and the rule of law.

Lungu (1997:1) believes that, in some cases, public administration is used synonymously with public policy, public service and government administration. His analysis of public administration as opposed to public policy could be based on the fact that public administration in practice is entrenched within public policy formulation and its management, structuring and policy interventions by the re-structuring of the public service in order to deliver services efficiently and effectively to the public. Additionally, public administration ensures that government structures are structured properly and according to the legal framework to obtain and maintain good governance.

In his analysis, Dror (in Perry: 1989: 98) maintains that public administration is very much a constitutional activity. This confirms that a constitution becomes critical in ensuring that government systems and organs of state function properly in order to ensure that governance is supported by strong and skilful managers. Therefore, public administration within a multidimensional approach, seeks to ensure that the roles of the state and government are fulfilled. It is also essential that a government and its citizenry respect and abide by its constitution.

Referring to South Africa as a constitutional government, in terms of section 2, the Constitution is the supreme law of the Republic (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996:3). In this context, government officials have to ensure that the ethos and values

(ethics, economic and efficient use of government resources and developmental public administration) of public administration crafted in section 195 of the Constitution are upheld, including the socio-economic lives of people like housing, land, education and health are also upheld. At the same time, the public must be respected. The concept of the supremacy of the law was an important change because it insisted that the law binds both the rulers and the ruled (Perry, 1989:98). Referring to Perry's argument, the government and the public servants, should serve the public with dignity and respect. The Constitution requires that government should deliver socio-economic services to people and people are also expected to act according to the Constitution in demanding such services. In this context the ruled and ruler have to respect the Constitution in order for public administration to function properly. The above picture signals that managers and other public servants in government should respect and adhere to the provisions of the Constitution and other legal measures, such as the PFMA. It is important that the above is analysed within a particular context or fundamental principles. The following are foundations of public administration and it is important to understand the meaning or elements regarding governance.

3.3 FOUNDATIONS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Like other disciplines, both in natural and social sciences, Public Administration is founded on some fundamental principles or tenets. These principles could shape or guide practitioners and political office-bearers, including academics within the field of Public Administration. Additionally, these principles could also instil values and standards within the government, state and society or the public, if applied correctly by taking into account a particular context or environment. The following are the foundations or principles of public administration as an activity within the Discipline.

3.3.1 Political supremacy

Every political office-bearer and every public official in a democratic society should carry out his or her official duties in cognisance of the fact that the legislature has been granted authority over the official's sphere of work. This implies that no public executive institution can change the nature and extent of its functional activities without being authorised to do so by a legislative institution. In the case of financial management, each department must spend public monies on the approval by parliament or legislature.

3.3.2 Public accountability

Generally, every political office-bearer and public official should display a sense of responsibility when performing his or her duties. It means that the official's conduct should be above reproach so that he or she will be able to give account in public, usually in portfolio committees. Thus, it could be stated that in implementing the PFMA, executing authorities and public servants, especially accounting officers of various departments in the public service are accountable to the public. Furthermore, to display a sense of responsibility and financial accountability, it is also expected that annual reports with annual financial statements are also submitted and reported to Parliament or other legislature through portfolio committees.

3.3.3 Tenets of democracy

Within this framework, it is argued that in response to democracy, the government should be arranged in such a manner that they cannot abuse the powers which have been entrusted to them to further their own interests or the interests of only one specific population group. Most important, the activities of public authorities should, wherever possible take place in the open rather than be shrouded by a veil of secrecy. With reference to financial affairs, the budget as an example is presented to Parliament and debated in public through public hearings.

Finally, to obtain sound public administration, individuals and groups should exercise their rights and freedom in a restrained manner. Centrally to rights and freedoms, individuals should not prejudice the rights and freedoms of others and endanger the community, including the welfare of others. Thus, public administration should be conducted in such a manner that the rule of law prevails.

The *rule of law* means:
a) The executive institutions should not be allowed to exercise discretionary powers that are too wide and unrestrained, nor should they be allowed to act in arbitration;
b) All citizens should be equal in the eyes of the law and should be treated equally in terms of the law;
c) The courts should function independently of the legislature and executive and judges and magistrates should act as independent guardians to ensure that the rights and freedoms of the individuals are respected.

3.3.4 Fairness and reasonableness

Public institutions and officials should promote the welfare of the community and should always be fair and reasonable in their dealings with each citizen, regardless of sex, race, language or religion. Every public functionary should treat members of the public in a fair and reasonable manner. The Batho Pele (White Paper on service delivery) is an example of government's commitment to furthering the interests of the South African society, especially the principle on fairness and equality.

3.3.5 Balanced decisions

Decisions taken by a public official will be accepted as being balanced if it takes all aspects of a matter fully into account. The impact of a decision should be taken into account because a decision will affect the public directly or indirectly. Balanced decisions are necessitated by the requirement that everyone should receive equal treatment before the law. In the case of budgeting the Minister of Finance's budget speech in Parliament refers to political, economical and social conditions influencing the proposals on revenue and expenditure.

3.3.6 Thoroughness

It is argued that the activities of public officials should be characterised by their thoroughness. This implies that public authorities have to take action; they should do so timeously. They should maintain a high standard of work and provide quality service. With regard to this principle, public officials should never condone the waste of money and material. For effective good governance and financial management in the Public Service, the Public Finance Management Act (1999) and the South African Constitution (1996), promote high ethical conduct, efficient use of resources in delivering services to the public. Furthermore, public servants are expected to avoid wasteful and fruitless expenditure.

3.3.7 Probity

Political officers and officials should have no ulterior motives when performing their duties. As a result, no public functionary is allowed to use his authority to obtain inadmissible gains either for him or for others or to secure preferential treatment for favoured persons. Each official

should conduct himself in such a manner that he will be able to withstand any test of public scrutiny. To support transparency and improve conduct of public servants, public service regulations (1999), require managers that are within SMS level to disclose any financial gains in order to eliminate conflict of interest and abuse of power and authority for personal gains.

3.3.8 Efficiency and effectiveness

Efficiency in the public sector means satisfying the most essential needs of the community to the greatest possible extent by using the limited resources that are available. It also involves upholding public accountability. *Effectiveness*, on the other hand is more about the impact that has been or will be caused by a service delivered or to be delivered. To improve governance and service delivery, performance budgeting system stresses efficiency (relationship between inputs and outputs) and effectiveness (relationship between outputs and outcomes).

3.3.9 Legal rules and legality

Legal rules, particularly, the tenets of administrative law, provide a normative code of conduct for public functionaries. For example, the legal rules require that:

a) a public functionary should not exceed his or her powers under the law, meaning *intra vires* not *ultra vires;*.

b) there should be justifiable reason for the act or decision, that is the decision should be bona fide instead of *mala fide* and *audi alteram partem* (listen to the other party) should apply. Therefore, a public functionary has to respect the prevailing provisions of laws and conduct himself or herself accordingly (Cloete, 1981:9). For example, every public servant must comply with PFMA, public service regulations and the constitution in order to support good governance in the Public Service.

The above fundamental tenents by Cloete are crucial as they provide the basis of public administration relative to governance. For example, as indicated earlier, the rule of law and supremacy of the Constitution, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency are fundamental in analysing governance in public administration. In this circumstance public administration becomes important in public life and for the institutions within it.

3.4 PUBLIC FINANCE IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

In chapter 4 a theory of public finance is provided. However, an illustration of how public finance fits to public administration is crucial so that the theoretical framework of Public Administration and its conceptual analysis are put into perspective and in the subsequent chapters contextualised as well. Public administration with its different components such as human resources, management and leadership, administrative law, and public finance are building blocks in the field of public administration. Public finance, both technically and conceptually (theoretically), becomes a central point of government in ensuring that services are delivered to society. Therefore, budget preparation and implementation have to be done, individual departments have to make estimates, budget and plan so that resources are available for government projects to be implemented.

This section gives an indication of where public finance 'resides' in public administration. As a result, the following issues provide a distinct outline of financial aspects in public administration or 'public finance in public administration':

a) Preparation of estimates of revenue and expenditure;
b) Presenting the budget for approval by the legislature competent to do so;
c) Execution of the budget, meaning the collection of taxes and other revenues and spending by departments in accordance with decisions and orders of government;
d) Treasury management, which includes custody of funds, issue of money and expenditure and maintenance of accounts and their audit, as well audit reports (Sharan, 1967:345).

Sharan's sentiments imply that public finance in the field of public administration, among others, consist of budget approval and effective parliamentary oversight, financing of government policies, projects and programmes through collective decisions by both officials and the cabinet and financial management through controls, systems and clear lines of accountability and responsibility. The aforementioned phenomena are discussed in detail in the forthcoming chapters. The importance of public administration in general is discussed below, especially within the framework of providing a conceptual (theoretical) analysis of public administration in the study.

3.5 IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Public administration is created with a sense of purpose and is expected to accomplish specified objectives. In public administration, public agencies are supposed to deliver services as expected, under the conditions of the rule of law (Marx in Cayer and Weschler, 1988:12). Deriving from the above assertion, it is apparent that public administration and its importance are based on its ability to serve the public within the legal framework. The legal and administrative framework require that when a service is provided, public officials must respect the rights of the citizenry based on the Constitution of South Africa by treating the public fairly and on an equal basis and the officials must also conduct themselves and act according to the law. As a result, the fundamental purpose and importance of public administration namely that of delivering services to the people, will be respected. Sharan (1967:19) explains the importance of public administration as follows:

a) Public administration ensures the daily life of the individual as well as that of the community;
b) While the police maintain internal peace and order, the army defends the state against outside aggression;
c) Public administration provides modern amenities such as justice, education, health, improved means of transport and communications, and wider opportunities for employment, as well as an improved life for the common people; and
d) The courts administer justice, and various government departments render various services to the people.

In analysing the importance of public administration, it is evident that public administration is a catalyst in both external and the internal environment. With regard to the internal environment, public administration ensures that policies and legal frameworks are applied according to prescribed standards and that institutions supporting the government adhere to these policies. Externally, public administration has to respond to political, social and economic situations. Additionally, it has to respond and account to the public it serves. Public administration's importance lies in its efficiency, effectiveness and the way it uses resources efficiency and economically. Issues of governance and managerial leadership become crucial in ensuring that public administration maintains its vision and mission in accordance with the legal and political mandates.

In achieving the above goals, there should be intervention by both the state and government. On this basis, the role of the state and government has to be explained. However, sometimes the terms *state* and *government* are used interchangeably and tend to confuse or shift the main argument or debate within public administration discourse. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that a line is drawn between *state and government* so that the role of each is understood. Most importantly, at a functional level, both state and government could contribute and impact on governance and service delivery within the country. The difference between the state and government showing their significance in governance in particular and service delivery in general will be discussed as follows.

3.5.1. State and government: a comparative analysis

Summarily, the *state* is defined in terms of a system of authorities which regulate the society; and *government* is a group that controls the state's institutions, the executive branch or cabinet, though it may control other branches as well (Boulle, Harris & Hoexter, 1993:16). Based on the author's distinction between the state and government, it is concluded that the difference is role-based with a particular society because one regulates society (state) and the other (government) controls the state institutions.

Referring to the above, a *state* is believed to operate effectively and has the legal right of existence. It provides rules in a given environment so that inhabitants in a particular area are bound by such rules. Wikipedia Encyclopaedia (2005:1) defines a state as 'an organized political community occupying a definite territory, having an organized government and possessing internal and external sovereignty'. The Encyclopaedia thus agrees that a *state* is a political community within a particular territory with legal status of existence that has a government and ensures that its sovereignty is preserved both internally and externally.

a) Functions of the state

To illustrate the existence of a state and its role in a particular society, its functions are listed below:
(i)   a)   The state has political institutions to maintain law and order;
        b)   The state provides public services for the maintenance of the community, and
        c)   The state promotes welfare and the good life of the population (Cloete, 1998:3).

From the above, it is clear that the state has a political mandate to deliver services to people and with its institutions the state is able to protect the rights of the inhabitants. Kayizzi-Mugerwa (2003:57) supports the view that the state provides public goods and protects property rights.

Van Niekerk et al., (2001: 41) also believe that the main components of the state are the decision-making structures (executives, parties, and legislatures), decision-making institutions (bureaucracies, parastatal organisations and security forces) and decision–mediating bodies (courts, tribunals and commissions of inquiry). Regarding the above structures, it is evident that institutions or structures such as parties, legislatures, bureaucracies and courts, are fundamental to the well-being of inhabitants, and the state has the role of making sure that the above institutions make decisions that impact positively on the public. Decision-making is fundamental in governance because it facilitates to the provision of services to people, if the process is transparent and decision-makers are accountable for their decisions.

b) *Characteristics of the state*

To understand the state and its fundamental position, Van Niekerk et al., (2001:48) provide the following three basic characteristics of the state:

  (ii) a) Territory

    The first requirement of the state is geographical and territory is viewed as indispensable.

    b) Population

    To classify a territory as a state, it must have inhabitants or people living in it. However, the number of people or inhabitants living within a territory is not used as a criterion to determine whether a territory is a state or not.

    c) Government

    One of the tangible characteristics defining a state is the presence of government.

The above characteristics confirm that a *state* is defined along the lines of inhabitants as dwellers of a particular territory. These inhabitants must have a territory and the functioning of the state happens in the presence of government. On the basis that the state exists in a stable condition, Chazan et al., (1992:39) define state as the organized aggregate of relatively permanent institutions of governance. The argument by Chazan et al., confirm the fact that the

state supports governance and service delivery. The following is a discussion of government and its functions in order to explain the role of government.

3.5.2 Government: Definition and analysis

By definition, *government* refers to a body of persons and institutions that make and apply all enforceable decisions for a society (Van Niekerk, at al., 2001: 49). According to Wikipedia Encyclopaedia (2005:1), the word *government* is derived from the Greek word *kubernites*, which means 'steersman', 'governor' 'pilot' or 'rudder'. The Encyclopaedia also defines *government* as "the body that has the power to make and enforce laws within an organisation or group and broadly, to 'govern' means the power to administer, whether over an area of land, set of people, or collection of assets" (Wikipedia Encyclopaedia, 2005:1). On the basis of the above, *government* has a responsibility to 'steer' or to guide the state and its organs on matters of governance through a decision-making process, such as cabinet meetings and legislature.

a) *Functions of government*

According to Van Niekerk at al., (2001:49), the following are the functions of government:
 (i) a) Government officials are specific occupants of public office who possess power and make binding decisions;
   b) Government consists of three branches, namely the judicial, legislature and executive; and
   c) Therefore, the government is the mechanism that maintains the state's existence.

It is clear from the above that both the state and government are distinguishable and they serve their purposes differently, and the use of them interchangeably could indeed cloud the existence of each other or their role. In essence, the difference between the state and government is on the basis of authority and scope or mandate to act on behalf of or for citizens. For example, state institutions are established to keep the government accountable or act according to the law so that good governance could be preserved and embraced.

For the functioning of state and government, the existence of an administrative arm is crucial. However, its existence should be guided by a particular theory because public administration operates within certain paradigm shifts or changes, which are mostly influenced by government. Therefore, administrative theory is important as it serves as an engine in service delivery. The following section discusses the importance of administrative theory in public administration.

3.6 ADMINISTRATIVE THEORY: AN ANALYSIS

As in other fields, officials reforming a public administrative function use theory to assert a particular position or to generate a theoretical framework in order to apply a particular model in public administration. In the social sciences, it is imperative to research and understand theory, models and paradigms because an environment can change people's approaches and institutions. As reported earlier in the thesis, people react differently in different situations. Institutions are also affected by human factors. Public administration is not immune to those changes. Through research and theory, guidance has to be provided so that practitioners act from an informed position.

A theory-practice relationship is critical, especially in public policy because in some cases or selected incidents the public may complain about the implementation of policies in government. In this context it becomes crucial that policy analysts look at the environment within which and how a policy will be implemented. This could be termed as *policy environmental scanning.*

Theory becomes crucial in relation to policy implementation because of perceptions about poor or a total lack of policy implementation. The latter does not concern a theory in particular, but it is a policy implementation strategy or instrument that is used in theory-building. In this context theoretical analysis has to be done, both of policy formulation and implementation, so that theory is not the 'scapegoat' in the proper implementation of the public policy. As, Jreisat (1992:9) comments, theory has not failed, but its application.

Jreisat's comment stresses that it is not always a theoretical problem, but rather the application thereof. Therefore, it is paramount that during public policy application, the skill of the practitioner is analysed in relation to policy application and its strategies. The same

arguments apply to the PFMA, namely that concerns relating to its implementation or non-compliance could be a result of the lack of skill of the practitioner or failure in the application of the act, not the action itself or the theory. Theory building and analysis are important so that the administrative arm can apply the policies based on an understanding of the environment.

In relation to administrative analysis, Jreisat, (1992:9) states that theory may seem to fail to solve specific problems, or even aid in their resolution, simply because theory assumes conditions that cannot be met. Some theories and models have to be theoretically analysed and based on proper situational and contextual analysis because the theory provided, as theory is not a panacea. As indicated earlier, people react differently, just like the organisations in which they operate. Therefore, a theory is important in building and implementation strategy or a model, because public administration is theoretically developed and based on fundamental functions, among others decision-making.

Based on the above discussion, like any field of study, both theoretical and practical, Public Administration uses particular theories for its advancement and development. These theories need to adhere to and operate under social, economic and political changes, because public administration operates within such a milieu.

Hanekom and Thornhill (1983:48) explain that theory is derived from a Latin word, *theoria* and Greek *theoreo*, meaning contemplation, speculation and sight. Hanekom and Thornhill (1983:48) state that theory is used to indicate a frame of reference and abstracted generalisation that may stand in lieu of facts. Theory encourages reasoning and an understanding of frame of reference. The latter is crucial in the process of decision-making in order to make rational decisions within organisations and improve governance in the Public Service.

As alluded to earlier, the theory-practice connection is imperative because it produces well-structured practical issues. Hanekom and Thornhill is supported by Lungu (s.a.130), that the theory operates at least in three possible ways:
   a) provides a frame of reference for the practitioner;
   b) a process of theorising provides a general mode of practical events; and
   c) provides the knowledge upon which practical and rational decisions are made.

3.7 CONTRIBUTIONS OF ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYSIS

Given the above administrative analysis, authors such as Jreisat continue to contribute to the debate on the value of theory. Jreisat (1992:12) provides the following functions of administrative theory:

a) Theory provides a systematic view of existing knowledge and helps to organise insights gained through research and application;

b) In their contribution to science, some scholars like Kaplan share the view that the basic function of theory is to make sense of what would otherwise be inscrutable or unmeaning empirical findings;

c) Theory serves as a guide to research by connecting the gaps between existing knowledge and ongoing research;

d) Theory offers criteria of relevance to the questions under investigation. As a result, it disciplines the process of information gathering and restrains individual bias and perception;

e) Administrative theory aspires to become a guide to administrative action and behaviour. Parallel to this assertion, administrative theory provides practitioners the means to evaluate performance as it offers academics a balanced perspective in areas of curriculum development and teaching; and

f) Theory leads to better analysis and understanding of administrative problems, an essential step in the development or identification of problem-solving techniques. It is in this context a relevant theory helps to improve practice.

As indicated in the previous paragraph, administrative analysis draws together the insights of the humanities and the validated propositions of the social and behavioural sciences.

Theory in public administration equally assists to apply insights and propositions to the task of improving the processes of government aimed at achieving politically legitimated goals by constitutionally mandated means (Charlesworth, 1968:129). Charlesworth's comments

suggest that public administrative theory assists in facilitating and enhancing the political mandate of government. The political mandate could ensure that service delivery and institutional development are achieved through proper theoretical analysis and environmental scanning. Administrative theory enables both an individual within an organisation to grow, and supports institutional development taking place in a department or country. It is because theory on its own does not serve any purpose. It has to be supported and understood by an official so that administrative functions are performed and people within an organisation are able to comply with administrative measures with a sense of responsibility. In this context, administrative theory provides a culture of responsibility because officials are able to administer within a clear framework based on a body of knowledge. Administrative responsibility offers some elements of governance such as responsibility and accountability, more especially during transformation. As alluded earlier, administrative responsibility is useful in supporting good governance.

3.7.1 Dimensions of administrative responsibility

Administrative responsibility applies both to the individual and a political system. South Africa is no exception, especially in its transformation into a democratic state. In his inaugural lecture, Lungu (1993:7) provides the following elements of administrative responsibility that have an ethical 'tone' and clarifies the role of public servants in a democratic state:

a) **Authority:** In a modern state, an individual administrator or departmental agency is authorised to act on behalf of the state. He strongly emphasises that it would be *ultra vires*, for example, for one to sign documents he or she has not been authorised to do, or a government agency to undertake a programme unsanctioned by those competent to do so;

b) **Accountability:** Democratic accountability implies answerability to several levels of control as well as one's conscience. For example, public administrators are not only answerable to hierarchical superiors in the public service, or to political executives (ministers) to the legislature, but also to subordinates. They are also accountable to the public and answerable to the moral conscience;

c) Administrative responsibility in a democratic state involves personal judgement or the discretion officials are allowed to exercise;

d) **Neutrality:** In public administration, neutrality is always a debated concept because it is by definition a political action. Based on some connotations, *neutrality* means that officials should apply rules and regulations impartially when serving members of the public regardless of personal, ethnic, racial or any other considerations that have been explicitly declared irrelevant in a given democratic state. The ideal of neutrality emphasises the essential aspect of *public administration*, namely that it involves the enabling actions required so that a public service could be rendered to the relevant individuals, community or society without discrimination, unless under politically determined circumstances, for example, preferential treatment of a historically disadvantaged group;

e) **Openness:** Open governance is associated with the notion of transparency. It promotes the feeling among society that the public service is not unduly secretive, that the true basis of democracy requires access to vital information on the critical decisions, actions and inactions of the public servants. For example, a member of the public wants to know from the public servants on what basis his or her application for a passport is delayed or denied or the existing one withdrawn; and

f) **Virtue:** It is an ideal that public officials must have morals all the time. An offer of employment in the public service is regarded as a form of public trust requiring that officials be committed to principles, morally attuned, trustworthy, honest, dependable and reliable. Additionally, officials are expected to exhibit a high degree of moral integrity.

Regarding administrative responsibility, Mass and Laurence argue as follows (1953: 440):
a) Bureaucracy as a corps of appointed officials is the very core of constitutional democracy in the sense that modern government cannot operate or maintain service delivery without an efficient administrative organisation;
b) It is not a question of either democracy or bureaucracy, or of their constitutionalism or efficient administration but a combination of the two, a working balance between them, in short it is a question of a responsible bureaucracy;

c) An administrative agency should be responsible for formulating as well as executing public policy; and

d) Administrative hierarchies have a profound influence on policy formulation, especially on the exercise of the discretionary powers allowed in everyday operations and the processing and developing of specific proposals for legislative consideration.

With reference to the above authors, it is important to note that administrative responsibility is crucial because it calls for an efficient public service that is able to deliver services responsibly by executing policies of government efficiently. In delivering public services, an official must be accountable to the public. *Responsibility* implies that duties are assigned to individuals or government officials to deliver services to the society. What is also important from the above analysis of administrative responsibility is the decision-making in relation to discretion. It is important for public servants to make responsible decisions when serving people rather than sticking to the rules because that could stifle service delivery. What is important is for officials to be accountable for discretionary decisions because if it becomes secretive it could result in unethical conduct and affect good governance in the public service.

Having discussed administrative theory and responsibility and contribution to governance, it is important to outline some fundamental theoretical sentiments that are based on certain theorists. These theorists contribute significantly to terms such as, *leadership* and *decision-making*, both aspects are crucial in governance. The understanding of these theories in public administration could serve as the basis of organisational design. The latter becomes effective if the underlying theory is well structured. Some organisations are rule-bound and others are flexible and therefore by taking account of the surrounding environment, decisions can be decentralised. This following section outlines some theories of public administration on the basis of the above analytical framework.

3.8 THEORIES IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Public administration acknowledges various theories, among others, human behaviour, management and leadership theories and organisational theories. The theorists Max Weber, Mary Parker Follett, Chester Barnard, Mayo, Taylor, Lindblom and Woodrow Wilson have contributed significantly to public administration. Their theoretical foundations have

necessitated scholars in public administration to scrutinise and understand fundamental issues in the field of public administration, such as scientific management, leadership, motivation in organisations, policy analysis and decision-making. Knowledge of the theories by the above authors is instrumental in understanding organisations and personnel within an organisation in order to understand and contextualise other phenomena such as governance and leadership.

3.8.1 Bureaucracy: Conceptual analysis

The term *bureaucracy* means different phenomena to different people, for some the term has negative and for some positive sentiments. As a result, the term bureaucracy is sometimes not placed into context. It is therefore crucial to look at the origin of the term and its proper meaning. For example, Hanekom & Thornhill (1983:117) argue that originally, *bureau* was used as early as the 18th century; the suffix refers to the Greek word "to rule".

Evidence states that *bureaucracy* has been and is still associated with a number of negative perceptions; namely, red tape, inefficiency, poor performance, and maladministration. In contrast, in other situations, it is seen as a structured system of government with rules and regulations, including too systematic procedures. As indicated earlier, these features are attached to the term *bureaucracy* because the term, in some situations, is not discussed in context. In Albrow's (1970:47) analysis of *collegiality,* as a mechanism to limit the scope of systems of authority generally, bureaucracy in particular, means that at each stage of the official hierarchy, one person, and one person only, has the responsibility for taking decisions. Albrows's comment is based on the fact that *bureaucracy* has an element of centrality in relation to decision-making, meaning that decisions are centralised and other officials simply follow the order or rules.

3.8.2 Bureaucracy: A system

As a system, bureaucracy is discussed in terms of how an organisation should function in relation to rules and approach, including its structure or organisational design. A German sociologist, Max Weber, provided an organisational analysis of *bureaucracy* with his famous essay called *Ideal type of bureaucracy*. His essay provides features of this ideal type of bureaucracy. Stillman (1983:47) comments that three of the most important attributes in

Weber's concept of *bureaucracy* are the "division of labour, hierarchical order and impersonal rules". These three attributes are critical in defining *bureaucracy* so that the 'positivity' element of bureaucracy is contextually understood.

In his analysis of Weber's rational bureaucracy and his outline of some of the 'positive' and 'important' elements of bureaucracy, Albrow (1970:45) provides a series of characteristics such as precision, continuity, discipline, strictness and reliability which made it technically the most efficiency form of organisation. Albrow's analysis provides a crucial understanding of bureaucracy in an organisational context. Weber's characteristics of bureaucracy are the following:

a) The principles of office hierarchy and levels of graded authority mean a firmly ordered system of supervision and subordination in which there is supervision of lower offices by the higher ones; and

b) Management of office follows general rules (Shafritz & Hyde, 1992:55).

In addition to the characteristics of bureaucracy by Weber, some authors like Mouzelis add that bureaucracy has a hierarchical authority structure with limited areas of command and responsibility (Mouzelis 1967:38). Weber's ideal type of bureaucracy has an effect on the operation and structure of the public service, the managerial ability to manage and the making of effective financial decisions about departments. It portrays a very centralised institution where delegation of responsibilities is not practiced and the personnel work strictly according to rules resulting in less creativity.

3.8.3 Organisational design and its perspective

In terms of organisational performance, the design of an organisation and its environment are important for delivering services to people effectively and efficiently, for example centralized decision-making, hierarchical as opposed to the so-called flat structure, as well as departmental instead of a matrix-oriented organisation where different organisational units share information expertise and tasks. Therefore, an organisation should be designed in response to its environment and in support of governance elements such as decision-making, accountability and transparency. If the aforementioned are not taken into consideration, governance and systems could be affected. In the case of the National Treasury, guidelines for public financial management are issued in order respond to external environments such as

social, economic and political. In some instances, government departments are redesigned to cope with the external environment.

3.8.3.1   *Organisational design defined*

Organisational design is a formal, guided process for integrating the people, information and technology of an organisation. Organisational design is used to match the form of the organisation as closely as possible to the goals the organisation seeks to achieve. Through this process, organisations act to improve the probability that the collective efforts of members will be successful (Autry, 1996:1). The above definition suggests that organisational design is a process that integrates people and technology so that its objectives are achieved. Collectivity is an important requirement. Technology and people are seen as 'drivers' for organisational effectiveness and efficiency. Robbins (1990:6) argues that an organisational design is concerned with constructing and changing an organisation's structure in order to achieve its goals.

The theory behind Weber's ideal form of bureaucracy is an organisational structure that is too formalistic and rule bound. The criticism of the type of structure is that it does not take into account outside surroundings or the environment resulting in an organisation that is designed in a manner that excludes other processes and other factors affecting the employees within an organisation and its performance. However, an organisation should be designed or structured in such a way that processes such as calibre of personnel; technological factors can be integrated into the mission and vision of an organisation. An institutional environment is important so that the ability to cope with any change is entrenched within an organisation.

3.8.4 Decision-making: An analysis

Generally, organisations take decisions in order to execute an agreed upon agenda or mandate. These decisions are important in both private and public organisations. Within the context of the study, decision-making is always fundamental in governance if the process is transparent and decentralised. At the same time, poor decision-making could expose the government to risks, either financial or economical.

The manner in which decisions are made and the purpose they serve are important. The manner in which they are communicated within an organisation is also important. A distinction

should be drawn between personal and organisational decisions so that the outcome of a decision is objective. During decision-making, rationality is crucial and the effect or implication of making irrational decisions are equally important. Sometimes, in the process of decision-making, discretion is used. Lungu (1982:342) explains that in Latin *discretio* (discretion*)* denotes the ability to distinguish, discern, discriminate or separate. It also refers to being discreet and circumspect in making one's judgement regarding unclear issues or confused situations.

Choices and alternatives are the cornerstones of the decision-making process within an organisation. Finally, in the decision-making process, risk assessment of the decisions to be taken is of vital importance to take a calculated risk. Decision-based-risks regarding a department are to be managed in such a way that the people are treated fairly and their human rights are protected. Poor decision-making could be costly to government, exposing government to financial or political risks. A member of the public could decide to sue the government for inefficient service delivery. Revolt against the government, could even develop on the basis of poor decision-making by political office bearers or public servants. The following authors provide various different perspectives on decisions and decision-making because decisions are taken for different purposes and reasons in different context:

a) Fry (1989: 170) defines *decisions* as "acts of individuals, which are the result of deliberation, calculation, and thought involving the ordering of means to an end". Individuals, through a process of discussion and deliberation, make decisions so that strategic actions are taken in order to influence line departments to effectively deliver service to the people;

b) Dubrin and Ireland (1993:80) define *decision* as the selection of a course of action from two or more alternatives and the *decision-making process* as the sequence of steps used to make a decision, that is, to select a particular course of action. Both Dubrin and Ireland argue that *decision-making* is a course of action through the process of selection of an action for of a variety of alternatives. This confirms that a *decision making* is a process, not an end in itself, but the means to an end to improve an organisation's effectiveness so that challenges facing the lives of people are dealt with through a strategic decision-making process;

c) For Steiss (1989:225) *decision-making* is one of the pervasive functions of management, whether in business or in government. Steiss's comment could be driven by the fact that decision-making is a function of management. It is important that managers are able to take well-calculated decisions because poor decisions could affect an organisation's objectives and mission;

d) Fry (1989:170) states that decision-making is an integral function in the organisation, being both the means by which the purpose of the organisation is related to the organisation's environment and the means by which the purpose is translated into action. Fry's assertion on decision-making takes into account the fact that authentic decisions are those that originate from an organisation through a process of decision-making. Such internal decisions could take into account both the internal and external environment of the organisation;

e) Theorists like Simon, Smithburg and Thompson (in Stillman, 1983:263) believe that decisions in political settings can never be wholly rational but rather of a 'bounded rational' in nature. This means that instead of insisting on an 'optional solution' the public policy-maker must be satisfied with what is 'good enough' or must 'muddle through'. These observations by Simon, Smithburg and Thompson could be correct because political parties usually have competing interest and agendas so that one party remains in power or one becomes an effective opposition to the one that rules. However, political competition or interest should not undermine rationality in decision-making so that the expectations of the people are well managed through effective service delivery plans coming from a majority party in government. It is in this context that 'bounded rationality' emerges because rationality in decision-making is affected by 'muddling through' or by poor analysis of alternatives or options or poor cost benefit analysis in making decisions; and

f) According to Fry (1989:185), Herbert Simon believes that decision premises provide the basis for the process of decision-making, while decisions themselves are conclusions drawn from the premises. Organisations are the best premises for decision-making in order to impact positively on the organisational objectives on the basis of the strategic plans formulated.

3.8.5 Management

3.8.5.1 Brief overview and analysis

Dillons, Feldhaus & Farrell (1984:50) define *management* as an act of planning, organising, directing and controlling the resources and activities of an organisation. Parallel to the above authors, Hanekom and Thornhill (1995:14) explain that management aims at directing an institution towards its predetermined objective(s), by keeping the operations of an institution in equilibrium with its environment. With regard to the above authors organisational objectives and operations in the environment are of vital importance. As stated in the previous chapter, the understanding of the environment or surroundings helps to recognise what could be a threat within an organisation. The management has a responsibility to scrutinise the environment so that the government's objectives in general, and the public service in particular, are attained as planned.

In his analysis of the role of management in an institution, Botes (in Roux et al., 1997: 10) notes the following:

a) Public officials in high echelons in an institution have management responsibilities, in addition to their administrative and functional activities. It means that officials must have certain people-oriented leadership skills to direct the generic administrative functions;

b) The management should also have specialized functional processes so that institutional goals are realised. The management gives direction to the administrative conduct;

c) Management is a social process which involves judgement, decision-making, guidance, integration and motivation;

d) The aforementioned aspects are not administrative *per se* but they are involved in the process of administration; and

e) With regard to the above aspects, management is not equal to administration, but part of administration.

Figure 3.1 below illustrates Botes' analysis (in Roux et al., 1997:10) that the management should also be responsible for generic administrative activities and functional tasks. The

implication is that the high echelon within an organisation also has the dual responsibility of ensuring that the administration runs effectively within a department and other functional tasks are performed effectively and efficiently. A manager within an institution should display managerial skills to direct the institutional goals within an organisation through the interaction with all domains within an organisation. It is important that the management should ensure that they are in charge of the functional and administrative processes of a department so that the institutional goals are achieved. Within management, a people-centred leadership should be displayed at all the times.

Figure 3.1: Responsibilities of management
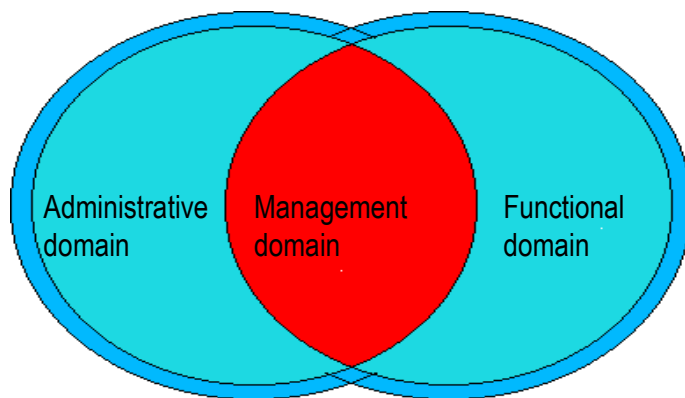
Source: Adapted from Botes, (in Roux et al., 1997:10)

As explained earlier in the text, Botes (in Roux et al., 1997:10) explains integrated managerial responsibilities by including administrative and functional domains and management as a central domain. Gulick and Urwick (in Fry, 1989:86) believe that for administration to be properly executed, an organisation should be structured around specific functions. Gulick and Urwick assign a range of functions to the executive in an acronym namely **POSDCORB** which stands for *planning, organisation, staffing, directing, co-ordinating, reporting and budgeting* (Fry, 1989:86).
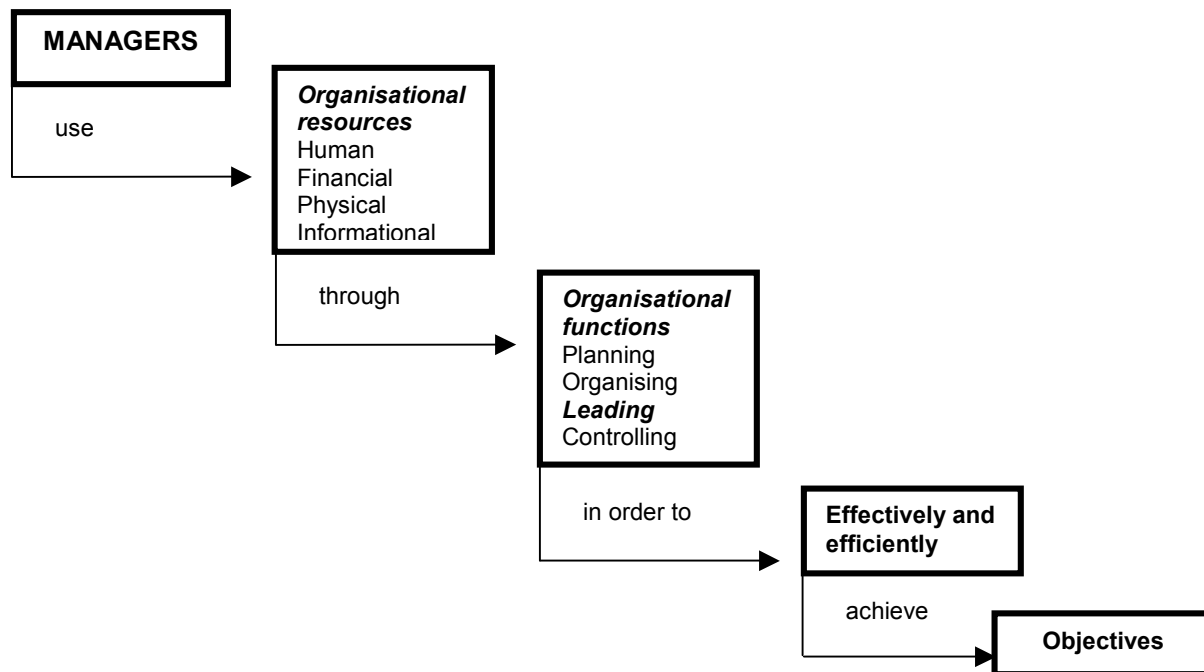
Gulick and Urwick (1977:13) explain the above acronym as follows:

a) **Planning** is working out in broad outline the things that need to be done and the methods for doing them to accomplish the purpose set for the enterprise;

b) **Organising:** is the establishment of the formal structure of authority through which work subdivisions are arranged, defined and co-ordinated for the defined objective;

c) **Staffing** is the whole personnel function of bringing in and training the staff and maintaining favourable conditions of work;

d) **Directing** is the continuous task of making decisions and embodying them in specific and general orders and instructions and serving as the leader of the enterprise;

e) **Co-ordinating** is the all-important duty of the interrelation of the various parts of the work;

f) **Reporting** means the executive is responsible to inform the staff as to what is going on, which thus includes keeping subordinates informed through records, research and inspection; and

g) **Budgeting** comprises with all that goes with budgeting in the form of financial planning, accounting and record.

On the basis of the above, budgeting is crucial in administrative processes as it ensures that an organisation's financial management position is stable. Budgeting can be viewed good if its objectives attend to the socio-economic problems facing the country and government in particular and the budgeting is linked to government policies and planning. Poor fiscal planning and outdated accounting systems like cash accounting systems, poor or non-functional of information systems and recording of documents could negatively affect the financial position of a department.

Figure 3.2: Functions of management

MANAGERS		
use		

→ **Organisational resources**
Human
Financial
Physical
Informational

through →

Organisational functions
Planning
Organising
Leading
Controlling

in order to →

Effectively and efficiently

achieve →

Objectives

Source: Dubrin & Ireland, (1993:5)

Figure 3.2 above, explains the functions of management which are also expected in the South African Public Service. The authors state that in achieving organisational objectives, managers use the most vital organisational resources, especially human and financial. However, it depends on whether the human resources are skilful enough and finances are adequate, and financial planning and budgeting are able to achieve the set standards within an organisation. In this regard, organisational functions are also vital, especially the planning and controlling of organisational resources because poor planning and the absence of control measures could result in poor expenditure management, but it takes good leadership skills to ensure that organisational functions are implemented. Finally, the efficient and effective use of organisational resources are vital in order to achieve organisational objectives.

For this study, the above analysis of the functions of management could be placed within the context of the PFMA and the South African Constitution. Successful management requires an ability to manage complexity and diversity in the context of a dynamic policy environment (Mthembu, 2001:2). Therefore, to implement the PFMA and its regulations, the managerial leaders in the Public Service have to understand policy dynamics and complexity, as well as the environment in which the Public Service is structured. These views are discussed in the following chapters.

3.9 POLICY AND POLICY- MAKING

Both in private and public organisations, policy formulation is essential because a policy guides both an organisation and the government in achieving the objectives, mission and vision. Therefore, the PFMA as a public policy document enables the government to ensure that there is good governance and effective financial management in the South African public sector in general. The following are different definitions of public policy in public administration in general, governance in particular, and the role to be taken by managerial leadership in implementing government policies like the PFMA.

3.9.1 What is public policy?

a) It is a purposive course of action followed by an action or set of actions in dealing with the problem or matter (Andersen, 1979:3).

b) Policy is classified in four phases, as specified means to achieve goals, authorised means to achieve goals, specified actions taken to implement programmes and the measurable outcome of programmes (Jones, 1977:4).

c) *Public policy* is defined as the relationship of a governmental unit to its environment (Anderson, 2000:3).

d) *Public policy* is a proposed course of action of a person, group or government within a given environment providing obstacles and opportunities which the policy was proposed to utilise opportunities and overcome obstacles (Friedrich, 1963:70).

e) Dunn (in Van Niekerk et al., 2001:87) defines *public policy* as a long series of more or less related choices, including decisions to act, made by governmental bodies and officials.

f) Van Niekerk et al., (2001:87) state that a policy is larger than a decision and they define a *policy* as a series of more specific decisions, sometimes in a rational sequence.

The above authors present a diverse analysis with regard to public policy and provides different perspectives that relate to policy and some contributions regarding governance in the Public Service. The policy assertions by the above authors significantly contribute in the understanding of the purpose of a policy. To illustrate the above authors' contribution to public administration in general and public policy in particular, the following analysis is relevant to the current discourse of public administration in relation to governance.

Anderson's (1979) assertion maintains a view that has been debated by some policy experts, namely that a policy is an action statement or a statement of intent in order to deal with an economic, political or social phenomenon. Jones (1977) provides a systematic approach to policy. As a statement of intent, Jones' definition of a *policy* holds the particular view that a public policy aims to achieve particular goals by making sure that policy directives are authorised by an institution and the actions prescribed by the policy are implemented and outcomes are measured. Jones' view is similar to the PFMA as a policy that an executive institution must achieve goals outlined by the PFMA. This could relate to asset management, procurement, risk management and the role of an accounting officer.

Anderson (2000) and Friedrich's (1963) view agree with a view that was discussed earlier in the previous chapter on the understanding of the environment in relation to public administration, namely that public administration takes place within a political, social and economic milieu. In this context, public policy forms a relationship between government and its surroundings or the environment and if the policy is correctly formulated it is able to assist the government in responding and adapting to economic, political, technological and social influences. For example, the PFMA enables government to respond to such aforementioned influences or environments so that a department can manage risks or threats that could affect service delivery programmes of the government due to poor financial management or expenditure management. Therefore, a public policy becomes instrumental in safeguarding the government from threats or risks and serves as an internal control measure on some fiscal matters like expenditure management, procurement and asset management. Dunn (in Van Nierkerk et al., 2002:88) argue that a public policy is associated with decision-making in

making choices by both officials and the government with regard to the public. Similarly, Van Niekerk et al., (2001) argue that a policy is central to decision-making because in the process of policy implementation, choices are made that involves decision-making.

3.9.2 Public policy as formal legislation

In this particular instance, the government may decide to propose a policy on a particular matter, for example on disaster management or public finances. The process regarding this particular policy is that it originates from Parliament and undergoes a systematic process of scrutiny and analysis by Parliament and the relevant portfolio committee, including the public through public hearings. The outcome of such a process is that the policy becomes a formal legally entrenched framework. This section looks at a particular legislative framework as policy, namely the PFMA.

According to Wissink (1990:2) this form of policy is the formal output of the legislative process, which the representatives of the electorate have debated, and sanctioned, following its formulation and representation by government. Wissink's argument is based on the fact that the public policies, in many cases are outputs of Parliament. As much as it is a legislative framework, the PFMA is indeed a policy. Van Niekerk et al., (2001:88) also argue with that legislation or a national policy is a declaration of intent.

3.9.2.1   *Objectives of legislation*

a) Legislation deals with a specific societal problem or need.
b) It provides certain provisions or statutory guidelines which must be followed in order to realise the set objectives.
c) Legislative powers are conferred on subordinate institutions. These powers include administrative and legislative institutions.
d) Legislation prescribes the way in which that objective is to be realised, and grants institutions and individuals the authority, by means of delegation, to carry out a policy (Van Niekerk at al., 2001:88).

With regard to the above, it confirms that legislation like the PFMA is formulated within a particular framework and with a purpose and its provisions must be followed in order to achieve a particular objective, which is financial management, accountability, and

transparency. On this basis, the responsibility to implement the Act is conferred to departments. The Auditor-General is also assigned the responsibility to perform audits regarding the financial management, including compliance with the Act. On the basis of conferred responsibility to other institutions, they are expected to account for their activities to Parliament. Therefore it is important that legislation must be formulated for a specific purpose and an institution that is charged with the responsibility to implement it must be able to account for its implementation.

3.10 MANAGERIAL LEADERSHIP: AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

A scholarly debate about whether managers are leaders, and about how effective a managerial leader is within modern public and private organisations. The questions are relevant; yet remain unsolved. The research does not intend to provide concrete answers nor to focus on all the questions, but to explain the role of managerial leaders in the Public Service in order to provide quality service to society. The following authors provide different explanations about leadership and a leader and *managerial leadership*:

a) Gbadamosi and Adebakin (1996) define *leadership* as the process of influencing and directing the activities of an organised group towards the achievement of organisational objectives;

b) Robbins and Coulter (1999) define *leadership* as the ability to influence a group towards the achievement of goals;

c) Encyclopaedia Britannica (1975:242) defines *leadership* as that relationship which exits between an individual and a group sharing a common goal or interest;

d) McFarland (1979) defines *leadership* as a " the ability of an individual to influence others to work beyond ordinary levels to achieve goals";

e) Davis and Newstrom (1985) argue that *leadership* is the process of encouraging and helping others work enthusiastically towards objectives;

f) *Leader* is what a person does above and beyond the basic requirements of his position, it involves the persuasion of individuals and innovation of ideas and decision-making (Hall, 1999:137);

g) Gbadamosi and Adebakin (1996) describe a *leader* as one who inspires others to work willingly towards the achievement of a goal through maximum application of his capabilities and qualities;

h) Davis and Newstrom (1985) further argue that *leadership* is a human factor that binds a group together and motivates it towards goals; and

i) Stoner et al*.,* (1996) define *managerial leadership* as the process of directing and influencing task-related activities of group members.

According to Hall, Gbadamosi and Adebakin, a *leader* has a responsibility to share organisational goals and vision with members of an organisation, not focusing on the position but on the growth of the organisation with innovations and new ideas within the decision-making process. It is in this context that leader in the Public Service has a responsibility to ensure that correct decisions are made in order to improve governance and public finance management system in general. Therefore, a leader is a person, such as a manager or an individual within a department. Other authors such as McFarland, Davis and Newstrom and Encyclopaedia Britannica view leadership as a characteristic or a trait.

Leaders should maintain authority, power, influence, delegation, responsibility and accountability in their respective organisations or departments and also help to understand the concept of leadership (Brevis, Vrba & de Klerk, 1992:280). Brevis et al., also view a *leader* as an individual within an organisation which encourages mentorship, develops coaching, provides guidance and maintains accountability and responsibility so that both individuals and peers of an organisation grow and deliver services efficiently and effectively. To lead is a management function, which is mostly directed towards people and social interaction, as well as the process of influencing people so that they would achieve the goals of the organisation or the common goals (Skansi, 2000:51). For the purpose of the study, the focus is on managerial leadership as outlined by Stoner and others especially matters of directing, influencing task-related activities of other group members within an organisation. It is in this context that managers in the Public Service should be able to lead, support group members to achieve organisational objectives, direct a department in support of its vision and mission and ensure that agreed tasks are performed efficiently and effectively. What is also important is that a leader understands an environment in which the Public Service is operating.

Additionally, Cuban (in Moline, 2005:5) provides the following assertions with regard to leader-manager dichotomy:

a) First, a leader influences other's actions in achieving desirable ends;

b) Secondly, leaders shape the goals, motivations, and actions of others and frequently initiate change to reach existing and new goals. From this perspective, within an organisation, a leader shapes goals, implements goals, and motivates or coaches other employees to be innovative; and

c) Thirdly, the management focuses on managing and maintaining efficiently and effectively the organisational arrangements and simultaneously exhibit leadership skills.

Managerial efficiency differs depending on his or her leadership style (Skansi, 2000:51). In essence, according to Skansi, leadership is within management or part of management because leadership is not a position but the way in which an official displays a sense of responsibility, directing the vision and mission of an organisation, including couching or guiding staff to achieve the organisational agenda. With reference to Skansi's comment on managerial efficiency in terms of managerial leadership style, the effective and efficient running of an organisation depends on the leadership skills.

Skansi (2000:51) adds that without high quality leadership and initiation of the member's activities, stimulation of high motivation and the engagement of people, there is no successful organisation. This type of observation supports the fact that without good guidance and necessary coaching from the leadership, there could be no successful organisational effectiveness. Therefore, managerial leadership plays an important role in making sure that organisations are able to deliver services to people by making sure that personnel within an organisation has the necessary skills, and are motivated to produce the results.

Dubrin and Ireland (1993:4) define *management* as the process of effectively and efficiently using an organisation's resources to achieve objectives through the functions of planning, organising, leading and control. Additionally, like Skansi, Dubrin and Ireland's definition of *management* implies that 'leading' is part of 'management'. Therefore, the concept of *managerial leadership* suggests that planning, organising, leading and control lie squarely on managerial leadership within the Public Service.

In their analysis of managerial leadership, Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach (1999:14) state that managerial leadership assumes that the focus of leaders ought to be on functions, tasks and behaviours and that if these functions are carried out competently the work of others in the

organisation will be facilitated. Thus it implies that managerial leadership is the art of ensuring that the functions of management as leaders are performed, tasks assigned to the managerial leaders are completed as planned and understand the behaviours of personnel within government departments. Understanding personnel's behaviour within the public or private sector by managerial leadership is essential because it assists in understanding the cause of poor performance, if it exists, or the institutional environment in general.

Middle level leadership centre (2000:1) also argues that managerial leadership promotes procedures and policies and strives for efficiency, sets up procedures in order to ensure that there is efficiency within an organisation, is creative and uses resources efficiently. What is also important for effective governance is the development of procedures, internal controls and systems for organisational efficiency and service delivery. Managerial leadership has a moral responsibility to ensure that an environment is created for effective governance so that quality service is delivered and public financial management systems are effective in the public service.

Managerial leadership in the South African Public Service should strive to make sure that organisational resources are used effectively and efficiently, and ensure that systems and processes are effective in order to promote good governance.

3.10.1 Role of managers as leaders in organisations

Moline (2005:16) argues as follows:
  a) **Communicating expectations**: Effective managers must expend a good deal of energy communicating what needs to be done, why it needs to be done, and the consequences that will follow actions. If people know how their efforts impact and contribute to outcomes, they willingly perform at work;
  b) **Delegating:** effective managers concentrate on explaining what needs to be done and leave employees to make as many decisions as possible. However, when managers delegate they must ensure that employees have the skills or information required to perform the job;
  c) **Observing performance and providing frequent feedback:** Complaints about the lack of feedback are frequently reported in work conditions. Managers must therefore pay attention to employees and get to know their strengths, interests,

aspirations and improvement opportunities. Managers must also provide immediate feedback if there is need to correct an action. Managers must provide performance coaching. Feedback and coaching should be based on observable work performance; and

d) **Recognising performance:** A sincere, deserved compliment for good performance goes a long way towards demonstrating respect, appreciating and motivating people, and reinforcing the desired performance. Appreciating performance and explaining why it is appreciated is a good managerial skill.

In response to the above, Moline's (2005:16) assertions regarding the producing of results by the managers within organisations has a bearing on governance and the Public Service. Fundamental to the above issues is the decentralisation of decision-making within an organisation because it could improve financial management and boost employee morale and performance in an organisation.

In promoting good governance in the public service, the managerial leader should be competent in caring out its task in an organisation, procedures and policies should be correctly implemented and resources used efficiently.

3.10.1.1 Leadership: Some weaknesses

Literature reports about weaknesses in leadership, both in the public and private sector and such weaknesses affect organisational efficiency in delivering services to the population. On the basis of these comments about weaknesses in leadership, Hill (1960:107) stresses the following advice for a leader:

a) A leader should have an unwavering courage based upon knowledge of self and occupation and should also have definite decision-making and effective planning skills. This suggests that a leader must understand his or her job, tasks and purpose within the organisation. An understanding of the tasks assigned to an individual should be coupled by having both conceptual and technical skills so that the individual's responsibilities and duties are performed according to an organisational or departmental strategic plan. To implement the strategic plan, it is important that managerial leaders are decisive in implementing government programmes and

projects that are reflected in the strategic plan. Managerial leaders in the South African Public Service has to ensure that efficiency, economy and effectiveness (three E's) are achieved in the process of delivering services to people. Once the three E's are undermined or not achieved within a department, the role or vision of managerial leadership within an organisation becomes questionable, particularly regarding planning and decision-making or governance in general;

b) A leader should be willing to assume full responsibility, both at an organisational level and in general. It is important that the managerial leader assumes full responsibility and accountability for any departmental deliverables or outputs, including expenses incurred during the process of delivering services. As much as it is organisationally important to delegate some activities to subordinates, accountability remains with the accounting officer because accountability is not delegated only the responsibilities can be delegated;

c) A leader should not have a lack of a sense of imagination, become disloyal and put too much emphasis on his or her status in the organisational structure. A leader that has no sense of anticipation or vision does not add value to an organisation. In ensuring that there are governance processes and effective public financial management system in the Public Service, the managerial leadership must be able to understand the government's vision and mission, and promote ethical conduct. Too much emphasis on the position the person holds within a department could have a negative effect on the subordinates because they might not feel part of the organisation or view themselves as objects, not part of the establishment;

d) A leader should not expect to be paid for what he or she 'knows' instead of what he or she does with what he or she 'knows'. This could suggest that it is important that public servants in general, managerial leaders in particular, are not remunerated on the basis of what they know rather than applying what they know in relation to organisation vision, mission and objectives. Therefore, managerial leaders are expected to blend theory and practice at all times because theory alone could not assist an organisation or provide efficiency within the public service; and

e) A leader should not emphasise authoritarian style of leadership. On this basis, an efficient leader leads by encouraging others, not by trying to instil fear in the hearts of followers. Managing by fear destroys an organisation, including its vision and mission. As indicated earlier, leadership is not a position, but an ability to guide, coach or mentor others within an organisation. However, in stilling fear in other employees could affect organisational performance and a leader that manages with fear could be labelled as suffering from an 'inferiority complex' or not trusting himself/herself when performing duties assigned to his/her. Such an organisational deficiency should be avoided, as it does not produce favourable results for both an organisation and the public.

In addition to the above, financial and non-managerial financial managers have to be technical and conceptual skilful. The quest for such skills could be based on the fact that public finance is technical in nature so to be able to deal with its technicality some conceptual skills are needed to support it. Dubrin and Ireland (1993:9) comment that technical skills are required to complete specialised tasks and conceptual skills involve the ability to think in abstract terms, to simplify complex situations, determine a course of action and determine the organisation's mission, including a strategy to accomplish the mission. In the research, the Auditor-General (AG) reports on repetitive organisational problems in one department, see Table 5.1. This could be seen as a reflection on a lack of conceptual and technical skills. As a result, complex and abstract organisational problems are not attended to and the mission and vision might not be attained.

In the government's ten-year-review and of particular reference to governance and administration, the government acknowledges the following as challenges facing the state machinery:

a) the lack of skills at key technical levels, at both local and provincial government administrations, especially where it impinges on service delivery and financial management;

b) the improvement with regard to accountability, and contact with, the electorate by all spheres of government;

c) provision of leadership to social partners through the (re)articulation of an encompassing framework for South African's development in the next decade and beyond (Presidency, 2003: 114).

The above assertions in the ten-year-review in particular, signal the fact that since the introduction of public sector reforms, public financial management system in particular, technical skills, public accountability and visionary leadership have been an impediment to governance. Impediments to governance could be caused by the fact that in the environment in which the Public Service has been operating, the leadership had and still has a responsibility to take into account any political, economic and technological changes in order to improve governance throughout the Public Service.

In an interview the chairperson of the Association of Public Accounts Committees (APAC), (2003) responded to the evolving public administration and public finance in particular, saying that a different quality leadership is needed. The chairperson believes that there is a need for a leader or a financial manager who is not a bureaucrat but a technocrat who understands the value for money principle and ensures that a sound financial planning and management are promoted and who understands cost-effectiveness too. He acknowledges that there is a shift in public administration from 'administration, rules' towards 'management' of public finances. According to chairperson, managerial leaders have a responsibility to understand such a change in order to support governance and the evolving public finance management system in the South African Public Service.

3.11 FROM TRADITIONAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION TOWARDS THE NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

3.11.1 Traditional perspectives on public administration

Literature reveals that public administration has evolved and is still, evolving from its traditional approach to the so-called the 'new public management or 'managerial' approach. Some authors label the 'new public management' as a market-based form of public management. Central to traditional public administration is the challenge to and criticism of bureaucracy and its principles regarding public administration. For example, Mthembu (2001:2) expresses that a shift from public administration to management is highly commendable due the fact that South Africa, like other countries, is not immune from the impact of globalisation on the Public Service. Mtembu (2001) further comments that the public management model appears to be a

strategy to meet the challenges of globalisation and to promote professionalism, accountability, transparency and service-oriented Public Service.

These principles are outlined in Max Weber's well -known assay known as *Max Weber's ideal form of bureaucracy.* Weber's principles have been outlined earlier in the text, under Weber's model of bureaucracy. The most fundamental area criticised is bureaucracy, namely that government institutions should organise themselves according to the hierarchical, bureaucratic principles. Morstein and Marx (in Cayer & Weschler, 1988:12) further argue that this form of rationality is referred to as institutional or procedural rationality as it is a foundation of traditional public administration theory. The same model provides a 'one best way' of working and procedures to be followed by administrators (Hughes, 2003:1). Woodrow Wilson (in Starling, 2002:53) writes of traditional public administration, stating that is a political-administrative dichotomy that suggested that politics and administration are two distinct issues. As a result, in his comments, Woodrow Wilson (in Starling, 2002:53) says 'the field of administration is a field of business and it is removed from the hurry and strife of politics'. His assertion was on the emphasis that politics and administration play different roles in public administration and they should be separated. Wilson (in Hughes, 2003:1) states that the administration has to carry out instructions, while matters of policy or strategy were the preserve of the political leadership. Another theorist, Taylor (in Hanekom &Thornhill, 1983:74), viewed a worker as an extension of the machine and stated that the worker should therefore perform just as efficient as the machine he served, hence the 'machine model'. The 'machine model' did not provide room for initiative and flexibility and was emphatic on authority and rule, including procedures (Hanekom and Thornhill, 1983:74).

The above issues are views of the traditional public administration by the above theorists, and these views created difficulty in providing and facilitating quality service speedily, promoted inefficiency and less discretion and left no room for creativity, and were inflexible in managing public affairs in general. Traditional public administration has been widely criticised on the basis of its outdated application in 'modern' governance. Evidence indicates that traditional public administration does not promote a results-based management (RBM) model, a model that ensures that a linkage between input-output outcome is crystal clear and implemented. Under the RBM model, which is central to the 'new public management' (NPM) model, the public sector in general and public officials are also expected and encouraged to be results-oriented.

3.12 THE NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT MODEL: SOME PERSPECTIVES

Developments in public administration made it possible for most countries, including South Africa, shift from traditional public administration to the NPM model. As a result, Hood (1999:5) notes that traditional public administration, as an old-fashioned style, typically characterised as rule-bound and process-driven, is being replaced by results-driven, managerially-oriented approaches to public service provision with a particular emphasis on efficient least cost provision.

In support of the NPM model, the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) argues that "this new management paradigm emphasises results in terms of 'value for money' to be achieved through management by objectives, use of markets and market-type mechanisms, competition and choice, and devolution to staff through a better matching of authority, responsibility and accountability" (Hughes, 2003:3). This advocates a results and managerial approach regarding the delivering of services to people, and pronouncements by the OECD share the same value and principles of the South African Constitution, section 195; the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), 1999; and the White Paper on Service Delivery, especially its value for money principle. The PFMA under review is within the NPM model, including the aforementioned policy frameworks.

Additionally, scholars in Public Administration advocate that the contemporary public administration, within the framework of its normative factors, strives for:
  a) more and better services with available resources;
  b) the spending of less money without impairing the quality of services;
  c) stability in a rapidly changing social, political, economic and technological environment; and
  d) the development of public institutions to deal with social pathologies (Hanekom & Thornhill, 1983:193).

Regarding the above arguments, the authors raise the fundamental aspects regarding the NPM school of thought, namely that the Public Service should be able to cope with environmental changes taking place in the country, such as economical, social and

political. The NPM management model also maintains that in providing services, resources are used economical and efficiently.

3.13 FEATURES OF THE NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT MODEL

Some perspectives of traditional public administration have been provided so that the shift from traditional to the new public management model is contextually understood and its background is known.

Hughes (2003:54) provides the following features of the 'new public management' model:

a) Strategic approach

Governments develop long-term planning and strategic management. This means that governments decide on the organisation's mission, goals and objectives, organisational environment, including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that could affect an organisation;

b) Management within administrative framework

The NPM model requires professional management, within and administrative realm. In this model, managers are involved in policy and relatively involved in politics. Managers are responsible for achieving results;

c) Focus on results

The NPM model believes that organisations should focus on outputs or outcomes, instead of strictly or solely focusing on inputs. Fundamentally to the NPM model, is the performance by individuals and agencies. Agencies are expected to develop performance indicators as a way of measuring the progress made towards achieving declared objectives. The general aim is to monitor and improve the progress of staff and agencies towards achieving objectives. With regard to performance, Holmes and Shand (in Hughes, 2003:55) argue that performance orientation is marginally influenced by the existence of performance information. Greater attention has to be given to changing the incentives in the institutional framework, that is the budget, personnel systems, and risk management;

d) Improved financial management

Evidence shows that budget reforms have been successful within public management reforms. The most successful change is on performance budgeting systems by replacing the old-line item budgeting and accounting systems. Under line-item budgeting system, the focus is on inputs rather than outputs or what the agency does and the budgeting systems focus on control with little or insufficient information on actual programme delivery. Under the NPM model, the accrual system replaces cash accounting system. Public management requires increased attention on the best use of resources;

e) Relationship with politicians

It is argued that one of the main characteristics of the NPM model is that managers take responsibility for achieving results. The relationship between managers and politicians, and managers and the public must change. As indicated, traditional public administration was narrow-minded and was typical of a master-servant form of relationship. In the NPM model public managers are involved in matters of policy. The major skill needed for a public manager is how to become an effective adviser to a politician, this means the ability to interact with politicians and with the outside world in a way that is beneficial for both oneself and the organisation; and

f) Relationship with the public

Within the NPM model, there is an encouragement and recognition that managers should have direct accountability with the public. This demands a client focus and responsiveness, which are found in the traditional public administration.

It is also evident that the NPM adheres to a results based management model (RBM). The RBM model provides a coherent framework for strategic planning and management based on learning and accountability in a decentralised environment. The model also aims at improving management efficiency and accountability by defining realistically expected results, monitoring progress towards achievement of expected results, integrating lessons learned into management decisions and reporting performance (Development Assistance Committee, 2000:9).

Fox & Miller (in Minogue, Polidano and Hulme 1998:60) argue that the traditional public administration paradigm, based on the Wilsonian dichotomy, Taylorist scientific management

and Weberian hierarchical control, is dead. The irony is that the separation of politics from administration, the removal of professional discretion over service delivery, and the enhancement of the measurement and monitoring capacity of government over public service delivery, actually lie at the core of the 'new public management' (Minogue, Polidano and Hulme 1998:60). What is most important regarding the above features of the NPM model is the fact that it is also in line with the PFMA and Treasury regulations. It is because the PFMA and Treasury regulations require departments to have strategic plans and encourage managers to be flexible in managing the financial affairs of a department but maintaining accountability. The PFMA focuses on results or is results-oriented as opposed to inputs, encourages financial management and encourages a relationship between an accounting officer and the executing authority. On these grounds, like other countries, public administration in South Africa has evolved towards the NPM model and the PFMA is in line with such change. Therefore, it is clear that public administration operates within political, economic and social environments and evolution had to take place.

An evolution, which is taking place in public administration, is based on an informed background or a position. Even the transformation in South Africa, after democratisation in 1994, was based on an informed theoretical background. Therefore, an evolution from public administration to public management is no exception, it has to happen due to environmental factors. On the basis of the change outlined, many organisations have been redesigned to suit the change and they are informed by the circumstances. The question remains whether public administration is a science or an art.

3.13.1 Is public administration an art, a science or both: an analytical overview

The debate whether Public Administration is an art or science has been profound and important in public administration discourse. The debate is still relevant in contemporary Public Administration and will enable scholars and practitioners in the field to ascertain what is 'scientific and artistic' about Public Administration. Science in this context, in Public Administration in particular, is associated with knowledge or acquired knowledge and art is associated with skill to perform administrative tasks.

Public Administration is not only art or science but both of them and science is characterized by precision and predictability, maintain Berkley, Rose and Begovich (1991: 4). On the basis

of the above authors, it is evident that art and science are inevitable in Public Administration. Research in Public Administration suggests that administration uses scientific data, laws, and theories (Berkley et al., 1991: 4).

According to Mouton (1996: 13) *science* refers to a body of knowledge as 'product' and *scientific research* to a 'process'. In a government department, for an official to perform his or her tasks, knowledge and training are necessary, and his or her tasks require a particular skill or an art. An art presupposes human skill and, although it calls for knowledge, its emphasis is on practice rather than theory. Science is concerned with trained skill and presupposes that it has been acquired by study (Gladden, 1964:23).

It is therefore critical for public officials or public servants to be 'scientific' and be 'artistic' in order to improve service delivery and in ensuring public accountability. Managerial leaders are also expected to possess both the knowledge and the art of performing government tasks. It is also expected of the managerial leaders to be highly skilled and to have the expertise to manage and implement government programmes.

It is stated that administration is a distinct activity calling for specialist knowledge and techniques and in exercising of an art the administrator needs to enquire more and more knowledge (Gladden, 1964:23). As indicated earlier Public Administration science also assists decision-making so that managers are able to estimate or predict consequences for both the government and an organisation.

Some scholars also attest to the notion that scientific methods can be used in many management situations and can be useful in decision-making process because science as a method of inquiry and body of knowledge may be used to inform managers and estimate the possible consequences of actions (Cayer & Weschler; 1988:7). Thus, to effectively manage governance processes, managers must act from an informed position.

Science is based upon principles, which are of general applicability wherever that science is applied (Gladden, 1964:23). Therefore, even in Public Administration, the application of science should be based on principles but context remains important in the process of application.

Administrators use scientific laws, techniques and data, they do so in ways that help them to tackle particular administrative problems and a creative administration may even devise a new solution. As a result, administrators share traits with the arts as well as the sciences (Berkley et at., 1991: 4). Public administration has a set of 'scientific' principles and structural precepts that aught to govern all administrative activities (Lynn, Jr, 1996:151) The above indicates that science devises new solutions, norms, standards and governance framework to support the Public Service for example, the adoption of the NPM model by many governments.

As discussed above, management is an art and the knowledge within management is a science. As a result, Koontz, O'Donnel & Weihrich (1982:6) argue that management as a practice is an art, the organised knowledge underlying it may be referred to as a science, and art and science are not mutually exclusive but are complementary. The arguments regarding art and science confirm that public administration is indeed an art and science because some authors are of the view that art is at the heart of management and science is the 'information' that informs the management to make decisions, in designing or redesigning an organisation. Therefore, in implementing a public finance management system in the Public Service, the managerial leader has to be 'artistic' so that the underlining policy frameworks are implemented. The leader also has to be 'scientific' so that public servants, especially in public finance, gain knowledge, skills and make departments gain learning and growth.

3.14 CONCLUSION

It is clear from the above that Public Administration is either a complex subject and field of study. It depends on how theory about Public Administration is understood and analysed in order to focus on areas of research or fundamental elements of Public Administration. Some scholars like Cloete, Lungu, Hanekom and Thornhill and confirm in their analysis that Public Administration is not 'a one definition' field of study. It is because its purpose is diverse in response to its society. Like any other field of study, it is based on theoretical foundations that make this a multidimensional area of study, an area that includes leadership, personnel and its behaviour, policy management and analysis, as well as public finance and economics. The latter is crucial and central to the entire research as a whole, as the topic proposes.

Theorists like Herbert Simon, Woodrow Wilson, Taylor, Max Weber, Mary Parker Follett, Chester Barnard and others are central in providing a multidimensional approach to public

administration. For example, Chester Barnard describes the role of the executive as leaders and Mary Parker Follett, advocates functions of leadership in public administration. An analysis of leadership is crucial as it assists to explore and analyse the type of leadership required for the South African Public Service. Once leadership is analysed, based on theoretical foundations by Chester Banard and Mary Parker Follett, it could assist the South African Public Service leaders to respond to challenges facing both organisational and service delivery levels. Decision-making and analysis by Herbert Simon specify personal and organisational decisions, in particular the use and endorsement of personal decisions in an organisation and 'satisficing model'. This could assist in establishing the South African Public Service's leadership's style, ability and strategy in decision-making.

The above theorists endorse the fact that Public Administration is indeed a science and an art. It is because in most situations in government, decision-making, policy development and development of an organisation are based on a scientific exercise, a body of knowledge. In the process, a skill to apply knowledge, namely science, is needed. It is in this context that public administration is both an art and a science.