

**THE INTERFACE BETWEEN POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION IN THE  
LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**BY**

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**AT**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO**

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COMPLETED : JUNE 2006**

**i. DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this research paper submitted to the University of Limpopo for the Masters' degree in Public Administration has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university. I also declare that it is my own in design and execution and that all material contained therein has been duly acknowledged.

Signed.....

Date.....

## ii. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my gratitude, sincere thanks and appreciation to the following people:

First, to the supernatural power from above, Almighty God, who always provided strength even when the challenges posed a threat;

to my parents, Serutlwe and Monare, who supported me and shared their wisdom whenever necessary;

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### iii. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study conducted was based on the political and administrative interface in the Department of Education in Limpopo.

This provincial Department has experienced challenges that originated from the offices of both the Executive Authority and the Accounting officer. This grey area in the Department had almost paralysed the whole system and it became imperative that it be studied in an attempt to find possible solutions.

An extensive scientific body of knowledge from different scholars and their findings contributed to a new direction recommended for consideration.

The findings presented have the capacity to hamstring any organisation. The findings reveal, among others, that:

the complementary bureaucratic model is threatened by time, and its challenges are enormous;

there is little knowledge among politicians and administrators regarding interface matters;

administrators do not have a global picture regarding the result of unethical conduct;

more research on interface matters needs to be done and results published for the public to be educated while politicians and administrators should be continuously trained;

the fluidity of the interface needs continuous focus to avoid plunging the department into an untenable situation.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL ORIENTATION

#### 1.1 BACKGROUND / RATIONALE

Politicians and administration work together as a machinery called government. In indirect democracies, politicians are voted into decision-making positions. The party that wins most votes during an election becomes the ruling party. The above scenario also has implications for South African politicians who become the political heads of administration. Administration is not voted into office, but most administrations around the world serve the ruling party in various forms, e.g. a permanent administration system in Britain, a hybrid administration in America and complementary administration in South Africa. The South African government is divided into three spheres which are the national, provincial and local spheres of government (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996, Chapter 3, Act 108 of 1996).

The word “interface” is a noun that means a situation, way or place where two things come together and affect each other (Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary [New], 2003:655). The situations that come together and affect each other in this case are the functions of the office of the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) and the office of the Head of the Department (HoD). The organisational structure does not express itself clearly as to their functions, but the Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation 103 of 1994) and its regulations are very clear about their function. Mafunisa (2003:97-98) proposes the roles of the political office bearers as follows:

- to provide the vision and policy direction;
- to oversee and monitor implementation of policy;
- to secure support from colleagues in the form of the necessary resources for their ministries and departments;

- to carry out policy effectively;
- to represent the ministry in Cabinet and Parliament;
- to account publicly for the performance of the Department;
- to account to the Legislature for their actions; and
- to take collective responsibility for Cabinet decisions.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The South African administration established through the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, has nine provincial administrations. Each of the provincial administrations has the offices of the Members of the Executive Council (MECs) and the offices of the Heads of Department (HODs). The Public Service Act, 1994, outlines the functions of the office of the Minister and the office of the MEC clearly in section (3). It is problematic that the working relationship of the office of the MEC and that of the Head of Department in the Department of Education in Limpopo seems not be clear in practice. The Head of Department implements policy based on the mandate of the MEC. Questions are raised when sometimes the MEC's office and the office of the Head of Department cannot work together in line with the policies and practices of the Province and the Department in particular. The functions of the MEC and the Head of Department in the Department of Education in Limpopo need to be investigated as there are generally poor working relations in their day-to-day operations.

Working relationships are a very important aspect for effective and efficient service delivery to the public. Poor relationships at work are a source of conflict. The causes of poor relationships are the reason for this research. The answers to the problem would assist organisations in their operations. The challenges in South Africa today are about skills, especially as it is a developing country. The research is an attempt to check whether both policy execution and administrative

processes are free of personal interest. An organisation that limits personal interest stands a better chance of succeeding.

### **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- Why is there a political interface in the administration of the Department of Education in Limpopo?
- Why is there a grey area between politics and administration in the Provincial Department of Education in Limpopo?

### **1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The research objectives of the study are:

- to investigate the nature and extent of politics and its interface with administration; and
- to attempt to provide mechanisms/models to resolve the problem h

### **1.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The research is limited to the Department of Education in Limpopo. Availability of official documents relating to the topic is a challenge, due to the sensitivity of the topic and the anxiety of participants. The other limitation is the ever-busy senior officials who may not be found easily. The researcher had to exercise much patience to cope with the senior officials' busy schedules.

### **1.6 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS**

#### **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL ORIENTATION**

This chapter looks into the scientific framework of the research, such as the statement of the problem, research questions and the objectives of the study, among others.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter covers the available literature on the issues of political and administration interface/dichotomy.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Chapter three covers the methodological aspect of the study, among others, the type of research, sampling and research techniques.

## **CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS**

The collected data is presented in narrative form. The study will show how the existing political and administration interface functions in the Department of Education in Limpopo.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The result of the study informs the conclusions and recommendations arrived at. In deducing from the given premise, the researcher presents the successes and failures of the interface in the Department of Education in Limpopo. The recommendations of the study are given, based on the strengths and weaknesses of the Departmental dichotomy.

### **1.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Due to the sensitivity of the study, the Bill of Rights and the Code of Conduct are the guiding documents in conducting the research.

### **1.8 CONCLUSION**

The legislative framework of the interface and its practical application are the bone of contention. The grey area of the interface calls for scientific investigation. In the chapters that follow this is made clear.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter attempts to provide an empirical overview of the different political and administration models. Different scholars share their knowledge and experience. There are four interface models that are discussed fully viz: the political bureaucratic model, the depoliticised bureaucratic model, complementary bureaucracies, and permanent and hybrid bureaucracies. The debate is international and localised in order to locate the South African government in general and the Limpopo Department of Education in particular within the different models. Views are shared on each model's role in policy development and implementation. The discussions contribute to the benchmarking of Limpopo Department of Education against interface models. Thornhill (2005:182) introduces the interface debate as the area where the tyre hits the road and the grey area within politics that needs to be distinguished from the administration and management. Kanyane (2005:70) strongly maintains that the survival of public life depends on the strength of its moral foundation. This idea could be interpreted to mean that the ethical or unethical society produces politicians and administrators, therefore leaders in the society should use ethics as the best spice for their product.

#### 2.2 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

**Policy** means a manner of doing something that has been officially agreed upon and chosen by a political party (Longman Advanced American Dictionary [new], 2000:1111).

**Policy-making** means a process of doing something that has been agreed upon.

**Implement** means to make something happen (Longman Advanced American Dictionary [new], 2000:725).

**Implementation** means the translation of policy into action.

**Organising** is one of the necessary arrangements that make an activity happen (Longman Advanced American Dictionary [new], 2000:1023).

**Administration** of government organises requirements in order to let expected activities happen.

**Financial** is derived from the verb **finance**, which means to pay something (Longman Advanced American Dictionary [new], 2000:535). The three spheres of government have funds voted to them for purposes of service delivery.

**Staffing** is derived from the word **staff**, which means to provide the organisation with a workforce (Longman Advanced American Dictionary [new], 2000:1412). Staffing is best understood as the provision of human resources.

**Procedure** (Longman Advanced American Dictionary [new], 2000:1145) means the correct, normal method of doing something. Section 33(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, Act 108 of 1996, states that everyone has the right to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair. In providing services, government should follow processes and procedures. The Executive Authority comes with a funded policy mandate and delegates such functions to the Accounting Officer who implements the policy administratively.

**Management** is defined (Smit & Cronje, 2002:9-10) as the process of planning, leading, organising and controlling the resources of the organisation to achieve stated organisational goals as productively as possible.

**Diversity** (Longman Advanced American Dictionary [new], 2000:410) is the quality of being made up of a range of different people, ideas or things. Provincial administration is composed of people from different cultures, races, ethnic groups, religious beliefs and professional backgrounds, which need to be managed.

**Performance** means how well or badly you do a particular job or activity (Longman Advanced American Dictionary [new], 2000:1073). The business measures its success through profit while government looks at the outcomes, and it takes a long time before such outcomes become visible.

**Conflict of interest** is defined by Woode in Kanyane (2005:61) as a situation in which a person, such as a government official, an employee, or a professional, has a private or personal interest sufficient to appear to influence the objective exercise of his/her official duties.

### **2.3 POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES AND PRINCIPLES**

Government policies are developed to provide goods and services. Another issue of policy is the reconciliation of the conflicting interests of individuals and groups. The policy statements direct all government activities. Developed policy is implemented to achieve government objectives (Cloete, 1998:125). "Organising consists of classifying and grouping functions as well as allocating the groups of functions to institutions and works..." (Cloete, 1998:165). Government is made up of departments with heads of department who need to implement the policies through their administrative staff. A repeated division of functions results in smaller units:

- ✓ Branches (headed by Deputy Directors-General)
- ✓ Divisions (headed by Chief Directors)
- ✓ Supervisions (headed by Directors)
- ✓ Sections (headed by Deputy Directors)

✓ Sub-sections (headed by Assistant Directors)

Cloete (1998:189) maintains that the executive authority cannot collect or spend money before obtaining authorisation from the Legislature. There are other policies that assist government in spending money. The Public Finance Management Act of 1999 and Treasury Regulations serve as guidelines on government expenditure. The Minister, Members of the Executive Council (MECs) and Heads of Department function within these guidelines.

Policy development is one function of the MEC. Government has developed the Public Service Act, Act 103 of 1994, according to which staff is appointed. The roles of both political and administrative heads are defined in the Public Service Act of 1994. The political head of department cannot function without human resources because human resources implement the policy mandates of government. Implementation of the Employment Equity Act of 1998 may be misconstrued for tribal appointments that are obvious and exaggerated (Nel, et al. 2001:96). These appointments are done in the name of equity and true democracy. Policy implementation encompasses those actions by public and private individuals (or groups) that are directed at the achievement of the objectives set forth in prior policy decisions (Cloete & Wissink, (eds), 2000:166). This serves to show that people in organisations are themselves hindrances to policy success as they bring their baggage along with them into organisations. The political and administration heads cannot be exonerated from carrying their baggage into organisations.

Government activities are guided by procedure. Development of policies is also guided by procedure, e.g. it is normal practice to adopt a policy after ninety (90) days of public consultation. It is also within procedure to implement a policy after consultation with relevant internal and external stakeholders. Section 33 (1) of the Constitution, Act 108 of 1996, reads: "Everyone has the right to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair". This is still

the responsibility of the office of the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) and office of the Head of Department (HOD).

The delegation of authority is legislated and can be controlled. The Baseline Implementation Guide (1999:35) asserts that the employee should be given both the responsibility and the authority to get the job done, but that the person upon whom the Act or the Regulation confers a power or duty, remains accountable for the end result.

Checking or monitoring is an important aspect of the control function. The policy mandate goes with the budget. The two aspects (policy mandate and budget) of service delivery are linked to departmental strategic plans. Money is allocated to the objectives and activities of the strategic plans, which are informed by the policy mandates. The strategic plans are the Department's approved documents, which help to direct the correct spending of voted funds. The MEC has to approve or ratify the Department's strategic plan. Formal control measures include written reports, inspection, investigation and auditing. The notion of controlling finds its basis in section 216 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996), which maintains that the National Legislature must establish a National Treasury and prescribe means to ensure both transparency and expenditure control in each sphere of government. The controls referred to are achievable, among others, through the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) (Act 1 of 1999) and Treasury Regulations. Pauw, et al. (2002:129) maintain that gone are the days when a public manager could say 'look I am a doctor, or a soldier ... and my responsibility is line management, not the financial side of things. Pauw, et al., (2002) continue to show that Section 45 of the Public Finance Management Act (Act 1 of 1999), as amended, leaves no doubt about the fact that every official is responsible for proper financial management and control, as the Act puts it, 'within that official's area of responsibilities'. For example, any official driving a government vehicle should write in the itinerary the destination, dates, passenger names and identity

number, and finally the reason for the trip. It is then that the supervisor can authorise the trip.

Cloete (1998:189) says that control is exercised in the institutional situation by the use of formal control measures, which ensures that everything the functionary does is, in fact, aimed at achieving the set objective. Examples of such control measures are reports, inspections, audits, cost accounting and statistical returns. One can read the reports that are written based on the plans and the strategic plans of the department(s). Quarterly plans and reports serve to show critical success factors and challenges that point out areas that need support, and proper action can be taken to rectify the situation. Section 38(1) (c) (ii) of the PFMA (1999:45-46) maintains that the accounting officer of a Department, trading entity or constitutional institution must take effective control to protect the Department, trading entity or constitutional institution from fruitless and wasteful expenditure and losses resulting from criminal conduct.

The report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) on the report of the Auditor-General on Public Works (2004:1) shows irregular expenditure and as such the Accounting Officer had contravened Section 39 (2) (a) of the PFMA (1999) and was therefore required to report to the office of the Auditor-General and SCOPA. This provides clear proof that the application of the legislation by government structures is happening, to ensure adherence to the law by all citizens. The SCOPA report on the Auditor-General's report relating to Public Transport (2004:1-3), recommended that the Executing Authority, Director-General and Provincial Treasury take disciplinary and criminal action and that prosecution be instituted against offending officials at senior management level, who ineffectively, inefficiently and uneconomically managed their business units.

### **2.3.1 The Public Administration Anti-corruption Strategy of South Africa**

Webb (2005:154-155) reports that the South African government adopted an Anti-corruption strategy that has nine interrelated considerations. They are: the review and consolidation of the legislative framework, increased institutional capacity, improved access to report wrongdoing and protection of whistle blowers and witnesses, prohibition of corrupt individuals and businesses, improved management policies and practices, managing professional ethics, partnership with stakeholders, social analysis, research and policy advocacy and awareness training and education. The strategy as it stands provides a better environment for a successful interface in any of the South African government departments.

Institutions of government have increased capacity to prevent corruption. The South African government established the Anti-Corruption Coordinating Committee (ACCC) that is constituted of the following key role players: the National Intelligence Agency, the office of the Public Service Commission, the National Prosecuting Authority, the Department of Public Service Administration, the South African Police Service and the special investigating unit (Webb, 2005:156-157). It has been observed that these institutions do not approach corruption with complementary prevention and investigative measures. This results in their failure to achieve set objectives (Webb, 2005:157). In this article, the author provides two successful approaches used by the Hong Kong Independent Commission against Corruption (ICAC) and a similar agency in New South Wales. The ICAC's approach is that of investigating corruption, preventing corruption and anti-corruption education. The South African agency does not have any of the comprehensive mandates (awareness, education and training on corruption). It is again reported by Webb (2005:159) that the Public Service Commission developed a manual on a code of conduct for South African public service and conducted training of eight hundred (800) managers. The commission further sent copies of the manual to all departments with a directive that departments conduct internal training, and officials signed for receiving copies of the manual.

Kuye and Mafunisa (2003:428) observe that there is increasing concern in contemporary society about conflicts of interest that have come about in large part from the realisation that public employees now have opportunities to put private benefit before public duty. Kuye and Mafunisa continue to make the observation that one of the reasons why more public employees feel less committed to their jobs is that they increasingly engage in activities for remuneration outside government as a hedge against losing or quitting their jobs. In some cases, public employees may feel that the financial rewards from serving the public are inadequate and that they are justified in using their public office for private gain. This conduct of government employees is the one that makes prevention of corruption difficult. However, one cannot fail to acknowledge the dynamics of corruption and unethical conduct in a developing country. This debate proves that administrators in government undermine the existing strategies to overcome corruption.

### **2.3.1.1 Categories of conflict of interest**

Kuye and Mafunisa (2003:428-430) identify five categories of conflict of interest as follows:

- **Using inside knowledge and influence**

Some public employees argue that it would be foolish not to take advantage of inside knowledge gained as bystanders, but it is immoral and illegal to actively influence decisions, which could favourably affect their own pocket books. Similarly, a professional employee may disqualify himself/herself when he/she is called upon to take a decision affecting a firm for which he/she formerly worked (Kuye & Mafunisa, 2003:429).

- **Self-dealing**

Kuye and Mafunisa (2003:429) say that self-dealing refers to a situation where one takes an action in an official capacity which involves dealing with oneself in a private capacity and which confers a benefit on one- self. This possibility cannot be ruled out in an interface with a government department.

- **Outside employment**

Conflict of interest problems arise when the outside employment (or moonlighting) of a public employee clashes with the performance of his/her official duties. Stipulation C.55 of the Code of Conduct for Public Servants does not allow public employees to undertake remunerative work outside official duties without approval (Kuye & Mafunisa, 2003:429-430).

- **Post-employment**

This is a category where public employees use, or appear to use information of contracts acquired while in government service to benefit themselves or others after they leave office (Kuye & Mafunisa, 2003:430).

Kanyane (2005:66) provides lessons from America that say that law regulates the economic life of all public employees and their immediate families. A municipal council member must disclose, on the council's official records, any direct or indirect financial conflict of interest in respect of proposed legislation. No member of the council or its agencies or any salaried municipal employee, or a council member or any employee, is permitted to act as an attorney, agent, broker or consultant for any person, firm, corporation or other entity interested directly or indirectly in any business dealings with the city. It should be appreciated that it has been pointed out that attempts and advances towards preventing and reducing corruption have been made by the South African government that has had ten to eleven years' experience in government.

Managing diversity is an important subject for managers because it prepares managers to handle differences based on primary and secondary dimensions. Primary dimensions include age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, race, physical

ability and gender. Secondary dimensions include income, religious beliefs, education, marital status and work background. Government today faces challenges that are created by the era we find ourselves in, in South Africa. The period of freedom came with challenges that had never been experienced by anybody in the country. Smit and Cronje (2002:251) believe in three approaches to managing diversity: "golden rule", "right the wrongs", and "the value of difference". The value of difference creates an opportunity for managers to understand employees' differences and treat them accordingly.

### **2.3.2 Management and leadership**

Kibasomba (2000:41) presents management leadership as leadership that derives its peculiarity from efforts to achieve competent leadership, the determination to achieve competent leadership, and the determination to get things done competently. The author continues and says that management leadership means the capacity to lead through positive and progressive results, actions and impacts. It is the capacity to organise and move people and resources from the present situation to a new and better situation, from problems to solutions, from questions to answers, from scarcity to abundance, from poverty to wealth, from ignorance to knowledge, and from insecurity to peace. There is enough literature on leadership. If all South African managers and leaders in government could learn about the subject 'management leadership' and practise it as expressed by Kibasomba, then the levels of confidence and trust in government would increase.

Kibasomba (2000:41) observes that when a public manager is confronted with a chronically personalised political will, his/her political competency does not consist of leading the organisation to bankruptcy or ruin. Rather, his or her political competency in this case consists of disengaging and resigning. Patterns of political leadership in Africa are characterised by dogmatic slogans such as 'a political man never resigns', 'never admit failure or limitation', and 'never give up'.

One can only encourage South African leaders and managers in other spheres of leadership and management to learn from this dogma that the contrary is true, that failure, limitation, resigning and giving up are progressive because in anticipating such weaknesses a need to develop a new crop of leaders and managers will be inevitable.

Band in Kibasomba (2000:43) maintains that poor relations with management, is the number one reason cited for the high rates of staff turnover in modern companies. The best people will not put up with destructive relationships. They do not want just bosses, but mentors and leaders, not just co-workers, but colleagues and friends. One can therefore understand relationships in an interface as a situation that needs strong levels of trust and which provides room for freedom to debate any matter related to work. Kibasomba (2000:43) remarks that some would object that these kinds and levels of political liberation and competency are not yet operational in Africa. Leaders and managers tend to behave like monarchs, and employees tend to hold and display a slave mentality. The sum of these behaviours is the tendency not to exit, but to remain and disappear. The notion of meaningful work and healthy relationships does not exist. It seems that leaders, managers and employees do not join organisations to transform, drive and build them, but to 'consume' them. Kibasomba further advises that perseverance and challenge are required to rebuild economic development strategic institutions such as government and public enterprises.

### **2.3.2.1 Some contemporary perspectives on leadership**

Smit and Cronje (2002:292-297) discuss leadership behaviours that are viewed, among others, as new leadership models.

- **Transactional leadership**

This is presented as a traditional management function of leading, also known as transactional leadership. Transactional leaders clarify the role of subordinates, initiate structures and provide rewards. Their style is characterised by objectives and standards, and evaluation and correction of performance, policies and procedures. They direct and control in a stable structure while they centralise authority (Smit and Cronje, 2002:292).

- **Charismatic leadership**

Charismatic leaders have the capacity to motivate people to do more than what is normally expected of them. They motivate subordinates to transcend their expected performance. They are less predictable than transactional leaders. They create an atmosphere of change and have an emotional impact on subordinates (Smit and Cronje, 2002:293).

- **Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leaders are distinguished by their special ability to innovate and bring change. Transformation leaders emerge to take an organisation through major strategic change. To support the view that leaders are managers who bring about change, there are seven key leadership skills that describe the actions of effective transformation leaders.

They are people with intellectual curiosity who ask questions about possibilities and establish a sense of urgency. Mark Shuttleworth, the South African amateur astronaut, is a good example.

They challenge assumptions and conventional thinking to find new solutions to old problems.

Leaders form and communicate inspiring vision. They further build coalitions to support their change.

Leaders turn dreams (change vision) into reality by nurturing and supporting their coalitions. Leaders let their followers take the vision and move ahead with it. Great leaders build other leaders.

They drive the process of change by pushing and overcoming obstacles.

They share credit for success and give recognition to their followers. Leaders make heroes (Smit & Cronje, 2002:293-294).

- **Female leadership**

Women also possess assertiveness, initiative and aggressiveness, but they tend to engage in leadership behaviour that can be called interactive. An interactive leader is concerned with consensus building, is open and inclusive, encourages participation by others, and is more caring than the leadership style of many males. Interactive leadership is, however, not confined to women.

- **Dynamic engagement**

Smit and Cronje (2002:294-295) say there are leaders who get “extraordinary things” done. This is a leadership style that combines the charismatic and transformation styles. It is further reported that there is no single ‘best’ way of leading people to levels higher than their usual performance.

Performance management should first be accepted by the senior officials. It may then be directed to employees and the organisation as a whole. The positive results are seen most of the time through outcomes in government. The business sector judges its success through high profits and products. There are many contributing factors before performance management is seen to be a success. Van der Waldt (2004:39) defines performance management as an approach to management which harnesses the endeavours of individual managers and

workers towards the organisation's strategic goals. Patel in Van der Waldt (2004:39) defines performance management as goals, outputs, and gains, commitment of individuals or teams to achieve outputs and finally monitor outcomes. The essence of performance management is establishing a framework in which the performance of human resources can be directed, monitored, motivated and refined and the links in the cycle can be audited (Mabey, et al., 2001:129). The Baseline Implementation Guide by the Department of Public Service and Administration (1999:5) maintains that the new framework is a management tool not just a new set of rules that is meant to replace the old. This is acknowledgement of the fact that even apartheid had an administration that worked and this new government also needs a committed administration that has its values and morals rooted in the Constitution. This idea is supported by the Baseline Implementation Guide (1999:6) when it says that the Constitution of 1996 gives the values, principles and requirements that must direct the management of public service delivery. The emphasis is on the proper management of public service for it to perform better in delivering services to the public.

Performance management is related to quality, economy, efficiency, effectiveness and productivity. Quality is the integration of management quality principles, practices, process and procedures to provide quality products and services, deliver value and operationalise the strategic objectives of an organisation (Van der Waldt, 2004:68-69). There are linkages between Van der Waldt and the Constitution on matters relating to performance. Section 195 (1) (b) of the Constitution (1996:107) maintains that public administration values and principles are inclusive of efficiency and economy and that effective use of resources must be promoted. Van der Waldt (2004:287) continues to say that usually performance management results in a radical change in the culture and way of working in an organisation. A fundamental factor is leadership, including philosophy, style and behaviour. The leader implementing cultural change in a public organisation should behave according to the factors presented

(leadership, philosophy, style and behaviour). Performance management depends on the leadership of the organisation. This discussion has attempted to look into government administration and bring about an understanding necessary for the debates on the following models:

## **2.4 INTERFACE MODELS**

### **2.4.1 Political Bureaucratic Model**

The political bureaucratic model presents an argument that elected office-bearers have a mandate to manage and control the public service. This means that there is no difference between politics and administration and between party and state. The implication of this model is that rewards and appointments are made on the basis of public servants' allegiance to the ruling party, and not on the basis of the merit system. (Mafunisa, 2003:88). The appointment of politicians in senior bureaucratic positions such as senior management and general management is viewed as a means of controlling bureaucrats and the civil service. This is to say that the ruling party has control over the civil servants (Heywood, 1997:355).

The African National Congress (ANC) is the ruling party of the present government. The majority of ministers and members of the executive council (MECs) including the presidency and premiers are ANC members. The senior managers of the administration are mostly members of the ruling party. In the words of Mafunisa (2003:89), the ruling party has to ensure that people who are committed to the party's transformation agenda occupy senior positions in the three spheres of government (national, provincial and local).

Section 195 (4) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) also provides for political appointments. Historical issues could be used to understand the fairness of Section 195 (4) of the Constitution. The ANC-led government took over from the previous apartheid government with which it had

extreme ideological differences. The question is, would it be correct for the ANC to leave administration in the hands of the former political rivals, or what would fair practice be? The answer to this question might be dealt with through other bureaucratic models.

#### **2.4.2 Depoliticised Bureaucratic Model**

Mafunisa (2003:87) finds the depoliticised bureaucratic model to be a neutral model of administrative responsibility. Shafritz in Mafunisa (2003:87) maintains that the politics and administration dichotomy holds that political interference in administration would erode the opportunity for administrative efficiency, and the policy-making activities of government ought to be wholly separated from the administrative functions. Mafunisa's view is further supported by Heywood (1997:355) when he says that recruitment of the senior bureaucracy into the ideological enthusiasm of the government of the day effectively blurs the distinctions between politics and public officials. Heywood continues to give the example of the German ministers as being limited in terms of political appointments. What are the dangers of a politically loyal administration? The word 'loyal' means being supportive of friends at all times (Summers, et al., 1995:855). A loyal person will support a friend under all circumstances. The correct interpretation would be that a loyal administration will support the ruling party whether it is wrong or right.

The depoliticised bureaucratic model is neutral; it does not erode administrative efficiency nor does it blur the distinction between politicians and public officials. The model requires separation of administrative functions from that of policy makers. Mafunisa (2003:88) finds the central argument of the dichotomy model to be that "governments come and go, but the public service remains". Therefore, the public service needs to be characterised by professionalism. The following are the advantages of the model under discussion:

- to protect administration from interference by elected office-bearers in its day to day administrative activities;

- to protect public administration from political patronage, where party political connections become the over-riding criteria in public personnel functions such as recruitment, transfer, training and promotion; and
- to protect the independence and professionalism of the public service.

The political and depoliticised models oppose each other and therefore other models need to be discussed in order to find the balance.

### **2.4.3 Complementary model**

Summers et al. (1995) explain the word ‘complementary’ as making someone or something better or more attractive by emphasising its good qualities or having qualities that the other person or thing lacks. An understanding of the complementary model will therefore be that neither the ruling party nor the administration is complete on its own. The former needs the latter to be 100% complete. In his paper, “Moral Agency and moral citizenship: Politics, administration and ethics reform”, [www.liasiisa.be](http://www.liasiisa.be) (2003:1-2) opens the debate by saying, “these treatments also tend to be uni-directional, with administrators identified as the targets of concern, consternation or reform. The elected official’s position is inviolate, sanctioned, even sacrosanct, while the bureaucrat’s position is suspect, dubious, even diabolic ... political appointment is assumed to confer a moral status ... regardless of the representative nature or size of a politician’s electoral strength; it bestows moral and functional superiority over the public administrator”.

It is further believed that politicians and administrators should both maintain a relationship of responsibility, reciprocity and respect ([www.liasiisa.be](http://www.liasiisa.be), 2003:5). It is further captured that the complementary model should be based on trust, which is difficult to create but easy to damage or destroy. Trust, like charity, begins at home ([www.liasiisa.be](http://www.liasiisa.be), 2003:11). Mafunisa (2003:89) has an influence regarding the complementary model as a strong foundation for public administration that implies a relationship of separate parts and distinctness. This

move enriches and extends the model by going beyond required interpersonal and practical interdependence and provides moral justification.

The complementary model is a strong foundation for public administration in all spheres of government. Heady in Mafunisa (2003:89) says that the issue is not whether public administrators are “instrumental or usurpative”, but it is the standard dichotomy versus non-dichotomy options, and also how they are both instruments and contributors to the political process which remain instrumental and contributive. The model reconciles contradictory aspects of public administration and politics. The reconciliation comes from recognising the reciprocating values that underline complementarities.

#### **2.4.4. The British Permanent Model**

The public service is a permanent service in the sense that it remains in place on a change of government. Fry in Mafunisa (2003:91) says that the British civil servants remain non-political in the sense that they normally receive their appointment independently of ministers, that they are not allowed an overt political allegiance, and that they are not required to perform politically on the floor of either house of parliament. Closely associated with the concept of permanency is that of neutrality. By virtue of the fact that administrators are expected to serve ministers of any political complexion, senior civil servants are required to be scrupulously neutral. Senior civil servants cannot hold party offices, canvass for candidates or express views in public if any of them is associated with the politics of the United Kingdom or European parliament (Pyper in Mafunisa, 2003:91). Over and above the permanent model of administration there is one more that combines merits and spoils the system.

#### **2.4.5 The American Hybrid Model**

The permanent model that was discussed differs from the hybrid model because the promotion of senior civil servants is done through a spoil system that involves politicians. Besides the spoil system the Americans also appoint civil servants on merit. The United States civil service system was intended to forever abandon the practice of political patronage – the so-called “spoil” system - for all but a few senior positions. In part, the intention was to promote continuity, but more importantly, it was meant to ensure that the public officials had the skills and abilities required to administer complex federal programmes (Mafunisa, 2003:92-93).

#### **2.5 VIEWS AGAINST INTERFACE**

Friedrich (in Gatto, 1993:316) advocates for separation of policy making and policy execution. Appleby (in Gatto, 1993:16-17) finds the public manager extremely involved in the political process of formulating and implementing policy. It portrays how administration actually makes decisions on complex issues independent of political association. This suggests that there is a structured meaning to the art and science of public administration.

#### **2.6 VIEWS IN SUPPORT OF POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INTERFACE**

The New Public Administration School of professional administration, characterised by normative values, ethics and development of human skills of organisation members, has a strong moral tone. It is believed that the social needs of an individual working in public administration can be strengthened by a division between the person and the position held (Gatto, 1993:318). Another division propagated is that of political/administrative demands within government. The decision should be related to clarification of roles of both politicians and

administrators. It is maintained that the high moral tone alluded to in this discussion could be achieved through consideration of the political/administrative dichotomy (Gatto, 1993:318). According to Peters and Waterman (in Gatto, 1993: 319) the following are eight attributes that characterise organisations of excellence and innovation: a bias for action, close to the customer, autonomy and entrepreneurship, productivity through people, value driven and simple form. The role of national government and its public service is to ensure that fair treatment is extended to all. The role of a classic theory bureaucrat is therefore to regulate, administrate and evaluate public policy.

## **2.7 POLITICAL ADMINISTRATIVE CONTRIBUTION TO ETHICAL CONDUCT**

Hanekom (in Visser & Erasmus, 2002:303) is of the view that both politicians and administrators should be ethical in their activities of quality service delivery. It is further demonstrated that the general conduct of politicians and senior bureaucrats has either a negative or a positive influence on their subordinates: "Elected Executing Authorities (or cabinet), political heads of department, whose behaviour directly influence officials in the execution of their duties. If the minister tries to promote effectiveness and efficiency in administration, accounting officers will most probably follow suit" (Visser & Erasmus, 2002:304). Accounting officers are administrators and if their conduct is influenced by that of politicians, it will be unchallengeable to view political and administrative heads as separate entities. This argument strengthens the importance of the political-administrative interface.

Chalker (2001:59) says that corruption is a cancerous weed. It chokes almost all growth and its effect on a country, economically, socially and politically, can be devastating. To deter corruption and enable development, both government and business must tackle it whenever it is found. Chalker is ringing a wakeup call to everybody, including politicians in developing countries, because it will eat away all means of development. Chalker (2001:63) further argues that one of the most

attractive opportunities for corruption lies in the import-export trade. High tariffs guarantee that bribery is rife. It is true that high tariffs will always put administrative officers and politicians in danger as they will be targeted by business people who want to make sufficient profits by defrauding the government revenue system. Government officials, who are involved in unethical activities, may not be aware that bribes are ultimately closing all opportunities of development. Government officials and politicians often favour large capital projects and urban development rather than development in rural areas, in turn causing more poverty and crime (Chalker, 2001:61). It can be argued that junior officials do not have the authority to sign contracts with big business, but senior government officials have that authority. It will be logical if business will try first to corrupt senior government officials.

Smit and Cronje (2002:445) advise that when ethical issues originate at organisational level, the individual dealing with such an issue should consult the organisational policies and procedures and code of ethics to clarify the organisation's stand on the issue. Chalker (2001:64) also provides the information that corruption cheats everyone. In the end everyone pays for it, and the poor pay the most. The bigger picture of the product of unethical behaviour painted by Chalker could be solved, among others, by Smit and Cronje's advice, which says, consult organisational policies. Pauw et al. (2002:341) provide the following proof of systems established to overcome unethical conduct in government: The Public Service Commission that offers policy advice on public sector corruption; the Auditor-General who audits all constitutional institutions; the Public Protector who investigates allegations of fraud and unfair practice by the state on behalf of members of the public; the National Directorate of Public Prosecutions that investigates corruption and criminal cases; the Asset Forfeiture Unit that seizes the assets of criminals; the Directorate for Special Operations, 'Scorpion', that investigates and has powers to arrest; the Special Investigation Unit that investigates public sector corruption, recovers assets and processes civil cases; and, lastly, the South African Police Services Commercial Crime Unit

that investigates cases of fraud. Hanry (in Kanyane, 2005:69) warns that tightening conflict of interest and other statutes will not necessarily eliminate all unethical conduct because public administrators may use their discretion to favour their own interests. The implementers of the legislation make use of the gaps in legislation to defraud the state.

## **2.8 THE PLACE OF BUREAUCRACY IN POLICY FORMULATION**

Administrators cannot ignore the political environment of their agencies. They are involved in both the formulation and the implementation of public policy. Administrators deal on a daily basis not only with their immediate supervisors but also with all kinds of external groups and the public. Because policy decisions profoundly influence who gets what, this involvement in policy inevitably involves them in politics (Starling, 1982:23). Starling further asserts that purely administrative matters can seldom be separated from politics and administrators also become involved in policy formulation when they recommend amendments to existing laws to the Legislature. Agencies are closest to where the action is and therefore are more likely to see imperfections and incompleteness in the laws. Indeed, legislatures expect that those who deal continuously with problems will suggest improvements (Starling, 1982:26-29). For example, "... NASA planners closed lunar landing objectives fully two years before President Kennedy announced his Choke of the lunar landing as a national goal. And without the Kennedy decision in 1961, NASA no doubt would have continued pressing for the lunar decision" (Lambright in Starling, 1982:28).

Dye (1995:312) confirms that bureaucrats hire personnel, draw up contracts, spend money and perform tasks. All of these activities involve decisions by bureaucrats – decisions that determine policy. As society has grown in size and complexity, the bureaucracy has increased its role in the policymaking process. Dye (1995:313) further asserts that policy implementation often requires the

development of formal rules and regulations by bureaucracies. Federal executive agencies publish about 6 000 pages of rules in the federal register each year.

## **2.9 SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICS-ADMINISTRATION RELATIONS**

Mafunisa (2003:93) says that the public service has, historically, been politicised. It was difficult to separate the National Party (as the government of the day) and the public service. The National Party deployed its loyal members to different senior positions in the public service. The post-1994 political developments predictably resuscitated the debate on the relationship between political office bearers and senior public servants. The administration of post-1994 politics had to address the inequalities of the past as well as the legacy of institutionalised discriminatory human resource practices within the public service. Heywood (1997:346) classifies the political-administration relationship by making an observation that top-level civil servants have daily contact with politicians and are expected to act as policy advisers. The Executing Authority knows about administration issues through the Head of Department. The policy-making structure (Provincial Legislature) knows the departments through the Executing Authorities. The appointments of Senior Management, General Manager and Senior General Manager of a department are done by the political head of the department concerned. The positions mentioned above are mostly occupied by members of the ruling party. The ideal relationship between the political head and top-level civil servants is based fundamentally on trust. Heywood (1997:355) asserts that the attraction of a political senior bureaucracy plainly ensures that there is a higher level of loyalty and commitment in such a group than would be likely among politically impartial civil servants. He further observes that one of the most common ways of exercising political control is to recruit the senior bureaucracy into the ideological enthusiasms of the government of the day. This effectively blurs the distinctions between politics and administration and between politicians and public officials.

The Provincial Review Report in the Journal of Public Administration Volume 38 (number 2) (2003:95) notes that in many provinces, political interference in day-to-day administrative functions tends to paralyse administration and that there is a poor definition of the roles and functions of employees. The Executing Authorities are involved in interviews and appointments. Since 1994, there have been serious tensions between some political office bearers and their directors-general. These tensions are generally caused by the following: political office bearers allegedly meddling and interfering in administrative matters, lack of understanding of institutional history by public functionaries, lack of understanding of administrative or technical issues by the political office bearer, political differences between the political office bearer and the senior public servant, strong participation in political issues by the senior public servant and the seizing of expert power by senior public servants through intentionally misleading political office bearers, maintaining a veil of secrecy, withholding information and delaying decisions (Mafunisa 2003:95-96). Thornhill (2005:180) observes that the personality of the ministers has an effect on the political administrative interface. Over and above personality compatibility, the management style and leadership qualities can also compromise service delivery.

## **2.10 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

The South African administration is established by section 195 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996): "Public administration must be governed by the democratic values and principles enshrined in the constitution ...". Section 196 of the Constitution establishes the Public Service Commission. The Commission is expected to be independent, impartial and must exercise its power and perform its functions without fear, favour or prejudice, in the interests of the maintenance of effective and efficient public administration and high standards of professional ethics in public service. Public administration is the structure that is constitutional in origin. Public service regulations also set

principles in Part II A that connects the executing authority, the accounting officer (Head of Department) and employees in the administration together: "...the executing authority shall provide the head of department with appropriate powers and authority. For the same purpose, a head of department shall empower employees in the department by means of appropriate delegations and authorizations, where necessary."

Mafunisa (2000:72) cements the claim of service delivery by listing a number of policies that governs public service delivery, namely:

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996);
- The Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation 103 of 1994);
- The Public Audit Act, 2004 (Act 25 of 2004);
- The Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act 66 of 1995);
- The Public Protector Act, 1994 (Act 23 of 1994);
- The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (16868 of 1995); and
- The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (18340 of 1997).

The above policies, in particular the Public Service Regulations, clarify the line function between the political head and the head of department. Section 64 (1) of the Public Finance Management Act (Act 29 of 1999) further clarifies the powers and responsibilities, e.g.: "Any directive by an Executing Authority of a Department to the Accounting Officer of the Department having financial implications for the Department must be in writing". The South African situation of political-administrative interface is highly monitored by regulations and policies. This statement is further supported by the Auditor-General's Report (Limpopo Department of Education, 2001-2002:31) when asserting that the Accounting Officer was lacking internal control, e.g. "At MASTEC and Tivumbeni college of education, it could not be determined how much boarding fees should have been collected as no record of students residing in hostels could be produced. At

Modjadji College of Education, ten houses were occupied by educators, but no rent was paid”.

The honourable President Thabo Mbeki (2003:9) affirms the Auditor General by saying that the national and provincial government will complete the process of auditing the public service personnel in these spheres of government and determine their personal needs in terms of the tasks that confront government. This will enable government to effect the necessary adjustment to ensure that public service has the people with the right skills, at the right places, in the right numbers. Pauw, et al. (2002:129) refers to section 45 of the PFMA that says that the responsibilities of officials other than accounting officers are inevitable. The PFMA leaves no doubt about the fact that every official is responsible for proper financial management and control, within that official's area of responsibility. Van der Waldt and Du Toit (1997:157) also make reference to the Public Service Act of 1994 as guidelines laid down with regard to the functioning and administration of the public service. The managers have to be accessible to everyone and must serve the public in an unprejudiced and impartial manner.

## **2.11 CONCLUSION**

Heidenheimer (1970:531) makes the observation that in developing nations, particularly where there is a comparatively free play of political forces, there is often tension between the civil service and the politicians. The bureaucracy may develop considerable esprit de corps and feel impatient with the activities of politicians, whose only thought seems to be to truckle to mass whims, hampering the orderly progress of the bureaucratic nation-building machine. Principle number nine of the Public Service Commission Report (2004:33) captures the fact that amendments to the Public Service Act in 1998 made political heads of departments responsible for employment decisions. Another equivalent policy decision is that the head of department is the Accounting Officer. Pauw, et al. (2002:70) summarises the Accounting Officer's (HOD) functions as being

responsible for the administration of state funds under the control of the department and further that in terms of section 36 she/he fulfils a critical role in the activities falling under a vote. The Executing Authority appoints senior management services for the accounting officer to utilise in administering the said department. Thornhill (2005:181) refers to section 12A of the Public Service Act, 1994, that makes provision for an executing authority to appoint one or more persons under special contract to advise the Executing Authority. Kanyane (2005:65) asserts that the stability of government rests on the maintenance of public confidence. It is further argued that the confidence of the public is eroded by the appearance of conflict of interests. Unethical conduct and corruption are inseparable sides of one coin. This is a threat to any young government that does not have adequately developed managers and leaders.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The researcher has considered the qualitative method for the collection of both primary and secondary data. The Department of Education in Limpopo will serve as a single-site case study for this study. The researcher has targeted the offices of the Executing authority, Accounting Officer, Senior General Managers, General Managers, Senior Managers, Deputy and Assistant Managers. Purposive sampling has been preferred on the basis of the opportunities it affords the researcher to select information-rich participants.

The methods considered for data collection were interview, observation and documentation. The researcher found interviews to be appropriate due to the selected topic that would require a certain number of probing questions in order to extract more information from respondents. The sensitivity of the topic dictated a schedule-structured interview, which afforded participants enough freedom and a sense of trust and rapport. The researcher observed respondents as they worked and related the information to what respondents said during the interviews. The information from observation and interviews was linked to the relevant documents found.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

The research method considered for the study was the qualitative method. The qualitative method investigates small, distinct groups such as all the participants in an innovative school or organisation.

These are typically single-sited studies (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:375). This case study is the Department of Education in Limpopo. The qualitative method makes use of observation, interviews and documents.

### **3.2.1 Target group and sampling**

The study covers the Provincial Department of Education in Limpopo. The Department referred to has a population of approximately three hundred (300) staff. The Executing Authority, Accounting Officer, Chief Finance Officer, two Senior General Managers, five General Managers, fifteen Senior Managers, Deputy Managers and Assistant Managers serve as the size, scope and target of the research. The researcher followed the purposive sampling design, in particular comprehensive sampling because it is the sampling strategy that allows the researcher to select information-rich informants, groups and places. The sample was chosen because it was likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon under investigation. The power and logic of purposive sampling is that a few cases studied in depth yield many insights about the topic (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:378-379).

### **3.2.2 Data collection**

#### **(a) Interviews**

The researcher used a combination of schedule-structured and non-directive interviews. Schedule-structured interviews provided the interviewer with an opportunity to remain focused and consistent during the interview. The non-directive or non-structured approach provided the interviewer with enough freedom to enquire more into the subject during the interview. The combination of these approaches was helpful especially as the topic is sensitive and respondents may choose indirect responses (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992:224-225). The application of both schedule-structured and

non-structured interviews was helpful as the selected target was comfortable with both approaches.

The researcher took the Provincial Department of Education in Limpopo as the sample size and particularly targeted the Member of the Executing Authority, Head of the Department, Senior General Manager, General Managers, Senior Managers, Deputy and Assistant managers. The researcher started interviewing respondents from 11 November 2005 and by March 2006 the Member of the Executing Authority was still unavailable. The Accounting Officer and the Executing Authority were not available for data collection due to their business. One Senior General Manager was transferred to another department in the process but the other one was interviewed. Four Senior Managers out of fifteen could not be reached. A total of eight Deputy and Assistant Managers were interviewed. The process of data collection proved to have reached the level of saturation when information was repeated at various levels of the interviews. The researcher is an employee of the Department of Education and has been seconded to head office since 1998 to date. The researcher had thought that it would be easy to interview, observe and request documents, but it proved to be difficult.

#### **(b) Observation**

The advantage of observation is its directness; it makes it possible to study behaviour as it occurs. The researcher simply watched them do and communicate issues. This in turn enabled the collection of first-hand data that was uncontaminated by factors standing between the investigator and the object of research (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992:199).

The researcher's observation activities happened mostly during the interview process. Robert (1995:64) is of the opinion that interview is the main road to

multiple realities and getting acquaintances to interviews is perhaps the easiest task in a case study, but getting good interviews is not so easy. The interviewees were colleagues with whom the researcher worked, and therefore it was not expected that interviewing them would be difficult. It was not difficult for interviewees to agree to be interviewed, but the actual interviews were very difficult. Participants in the interviews were tense, especially if they were asked to give examples of corrupt activities in the Department of Education in Limpopo. Developing trust and rapport were key elements in encouraging the interviewees to respond. Most of the participants indicated after the interviews that they were interested in seeing the results of the study. It should be noted that the Department of Education in Limpopo has had five Members of the Executive Council and two Heads of Department from 1994 to March 2006. This matter has an impact on the interface (dichotomy).

### **(c) Documentation**

The research was done in the Limpopo Department of Education as mentioned earlier and therefore the Hansard of the Legislature debating matters relating to the Department was consulted. The monitoring and evaluation report of the Public Service Commission provided information regarding the performance of the Department. The fact that the ruling party was in the majority and the opposition was in the minority, meant that the debates were only praises.

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) reports were then considered because the committee's composition is multiparty-based. The researcher looked into the following documents: The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, which is the law that creates the three spheres of government (national, provincial and local). The public service is created by the Constitution. The Public Finance Management Act, No. 1 of 1999, PMFA

regulations, shows the responsibilities of the Accounting Officer. The Code of Conduct for Ministers presents the ethical behaviour expected of Ministers and the Executing Authority. The Public Service Act, 1994 and PSA Regulations provide the powers of the Executing Authority and describe how powers should be delegated. The 2004/2005 Department of Education Auditor's Report provides insight into the utilisation of public resources by the Accounting Officer. Robert (1995:68) notes that documents serve as substitutes for records of activities that the researcher could not observe directly. The record of documents is a more expert observer than the researcher.

### **3.3 THE TYPE OF STUDY**

The following are some of the ten characteristics of qualitative research:

1. Holistic inquiry in a natural setting. This method allows the researcher to involve relevant stakeholders of the dichotomy in the Department of Education in Limpopo, i.e. in the natural setting of the respondents during interviews, and the SCOPA report.
2. Humans are the data-gathering instrument. The researcher made use of interviewees, who had heard and seen much, to gather data, but relevant documents were considered as well, e.g. PFMA and Public Service Regulations (2001).
3. Purposive rather than random sampling. This approach allows room for the research to uncover the full array of multiple realities relevant to the inquiry, e.g. interviewing the Union Leadership in the Department (PSA).
4. Inductive data analysis. The qualitative researcher first gathers the data and then tries to develop understanding, and then generalises. The

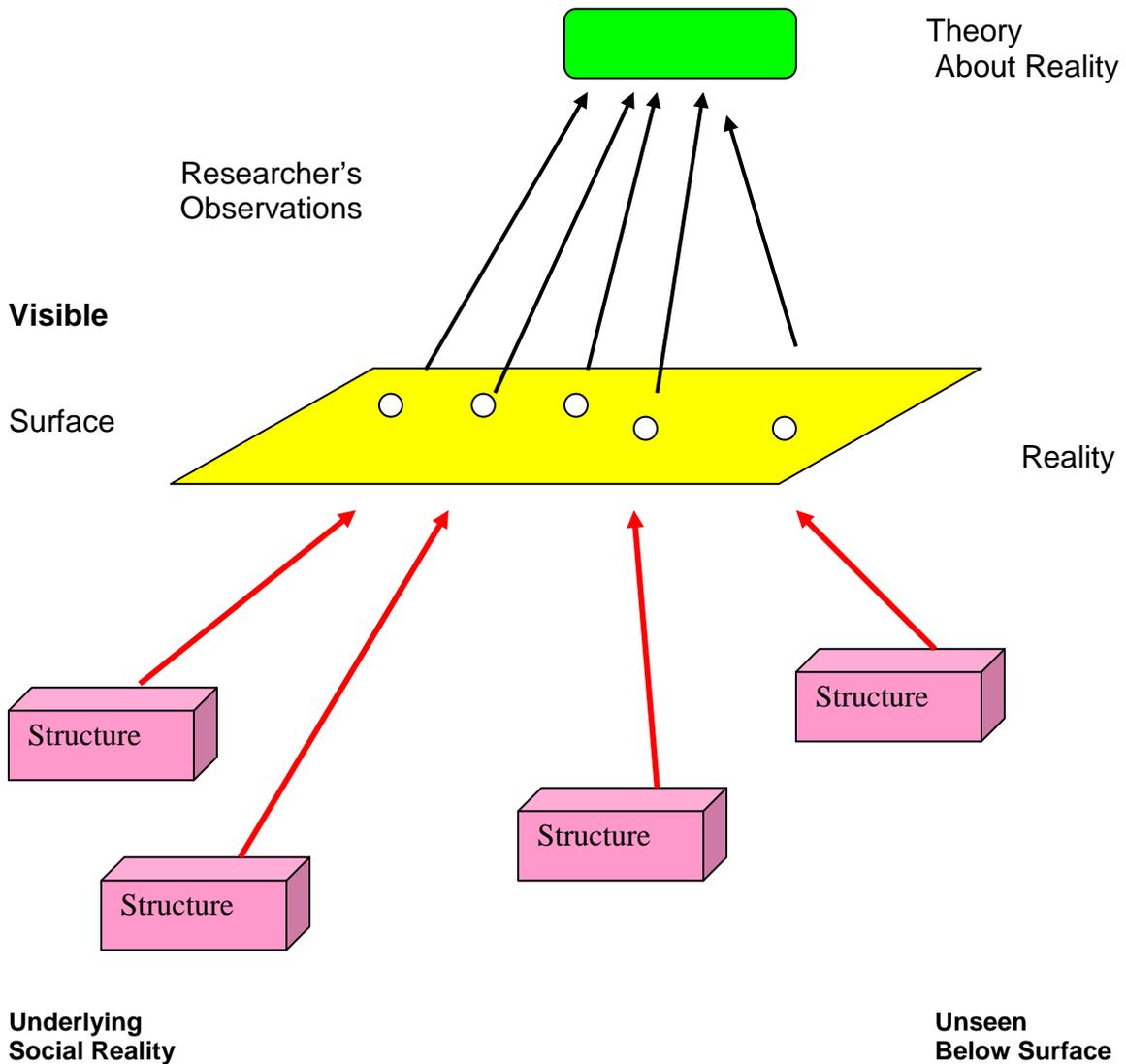
researcher allows primary and secondary sources to direct analysis and interpretation.

5. Emphasis on social processes. Qualitative studies focus on social processes and the meaning that participants attribute to social situations (Borg & Gall, 1989:385-387). The Department of Education in Limpopo is part of the social cluster, and the researcher studies the political and administrative relationship, which is a social activity.

### **3.4 MEASUREMENT**

The measurement adopted for the study aims to analyse the collected data. The selected measurement is 'outcroppings'. Fetterman (in Neuman, 2000:441) defines outcroppings geologically as that part of the bedrock that is exposed on the surface for people to see. It is the outward manifestation of the central, solid features of the land. Geologists study outcroppings to get clues about what lies beneath the surface. The definition could best be understood as meaning that the surface is the visible reality, only partially reflecting what goes on unseen, beneath the surface. Neuman (2000:441) names the model as the relationship model which suggests that the researcher's data from the observable, surface reality are only samples of what happens on the invisible, below-the-surface level. The model is called Theory, Surface Reality and Underlying structures (See the model below). The underlying structures inform the surface reality from which the researcher conducts his research based on the question(s) of the study and its objectives. The data collected from the surface reality would be interpreted and theories developed from the analysed data. The model presented means that the participants interviewed represent primary data on the interface, while documents represent secondary data from the reality surface of the interface. The collected data represent what goes on unseen, inside (underlying structures) the interface of the Department of Education in Limpopo.

## Theory, Surface Reality and Underlying Structures



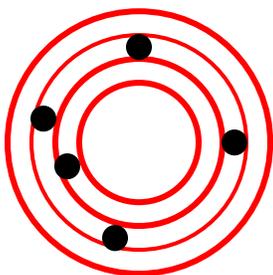
### 3.5 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Neuman (2000:170-171) defines reliability as dependability or consistency, but mentions that the social world is diverse, and therefore consistency is threatened. Validity means truthfulness, but the qualitative researcher is

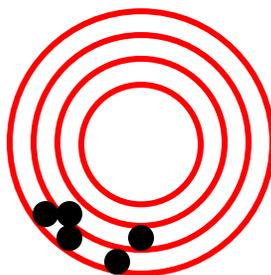
interested in authenticity which means giving a fair, honest and balanced account of social life from the viewpoint of someone who lives it every day (Neumann, 2000:171). This relates clearly to respondents who are working with the Executing Authority and Accounting Officer.

Validity can be divided into external and internal validity. The internal validity has no errors internal to the design of the research project. The respondents in the Department of Education in Limpopo represent internal validity because the majority of them are senior officials. Validity is primarily used in experimental research. It is the ability to generalise findings from a specific setting and a small group to a broad range of settings and people. External validity can further be divided into high external and low external validity. High external validity means the results can be generalised to many groups of people while low external validity means that the results apply only to very specific settings (Neuman, 2000:172). The relationship between reliability and validity could be illustrated through the following figures of Babbie in Neumann (2000:171).

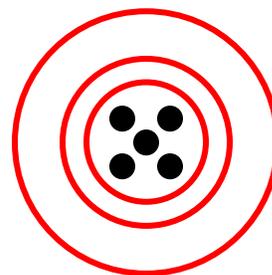
A Bull's Eye = A Perfect measure



Low Reliability  
And low Validity



High Reliability  
but Low Validity



High Reliability  
and high Validity

Low reliability and validity could be understood as meaning that the dots are scattered and consistently not found at the same point. The middle figure represents high reliability and low validity, which means that the dots are found mostly at one point (consistent) but not in the centre (low validity). The figure on the right has all the dots in the inner circle, which means that there

is consistency and truth (high reliability and high validity). The social world is diverse and it has been mentioned that where there is high reliability there may be low validity and vice versa. The collected information represents the truth and is reliable because there is no smoke without fire.

### **3.6 CONCLUSION**

The data collection was mainly difficult but the majority of the people who were targeted for the study were interviewed and observations were done. The letter requesting permission to conduct a study in the Department of Education in Limpopo was responded to, and it was indicated that respondents would only be interviewed once they had agreed to participate. Reports on the evaluation of the Provincial Department of Education in Limpopo were said to be confidential. However, the collected data is sufficient for analysis and recommendations. The outcroppings model has demonstrated the possibility of studying structures that are inaccessible. The three figures that serve as sifting instruments were helpful in selecting reliably valid data.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The research attempts to respond to the research questions raised earlier in chapter one (1). A number of attempts were made in chapter two (2) to respond, where different interface models were discussed. The legal framework of South Africa provides the environment for the interface. The responses should cover the grey area of the interface in the Provincial Department of Education in Limpopo. The interface is composed of the offices of the Executing Authority elected by the public and the Accounting Officer managing public resources.

#### **4.2 THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF THE INTERFACE**

The Executing Authority is also known as the Member of the Executive Council which his/her party voted into government. The Accounting Officer, who is also known as the Head of Department, is employed by the Government to perform certain functions. The respondents at Assistant, Deputy, and Senior and General Management levels of the Department provide knowledge of the functions and roles of the two offices under discussion. They believe that government originates from politics in the sense that it rules after elections have been won and people have been promised services.

The Department of Education has the Executing Authority from the ruling party that won the election, the African National Congress (ANC). The party serves the public with the political supervisor being the Executing Authority. Schedule 2 of the Constitution (Section 5) provides the Executing Authority with powers to execute in the Provincial Education Department. The political head needs the professionals to serve the public with the required education. The administration

of the Department of Education has its basis in section 195 of the Constitution. The interface has its origin in the Constitution of South Africa. Schedule two provides for the Executing Authority, while Section 195 provides for administration. One respondent said that he/she had the privilege of working with a number of Executing Authorities; one of them allowed administrators to work without interference, while he/she concentrated on political matters. The respondent alleges that two of the Executing Authorities could not distinguish between politics and administration.

The origin of the interface has been located and it is becoming important that there must be people in the Executing Authority's office and administration. A respondent showed a need to understand the interface even before one worked in its environment. The legislative environment for interface is peaceful without people, while the practicing legislative environment of the interface is changed by the human element. This argument finds support in the fact that one member of the executive would allow administrators to perform their functions while the two Executing Authorities could not distinguish between politics and administration. It can be deduced that for any interface to be operational, there is a need for knowledge about it on the part of both the Executing Authority and the Accounting Officer. Furthermore, one respondent believes that a "no fees policy" (those people who can afford to should pay) in public schools is a political decision coming from the ruling party during the election campaigns. That is to say that the Executing Authority would not be happy to be informed that a child has been driven out of a public school on the basis of unpaid school fees.

The Executing Authority ensures implementation of the party's manifesto and political mandates. The political mandates referred to here are, among others, the Public Services Act, 1994, The Constitution, 1996, and the Educators Employment Act, 1998. The Executing Authority cannot visit schools to inform them about the no fees policy and how it works. This is very clear in the words of a respondent who says that the Executing Authority is interested in the outcomes

and whether administration is achieving the political mandate. The administration of the Department of Education should bring positive results as expected by the Executing Authority. The arguments about Executing Authority and Accounting Officer's roles and functions hit the bull's eye in terms of what the legislation expects from both offices. The idea can be traced back to the Freedom Charter that argues that the doors of education should be open for all. This information is valid and reliable because it is happening in the public schools that are funded by public money.

### **4.3 IMPLEMENTING POLITICAL MANDATES**

The implementation of the political mandates and priorities depends on the allocation of resources, e.g. finance, human resources, equipment, capital resources, transport, etc. The respondents at Assistant Manager's level view the Accounting Officer as the person to whom the Executing Authority delegates powers that are inclusive of finance, human resources and all administrative responsibilities. The Accounting Officer is the manager of resources in the Department of Education in Limpopo. The personnel, made up of professionals and non-professionals, make use of these resources to produce expected results and skills. Furthermore, respondents say that the Public Finance Management Act explains that the Accounting Officer is responsible for human resources (HR), finances and infrastructure. The Accounting Officer should recommend to the Executing Authority, but it is not the case in the Department of Education in Limpopo. The Executing Authority and Accounting Officer had poor working relations that led to mistrust, resulting in the Accounting Officer being stripped of appointment powers, alleged one of the respondents. It is hard to understand how a healthy legislated interface with good intentions could function without people. It is also unacceptable for an Executing Authority and Accounting Officer to be personal about public resources. It is strange to appoint employees without the knowledge of their managers or supervisors. This is an attempt to mix water with oil, which has been scientifically proven to be an impossible mixture. The

appointments that the Accounting Officer does not know about create poor working relations which may lead to poor performance. An unhealthy interface has the capacity to ground a department.

In the respondent's view, the Accounting Officer is responsible in terms of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999, (PFMA) as amended, for the utilisation of all resources entrusted to the Department of Education (DoE) in Limpopo. The Accounting Officer takes responsibility for misappropriation of funds by all employees in the administration. He/she accounts every year to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA). Respondents allege that the Executing Authority appoints personnel without the involvement of the Accounting Officer. This shows problems that are clarified by the outcroppings model (Fetterman in Neuman, 2000:441). The outcroppings model shows that the little evidence exposed on the surface is representative of the bedrock below the surface. When this theory is applied to the scenario painted of the Department of Education in Limpopo, it also implies that there is more to the mistrust than is visible on the surface.

#### **4.4 CAUSES OF UNDER-PERFORMANCE**

According to the legislation protocol the interface needs the elected Executing Authority and the appointed Accounting Officer to create a smooth and peaceful working environment. The interface further needs personnel that should perform the duties of the organisation. A working environment presupposes a working relationship. The respondent reports that the Executing Authority once insisted on advertising a post against the Accounting Officer's advice that there were no funds. The same situation was repeated when books were bought without a budget for them, respondents alleged.

The picture painted of the working environment of the Executing Authority and the Accounting Officer was that it was not cordial and worker friendly. If the

Accounting Officer was forced to advertise a post and hire an officer, the hired officer would immediately enter a tense working environment. The normal administration process requires officials to acquire approval for spending public money. The Accounting Officer responsible for the Department of Education in Limpopo's resources should approve the spending of resources in a tense environment. The office of the Executing Authority staff would threaten the Accounting Officer by using the Executing Officer to comply with their requests, the respondent alleged. Under-performance started at the highest level of the interface. If the policy formulation level of the Limpopo Department of Education was not working in harmony, what performance could be expected from the implementers of the mandates?

The Executing Authority and Accounting Officer should complement each other. The Executing Authority and Accounting Officer need to share one vision which may need programmes to be implemented that are informed by the available budget. The Public Service Regulations, 2001 (as amended) Part 2, provides the Executing Authority with powers to delegate authority to the Accounting Officer. Respondents alleged that the Executing Authority would want to implement more programmes than resources were available for, and the Accounting Officer would disagree. If the additional programmes came after planning and they were unfunded mandates, the Accounting Officer would first find out what sacrifices could be made. This is where Chief Finance Officer is needed to advise on financial matters. If funds are not permitting, the Accounting officer will disagree. The scenario presented has the capacity for causing tension. This could be the reason why one respondent argued that he/she is still to see a tension-free relationship. One believes that tensions are for people to resolve rather than to allow them to erode the performance of the organisation.

Some respondents found tension normal in a relationship. It is even more difficult if the vision is not the same. It is further worsened by making the differences of the interface known to the public. Respondents made the observation that in

management meetings, it was difficult to discern the beginning and end of politics. Furthermore, communication was not good between the two authorities and the Department was divided into two groups.

The respondents at senior management level found that it was difficult to draw a line as to who had powers in the administration. Sometimes respondents could read two parallel administrations, one led by the Executing Authority while the other was led by the Accounting Officer. This evidence shows the symptoms of a sick interface. Over and above all allegations, respondents said that the Executing Authority viewed the Accounting Officer as sabotaging the political agenda when the Accounting Officer could not buy books for a library, but could buy books for use by learners in class. The relationship between the officers of the Executing Authority and Accounting Officer was so strange that policy directives were issued from a junior person in the office of the Executing authority. The Accounting Officer could not commit his office to such directives. The discussion reliably validated the fact that the interface in the Department of Education in Limpopo needs a decisive remedy.

#### **4.5 SEPARATION OF POWERS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

The powers referred to are the powers of the offices of the Executing Authority and the Accounting Officer. This is where the interface of the Department of Education in Limpopo rests. Section 2 of the Constitution (1996:3) says that the Constitution is the supreme law of the Republic. Laws or conducts inconsistent with it are invalid, and the obligation imposed by it must be fulfilled. This is where the strength of the Republic of South Africa lies, because nobody or any law is above the Constitution. The interface of the Department of Education in Limpopo has its foundation grounded in the Constitution. The Executing Authority and the Accounting Officer are all operating within the prescriptions of the Constitution.

The interface is a regulated sphere or arena that is governed by a set of rules and regulations. In terms of the Executive Code of Ethics, members must perform duties and exercise their powers diligently and honestly. The Executing Authority cannot wilfully mislead the Legislature, the President and the Premier. The Executing Authority cannot act in an unethical manner (Handbook for Members of the Executing and Presiding Officers, 2003:5). The Accounting Officer has appropriate powers and authority delegated to her/him by the Executing Authority. The Accounting Officer delegates authority to administrators at different levels (Public Service Regulations, regulation 11 A and B, 2001:11 as amended). The Public Finance Management Act (1999:44-68) outlines the Accounting Officer's responsibilities.

The respondents at senior management level agree that the Executing Authority has legislative powers to appoint personnel. The Executing Authority may delegate the powers to appoint. The Accounting Officer appoints in terms of the Educators Employment Act (EEA). The public service is a regulated environment. Practically everybody in the Department of Education is expected to know the law and regulations of his/her area of operation. The Accounting Officer needs PFMA and related regulations to implement all of the Executing Authority's mandates. One respondent was of the opinion that the management is there to support the Executing Authority and that the success of the Department is the success of the Executing Authority. The moment there is a rift between Management and Executing Authority, then the whole department will be doomed. It has been observed by respondents that sometimes the Executing Authority wants to implement and carry out both political and administrative functions. The researcher, who is an employee of the Department of Education in Limpopo, has observed that posts were advertised but could not be filled. The non-filling of posts has led to a totally burnt-out staff, which cannot carry the burden any longer.

In the previous discussion an observation of conflict in the interface was made. The roles in legislation are clearly indicated, but it is resurfacing that the Executing Authority may want to carry out administrative functions. This means that the Executing Authority may be found implementing, while there is an Accounting Officer to carry out this task. One respondent alleged, for example, that administratively they were not trusted and people from the Legislature were invited to interview junior officials, something they found unreasonable and improper. It stands to reason that Members of the Legislature are equivalent to the Executing Authority and if they are invited to interview junior officials, the question is, who invites them and for what reason? Members' judgment was that it was improper to shortlist and interview juniors, and that it showed lack of trust in the implementer.

Members of the Legislature were aware that they were crossing into the administrative sphere/area. The assumption was that the Executing Authority had invited the members of the Legislature on account of lack of trust in the Administration to interview junior officials. Junior officials start from Deputy Director level, downwards, or Chief Education Specialist in terms of the Employment of Educators Act. One respondent quoted the Premier as saying that politicians were hired in administration and that is why administrators were playing politics and that the Minister of Labour also believed that politics in administration did not help with service delivery. Another respondent believed that in the history of the Department there had been no understanding of the interface.

#### **4.6 ETHICAL CONDUCT IN THE INTERFACE**

The Executing Authority is expected to disclose and declare all conflicts of interest, gifts and financial interest. For example, the Executive Ethics Code 3.7 says that when the administration of a member's interest has been placed under control of a person as contemplated in paragraph 3.6 (b), the member may not,

during the course of his or her term as member, have any communication with or give any instruction to that person regarding the interests or the administration or control thereof, save for the purpose of complying with any legal requirement (Handbook for Members of the Executive and Presiding Officers, 2003:7). Schedule 2 of the Constitution (1996:147) Section 5 is about taking an oath, by Members of Provincial Executive Councils.

The Accounting Officer is also expected, among others, in terms of section 38(1) (c) (ii) and (iii) and (h) (i) and (iii) of PFMA, to "take effective and appropriate steps to ... prevent unauthorised , irregular ... manage available working capital efficiently and economically ... take disciplinary steps against any official who contravenes or fails to comply with a provision of this Act...".

Ethical conduct is much concerned with the resources of the Department of Education in Limpopo. The Accounting Officer is legally responsible for all use of resources by her/himself and all other officials. Among others, three respondents found the Accounting Officer to be swift to act against corrupt officials to the extent that the Accounting Officer would contravene the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act 66 of 1995) when dealing with unethical behaviour. More than half of the respondents gave one example about a provider who supplied chemicals for pit toilets in public schools. The supplier was assisted by some officials in the Department of Education in Limpopo to claim more money than was justified by the amount that had been supplied. The Limpopo Department of Education was able to reclaim the money after a lengthy court process. The officials were charged but they won the case.

The above case proves that the Accounting Officer who is responsible for resources does not like unethical conduct at all and neither does the Executing Authority. The officials in the Department were problematic. For example, a member of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) found that no Assets Register was maintained at Mopani regional office, which register had not

been updated at head office. Several trip authorisations, log sheets and maintenance files delivered could not be submitted for audit purpose due to poor filing (SCOPA Report: 2004). It is only one percent of respondents and actually in senior management level that believed that the Accounting Officer did very little or nothing to stop corruption.

The Accounting Officer is responsible for every wrong-doing by his subordinates. The respondents at general management level said that they had signed a statement of intent to deal with corruption immediately. It is a matter for concern when the Accounting Officer is silent on officials who undermine the PFMA in terms of expenditure, personnel expenditure, and transport and asset management (SCOPA Report: 2004). The Department had more than 200 posts approved and for more than a year the Department failed to fill the approved posts. When the Department of Education in Limpopo fails to deliver services on account of lack of capacity, the public will not accept the excuses for non-delivery of services. This is where the offices of the Accounting Officer and the Executing Authority are being totally unfair to the public.

An observation is that funds for the appointments, and training and development were not utilised to enhance service delivery. The Human Resources Management budget was under-spent because no personnel budget for appointed was utilised, while Human Resources Development did not sufficiently train personnel. In some sections of the Department, employees have been working long hours (overtime) for more than a year due to overload. Unethical activities emerge within the system even though counteracting systems are in place.

#### **4.7 CONFLICT OF INTEREST IN THE INTERFACE**

The respondents at assistant management level found cases of conflict of interest to be caused by the appointments that were based on ethnicity. The

perception is difficult to either accept or dispute. The appointments might be made on the basis of the constituency of the Executing Authority. If the view of the constituency holds water, then there might be no argument against it. The Limpopo Province has different population groups, i.e. Afrikaans, English, Northern Sotho, Xitsonga and Venda-speaking people. If trust and constituency affected appointments at management level, it may be difficult to say that ethnicity has an influence on appointments. It is very difficult to dispute allegations that appointments are made on the basis of ethnicity, while the constituency is within ethnic groups.

The politicians may want to serve their villages. The Executing Authority gives services first to his/her constituency for the sake of votes. This is the perception of the respondents. The votes are part of the constituency; the village is the host of the constituency, votes and ethnic groups. It is therefore very difficult to deal with the matter if the Public Service Act and Regulations give the Executing Authority the power to appoint. It would be difficult to avoid even if it were any other person.

'If you see fire and flames and people walk through the flames and nobody burns, why should one be afraid of such a fire?' a respondent remarked after making an observation that people survived even though they committed gross breaches of ethics and the Accounting Officer was not able to take them to task. The PFMA provides the hottest fire, but unethical officers found a home in the PFMA. For example, one respondent noticed that a lady withheld information relating to an official who received R10 000 that was meant to buy a Public Schools Nutrition Programme (PSNP) tender and failed to win the tender. The Standing Committee on Public Accounts comes out strongly against the Accounting Officer each year, but there are no examples set regarding unethical conduct.

#### **4.8 CHALLENGES OF THE INTERFACE**

The Department of Education in Limpopo lacks capacity to implement its plans. The Department has not been appointing educators for a very long time because there are no educators with the required skills, but there have been temporary educators for more than ten years. The researcher not only observed the Executing Authority appointing temporary educators in his speech during the official announcement of grade twelve results, but he also issued a media briefing. There has been no appointment at operational level for more than seven years. The implication is that learners are not supported, educators are not supported, and those who can support teachers and, indirectly, learners, are over-stretched and demoralised. The researcher discovered that there is agreement on this matter across all levels of management.

Poor communication has been observed by respondents at senior management level between the Accounting Officer and the Executing Authority. If the two offices cannot sit and prepare before scheduled management meetings, what about other levels of the management of the Department? Ensuring that each employee has his/her responsibilities in written form would help the employees to focus on production and performance. The researcher has observed that the Department of Education in Limpopo has plans, but employees do not have job descriptions, something that can weaken an organisation's performance. This is the beginning of failure. One respondent said that the departmental organisational structure should match the strategy. A structure that matches the strategy, but without personnel, cannot produce results.

The lack of delegation of authority to all relevant levels, e.g. Senior General Managers to General Managers, from General Managers to Senior Managers, Deputy Managers and Assistant Managers, is critical. The department should also monitor, evaluate and support the officials on delegated authority. One respondent asserted that delegation of authority goes with trust in the officials.

Staff development linked to real career paths should be improved. The Baseline Implementation Guide (1999:27) advises constitutional institutions that human resource planning is about determining the demand for, and the supply of competencies that are critical to achieving strategic objectives. This information is not only a challenge but also a threat to the Department of Education in Limpopo.

#### **4.9 CONCLUSION**

The study has consistently addressed itself to the interface and its alleged grey area. Important information relating to the strengths and weaknesses of the interface in Limpopo Department of Education has been uncovered. The diagnosis made in the interface calls for remedies as a means to reorganise and rebuild this important organ of government. The quality and quantity of the output of the Provincial Education Department, which is challenged by its crippling rural nature, is important for the development of its people.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study has given attention to the offices of the Executing Authority and Accounting Officer. It has become clear that the Executing Authority is an elected member of a ruling party and he/she carries the political mandate. The Accounting Officer responsible for the implementation of political mandates with given resources is an employee reporting directly to the Executing Authority. An interface is a situation of political and administration relationships. It appears that the interface between the Executing Authority and the Accounting Officer determines the operation and progress of the Department.

The Executing Authority's knowledge and understanding of the situation of the interface is critical. This is similarly applicable to the Accounting Officer. The interface has been referred to as a grey area that is interesting and attractive for Public Administration. The Department of Education in Limpopo is part of a young democracy that is learning to navigate through the interface model, the "complementary administration model".

This debate narrows down to one point, that is, that an interface is a fluid, complex, ever-changing environment and therefore it requires professional people who understand it. This is reason enough to view an interface or dichotomy as a grey area.

It has been the intention of the study to investigate the nature and extent of the politics and administration interface. The researcher intended to attempt to provide mechanisms to resolve the grey area in the interface of the Department of Education in Limpopo.

The nature and extent of politics has presented itself as complex in that it involves a number of issues, e.g. delegation of authority, implementation of priorities and mandates, availability of resources, and the conduct of politicians and administrators.

The implementation of mandates and priorities needs skills that cannot be divorced from the delegation of powers. The skills and knowledge of the employee are critical. The interface is about politics and administration and therefore the required skill cannot be separated from the conduct of both the Executing Authority and Accounting Officer. Schedule 2 of the Constitution, Section 5, requires that the Executing Authority should conduct himself/herself in a particular manner. This is further cemented by the Handbook for Members of the Executive and Presiding Officers (2003) which talks about Executive ethics code. The Accounting Officer's conduct is controlled by the Public Finance Management Act (1999) as amended. It is interesting that while the interface seems to be over-regulated, there is still an opportunity of a revolving door through which service delivery is carried.

This conduct is possible in an interface that is sufficiently regulated. The conduct provided shows that the human element in a regulated interface has the potential to unsettle the interface. These are the complexities of the public/private partnership in servicing the public. There are possible overt and covert relationships between constitutional institutions, in particular in the Department of Education in Limpopo.

The outlining of chapters captured the limitations of the study, which practically presented a challenge. The researcher could not access the Executing Authority for interviews. One senior official was transferred to another department. Though a breakthrough was made, it was difficult to have appointments for interviews honoured by respondents because of business matters of the Department.

According to Chapter one (1) of this study the researcher wanted to investigate the problem relating to the poor relationship between the office of the Executing Authority and that of the Accounting Officer. The investigation is therefore on the interface. This is the grey area that was studied through a number of methods provided in Chapter one (interview, observation and documentation). It was in this chapter that the researcher made an undertaking to find possible mechanisms to overcome the challenges of the interface in the Department of Education in Limpopo. The proposed mechanism to examine the challenges of the interface would follow a diagnosis of the interface. The subsequent chapter two (2) studied the relevant literature available on the subject of the study. The following interface models were presented:

- (a) Political Bureaucratic model
- (b) Depoliticised models
- (c) Complementary models
- (d) The British permanent model
- (e) The American hybrid model

The presented bureaucratic models have different approaches to the interface. The researcher discovered that all bureaucratic models present their strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, there is no perfect bureaucratic model, but the circumstances in which a particular model is applied need to be safe and protected. The operators of the interface need to have sufficient knowledge and understanding of their circumstances and vision.

Chapter three (3) of the study presented a method relevant to a social study of a sensitive topic. It is in this chapter that the size of the sample was determined. The target was identified. The instrument for data collection was developed. It is in this report where methods of data analysis and interpretation such as the “outcroppings” and “bulls eye = A perfect measure” assisted to contextualise the meaning of the primary and secondary data to the interface under study. This chapter is the centre of the study because it connects entire chapters together.

According to chapter four (4), the data needed for revelation of the nature and extent of the politics and administration is processed and presented. The chapter under discussion captured the legislative framework of the interface. This provided the researcher with an opportunity to benchmark how interface issues were practised by both the offices of the Executing Authority and the Accounting Officer in the Department of Education in Limpopo. It came out clearly that the interface was rooted internally and externally in the sense that the Executing Authority related to the ruling party that would from time to time review mandates and priorities. Internally the Accounting Officer has subordinates affected by the elements of the interface. It was also revealed that administrative officers are social creatures that relate to the public privately and officially. The challenges of the public/private partnership are dealt with by the officials in the lower ranks in the bureaucracy. This is where the road surface is in physical contact with the tyre (Thornhill, 2005:182).

Based on the critical issues raised in the study, the following recommendations are made:

- (a) The Complementary model utilised in the South African interface is based on political belonging and trust. The fruits of the model are too many politicians, who are not specialists in their area of employment, who are unable to produce the expected results. The developing democracy proves that in the near future the complementary model will be inappropriate. Therefore, a permanent bureaucratic model is recommended for the Department of Education in Limpopo. The permanent model will help the Department to appoint professionals who are non partisan.
- (b) The interface in the Department of Education in Limpopo is new to both politicians and administrators. This is strengthened by the knowledge that the new government has employed a majority of

politicians and administrators who have not been exposed to an interface before. It is recommended that the deliberate establishment of training in the political-administration interface be considered as a step towards overcoming challenges of the existing interface. The target will be all administrators and the Executing Authority.

- (c) The socio-economic environment, which is inclusive of public/private partnerships, poses an unethical challenge to the administrators. It is therefore recommended that ethics be a requirement for employment in government administration. Furthermore, every three years all administrators should be exposed to a refresher course in ethics.
  
- (d) The study on the interface in the Department of Education in Limpopo has made it clear that communication is poor, staff is demoralised (unhappy and overworked), and working relations are poor. The recommendation is that research be conducted on the following:
  - I. What are the benefits of a good communication system?
  - II. What are the causes of poor working relationships?

The interface should be studied continuously and the result should be widely published to assist a new developing country and democracy.

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Mafunisa, MJ. 2003. *Seperation of politics from the South African public service: Rhetoric or reality*. Journal of Public Administration. Volume 38 No.2, March.

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Webb, W. 2005. *Applying the public service anti-corruption strategy in pursuit of accountable South African public administration*. Journal of Public Administration. Volume 40 No.2, June.

## **WEBSITES**

[www.liasiisa.be](http://www.liasiisa.be)

## APPENDIX A

Box 4662  
Polokwane  
0700  
23 November 2005

The Head of Department  
Department of Education  
Corner 113 Biccard & 24 Exelsior street  
Private Bag X 9489  
POLOKWANE  
0700

Sir/Madam

### **REQUEST TO COLLECT DATA IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

1. This letter serves as an annexure to the letter dated 22 November 2005 from the Acting Director at Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership: Prof. DR Thakhathi.
2. The purpose of this letter is to request permission to conduct research from the Department of Education. The target for data collection is the Executing Authority, the Accounting Officer, Senior General Managers, General Managers, Senior Managers, Managers and Deputy Managers. The study is restricted to head office. The data collection should be done in this year, 2005.
3. Relevant documents will be requested to support the data collection.

Regards,

Mogashoa M.W

## APPENDIX B

Corner 113 Biccard &  
24 Exelsior street  
Private Bag X9489  
Polokwane 0700  
Tel: 015-290 7600  
Fax: 015-297 6920  
015-297 4220  
015-297 4494

Enquiries: Mokoka MB  
Telephone: 015 290 7918  
Fax: 015 297 2690  
Reference: 2/5/6/1

Mogashoa M.W  
P.O Box 4662  
Polokwane  
0700

Dear Student

### **Application for Permission to conduct Research**

1. Your letter of application dated 30 November 2005 bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request for permission to conduct research at Head Office in Polokwane is approved. The title of the research is 'The interface between politics and administration in Limpopo Department of Education'.
3. However, the following condition must be adhered to:
  - 3.1. The research should not have any financial implication for Limpopo Department of Education.
  - 3.2. Arrangement should be made with the relevant offices for the timeslot that would be convenient to all the parties.
  - 3.3. The research is conducted in line with ethics in research. In particular, the principle of voluntary participation in this research should be respected.

- 3.4. You share with the department, the final product of your study upon completion of the research assignment.
4. It is expected of you to produce this letter at offices where you will be conducting your research, as evidence that permission for this activity has been granted.
5. The Department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

DATE:1/12/2005

## APPENDIX C

Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership  
P.O Box 756  
FAUNA PARK  
0787  
22 November 2005

THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT  
Corner 113 Biccard &  
24 Excelsior Street  
Private bag X9489  
POLOKWANE  
0700

Dear Sir/Madam

### **REQUEST TO COLLECT DATA IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

The University of Limpopo, Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership is requesting permission for Mr Mogashoa M.W (Story) to collect data through interviews and relevant documents. Mr Mogashoa MW is a student in the MPA (Masters in Public Administration) programme.

Dr MH Kanyane is the supervisor for the student mentioned above. The supervisor's details are: Cell. 082 324 1338, Tel. 015 290 2825/32. His topic is. **"The interface between politics and administration in the Limpopo Department of Education."**

The student is expected to be ethical in conduct throughout his research.

Yours Faithfully

Prof. DR Thakhathi  
Acting Director: TGSL

## APPENDIX D

### QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW: DATA COLLECTION 2005

#### **Topic: The interface between politics and administration in the Limpopo Department of Education**

1. How do you understand political administration in the Department of Education?
2. How is/was the relationship of the offices of both the MEC and the Head of Department?
3. Why should the MEC appoint the management in the Department of Education?
4. Explain the concept Accounting Officer as the Head of Department.
5. Explain how corruption is/has been handled /treated in the Department of Education.
6. How does the job description of the Head of Department differ from that of the Executing Authority?
7. Why does there seem to be an overdose of politics and administration in the Department of Education?
8. What could be the causes of conflict of interest on the part of the Political Head of the Provincial Department of Education?

9. What could be the causes of the administrative conflict of interest in the Provincial Department of Education in Limpopo?
  
10. What are the challenges that are faced by both the MEC and the Head of the Department?
  
11. What solutions do you propose for the proper interface between politics and administration in the Department of Education?