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MANUSCRIPT SPECIFICATIONS

1. The length of the article should be confined to a range of 4500-6000 words.
2. An article should consist of an abstract of between 200 and 300 words and keywords of between 3-6 words.
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http://www.polity.org.za/govdocs/policy/ grow/ .Accessed 14 January 2016.

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EDITORIAL

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The promise of globalisation and interconnectedness for collective societal progress is increasingly becoming mythical with the surprising popularity of nationalist political parties and leaders in the industrialized north. The heightened attacks on innocent civilians by those described as terrorists across the world, especially in France, Belgium, Nigeria, Egypt, Libya, Germany, Russia and Britain, are difficult to comprehend. The unending wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria are perfect examples of the failures of the international relations; and, the unending missile tests in the people's Republic of North Korea demonstrates the fissures in the global governance, management and administration of geopolitics. Simultaneously, the hyperbole of a global knowledge economy, which created a race among nations seeking to participate productively through competent human capital, regionalism, free trade and modernist infrastructure has been questioned with the BRIXIT wherein the United Kingdom voters elected to withdraw from the European Union. Close to South Africa, Zimbabwe has appeared to build a dynasty regime around the 93-year-old President Robert Mugabe. The question of the linkages between such global events and national circumstances remains unresolved. President Donald Trump's success at the USA's 2016 national ballot box amidst his divisive rhetoric, the suspicion that the Russian regime has interfered to shape the outcomes of national polls and the unprecedented Constitutional Court ruling against President Jacob Zuma in regard to the Nkandla Complex is evidently desperate and unconnected events. The complexity of the prevailing global events such as these is not only raising eye brows, instead it also tacitly questions the received philosophies about the substance and value of public administration and development choices.

In South Africa itself, 2008 and 2015 saw African against Africans in a widespread phenomenon commonly denoted violent and, sometimes, fatal xenophobic attacks. However, one denominator of widespread poverty, inequality, deprivation, intolerance, hostilities, discrimination, racial animosities, hatred, absence of opportunity and such other societal evil, define all the contested national and global events. The electoral underperformance at the ballot box on the part of the former liberation movement in South Africa, the African National Congress (ANC), during the August 2016 local government elections. That occurrence has apparently surprised many, including most academics, commentators, politicians and the public, thereby injecting unprecedented intellectual thrill. In the public domain, news of 'Jesus' being spotted elsewhere in South Africa were trending on social media as sarcasm and scorn directed at those who had bullishly believed and proclaimed that the ANC's grip on state power would persist with permanency. To this extent, the scholarship engagements of the *Journal of*

Public Administration and Development Alternatives (JPADA) have become crucial and topical in the current era in order to establish cognitive order in a social reality that appears chaotic. The emergent social reality, as described above, is steeply complex and multifaceted; and, this edition of the *JPADA* addresses seven pertinent aspects thereof.

As the adage suggests, it is prudent to act locally whilst thinking globally. **Sekgala** is concerned with the functions and dysfunctions of the ward committees in South Africa, which were established as surrogates for public participation in decision-making within local governments. Sekgala examines the national legislative and institutional frameworks to identify challenges faced by ward committees within South Africa's globally acclaimed liberal democracy. In reality, Sekgala argues, ward committee have faced teething challenges, especially in respect of influencing the decision-making processes, largely precipitated by existing local municipal governance.

Shai takes a futuristic approach that seeks to establish leadership lessons from student movements in South Africa, in a continental context wherein cultural determinism could be pardoned for thinking that every other cohort of new political elite is destined to degenerate into reflexive patrimonialists. From an optimistic perspective, Shai advocates for the inclusion of youth leaders as potential candidates in South Africa's political party electoral processes. Shai envisions a seamless historical process of political posterity that would never allow for the creation of a generation that is devoid of civic activism and institutional memory. In the final analysis, Shai laments the opportunity costs in South Africa's politics wherein youth leadership, through student movements, are fruitlessly exploited for political party factional contestations and battles.

Kyohairwe finds recourse in inclusive and equitable universal quality primary education, as the basic input in national socio-economic development. Using evidence from Ugandan practice, Kyohairwe demonstrates that since 1997 when Universal Primary Education (UPE) was introduced, substantial gains have been made towards increasing total enrolment and achieving gender parity. However, Kyohairwe laments public policy evaluations that persistently downplayed the relevance of UPE quality. Whilst appreciating the numerous UPE achievements, Kyohairwe finds that special needs children remained marginalized whilst the quality was uneven and far less inclusive across the nation. Kyohairwe recommends for the strengthening of teacher recruitment, capacity building and UPE Grant, as well as review of policy on parents' contribution and elimination of the tendency for politicisation.

One of the protracted challenges in Africa's attempts to create a pool of competent human capital for productive participation in the global knowledge economy for nation progress has been in the bottlenecks related to access to higher education. **Wanyama, Kyohairwe and Karyeija** deal with the contribu-

tions of student loan schemes towards the enhancement of access to higher education in Makerere University. The primary focus is on the prospects of efficiency of the loan scheme and national expansion of access to higher education. From a sample of 157 respondents, Wanyama, Kyohairwe & Karyeija find positive relationships between student loan coverage, repayment, targeting and access to higher education. They propose that the loan scheme should be revised to address issues of eligibility, fairness of selection criteria, increased access, inclusion of postgraduate studies, acceptability of repayment arrangement as well as coverage of both academic and non-academic expenses.

Mzangwa identifies the triple socio-economic challenges in South Africa as consequences of inconsiderate and ineffective leadership. First, the author describes the significant role that government and trade union leaders should play to enhance economic growth and confront the triple challenges of inequality, poverty and unemployment. For South Africa, Mzangwa identifies political and trade union leaders, specifically those in the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP), as major role-players in the formulation of economic policies regulating labour matters via platforms such as the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) and other bargaining councils. The author finds that these leaders have instead colluded in ways that derail socio-economic development, thereby being culpable in perpetuating severity of the triple challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment. To this extent, Mzangwa finds the leadership to be both inconsiderate and ineffective.

One political challenge that has captivated South Africa, especially in 2008 and 2015, involved violent xenophobic attacks among Africans themselves. **Dzomonda, Tirivangasi and Masocha** examine entrepreneurship education as a panacea for redressing xenophobic tendencies. Their assumption is that xenophobic attacks are precipitated by the erroneous perceptions that foreigners take away business opportunities from the nationals; and, they believe that these deleterious perceptions are fuelled by the void of entrepreneurial expertise and skills among nationals. Dzomonda, Tirivangasi & Masocha believe that the looting of goods and burning-down of foreigners' Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) establishments during such violent xenophobic attacks is the clearest indicator of the factors underlying that erroneous perception. To this extent, these authors advocate for entrepreneurship education in the hope that it would redress the negative perceptions. Their claim is that xenophobic attacks are perpetrated due to frustration among the native SME owners who are unable to compete with their foreign-owned counterparts. It is expected that entrepreneurship education would provide technical business skills that raise self-employment awareness as a career opportunity as well as promote the development of personal qualities relevant to entrepreneurship such as creativity, risk taking and responsibility.

Galukande- Kiganda and Mzini's article explores the implementation of decentralised local governance in Uganda and the factors that inhibit the realisation of a decentralised local governance. According to these authors there is a concern among scholars, practitioners and the civil society to generate a balanced assessment of the governance achievements and challenges facing the local government in Uganda from 1997- 2016.

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WARD COMMITTEE CHALLENGES IN SOUTH AFRICA'S LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES: FUNCTIONS AND DYSFUNCTIONS

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ABSTRACT

In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), local municipalities have established ward committees as a means of involving stakeholder communities in public affairs. Community participation is firmly entrenched as a pillar of local government in a democratic South Africa. Municipalities are encouraged to work with people in order that they may not seek to be passive beneficiaries; and, the Municipal Structures Act (117 of 1998) provides for the modus operandi for the creation of ward committees. As platform for public participation, ward committees are expected to facilitate communication between municipalities and communities as well as enhance participatory democracy at local level through decision-making processes. In reality, though, ward committee have faced teething challenges, especially in respect of influencing the decision-making processes. This article examines the functions and dysfunctions of ward committees precipitated by the prevalent challenges in the municipal decision-making processes. The article concludes that the challenges faced by the ward committees are associated with the existing local municipal governance.

Keywords: Ward Committees, Ward Councillors, Municipalities, Power, Municipal Councils, South Africa

1. INTRODUCTION

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa requires municipalities to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government (RSA, 1996, section 152 (1) (e)). All municipalities are mandated to be developmental. Developmental local government is a local government committed to working with locals and groups within the society to discover sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives (RSA, 1998: 23). Both Municipal Systems Act (32 of 2000) and Municipal Structures Act (117 of 1998) give effect to provision of the Constitution regarding involvement of the communities in municipalities. The Municipal Structures Act provides that municipalities which are allowed to establish ward com-

mittees may establish ward committees (RSA, 1998). Therefore, municipalities are not obliged to establish ward committees. These ward committees were introduced in municipalities as community structures to play a critical role in linking and informing the municipalities about the needs, aspirations, potentials and problems of the communities (Mgwebi, 2014). Although it is optional, ward committees have been established in more than 80% of the wards in South Africa (Department of Provincial and Local Government, 2005: 1).

It has been established that the system of ward committee has not lived up to its potential to enhance community participation (Naidu, 2011; Masango, Mfene & Henna, 2013). For instance, Naidu (2011: 10) stated that the role of ward committees in democratic governance and in the facilitation of public participation is one characterised by failure. On their part, Masango, Mfene & Henna (2013) stated that it appears that ward committees' performance is not satisfactory and that has negatively impacted on the pursuance and realisation of the objectives of ward committees. The rationale behind this conclusion is that many ward committees, if not all, are facing multitude of challenges which hinder their performance. These challenges are lack of skills by members of ward committees, lack of influence on the decisions of municipal councils, issues surrounding representation in the ward committees, lack of access to information by ward committees, resource constraints and the fact that ward committees lack real powers.

2. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF WARD COMMITTEES

When a local or metro council resolves to establish ward committees, it must establish a ward committee for each ward in the municipality (RSA, 1998, section 73 (1)). It therefore means that metropolitan or local council cannot establish a ward committee to a specific or particular ward to the exclusion of other wards. Above all metropolitan or local council have discretion to start ward committees, it is not legally bound to establish ward committees. Moreover, metropolitan or local council have power to disband ward committees if they fail to fulfil their purpose (RSA, 1998, section 78). However, it is advisable to establish a ward committee because its objective is to enhance participatory democracy in local government (RSA, 1998, section 172 (3)). Moreover, ward committee should disperse information within the ward, assists to rebuild partnership for better service delivery and also assist with problems experienced by the people in the ward (Putu, 2006). Ward committee serves as an independent advisory and representative body which must act impartial and perform its functions without fear, favour or prejudice

(regulation 4 (2) of the Guidelines for the Establishment and Operation of Municipal Ward Committees Notice 965 of 2005 (hereinafter GEOMWCN)).

All ward committees must comprise of the councillors who represent those wards in municipal council and not more than 10 other people (RSA, 1998, section 73 (2) (a) & (b)). The councillors who represent the ward in municipal council must be the chairpersons of the ward committees (RSA, 1998, section 73 (2) (a)). These councillors are often referred to as ward councillors. A metro or local council is required to make rules which will regulate the procedure to elect the 10 members of a ward committee, taking into account the need for women to be equitably represented in a ward committee and for a diversity of interests in the ward to be represented (RSA, 1998, section 73 (3) (a)).

The law prescribes that there are certain, not all, metro and local municipalities that may have ward committees. In the case of metros, the following types may have ward committees: a municipality with a collective executive system combined with a ward participatory system (RSA, 1998, section 8 (c)); a municipality with a collective executive system combined with both a sub council and a ward participatory system (RSA, 1998, section 8 (d)); a municipality with a mayoral executive system combined with a ward participatory system (RSA, 1998, section 8 (g)); and, a municipality with a mayoral executive system combined with both a sub-council and a ward participatory system (RSA, 1998, section 8 (h)).

In the case of local municipalities, the following types may have ward committees: a municipality with a collective executive system combined with a ward participatory system (RSA, 1998, section 9 (b)); a municipality with a mayoral executive system combined with a ward participatory system (RSA, 1998, section 9 (d)); and, a municipality with a plenary executive system combined with a ward participatory system (RSA, 1998, section 9 (f)). Note has to be made that all district municipalities are prohibited to establish ward committees. The rationale behind prohibition may be that district municipalities comprise of proportional representation councillors and those appointed by local councils in the district.

3. THE FUNCTIONS OF WARD COMMITTEES

A ward committee may make recommendations on any matter affecting its ward to the ward councillor or through the ward councillor, to the metro or local council, the executive committee, the executive mayor or the relevant metropolitan sub-council (RSA, 1998, section 74). Moreover, ward committee may have powers and duties delegated to it by

metro or local council. With regard to delegation of functions, a municipal council may not delegate a power to pass by-laws, the approval of budgets, the imposition of rates and other taxes, levies and duties and the raising of loans to ward committee or any other committee (RSA, 1996, section 160 (2)).

The guidelines for the establishment and operation of municipal ward committees provide detailed functions and powers which may be delegated to ward committees. Among others, ward committee may serve as a mobilising agent for community action within the ward, through attending to all matters that affect and benefit the community (GEOMWCN, 2005, regulation 5 (3) (c) (i)); acting in the best interest of the community (GEOMWCN, 2005, regulation 5 (3) (c) (ii)); and, ensure that the active participation of the community in service payment campaigns, the integrated development planning process, the municipality's budgetary process, decisions about the provision of municipal services and decisions about by laws (GEOMWCN, 2005, regulation 5 (3) (c) (i)).

4. THE CHALLENGES OF WARD COMMITTEES

Ward committees were created with intention of fulfilling public participation between the local and municipalities. However, ward committees are facing persistent challenges which need to be addressed. The following are the major challenges face by ward committees. In what follows, the paper discusses each challenge separately with a link to governance or legislative solution with the aim of achieving constitutional objective of enhancing public participation.

4.1. Lack of Skills by Ward Committee Members

Lack of skills is one of the major challenges face by not only ward committees but municipalities throughout South Africa. It is important for members of the ward committees to possess skills in order to perform their roles and functions effectively and efficiently. Sometimes it is not only members of ward committees who lack skills but even ward councillors who are chairpersons in the ward committees and representatives of the ward in municipal councils lack skills.

For that reason, Putu (2006) argued that in some cases even the ward councillors could not publicly explain the development decision of municipal councils because they did not comprehend the technicalities. A skills audit of 373 ward committee's members in the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality carried by the project for Conflict Resolution and Development 2008 found that only 34 of the members (9%) had any post matric training or qualification and 59 members (16%) did not have a matric qualification (Smith & De Visser, 2009:18). According to Himlin (2009), in the

City of Johannesburg many ward committee members were not sure about their roles or even how to perform their function. Many of the ward committee members are new to the local governance sector and had not engaged with their municipality on matters of good governance in any way prior to their election in the ward committees (Kabane, 2014). The ward committees' members experience difficulties in digesting the information in the budget and IDP. If ward committee's members are unable to understand such information, how are they going to spread such information to the communities? In order for members of ward committees to research the needs of the communities, they have to be equipped with resources and skills to conduct such research.

Municipality should assist ward committees to prepare an annual capacity building and training needs assessment for members of the committee (GEOMWCN, 2005, regulation 6 (1)). This annual capacity building and training programme should be developed for each member of the ward committee (GEOMWCN, 2005, regulation 6 (1)). After taken into consideration any funds budgeted by the municipality, an annual budget for the capacity building and training programme should be prepared according to the needs assessment (GEOMWCN, 2005, regulation 6 (1)). Therefore, it is necessary for municipalities to budget for the training of ward committee members, failure will result in underperformance of ward committees. Consequently, it will defeat the purpose or intention of public participation through ward committees.

4.2. The Lack of Impact on the Decisions of Municipal Councils

Ward committees are supposed to be platform where communities influence decisions of municipal council. Ward committees are empowered to make recommendations to municipal councils. It is therefore encouraged that ward committees should participate in preparation of their municipality's budget; implementation and review of integrated development plans; monitoring and reviewing of their municipality's performance; and, decisions on the provision of municipal services.

Raga & Taylor (2005) argue that in order for ward committees to function efficiently and in the best interests of their respective communities, they need to be actively involved in the policy-making process in the local sphere of government. Kabane (2014) also argue that ward committees were introduced in municipalities as community structures to play a critical role in linking and informing the municipalities about the needs, aspirations, potentials and problems of the communities.

In order for ward committees to have impact on decisions of mu-

nicipal councils, municipalities must be responsive to the issues raised by ward committees through their ward councillors in the municipal council's meetings. However, ward committee members have indicated the non-responsiveness of municipalities on issues that they have brought to the attention of the municipality (Kabane, 2014). Therefore, it makes hard for ward committees to give feedback to the communities. It must be noted that the Constitution mandates democratic government (all three spheres of government) to ensure accountability, responsiveness and openness (RSA, 1996, section 1 (d)). It may be necessary for the law to stipulate the timeframe within which municipal council may respond to the issues raised by ward committees. Furthermore, it is submitted that ward committee should have a legislative power to summon a mayor at least once in year to attend one meeting and answer the questions asked by the committee members.

Municipalities must strive, within its administrative and financial capacity, to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities (RSA, 196, section 152 (1) (a)). A Ward committee system could be used to bring a mayor close to the people and account to them. When a mayor appears before a ward committee to answer questions, it will enhance the impact of ward committee in municipality.

A legal provision should be made to require ward councillors to table the reports and recommendations made by ward committees in municipal council. Afterwards, municipal council must be given a timeframe to response to all issues raised by ward committees. In order for society to believe in ward committees as a channel communication between them and municipal councils, the decisions of municipal councils should reflect the recommendations of ward committees. It is useless to make recommendations if they are not taken into account. Failure to take views of the ward committees into account will raise a question of credibility over ward committees and their impact in the communities.

4.3. Representation in Ward Committees

One of the major challenges is the way people are nominated or elected to serve in the ward committees. There is an allegation that the ward councillors direct the selection of ward committee members in line with their political affiliations (Kabane, 2014). Another allegation is that ward committee members are, many times, only extensions of party structures and do not encompass the full range of interests in communities (Smith & De Visser, 2009: 16). The inference that can be drawn from partisan ward committees goes beyond just undermining their independent role, but also directly impacts on civil

society, by undermining its ability to engage municipal councils (Piper & Deacon, 2009: 425). Modumo (2010) argues that a councillor as a ward representative in a municipal council has the potential to promote partisan interest. For example, Buffalo City held multi-party caucuses to get inter-party consensus on the nomination process of ward committee members (Good Governance Learning Network, 2008: 26). According to Piper & Deacon (2009), in Msunduzi local municipality the Inter- party competition between the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), the African National Congress (ANC) and Democratic Alliance (DA) ward committees appear to be subject to their respective party's control in terms of both composition and agenda-setting.

These party-politics issues in ward committees are obstacles. Ward committees are required, first, to be representative structure of the whole ward irrespective of party affiliations. Diversity of interests and gender representation must be taken into account when composing a ward committee (GEOMWCN, 2005, regulation 7 (3) & (4)). This reflects the principle of equity and inclusiveness, which ensures that all members of the society, particularly most vulnerable, have a say in the running of that society. Secondly, ward committees must be independent from parties' control, therefore ward committees are not supposed to be the extension of the political parties. Thirdly, ward committees are compelled to be impartial and perform its functions without fear, favour or prejudice. When political party priorities influence ward committees, the impartial representation of the communities becomes compromised.

4.4. Access to Information

Ward committees can be very useful for assessing needs of the community, spreading information, building partnerships, consulting the community and picking up local problems with services. Ward committees should make sure that there is more effective communication between the council and the community (Van Rooyen & Mokoena, 2013: 765). Moreover, ward committees should conduct research to comprehend the needs of the locals, assist with consulting residents on key choices around development, budgets and service delivery and communicate municipal information residents need to access services (Van Rooyen & Mokoena, 2013: 766).

However, Smith & De Visser (2009) assert that the ability of ward committees to function efficiently as communications channels between municipal councils and communities is limited by poor municipal communications strategies and lack of accessible information at ward level. Lack of information and the way in which information has been packaged

seriously precludes any useful input around budget processes and the review of Integrated Development Plans (Naidu, 2011: 4). Masango (2001) argues that a lack of information about the functioning of local government could also limit public participation at local government level. Municipalities need to provide sufficient and simplified information to ward committees. One of the core principles of good governance is transparency, which prescribes that information is freely available and directly accessible to those who will be affected by such decisions and their enforcement (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 2014). It also means that enough information is provided and that it is provided in accessible forms and media (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 2014).

The primary function of ward committees is to be a formal communication channel between the communities and municipal council. Municipalities are mandated to encourage involvement of communities and community organisations in the local government matters (RSA, 1996, section 152 (1) (e)). The purpose of ward committees is to enhance participatory democracy in local government (RSA, 1998, section 172 (3)). In the case of Doctors for Life International v Speaker of the National Assembly and Others (Constitutional Court of South Africa, 2006) the court stated that participatory democracy is of special importance to those who are relatively disempowered in a country like ours where great disparities of wealth and influence exist. It went further to state that the democratic government that is required by the Constitution is a representative and participatory democracy which is accountable, responsive and transparent and which makes provision for the public to participate in the law-making process (Constitutional Court of South Africa, 2006: 121).

The ward committee system can also be viewed as a means of furthering the constitutional requirement of increased accountability, responsiveness, transparent and democratisation in local government (Taylor, 2008: 18). Therefore, ward committees need to be informed by municipal council in order to facilitate communication between municipal council and communities. It is submitted that municipalities should make printed information available to ward committees. If ward committee is unable to understand such information, it is advisable that ward committee call assistance from municipality to unpack such information.

4.5. Resource Constraints

It would be impossible to expect ward committees to function effectively without resources. An obstacle to capacity-building of ward committees points to the

lack of funding at municipalities (Kabane, 2014). Many municipalities have not been in a position to budget for capacity building and training of ward committees (Kabane, 2014). Masango, Mfene & Henna (2013) argued that even municipalities that have budgeted for operation of ward committees, it appears that they have done so out of responsibility rather than out of serious acknowledgement and consideration of the value that ward committees add to the greater governance of municipalities. Piper & Deacon (2008) argue that municipalities need to ensure the correct constitution of ward committees, train ward councillors and ward committee members, provides resources to ward committees and clearly define the role of ward committees in council processes.

Ward committees have raised concern over lack of access to resources such as office space, computers, printers and telephones (Kabane, 2014). This could be expensive for municipalities to provide offices, computers, printers and telephones to ward committees. The municipality is duty bound to provide resources to ward committees according to its financially capacity.

The Constitution mandates municipalities to strive within their financial and administrative capacity, inter alia, to encourage the involvement of the communities and community organisations in the matters of local government (RSA, 1996, section 152). The Borbert South Africa (Pty) Ltd and Others v Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality showed that the municipal council is required to allocate resources for its duty of involving public in the local government matters and to ensure that the political and other structures established by the legislation are employed to meet the objectives of effective public participation (Eastern Cape High Court, 2014: 80). Municipalities must assign each ward committee an annual budget to spend on community projects and subject to establishing clear community consultation guidelines consistent with community based planning for ward committee deliberation (Department of Provincial and Local Government, 2005: 55).

The spending of such annual budget by a ward committee is subject to the financial controls consistent with the Municipal Finance Management Act and the municipal council must oversight ward committee to ensure that an annual budget is utilized in a proper manner (Department of Provincial and Local Government, 2005: 55). This is to prevent the possible abuse of money by ward committees and municipal finance must be used efficiently and effective for the intended purpose.

4.6. No Real Power

The Municipal Structures Act (1998) prescribes that ward committee

may make recommendations on any matter affecting its ward to the ward councillor or through the ward councillor, to the metro or local council, the executive committee, the executive mayor or the relevant metropolitan sub-council (RSA, 1998, section 174 (a)). For that reason, Raga & Taylor (2005) argue that ward committees are purely advisory structures at present and it is doubtful whether they will be able to make a meaningful contribution on behalf of their communities.

However, Naidu (2011) argues that one of the important roles of ward committees as independent bodies is to monitor the performance of councillors and to review the IDP process. Smith (2007) argues that the oversight role of ward committees in relation to municipal performance within the ward and the performance of ward councillors are not clearly defined in the Guidelines for the Establishment and Operation of Municipal Ward Committees.

Moreover, the Municipal Structures Act (1998) vests discretion upon municipal council to delegate powers to ward committees (RSA, 1998, section 74 (b)). Smith & De Visser (2009) argue that it appears that few municipalities have delegated powers to their ward committees. For that reason, ward committees have easily been dismissed as toothless bodies and talk shops (Ministry for Provincial and Local Government, 2007: 54). Ward committees are likely to be more enthusiastic and meaningful if they are empowered in respect of core municipal processes, such as Integrated Development Plan, budget, performance management, performance and strategic decisions on services (Ministry for Provincial and Local Government, 2007: 54).

The Guidelines for the Establishment and Operation of Municipal Ward Committees provides a list of powers and functions which municipalities may be delegated to ward committees. However, delegation of such powers and functions may defer from municipality to municipality depending on the context of such municipality. Be that as it may, it is advisable for municipalities to consider delegating such powers and functions to ward committees. The Constitution prohibits municipal council to delegate the passing of by-law, the approval of budgets, the imposition of rates and other taxes and the raising of loans (RSA, 1996, section 160 (2)). The Guideline on the Establishment of Ward committees also prohibits the delegation of executive powers to ward committee members (RSA, 1996, regulation 5 (3) (d)).

Moreover, a key consideration for both ward committee members and municipal practitioners in deciding on delegations to ward committees should be the preservation of ward committee autonomy (Department of Provin-

cial and Local Government, 2005: 41). This is threatened where ward committees begin to take on decentralised municipal functions like local project management and the administration/supervision of municipal facilities (Department of Provincial and Local Government, 2005: 41).

5. CONCLUSION

Whereas well-intended, the provisions for the establishment of ward committees have not addressed the practical implications of community participation in municipal decision-making processes. The paper concludes that the major challenges of ward committees are defeating the purpose of their establishment; and, several recommendations are offered. First, the municipal councils must budget for training of members of ward committees. After the election of members of ward committees, the training must start as soon as possible.

If members of ward committees are not equipped with necessary skills to discharge their functions, the results will always be not satisfactory. Secondly, municipal councils should reflect the recommendations of ward committees when taking decision. This will help to strengthen the credibility of ward committees and communities will thus trust them as the facilitators of communication between the locals and municipalities. It was further submitted that the law should be amended to allow ward councillors as the chairpersons of ward committees, on the one hand, should start tabling the reports and recommendations in municipal councils. The municipal council, on the other hand must be given a timeframe to response to all issues raised by ward committees. Moreover, the law must be amended to mandates a mayor to attend at least one meeting of every ward committee once year to answer the questions asked by what committee members.

This arrangement will enhance the status and influence of ward committees in the municipal councils. Thirdly, municipalities must make information accessible and simplified in a manner which can be understood by a layman. One of the functions of ward committee is to disperse information in the ward and it can easily be performed if members of the ward committee understand it.

Fourthly, it is indispensable fact that without resource, ward committees will be unable to perform their functions. The lack of resources will lead to dysfunctional ward committee which does not facilitate communication between community and municipal council. It is the mandate of municipalities to facilitate community participation and therefore their structures such as ward committees which aim to enhance the participatory democracy must always be funded so that their work can be done without

financial constraints. The municipalities must provide reasonable resources to ward committees as soon as the members of such ward committees are elected. Finally, municipalities should consider delegating functions to ward committees. Evidence demonstrated that municipalities are not delegating functions which were supposed be delegated to ward committees in terms of the Guidelines for the Establishment and Operation of Municipal Ward Committees.

However, delegation of functions and powers to ward committees should be done within context of each municipality. Before the functions can be delegated, the above challenges need to be addressed because the ward committees should be capable to discharge those functions. In other words, ward committees should possess necessary skills, be able to access information and scrutinize it and facilitate the communication between the municipality and the community.

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YOUTH LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM STUDENT MOVEMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the part played by student movements in boosting the prospects of youth being considered as prospective candidates in the electoral lists of democratic South Africa's political parties. The youth constitute the highest number of potential voters in South Africa's polls; and, evidence demonstrates that youth activism and energy is commonly sought by political parties during electoral campaigns. Despite this, the representation of youth as candidates for South Africa's political parties is below expectation; except for the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF). The poor representation of youth as candidates in the majority of South Africa's political parties raises questions in terms of their (political parties) commitment to youth development. As such, this paper is an attempt to find answers for the following two central research questions: (1) To what extent do the students influence party politics? (2) Are the student's active citizens? The author interrogates these questions using an Afrocentric research methodology, which reinforces the dominant qualitative paradigm. This article concludes that most of student movements in South Africa are used to fight factional battles and in the process; do very little to push for the inclusion of youth candidates during the elections.

Keywords: Leadership, Political Parties, Youth, Student Movements

1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, youth constitute a large portion of most countries and regions. In the case of Africa, it is estimated that 65% of its 1.1 billion populace is under the age of 35 (African Youth and Governance Conference Initiative, 2015). In South Africa, Tracey (2016) notes that during the first Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa's (IEC) voter registration weekend for the 2016 Municipal elections, young people under the age of 30 accounted "for as much as 78.6% of new registrations". This positive development on South Africa's political landscape is something that political parties and observers cannot afford to overlook. It also reignites the interest on youth matters by both politicians and scholars following the #fees must fall campaign across the entire sector of South Africa's higher education since the last quarter of the year 2015 (Buys, 2016; Mancu, 2016; National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union, NEHAWU 2016).

The impressive registration of youth during the IEC's March 2016 registra-

tion drive is a departure from general voter apathy among youth ranks and South Africans at large (Kivilu, Davids, Langa, Maphunye Mncwango, Sedumedi & Struwig, 2005; Shultz-Herzenberg, 2014). That is to say that since the second democratic and inclusive elections in 1999, the number of South Africans and youth in particular, with an interest in electoral matters has dwindled. This dwindling in terms of the total number of potential voters and voters among the youth category is concerning especially if one is to consider that vote franchise is a right that Africans have been deprived from exercising before the dawn of democracy in the early 1990s. It is also worrisome if one is to consider the fact that so many people have sacrificed their lives so that all South Africans across the colour, aged 18 and above could be afforded with an opportunity to vote for their government (Shai, 2009).

One of the dominant narratives of voter apathy among the youth has been the fact that most of them (current crop) have not experienced the wrath of the inhumane and evil system of apartheid. Hence, it is not surprising that to a reasonable extent; they do not appreciate some of the opportunities availed by the new democratic dispensation. These opportunities include the right to vote. No matter the merits and demerits of the youth's disinterestedness on electoral matters in the recent past; it is the well-considered view of this article that the dominant narrative highlighted above only offers a partial guide to understanding the changing voting patterns and culture of South Africans. It is argued that the renewed interest of the youth on electoral matters can be understood within the context that issues that are directly affecting them (that is, education) are dominating the agenda of the present public and political discourse in South Africa (Mancu, 2016; NEHAWU, 2016).

From the developments at the local, continental and international level, there is no gainsaying that the wave of democratisation has presented both challenges and opportunities for the youth in South Africa, Africa and the world at large. Some of these challenges are new and others are historical, but they represent themselves with modern features. As such, different countries have identified various months for bemoaning challenges faced by the youth and for celebrating the opportunities enjoyed by the youth.

For instance, in the Caribbean islands, February is considered as a special month in the political calendar of Cuba. Thus, it is in this month in 1959 that Cuba's revolutionary leader Fidel Castro became the country's youngest ever Prime Minister *cum* President (Thaba, 2016). This milestone has served as an inspiration, courage and a lesson that young people also have a "transformist" role in their countries. In South Africa, June is generally regarded as the youth month. It was in this month during the year 1976 that students in Soweto and South Africa at large; waged wide range campaigns rejecting Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in teaching and learning (Vuma, 2013).

Some of the post-1994 prominent leaders in South Africa belong to the "1976 generation of students". Considering this, it is befitting to argue that their elevation into the political and government circles of the democratic state has also carried hopes for the expression of the interests, aspirations and frustrations of the youth. Although the political, material and socio-economic conditions of Cuba and South Africa differ; the two countries have a lot of lessons to learn from one another because both nations are developing countries. Against this background, this paper employs the triangulation of Afrocentric and qualitative research methods to: (1) determine the extent to which student movements influence party politics (2) establish the role of students in the various activities of their allied-political parties. It is emphasised that the epistemic location of this paper is the Afrocentric paradigm as articulated by scholars such as Asante (2003) and Modupe (2003), *inter alia*.

2. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to provide a definition to the key concepts related to the topical question under consideration: (1) Student movements and (2) youth; it is observable that the definition of concepts in humanities and social sciences, in particular, is always a contested issue among academics, practitioners, analysts and commentators (Shai, 2013: 91). For the purpose of this paper, student movements refer to the organised networks of learners and/or students that agitate for political, economic and socio-cultural change at both the basic and/or tertiary educational landscape. While the term "student movements" is generally tied to student formations at institutions of higher learning, it is worth noting that their struggles are traditionally waged around issues of student funding, accommodation and curriculum development (Vuma, 2013).

On the other hand, "youth" denotes young people in the age range of 14 and 35 years. These young people are found inside and outside the formal school system. Since university student political activists are also members of the society, it is notable that the membership of student movements and youth organisations outside the education sector overlaps one another. This development has also meant that student grievances also include unemployment, limited business opportunities, substance abuse, poverty, inequality and retarded levels of socio-economic development. This shows the difficulty in perceiving the youth as constituting a homogenous category. Contextually, an overlap in terms of the membership and challenges of both student movements and broad youth formations makes it difficult to separate them (National Youth Commission, 2002). To compound matters to an already worse situation, a trend is currently emerging on South Africa's political landscape wherein wider youth organisations including those of the African National Congress (ANC) and Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) contest Student Representative Council (SRC) elections at tertiary institutions of learning. This precedent means that these formations have assumed the dual identity, both as youth

movements and student movements.

2.1. Afrocentric Paradigm and Analysis of Qualitative Data

In this paper a clear distinction between the theory of Afrocentricity and Afrocentric research methodology is drawn. While this article is located within the qualitative research methodology and it employed the Afrocentric research methodology as it enables in-depth and detailed analyses within the context of a limited number of persons, but reduces the potential generalisation of the findings (Mafisa & Mtati, 2009: 7).

However, this paper is critical of the mainstream research paradigms in social sciences due their location within the Western world view. Inasmuch as the Afrocentric paradigm is generally considered as a re-enforcer of qualitative research methodology, it is introduced in this paper as an alternative to the dominant research paradigms, which are largely rooted within a Euro-American world view (interview, University of Limpopo's Psychology Professor, 13 February 2015). The competing narratives about the dominance and location of mainstream research paradigms is well-captured by Scheurich & Young (1997: 9) who correctly assert that "dominant epistemologies are a product of White social history". Nonetheless, the Afrocentric research methodology and qualitative research methodology have shared characteristics in that both of them "assume that people employ interpretive schemes which must be understood and that the character of the local context must be articulated" (Mkabela, 2005: 188; Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013: 3). The foregoing argument is backed up by Mkabela (2005) who notes that the principles underpinning the Afrocentric research methodology and qualitative research methodology are common. However, the Afrocentric research methodology is driven by the ideals, interests and needs of Africa and people of African descent across the globe; but it is colour blind (Asante, 1990; Welsing, 2015). In this context, this paper largely relied on document analysis. This was complemented with interview data. The latter was generated through semi-structured interviews with 6 respondents, who were purposively selected from youth leaders and academics at the universities of Limpopo and Venda. It is important to note that for the purpose of this study, written and spoken text were not analysed separately because they are considered as complimenting each other and the possibility of treating and classifying them as mutually exclusive is dismissed (interview, University of Limpopo's History Lecturer, 12 February 2015).

2.2. Bridging the Gap between Policy, Theory and Practice in Party Politics

In South Africa, students at both high school level and universities have been instrumental in deepening the struggle against the evil, inhumane and brutal system of apartheid. For example, historical and Political archives have it on good record that the 1976 Soweto Uprising was led by high school students. Furthermore, according to the State of the Youth Report (2002: 3) "what

started as student movement in 1969 with the formation of the South African Students Organisation (SASO) became a wider national youth movement against the hostile economic, social, political and educational conditions imposed by the apartheid system". Contextually, the 1976 generation that led the Soweto Uprising were influenced by the revolutionary theory and ideology of SASO and other liberation movements with cells or hide-nests in institutions of higher learning including then University College of the North (Badat, 1999). Linked to the discourse on institutions of high learning as the site of the struggle against apartheid, the University College of the North (now University of Limpopo) has produced and/or nurtured liberation pioneers such as Onkgopotse Abraham Tiro, Peter Mokaba, Cyril Ramaphosa, Barney Pityana, Mosiuoa "Terror" Lekota, Pandelani Nefolovhodwe and many others.

Given the prominent role of student movements in the struggle against apartheid, it is legitimate to expect political parties to consider youth representation in their candidate lists for municipal, provincial and national elections in the new democratic dispensation. However, age should not be the only criterion for this selection or nomination. Issues of political maturity, mental capacity and capability to engage with the policy discourse of the day must be used as a point of departure. The legitimate expectation to have youth representatives in candidate lists can be well and appropriately justified by the continual existence and relevance of student movements in the new South Africa. Hence, student activists are generally considered as the sub-category of intellectuals (Mashayekhi, 2001). To this end, the intellectual orientation of the student activists puts them at the edge of leading the urgent task (at least theoretically) for the South African nation to embark on a National Programme of Political Literacy. Closely related to this, Nkondo (2012: 18) observes that "political literacy constitutes the only sure avenue of opportunity to build a responsible citizenry, the only way of combating most of the heated but blind debates that now condemn South Africans to anxiety, astonishment and bewilderment".

In the same breath, this political discourse was advanced by the former President Thabo Mbeki. While addressing African student leaders at the University of Cape Town in September 2010, he strongly opined that "Like the rest of the African masses, I am convinced that you, our student leaders and the students you lead, will not disappoint our expectation that you will use your considerable capacity as young African intellectuals both to comprehend and educate us about our African past and contemporary reality, to better empower us to understand what we need to do today and tomorrow" (Mbeki, 2010: 10). The dichotomy between Nkondo and Mbeki's convictions is testimony to the gigantic task lying ahead of the student movements and youth in general in terms of the reconstruction and development of South Africa.

Despite this, this article advances that the youth are included in these lists simply because they have proved to be "a special category of the voting population" in South Africa. This category (youth) can swing votes to go either way. Viewing the youth as "vote-swingers" speaks to the reasons why they are often included in political party lists. Young voters can simply vote a certain political party upon knowing that one of their own has been included on the party list. In contradistinction, in some cases the youth are used to fight factional battles within political parties (Intra-ANC; intra Cope, Intra EFF etc.) where they are included in election lists to diffuse or dilute these intra-party tensions or factional fights (interview, University of Limpopo's Sociology Lecturer, 14 February 2015).

Sadly, the prevailing cultural conditions in South Africa have produced a dominant mode of politics which does not have respect for principle and intellectualism (interview, University of Venda's History Lecturer, 13 February 2015). It is not uncommon to hear South African politicians in private alluding that "you can't eat a principle or morality". Such narrow arguments have been politically and historically justified by others who proclaimed in public that they did not "join the struggle to be poor" (Mpumelelo, 2011). This moral dilemma should be understood within the context of Ramose's (2002) thesis that Ubuntu is the root of African culture. However, emerging trends in the practice of politics in Africa and South Africa in particular show that money and material benefits have eroded the humanist essence of African culture (Ramose, 2002). This is a situation that makes it difficult for student movements to successfully agitate for the inclusion of development-driven young people in the candidate lists of political parties. This point was equally and succinctly captured by Isaak (1985: 272) when he lamented that "When a society values economic activities above all else, business leaders gain control". This is an unfortunate situation that entrenches the dominant mode of politics which is in a crisis and ought to be transformed, as a matter of urgency if the democracy of South Africa is to be sustainable (Djanie, 2016).

It is for this reason that the envisaged generational mix of political parties' candidate lists is often invisible at certain levels of political contestation and not clear in others. This can be partly attributed to the fact that organisational interests are often sacrificed in favour of personal interests. Clientelism, patronage and *rent-seeking* have become the vices of modern politics. In most cases, votes are used in exchange for jobs, positions and so on (Nyawasha, 2015). In relation to this, one former student leader retorts that:

Students have always played a pivotal role in mobilising support for their mother bodies. Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) have the only one strongest and vibrant structure which is the Pan Africanist Student Movement of Azania (PASMA). It relies on us for support. We have always fought for representation in the party. Our National PASMA president is the ex officio of the PAC NEC and this allows us to be

represented well. In the party list to the IEC, we elect at least five people from the youth ranks to be in the top twenty. Unfortunately, we have not had any young person in parliament as a result of the party's dismal electoral performance. There is also an internal democracy in the party wherein young leaders compete to be in the list and branches (including campus-based special branches) demonstrate support to their favourite candidate(s). This has again caused many problems for the PAC whereby the student movement is occasionally used to fight mother body's internal strife. We are then promised top positions or funding for personal or branch survival in return (interview, PAC leader, 14 February 2015).

Conversely, it is also safe to argue that it is common practice within the South African political terrain for delegates (including those from student movements) to be given a particular mandate by off-campus leaders to vote in a certain manner, which may not be necessarily be in the best interest of credible and fair representation of youth in the candidate lists of their respective parties. Ironically, such behind-the-scenes manipulation of voting during lists conference of various political parties are often characterised by total disregard for leadership credentials and experience in favour of attributes ranging from trustworthiness, solidarity and loyalty. Equally important, student activists are often bought with money, alcohol, promise of jobs and other material benefits in order to suppress the emergence of genuine representatives of the youth on the candidate lists of various parties across the spectrum (interview, Progressive Youth Alliance (PYA) leader, 12 February 2015). While this tendency constitutes the erosion of intra-party democracy and it is well known within the political circles, there seems to be no or limited practical measures undertaken to contain its escalation.

That there is no concrete action to end the unethical conduct which is characteristic of the relations between political parties and their allied-student movements and youth wings is analogous to the uncertainty of the future of democracy in South Africa. This should be worrying for all South Africans across the political divide. Hence, the erosion of democratic practices within political parties constitutes an overall threat to the sustainability of democracy in the country. This claim is guided by the general understanding that political parties are the key stakeholders for democratisation in the country and if its broader democracy is to be sustained, it ought to be rooted from within them.

While it is true that some student movements' capacity to influence developments within political parties is at times compromised by external forces, it is also correct to state that such movements are in certain instances also hesitant to rally behind and offer real support to certain potential candidates who did not rise within their rank and file. More importantly, student movements without an *umbilical cord* attached to a particular party often find internal resistance from the general membership in its quest to influence the content and direction of the lead-

ership of any given political party. In the same vein, the membership and leadership of established parties often do not accept nomination of potential candidates by student movements who are not affiliated to them. There is no gainsaying that the cauldron of the mixture of factors that incapacitate or disinterest student movements to be actively engaged with internal party dynamics to ensure real youth representation in the candidate lists of political parties robs South Africa of the wealth composite of new ideas, actions, values and victories.

The failure of the student movements to correct this abnormal situation within South Africa's political parties was well captured by the legendary Mphahlele (2002: 6-7), when he asserted that "[T]he South African ruling class believes innovation is equivalent to opposition – which it does not allow". Although, it may be difficult to find lasting solutions to the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality, the first step in this journey should be to stop the exploitation of student movements in order to serve narrow and selfish interests of individual political leaders or political party factions.

3. CONCLUSION

The overall aim of this Afrocentric paper has been to present and examine the role played by student movements in ensuring that youth are included as potential candidates in the electoral lists for democratic South Africa's political parties. Despite their limits in forwarding and/or seconding youth candidates for political parties' electoral lists; the fact that non-political student movements (that is, fees must fall movement) are powerful and can alter the political agenda of South Africa towards a particular direction cannot be denied (Buys, 2016). It is on this basis that in certain circles, their genuine cause and activities have been deliberately described as a reflection of the work of the so called "third force" (Mancu, 2016).

For this author, the characterisation of the non-political 2015 national student movement as the element of the "third force", which seeks to engineer regime change in South Africa is devoid of truth. That "the doors of learning shall be opened to all", across the colour and class divisions have found expression in the anti-colonial/apartheid rhetoric of many countries including South Africa (Khapoya, 2010; Shai, 2013). Such a commitment has been legislated in the new democratic dispensation (Republic of South Africa, 1996). As such, it is politically, morally and historically justified for any student movement in South Africa to advance calls for "free education".

In the final analysis, the cessation of the exploitation of student movements for sectional interests is possible when fundamental principles such as "representativeness, openness, democracy and independence" find true and honest expression within such networks (Proteasa, 2002). This is an ideal situation which will re-affirm the relevance of student movements in both party and national politics. It will also give currency to Nelson Mandela's (2015) illustrative message to the nation that "[Y]ou,

the young lions (youth) have energised our entire struggle". Flowing from this, it is the careful conviction of this paper that student movements can also influence political parties to include the youth in their lists through an intense and sometimes adversarial process of political bargaining. This bargaining happens when movements forward their preferred names to parties for consideration. This is never a straightforward process; it can take many months to resolve. What we see is that the student movements do have the political clout (bargaining muscle) to bargain with political parties when it comes to candidate selection.

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EXPLORING UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION (UPE) POLICY: THE ROAD-MAP TOWARDS INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION IN UGANDA

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ABSTRACT

Education for all is universally recognised as a contributor to socio-economic development; hence, schooling systems are part of the interventions to ensure that participation in societal development processes is made possible. Since 1997 when Universal Primary Education (UPE) was introduced in Uganda, like in most of Sub-Saharan Africa, substantial gains have been made towards increasing total enrolment and reaching gender parity. From a net Enrolment of 3.1 million pupils in 1996 to 8.5 % in 2014 with a declining boy-girl gap in enrolment, Uganda would be considered as performing well by close of the 2015 Millennium Development Goals. These gains, well registered and acknowledged, the staggering completion rates and quality of education under UPE consistently remain high. However, evident tendencies to downplay the relevance of UPE quality kept dominating the public policy evaluations. Post-2015, Sustainable Development Goal 4 re-emphasize inclusive and quality education by re-directing the focus from equitable enrolment, that is almost attained in a gender perspective to completion of free primary education for both girls and boys and secondary schooling by 2030. This article, through a cross-sectional descriptive qualitative approach, appreciates noticeable UPE achievements, but concludes that special needs children are still marginalized, that retention and completion levels remain slightly lower and that quality of education remains problematic. It is suggested that teacher recruitment and capacity building be stepped up, UPE capitation grant be increased that policy on parents' contribution be revised as strategies for minimising UPE politicisation devised.

Keywords: Sustainable Development Goals, Millennium Development Goals, 2030 Agenda, Universal Primary Education, Inclusivity, Equitable Quality Education

1. INTRODUCTION

Achievement of equity is increasingly seen as an important goal of socio-economic development. Accordingly, equity is meant to offer individuals equal opportunities to pursue a life of their choices and also to structures create huge inequalities (World Bank, 2006; UNDP, 2014). Sifuna & Sawamura (2008) and Ogawa & Nishimura (2015) also emphasise this view, arguing that purposes and aims for universal primary education are many and varied, and generally may be categorized as:

human rights, equity, and socio-economic development.

Incidentally, emerging human inequalities from overlapping political, social, cultural, and economic structures stifle the probabilities to fissure the traps disadvantaged groups and as such perpetual poverty, oppression and marginalisation persist over generations. Concerns of equity and inclusiveness remain fundamental; hence, education interventions have been aimed at redressing these imbalances. For these reasons, the paper assesses the Universal Primary Education (UPE) in Uganda to determine inclusivity and equitability of quality education.

Universal Primary Education (UPE) Policy in Uganda is an outcome of the Education Review Commission (EPRC) setup in July 1987 to appraise the then existing system to recommend measures and strategies for improvement (MoES, 2001)[1]. The Commission's focus was on a number of aspects including curricular review, skills improvement with education programs, measures to improve the management of schools and tertiary institutions so as to maximise cost-efficiency. The EPCR report emerged with areas of policy and legal framework as well as other measures to increase access, improve quality and enhance equity at all levels of Education. The 1995 National Constitution underscoring the right to education for every Ugandan and the Local Government Act 1997 that enabled decentralisation pre-primary and primary education were some of the key legal frameworks for the EPCR report. The report also laid a foundation for current education policies including UPE policy in Uganda.

The UPE policy was introduced in January 1997, (MoES, 1999)[2] with aims to: (a) establish, provide and maintain quality education as the basis for promoting the necessary human resource development; (b) transform society in a fundamental and positive way; (c) provide the minimum necessary facilities and resources to enable every child to enrol and remain in school until the primary cycle of education is complete; (d) make basic education accessible to the learner and relevant to his/her needs as well as meeting national goals; (e) make education equitable in order eliminate disparities and inequalities; (f) ensure that education is affordable by majority Ugandans; and, (g) eradicate poverty eradication by equipping every individual with the basic skills and knowledge with which to exploit the environment for both self and national development. Initial UPE approach was the abolition of tuition fees and parents and Teachers Association (PTA) charges for primary education[3] replacing it with two types of grants: *capitation (fees) grants and school facilities grants*[4] (MoES, 1998, 2003; Essama-Nssah, 2011). Parents continued to contribute scholastic materials for pupils. To date, Universal Pri-

1.This was at a time when most administrative reforms were being initiated in the developing economies.

2.Also see Policy Brief 10 of February 2006: on interregional Inequality facility: Sharing Ideas, and policies across Africa Asia and Latin America

3. These were charges earlier introduced during the 1970s to complement the low salaries of teachers

4. Capitation grants were paid on the basis of at about US$5 per pupil for classes P1–P3, and US$8 per pupil for classes P4–P7, and was meant to cater for administration expenses, instructional materials, co-curricular activities; while school facility grant largely caters for projects like construction, equipment and furniture

mary Education (UPE) has dramatically increased primary school enrolment and minimized gender inequalities in access to education.

Although increased enrolment is evident in UPE however, there is growing and worrying trend of increased dropout rates and grade repetition and the completion rates remain relatively undesirable according to Ministry of finance Report of MDG progress (MFOPED, 2013). This paper therefore aims to assess the underlying realities of these trends in order to propos feasible remedies for improvement.

2. GUIDING THEORY

The conceptualization of this study is guided by the human rights based approach, a human development framework that is premised on numerous key principles (UNDP, 2000; UNICEF, 2007). Among these key principles are that: (a) human rights are universal and inalienable meaning that they are entitlement of all people everywhere in the world; (b) that all individuals are equal as human beings, and by virtue of the inherent dignity of each person, are entitled to their rights without discrimination of any kind; (c) that Human rights are indivisible, they are all inherent to the dignity of every person per se thus having equal status as rights and so cannot be ranked in a hierarchy; and, (d) that the rights are related and interdependent in a way that realization of one right often depends, wholly or in part, on the realization of others. The relevance of this approach lies in the fact that it seeks to identify groups and people whose rights are been violated, understand why certain people are unable to enjoy their rights, and redress unjust distributions of power that impede development progress. The human rights criteria focus on plan for action for availability, accessibility, quality, affordability, acceptability for all.

3. METHODOLOGY

The paper is based on cross-sectional and descriptive qualitative study that adopted interpretive methods of analysis. The study findings were obtained from both primary and secondary data. From primary sources, the data was obtained through in-depth interviews from 30 respondents comprising of selected 10 head teachers of primary schools, 5 deputy head teachers of primary schools, 5 District education officers in government service, 3 retired education officers and 2 retired officials from the Ministry of Education and Sports. Respondents also included 5 members of school management committees.

The respondents were obtained through convenience and purposive sampling techniques. The samples of head teachers were drawn from the Eastern and Central regions of Uganda and from urban and rural settings to establish whether their views had any significant divergences.

From Secondary sources, the study reviewed reports of the ministry, including education annual reports

for the financial year 2013/2014 and 2014/2015. Further, a National Strategy on Girl Education, Education Sector Annual Monitoring report and Ministry of Education and Sports Educational Statistical Abstract of 2013 were reviewed, as well as diverse World Bank, and UNESCO reports.

4. THE STUDY FINDINGS

The data obtained from a cross-sectional group of respondents with education experience, and from variable ministerial and World Bank reports, allowed for the findings that revealed progress, challenges and strategies relating to the UPE implementation in Uganda.

4.1. Access and Equity in the Education Sector

Access and Equity in education has always been a cardinal aim of the education sector since the inauguration of the UPE policy. The ministerial policy documents, Education Sector Annual Reports and National Development Plans (NDP) have always focused on this objective throughout the period of UPE policy implementation[5]. The National Development Plan of 2010, for instance, underscores the importance of Special Needs Education in Primary sub-sector where a total of 6 632 (48.7% and 52.2%) females had been enrolled in schools in 2008. On the gender equity, the 2010 National Development Plan situational analysis underscores the achievements obtained by 2006 when girls enrolment had reached 90% compared to boys at 93%. The NDP report however recognizes the lower completion rate of girls (42%) compared to boys' rates of 53% at the time (NDP, 2010/11-2014/1: 216).

In the first year of UPE, 1997, there were 5.3 million children accessing primary education in Uganda. Years following 1997 were characterized by steady increase in enrolment for both boys and girls. From 2000 to 2014, the total enrolment increased from 6 559 013 pupils (3 395 554 boys and 3 163 459 girls) to 8 772 655 (4 377 412 male; 4 395 243 female). The Uganda's net enrolment ratio (NER) improved gradually from 90.01% in 2004 (male 92.5%; female 87.6%) to 97% in 2014 (male 96%, female 98%). It is observed that the sector performance gap was only 3 percent across gender by 2014 (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2013/14-2014/15). Thus by the close of the Millennium Development Goals in 2015, the gender parity had been realized in primary school enrolment. While Uganda has scored highly on enrolment, the persistent challenge in UPE performance has been identified as retention and completion rates.

The Report by Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (September, 2013) on the Millennium Development Goals indicates some variations in primary school completion rates from 59% in 2002 to 56% in 2010 for boys. Comparatively, the girls' completion rates improved from 41% to 51% during the same period. Generally, the performance on completion and literacy rates of the UPE program

5.See the National Development Plan (NDP) 2010/11-2014/15; NDPII 2015/16-2019/20; the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) reports of 2011/12-2012/13, and of 2013/14-2014/15

indicate some improvement, although the percentage levels remained low in relation to MDGs targets. By 2012, apart from the gross completion rates for girls and boys falling short of MDG expectations, the average age at which children completed primary school had fallen. As a result of the assessment of the performance of UPE during that year, the national development plans and the primary education subsector plans subsequently re-emphasized issues of access and equity for marginalized groups in education at all levels. Interventions in education sector for access, equity, quality education to increase completion rate were made, resulting into parity by end of the 2014/15 financial year.

Gradually, there was an improvement in "primary seven" completion rate attributed to factors that include, among others, reduction in early marriages, reduced repetition rates and low teenage pregnancies. Other interventions that varied across regions included development of infrastructure; licensing and registration of private primary schools; establishment of new schools; and, provision of support to education of disadvantaged children in Karamoja. Further interventions involved the support to educate children in war affected areas (especially Northern region); provision of non-formal education; advocacy and social campaigns for primary education; and, affirmative action in support of the girl child education. With these interventions, gender parity at both pre-primary and primary levels was evident by end of 2014/2015 FY (MoES, 2014/2015: 120).

4.2. Opinions on UPE Completion rates

Efforts to validate the secondary data on enrolment and completion rates were made through interviews during this study where data was collected from experienced respondents in the field of education to augment the findings. A retired official from ministry of Education and Sports for instance noted that it was true that the completion rates were often noted in reports as poor because of a number of reasons. One of her views was that there was a difficulty in tracking of pupil progress.

She noted that because of the government emphasis of attending school under universal primary education, and also on the demands for cash economy, many pupils were enrolling when they are young (before the age of 6 year); and, as a result a number of them kept repeating making it difficult to track their comparison of enrolment and completion years. When asked whether this was not against the policy of UPE that emphasizes auto promotions of pupils, the official reiterated that it is true that there are some pupils that keep repeating classes before reaching primary seven.

Her views, therefore, suggest that the completion rates documented in most of the reports may not be due to dropouts or problems of retention as is implied at times. The pupils may still be in the same schools but are yet to finish primary seven. Therefore, data from tracking progress per class should and also on total retention in same schools

should be considered as better sources of gauging the UPE performance in some instances.

The second reason for tracking the pupils school progress and completion rates which another respondent identified was to do with the crossing of pupils from one school to another especially between government schools and private schools. The respondent who was a retired District Education officer stated *"this makes it very difficult to know the pupils who completed and those who didn't. Even if this student who crossed from a government to private school completed, he or she is counted as if the dropped out under UPE grogram"*. This argument appeared plausible and it may account for misinterpretation of school drop-out and completion rates if assessed in individual schools that are partially attributed to by inadequate information dissemination.

The third view of the completion rates was from a different respondent. The view of the head teacher was that while there has been almost the same enrolment rates amongst girls and boys under UPE, the dropout rates are also recognized amongst boys and girls throughout all the primary school levels. He noted that this is dependent of a number of factors including child labor in some communities like in the landing sites where boys go fishing, and in other cultures like Karamoja region where girls of adolescent age are married off in preference of cows. He stated that *"this affects completion rates differently in different regions but the national data aggregates may not show these differences"* (head teacher of a school from the eastern region).

Another female head teacher respondent also had this to note on drop outs: *"the girl child has her own challenges relating to their monthly women days"*. She explained that in the school she heads there has been an NGO that has been assisting them with some funds to provide girls with facilities for those girls' monthly conditions to ensure that the irregular attendance and subsequent dropping out is minimized. *"Yes, it has worked. We managed to buy basins, lesus[6], and we have trained girls from upper classes to make re-usable sanitary pads through use of local materials"* (Female head teacher from, Eastern region). She noted that this was a project in her school in the entire district which has a small coverage compared to all the schools in the locality. The suggestion for this problem would be to mobilize funding for provision of sanitary facilities.

Yet, another respondent from the central region emphasized the problem of less support from the parents. Like most of the other respondents in both regions sampled, the argument notable UPE dropouts were the reluctance of the parents to contribute towards school requirements. The respondent said that: *"the parents do not want to pay in government schools. They do not want to contribute to food (lunch), school uniform, and other requirements"* (head teacher central region). And another one had this to say *"the way this UPE was started, it was taken as a free thing .... and there has been*

6.Lesus are clothes commonly used by women to wrap around their wastes

a lot of politicization".

A respondent from the eastern region however, defended the parent non-contribution in some areas. He noted that for instance the parents may at times not be blamed for not packing lunch for their children at school. He argued that most of the Eastern region has severally been affected by drought leading to poor food yields in many areas. He had this to say: *"some families only survive on one meal a day and others take maize porridge for meals at times. This makes it difficult for them to contribute food or other school requirements because they do not have other sources of income"*. He observed that many of the families in the communities where their schools are dependent on crops like cassava and maize as a source of income. However, regular droughts and floods pose a big problem to the harvests in the region.

The overall views of different respondents on pupil retention, tracking, and completion rates suggest that not only the reports on UPE performance may be inaccurate but also that the factors that may be responsible for pupil drop out require serious attention from policy makers. Some of the school retention may not be solved at the parents' level as the policy may assume.

4.3. On the Quality of UPE

In the course of implementation of UPE programs, the reviews continued to indicate poor quality of education in a number of ways which include among others low survival rates, low learning outcomes (*particularly numeracy and literacy*), low efficiency, high absenteeism rates (i.e. for head teacher, teacher and learners); inadequate school management & supervision as well as inadequate teaching and learning materials (MoES, 2014/15), the improving the quality of pre-primary and primary education continued to be a priority in the subsector. To remedy the quality problem interventions made during the period included monitoring and support supervision of pre-primary and primary schools; delivery of instructional materials to beneficiary schools/colleges; provision of P.5-P.7 textbooks and assorted textbooks to support implementation of revised curriculum; primary teacher recruitment and deployment; and, infrastructure development. Other suggested remedies included provision of continuous professional development for nursery and primary teachers; enhancement of the thematic curriculum, and support for Early Grade Reading (EGR).

As a result of these various interventions undertaken in the pre-primary and primary sub-sector, achievements attained included improvement of pupil-teacher ratio, improved teaching and learning environment, increased number of availability of teachers, improved primary leaving examination (PLE) pass rates. However, proficient in literacy and numeracy according to the report was not assessed and therefore there were no data on it. Contrary to the intended objective also, the pupil-classroom ratio (PCR) declined from 57:1 in FY 2013/14 to 59:1 FY2014/15. The overall performance however indicates no substantial changes for both boys and girls from 2012 to 2015. The

reasons for these findings may be due to the continuing challenges in the UPE teaching environment that had not changed a lot to enable improvements as intimated in the interviews held. Problems of high pupil-teacher ratio, teaching and learning environment, sanitation, feeding, and poverty were cited in the existing reports and a number of them also featured in the respondents' opinions during this study.

Some of the respondents noted that there is a divergent way that the curriculum of the UPE and private schools are handled. They observed that "the Early Grade Reading" (EGR)[7] is not used in all schools which gradually becomes a disadvantage to some pupils at both primary and post primary levels. This problem was conceived to be highly associated with competence of teachers as one of the respondents noted:

> "… Some of the teachers lack general competencies, fluency in both English and local language, reading and comprehension. The problem is bigger, (and) it relates to the training they [teachers] obtain from colleges. It also goes back to what kind of tutors ... tantamount to vicious cycle of education quality" (retired Education officer).

Nearly all the respondents were agreeable that lack of enough trained and competent teachers in all UPE schools posed a substantial challenge for quality teaching and pupil learning. In addition, it was also noted that there are some teachers in government UPE schools but not on government payroll let alone that even those on the payroll express their discontentment on the meagre salary[8] that cannot sustain them and their families in the absence of other welfare interventions from parents or government. The common question from the respondents was how as a researcher one would imagine commitment of employees that are not on payroll to do effective teaching?

When explored further, the respondents noted that failure to follow EGR for schools creates a problem of quality as the pupils find conceptualisation from English which is a foreign language and difficult compared to a situation if they were beginning to learn from their mother languages. EGR was considered essential for a quick learning and improved quality although it was also found to face problems in some urban schools where a cross section of pupils with different mother languages were found.

4.4. Financing of UPE programs

A general consensus on matters of quality in primary and post primary education was also on the mode and amount of financing from government. It was established that talking about quality in education is unproductive without deliberate investment in it. The key argument was on irregularity of UPE funding, the fluctuating amounts in the releases and the non-alignment of financial year quotas vis-à-vis the

7.EGR is a policy requiring lower primary (p1-p3) to use local languages as a language of instruction so as to ease the learning process

8. It was noted that primary school teachers earn a salary about 150USD per month

school term set-up. Respondents pointed out that the capitation grant per primary school child per year is 7 000 Uganda shillings. This amount was considered being too small to be meaningful. A comparison of capitation grants for primary school of Universal Secondary Education (USE) students that was 47 000 Uganda shillings for those in private schools and 45 000 for government supported students under USE program.

One of the respondents had this to note: "*there is more funding for students at post primary level than the primary leaving the foundation of education marginalised*" (Retired Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports official). One Education officer indicated that to avert this problem, there had made proposals to the government to increase capitation grants for every child to at least 10 000 Uganda shillings. The proposals suggested that capitation grants could be withdrawn from fairly funded schools and granted to the poor schools that have more difficulties in mobilising their own finances and that some schools could be left to be self-financing in favour of the needy schools.

A further observation on UPE funding was on the salaries for primary teachers are still meagre, a net of about 400 000 Uganda Shillings which cannot sustain the teachers needs and their families. It was noted that like any other employees, teachers require transport, food, housing medical care, school fees for their own children for better education etc., which cannot be covered by the salary they get. Some of the teachers therefore tend to look for alternative ways of getting another source of income lie through "bodaboda[9]" riding business, small kiosks etc. which they operate alongside the teaching. This causes a divided attention for concentration of teachers and at times may overlap with school time leading to late coming, or increased absenteeism that have an overall effect on the performance of learners.

A challenge of financing was also demonstrable in the nature of facilities and utilities for the primary schools. As a point of emphasis on this challenge, one of the respondents stated: "*you may find on one seat like this* [pointing to a three sitter small bench near him] *six children and some where no classes. I think you have heard where some pupils study under trees*". Indeed, anecdotal records like newspapers, digital media and some assessment reports many times presented such captions indicating daunting UPE facilities in some isolated localities in Uganda.

t was noted that there is a dire need for water supplies for purposes of drinking and sanitation. A concern was for instance raised from some of the respondents on instances where government had made efforts to provide water bone toilets and changing rooms for girls in upper primary when need arises. One respondent also specifically pointed out that UNICEF as a government partner had gone further to provide some water tanks in some Northern Uganda part of western region but "*without water. What a mockery?*" one respondent noted. The re-

9."Bodaboda" is a term for of motor-cycle transport in Uganda

spondents put an estimation of water supply coverage in primary schools to about 10% which is too small to attract and encourage retention of pupils at school as a result of good conducive environment.

4.5. Views on Inclusiveness and Equality in UPE

Most respondents were sceptical about the current approaches in UPE being capable of realising inclusiveness of all children. Some of the respondents for instance noted that to access universal Secondary Education (USE), one must have obtained an aggregate of 28 points in Primary Leaving examinations. However, most pupils in rural schools obtain more than 28 aggregate and one respondent had to emphasise: *"so who is benefiting?"* (a retired District Education Officer). The concern of the respondents here which is shared by the public is that pupils from urban schools that are presumably fairly wealthy are still the ones to benefit from the USE.

On special needs education, the views held from some respondents the government has not attentively done much towards improving the inclusiveness of the less advantaged pupils. It was noted that while the recommended teacher pupil's ratio in special needs schools is 1:10, this is not catered for in most schools in Uganda. Moreover, the children with special needs for arguments of equality are mixed amongst the rest of the classes with no specific provisions of equipment and facilities for the pupils and teachers that handle them. Indeed, most reports seen have limited achievements and strategies to other disadvantaged children. As clearly noted, most of the data and achievements are on gender related comparisons not on equity and inclusiveness of other disadvantaged categories.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper has highlighted the performance of UPE since the policy began in 1997. It has underscored the achievements attained in enrolment and in gender parity specifically. From the documentary evidence, the findings indicate that UPE has played a great role in enabling access of boys and girls and within the last two decades, the numbers have increased three fold from about 3 million to about 9 million net enrolment.

It is however noted that in spite of increased access, some children with special needs may still be marginalised and therefore issues of full inclusiveness may not be claimed fully. It is also realised that retention and completion levels remain slightly lower than the desirable numbers meaning that even when there is increased enrolments, the pupils may not gain much if the dropout rates keep high.

The purpose for achieving objectives like numerous, literacy and also skilling the pupils for purposes of development may not be achieved. Quality of

education has been noted as remaining a big problem due to the teaching and learning challenges elaborated in the paper.

The specific recommendation therefore was that the government should focus on recruitment and capacity building of those in-service currently in order to improve their performance. The suggestions for increasing capitation grant for children under UPE was also emphasised as way to enable improved facilities and gradually to improved quality of education.

The proposals suggested include withdraw of capitation grants from some schools that could be self-financing and this would be given to the most-needy schools. It was also suggested that policy makers should reconsider a human rights-based approach and ease actions for education for all while finding possibilities for parents' contributions as per their socio- economic circumstances. The politicisation of UPE policy should also be minimised so and stakeholder should be mobilised to contribute expected.

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STUDENTS' LOAN SCHEME AND ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION AT MAKERERE UNIVERSITY, UGANDA

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to examine the contribution of the student loan scheme towards access to higher education at Makerere University with a view to improve efficiency of the loan scheme and benefit more students who are nationals. To achieve this, the researcher adopted a cross-sectional research design. From a study population of the 246 respondents who the researcher targeted, a sample of 157 respondents was selected, including students of Makerere University, officials from Higher Education Students Financing Board management, Ministry of Education-Uganda Through Self- administered questionnaires and interviews, quantitative and qualitative data was collected and analysed. The findings revealed that there are positive relationships between, Student Loan Coverage, Loan Repayment, Loan Targeting and the Access to Higher Education. The conclusion was that elements of student loan coverage such as eligibility and objectives of the scheme are upheld to increase number of students accessing the loans. It was also concluded that the elimination of loan scheme award loans to students pursuing post-graduate studies affects access higher education; and that in Uganda, the loan scheme is quite novel and therefore the repayment by students need to be clearly observed. The study recommended that the loan granting body namely the Higher Education Student Financing Board should step up measures to ensure that the students acquire and maintain a positive attitude towards the repayment of the student loan; that fairness should be promoted in the selection of students who are granted the loan scheme; and that the loan scheme should cover all the academic and non-academic expenses required by the student such as accommodation, books, stationery and feeding.

Keywords: Student Loan Scheme, Higher Education, Human Capital Investment, Makerere University

1. INTRODUCTION

Student Loan Schemes in Higher Education operates in more than 70 countries around the world and at least thirteen (13) Loan Schemes in Africa in 2009 (Johnstone & Marcucci, 2010). The number of loan schemes is seemingly increasing every year. Various reasons have been given for the renewed interest in Student Loans par-

ticularly in developing countries. In the view of Woodhall (1992), the renewed interest in student loan schemes is due to financial pressures on public budgets, governments giving higher priorities to primary and secondary education and trying to increase cost-sharing in higher education. Other reasons advanced by Woodhall (1992) are: attempts to improve the efficiency of higher education, and believing that loans would result in a more equitable sharing of the costs of higher education.

In most African countries, the system of higher education inherited at independence, and continued for three decades, had at its apex a single national university catering to a relatively small number of students whose tuition and accommodation were fully covered by the state. Access was based on examination performance, admission related to the requirements of the civil service, and the overwhelmingly youthful and male student body pursued full-time degree courses within a rigid term structure, with progress measured and achievement conferred by annual and all-determining examinations.

Management at the university was centralised and hierarchical, resources for research and learning were abundant largely elitist. Students contributed little by way of service, and had their study and leisure supported by attendant staff, more numerous than the academic faculty. Universities, except in South Africa, had no tradition of fees or student loans (Coleman & Court 1993). In direct and indirect ways, universities were subordinated to the state in matters of internal governance, as well as policy, finance and student intake and distribution (Eisemon & Salmi, 1993). Students' loans particularly in low and middle-income countries of Africa support the above requirements. In Africa there are a number of countries that have introduced student loan schemes. These include Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, Ghana, Botswana, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Uganda that introduced the scheme in 2014, among others. In East Africa, it is only Burundi that does not have a student loan scheme. Many countries in Africa, including Zambia, Rwanda and Zimbabwe, are reforming the existing programmes of the student loan schemes.

Makerere, the oldest university in East Africa, was established in 1922, and offered free University education. The government covered all costs and controlled all policy. An attempt to introduce cost-sharing in 1990 was opposed with demonstrations, a boycott of classes, the death of two students and the closure of the University for the First Time in its history.

When it re-opened the following year, a "needy students" scheme, based on the principle that poorer students could contribute to the cost of their education through service to the university, foundered on student resistance and the difficulty of identifying who were the truly needy. Since then there have been several attempts to support students in cost-sharing in order to increase access to higher education.

In 2014, the efforts of supporting higher education students by the government through the loan scheme were considered as solution to increase access to education in Uganda.

The purpose of the study was to examine the contribution of the student loan scheme towards access of higher education at Makerere University in Uganda. Conducting of this study was seen as having a potential for: (a) augmenting the existing knowledge on the contribution of the student loan scheme towards access of higher education at Makerere University; (b) revealing empirical information to the higher education institutions universities to enable them improve financing strategies; and, (c) setting a ground for enhancing further research in the area of education loan policy.

Specifically, the study aimed at examining the relationship between student loan coverage and access of higher education in Uganda; investigating the relationship between student loan targeting and access of higher education in Uganda; and examining the student Loan Repayment Conditions and access of higher education in Uganda. Focusing on the contribution of the student loan scheme towards access of higher education at Makerere University-Uganda, the study involved core stakeholders including students from various colleges of Makerere University; but because of their stakeholders' role in higher education financing, other respondents were also drawn from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and Sports, and the Higher Education Students Financing Board. The time period considered to be covered by this study was the Academic Year 2014/15, being the first time that loans of this kind have been awarded to Ugandan students.

2. HUMAN CAPITAL THEORY AND STUDENTS' LOANS

Barr (2009) argues that according to Human Capital Theory, expenditure on education is treated as an investment and not as a consumer item. An individual acquires this human capital in schooling and post-school investment and on-the-job training. Efforts are made in Uganda to encourage cost-sharing and loan scheme in order to increase number of educated people because it is believed that highly trained and skilled manpower is the pivotal element for real development (Ishengoma, 2004).

Schultz (1962) supports the theory by saying that "*… Increase investment in human capital increases individual productivity and income, and concurrently lays the technical base for the type of labor force necessary for economic growth in modern industrialized society*".

Research by Snooks (2008) supports the view that there has been increasing awareness that human capital, when combined with other factors of production, can be an important factor in economic development. This study also agrees on human capital theory because of the belief that people constitute the most important resource in any organization.

3. HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM AND THE FUNDING GAPS IN UGANDA

The higher education subsector in Uganda is composed of two tiers, (a) degree awarding universities, and (b) other tertiary institutions, commonly referred to as the technical subsector, which offer diplomas and certificates. Institutions in both categories are further categorized into public and private. Public or state-funded institutions are established by an act of parliament; and, the private institutions are chartered, licensed or unlicensed. Of the 33 institutions, five public and 28 private universities (NCHE, 2014). There are three main avenues for entering the university system in Uganda.

In the first, secondary school graduates with two principal passes in the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education Examination (A-levels), can be admitted directly into the university. In the second avenue, holders of diplomas (from the vocational education system) are "considered" for entry and may be admitted depending on the "quality" of their performance/pass at their previous institutions. Third, is the "mature entry scheme" for lifelong learners and adults who missed the opportunity for direct entry through the formal school system? The government reserves 4 000 positions annually for students admitted into the five public universities for whom the government provides scholarships. The system is merit-based. Students with the highest grades are admitted with scholarships based on the individual requirements of the institutions and the faculties where the students are to be based. The 4 000 students represent less than 10% of the students who qualify for university entry (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2012).

The funding of higher education has for long been a problem as universities receive less funds than it costs them to produce a graduate (NCHE, 2014). In the face of serious financial resource constraints for higher education, the Ministry of Education has responded mainly in two ways. First, there has been a clear shift toward some form of cost-sharing of tuition fees. Such cost-sharing has taken the form of a dual-track system where a fee-paying system coexists with a free, government-sponsored scheme for some students. Second, the government has permitted the introduction and subsequent expansion of the private education sector. All these have not greatly increased access to university education.

During the 1990s and early 2000s, the Government of Uganda undertook public sector reforms that changed the landscape of higher education. There was enactment of the *Universities and other Tertiary Institutions Act 2001,* which is an umbrella law governing all public universities and tertiary institutions in the country. As a result of these reforms, a number of private universities and other tertiary institutions have sprung up and this has had a positive multiplier effect to demand for higher education. Currently, in Uganda there are 33 licensed public and private universities (5 public and 28 private universities) and 181 other tertiary institutions. Tertiary institutions have

grown from 148 in 2006 to 181, with 130 (72%) being private and 51 (28%) being public institutions. The total enrolment in higher education institutions stands at 179 000 students. This is still low as the gross enrolment ratio is now 6.8% (NCHE, 2014).

Governmental funding for tertiary education has been declining over the years largely due to the financial constraints brought about by the unprecedented growth at the lower levels of education (Universal Primary Education and Universal Secondary Education schemes). This adversely affected the levels of access to these institutions especially for students from low income backgrounds. In 2005–2006, the government of Uganda introduced a new system, primarily to redress enrolment imbalance between the sciences and the humanities.

In the new system, 75% of the 4 000 government-sponsored students are admitted on the basis of merit but must be studying subjects deemed crucial to national development – science and technology, law, the performing arts, and economics. The rest (25%) of the 4 000 are reserved to address equity gaps. A quota system was introduced for the best students in each district, persons with disabilities, and athletes of both sexes who meet the minimum requirements of specific institutions and programmes. Students who do not qualify for government sponsorship pay their own fees at public institutions (if they are admitted), enter private universities, or enter other tertiary institutions. The competition for state scholarships is therefore very keen and mainly favors children from the higher socio-economic strata whose families can afford good secondary schools. Government-sponsored students receive "free" university education including tuition, housing, and meals. Additionally, because of the merit-based entry mechanisms, these students are admitted on a preferred basis to professional courses such as law and medicine. This preference further contributes to the divide between the urban rich and the rural poor. Currently, less than 10% of the more than 70, 000 students in public universities are government-supported.

The existing records indicate for instance that out of 15 989 students admitted in Makerere in 2010-2011, only 2 015 (12%) were government-supported and that in Kyambogo University reports that only 2 485 (18%) of the 13 000 students enrolled in the 2010-2011 academic year were government-sponsored. It is noted that in the 2012/2013 academic year out of 43 000 students admitted to universities, only 4 000 (9%) were sponsored by government, implying that 91% had to go for self-sponsorship. In 2014, a total of 45 000 students were admitted at both public and private universities. Out of these, 4 000 were given government scholarships and 1 200 were given student loans and the remaining 39 800 students who did not benefit from either scheme, had to fund their own university education (Higher Education Students Financing Board, 2014).

Against this background, government introduced the students' loan scheme though its coverage is still quite low in

spite of the publicity by government using the mass media to communicate the opportunity that students could have using the student loan scheme. What is observed is that improving the efficiency and viability of existing student loan programs while broadening their coverage consistently remains a major challenge for Uganda as most of the developing countries. Despite the poor performance of many systems, the positive experience of the loan scheme in countries like Columbia and the Dominican Republic, Kenya, Ghana, South Africa, shows that it is possible to design and administer financially sustainable loans if effective collection programs, appropriate interest rates, and income-contingent schemes can be made operational.

4. HIGHER EDUCATION LOAN FUNDING

Higher Education loan scheme and funding in general are supported by theoretical arguments that Higher education is a profitable private investment, offering graduates high returns in the form of better job opportunities and higher lifetime earnings. As such, a *Human Capital Theory* was adopted for this study. Schultz (1962) supports the human capital theory by arguing that Increase investment in human capital increases individual productivity and income, and concurrently lays the technical base for the type of labor force necessary for economic growth in modern industrialized society. Similarly, Snooks (2008) holds the view that there has been increasing awareness that human capital, when combined with other factors of production, can be an important factor in economic development. According to Barr (2009), Human Capital theory, expenditure on education is treated as an investment and not as a consumer item. An individual acquires this human capital in schooling and post-school investment and on-the-job training. Robbins (2009) also argues that organizations can survive without other resources, but they cannot survive without people and that organisations to achieve good end result, much of the investment must be directed on human beings. These arguments explain the current efforts that Uganda puts to encourage cost-sharing and loan scheme in order to increase number of educated people because as Ishengoma (2004) argues, it is believed that highly trained and skilled manpower is the pivotal element for real development.

4.1 Students Loan Scheme and Access to Higher Education

Student loan programmes have been developed in various forms in over fifty countries throughout the world (Albrecht & Ziderman, 1992). Whereas many student loan schemes are not working well and critics question whether they are feasible in developing countries, they have been widely advocated as a way of financing the private costs of investing in higher education. Many countries have loan schemes that enable students to borrow from the government agencies or commercial banks in order to finance their tuition fees or living expenses, and to repay the loans after graduation. According to Woodhall (1992), most loan schemes offer government guar-

antees and some form of interest subsidy, and in many countries students receive financial support through a combination of loans, grants, scholarships and bursaries. Woodhall (1992) observes that while introducing loans dates far way back in the first half of the 20th century, a significant scale is seen in the 1950s and 1960s in many developed countries like Canada, Denmark, Sweden and the USA (Woodhall, 1992). He notes that currently, more than thirteen countries in Africa operating the student loan schemes that offer loans to students pursuing undergraduate or post-graduate studies.

In general, developing countries' student loan programmes have been used to assist with student tuition fees and living expenses and typically cover a big percentage of the total student population. According to Kasozi (2009), to increase access to higher education for children from poor homes, a loan scheme is one of the panacea to their problems of rising fees for higher education. Kasozi's (2009) emphasis is that students' loans should be given to eligible students to pursue higher education in higher learning institutions while targeting the poor and needy students.

Identifying the underlying objective of a particular loan scheme is therefore important because this will have implications for many central aspects of the scheme. Ziderman (2013) these aspects may include: whether loans are offered for tuition, living expenses or both; the appropriate level of loan subsidy (if any); the need for targeting (confining eligibility to particular student categories); and, loan allocation and rationing procedures where loan funding is limited. However, the objective of a given scheme, and how this effects the operation of a scheme, will also have strong implications for the effect of the loans on access. Ziderman looks at access in four different perspectives and how the availability of government loans may positively impinge on access. The four aspects of access are: broadening access; deepening access; retention and successful completion; and, maintaining enrolment ratios. Improving the efficiency and broadening the coverage of the student loan coverage is a recipe for the success of any loan scheme.

On the aspect of loan targeting, Ziderman holds that financial constraints largely play a role on the low enrolment in countries that are operating student loan schemes. He argues that therefore consensus on the need to offer financial incentives to the poor potential students not only to overcome the burden of the fee payment and living expenses, but also to offset both parental resistance to reductions in family income and fear that the benefits of the educational process may not be sizeable. He recognizes though that the provision of the financial aid may be regarded as a necessary, though not sufficient condition for achieving greater participation of the poor (Ziderman, 2013).

Ziderman's (2013) arguments in favour of repayable loans are based on both efficiency and equity. Efficiency arguments for loans rather than grants are that loans will reduce demands on the

government budget and on the taxpayers; provide additional resources to finance the expansion of higher education to widen access and increase students' motivation by making them aware of the costs of higher education and requiring them to evaluate both costs and benefits in the light of the obligation to repay the loans. The equity arguments also focus on costs and benefits, concluding that since most university graduates can look forward to substantially higher lifetime incomes as a result of their education, those who benefit from higher lifetime income than average earnings should not be subsidized by taxpayers with average or below average earnings.

Studies have also shown that student loans are educational investments. Psacharopoulos (1996) argues that if returns to education increase demand for higher education, then as a result, the flow of private resources into education through tuition charges increases. He also argues that loans improve resource allocation for developmental courses in an economy. His argument, however, does not account for cases where the student is admitted to courses that they did not opt for, especially in developing countries where the facilities are limited. Further, with selective scholarships Psacharopoulos added, loans improve student selection and equity since poor students compete for places in higher education. This study therefore, as a first of its kind, has identified the weaknesses in the selection of students for the loan scholarship and goes ahead to raise strategies for combating these weaknesses.

4.2 Higher Education Loan Schemes Challenges

Despite the positive arguments justifying student loans as outlined above, lending to students still has imminent shortcomings. Johnstone & Marcucci (2007) point out that the major problem with lending to students, especially to needy students in poor countries, is the absence of either credit-worthiness or collateral. The need for collateral from the government or parents is therefore fundamental if students are to have access to such loans. The experience with most developing countries in the event of default is that it is extremely rare that the government recovers its loan value through taking over family assets. The loans are mostly written off (World Bank, 2008).

Woodhall (2001) maintains that student loans can only help facilitate recovery and improve quality if they are efficient and well-designed. Though many student loan programmes in Africa may have been well designed, they generally lack efficiency. Woodhall (2001) provides certain criteria that student loan programmes should meet while trying to promote equity and efficient cost recovery.

These are: efficient institutional management; effective financial management; effective criteria used in determining eligibility; provision of information on terms and conditions of loans; adequate legal frameworks; and, effective loan collection. While student loans are a prudent means by which recurrent costs in higher education can be met, and whereas most

governments may be well versed in raising funds through debt financing, to Woodhall (2001), some governments are typically far less familiar with and efficient in the processing of loans and that indeed, most government-administered programmes have notoriously high default rates (Woodhall, 2004). This argument is supportive to Ziderman (1992) earlier report that average rates of loan recovery were as high as 67% in Sweden and Barbados, but as low as 10% in Kenya and Venezuela. Kenya has, however, since introduced significant reforms to boost loan recovery though higher education is still largely publicly financed, with the Higher Education Loan Board (HELB) receiving about 50% of its funds from the Ministry of Finance (*HELB Review*, August 2002).

The World Bank particularly stresses that cost-sharing cannot be implemented adequately without a functioning student loan programme, where students borrow to finance their education (World Bank, 2008). Also, in order to minimize subsidy levels, government-financed student loan programs should typically charge interest sufficient to cover the government's cost of borrowing as well as administrative costs (Hauptman, 1999).

Detailed financial analysis for selected countries shows that the present value of repayment collected by loan programmes in developing countries constitutes a small percentage of loan value disbursed plus costs of administering. Hence, loan programmes have not significantly reduced the governments' fiscal burden for higher education (Albrecht & Ziderman, 1992).

Although student loans are found in increasing numbers of countries they are not all equally effective in shifting costs from government (or taxpayers) to the student. The effective recovery on student loans depends on the rate of interest, the repayment period, the rate of recovery (that is, the prevalence of non-payment, or defaults), and the cost of servicing accounts. Loan systems that are "generally available" without requirement of co-signatories (thus frequently incurring significant default rates), and that carry low rates of interest and long repayment periods, are able to recover only very small portions of the original amounts lent.

Such systems are largely ineffective in shifting significant higher educational cost burden from governments, or taxpayers, to students. Challenges of the education loan schemes recovery have led to conclusive suggestions such as the shifting student loan repayment terms and access of Higher Education of cost burden from taxpayers to parents, through appropriate measure of family "need" or "means", which unfortunately is not easy for most developing nations. An alternative to recovering expenses from parents, even with means testing, is to recover them from the student when such student becomes employable and productive.

5. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a cross-sectional research in which quantitative and qualitative data was collected. 157 respondents were drawn from Higher Education Students Financing Board

(HESFB), Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports and Makerere University.

The study employed simple random sampling to select and gather data from the students while purposive sampling was used to select respondents from the staff of the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports and the Higher Education Students Financing Board due to their knowledge on the loan policy implementation. Quantitative data was collected through close-ended questionnaires while interviews were used to solicit opinions for purposes of triangulating with the quantitative data to increase the levels of reliability. Data quality control was ascertained by pre-testing of the research instruments and also through calculation of content validity index. The ratios of 0.750 for Student Loan Coverage, 0.833 for Student Loan Terms, 0.778 for Loan repayments, and 0.800 for Access to Higher Education were obtained. This is consistent with the commonly acceptable values of 0.600 – 0.800 in social research.

To ensure data reliability the study assessed the internal consistency of the research instrument items for each variable using the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient and Cronbach"s alpha values were found to be a =0.62 for-Student Loan Coverage, a =0.71 for-Student Loan targeting, α =0.71 Loan repayments and a =0.74 forAccess to Higher Education. Since a reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher is considered "acceptable" in most social science research situations, the Values of items under Student Loan Coverage which falls below this coefficient were refined accordingly.

A total of 140 questionnaires were distributed to the student loan beneficiaries and out of these, 124 were returned constituting a response rate of 88.6%. For Key informant interviews, out of the 12 staff of Higher Education Student Financing Board management sampled 8 responded constituting a response rate of 66.6%, and out of 5 sampled Ministry of Education officials, 3 responded constituting a response rate of 60.0%. The overall response rate for this study was 71.7%.

The quantitative data from the research questionnaire was captured using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics in form of means and standard deviations were calculated so as to gain a deeper understanding of the concepts that were later tested for the relationships that exist among themselves and the correlations and regression analysis were also done to help in understanding the nature of relationships between the various study variables. The data from interviews was used to collaborate the quantitative information. The responses from the interview were sorted according to themes relevant to the research study objectives, and the findings were collaborated to respective the findings of the quantitative data.

6. FINDINGS

The purpose of the study was to examine the contribution of the student loan scheme towards access of higher ed-

ucation at Makerere University. Conducting this study was seen as having a potential for: (a) augmenting the existing knowledge on the contribution of the student loan scheme towards access of higher education at Makerere University; (b) revealing empirical information to the higher education institutions universities to enable them improve financing strategies; and, (c) setting a ground for enhancing further research in the area of education loan policy.

6.1 Students Loan Scheme

Loan Coverage: Loan coverage was measured using seven items and their percentages are presented below.

Table 1: Measuring Loan Coverage

		Disagree	Agree	Mean	SD
1	The loan scheme is meant to help students from all the districts in Uganda	27.0	73.0	3.04	1.22
2	The loan covers all expenses required to enable the student complete higher education	75.8	24.2	1.97	0.88
3	The administrators of the loan scheme favour students on some other criteria other than on their academic Potential	64.8	35.2	2.33	0.98
4	The student loan scheme is available for students who are pursuing both arts and science courses	83.5	16.5	1.77	0.94
5	The student loan scheme covers all the fees requirements of the university.	31.7	68.3	3.00	1.18
6	The student loan scheme is available for all students irrespective of their nationalities as long as they study in Uganda	92.4	7.6	1.43	0.73
7	There are measures to ensure that students from all regions in Uganda benefit from the loan scheme.	34.2	65.8	2.79	1.01

Though a greater percentage of the respondents agreed that the loan scheme is meant to help students from all the districts in Uganda (73.0%), it was noted that this loan does not cover all expenses required to enable the student complete higher education (as reported by 75.8% of the study respondents).

In addition, overwhelming percentages revealed that student loan scheme is not available for students who are pursuing both arts and science courses (83.5%) and reported that the student loan scheme is not available for all students irrespective of their nationalities even when they study in Uganda (92.4%). In the above findings, quantitative data results revealed that the student loan granting scheme does not have special privileges for those students who are pursuing arts or sciences.

However, qualitative research findings revealed that students, who are pursing courses that are applicable to the job market in Ugandan industries, should be prioritized over those that are not. This can be substantiated by the qualitative comment from a senior officer of the ministry of education stat-

ed that "*that courses that are relevant and applicable to the Ugandan job market should be prioritised*", suggesting that the students pursuing the applicable programmes should be prioritized.

Loan Targeting: The loan targeting was assessed using percentages from the data that was gathered for this study variable.

Loan Targeting	Disagree	Agree	Mean	SD
1 Students pursuing all kinds of Post-secondary programs are sponsored by the loan scheme e.g. bachelors, Masters degrees and PhDs	74.6	25.4	1.92	0.96
2 Students are given priority for the loan scheme depending on their performance at both Ordinary and Advanced Level	35.3	64.7	2.76	0.94
3 In selection of the students to grant the loan scheme at University, there is proper dissemination of information about the scheme.	33.9	66.1	2.75	0.83
4 The loan scheme is granted to students who illustrate the commitment to finalise their studies within a specific period of time	24.3	75.7	2.93	0.81
5 The student loan targeting process is fair for all the students from the different regions of Uganda.	34.2	65.8	2.86	0.96
6 I believe the loan targeting process is free and fair	29.6	70.4	2.83	0.98

From the table above, it is noted that there was a general disagreement as to whether students pursuing all kinds of post-secondary programmes are sponsored by the loan scheme, e.g. Bachelors, Masters degrees and PhDs (74.6%), much as it was agreed by some 64.7% of the respondents that students are given priority for the loan scheme depending on their performance at both Ordinary and Advanced Level. This implies that for one to qualify for the loan scheme, the performance of the student should be commendable given the competitive nature of the scheme for which many across the country are desirous. In spite of the efforts above to reach out to students who are underprivileged and help them further their education, the qualitative results revealed that there have been some challenges. For instance, senior Ministry of education officer stated that "*the demand for higher education is so high but government has not increased funding and therefore the scheme may not succeed*". This assertion implies that the government has not been very committed towards seeing to it that the loan scheme is effective.

Loan Repayment Conditions: The conditions regarding loan repayment are presented as shown in the table below.

Table 3: Loan Repayment Conditions

		Disagree	Agree	Mean	SD
1	The repayment helps other students benefit from the loan schemes	6.0	94.0	3.43	0.66
2	I believe that the repayment of the student loan is my obligation as a student	7.8	92.2	3.36	0.68
3	It is very essential for the student to pay back the student loan money after his or studies	6.4	93.6	3.46	0.62
4	It is a priority for me to make repayments for the student loan scheme	14.0	86.0	3.25	0.83
5	Students shall be easy to trace in case they deliberately refuse to pay	23.7	76.3	3.04	0.87
6	There are great penalties for students who deliberately refuse to pay	20.4	79.6	3.09	1.01
7	Loan repayment affects my personal development plans	27.4	72.6	2.97	0.96
8	Information about the student loan repayment is easily accessible to all beneficiaries.	30.7	69.3	2.93	0.95
9	The interest to be charged for the student loan is well known to all the loan beneficiaries	42.7	57.3	2.61	1.16

Regarding repayment, it was generally agreed by the students that it is quite essential for the students to pay back the student loan money after their study period (93.6%) and the majority consider the repayment a priority (86.0%). Most students are aware that there are great penalties for students who deliberately refuse to pay (79.6%). This is an encouraging note for the student loan scheme and gives a ray of hope that it will not be very hard to sustain unless its recipients generally change their attitudes relative to what the findings on repayment show.

Relationship between loan coverage, targeting, repayment and access to higher education: The correlation of loan coverage to access in education was found to be significantly and positively related to Access to Higher Education ($r = 0.530^{**}$, $p<.01$). This implies that when aspects of loan coverage such as favoritism are minimized, but issues like professionalism encouraged, then there will be increased number of students from the marginalized socio-economic groups accessing the loan.

The students loan targeting was also noted to be positively and significantly related to the access of higher education were ($r = 0.538^{**}$, $p<.01$). The results are an indication that when loan targeting efforts such as promotion of transparency and fairness in the student selection process are increased, then there will be more students that can be assisted in accessing higher education at the universities through

the loan scheme (Adjusted R Square =0.283). However, the descriptive analysis indicated that there is a general disagreement as to whether the students pursuing all kinds of Post-secondary programmes are sponsored by the loan scheme.

Student Loan repayment and access of Higher Education in Uganda are also positively and significantly related (r =0.538**, p<.01). The observation in this case reveals that proper loan repayment conditions will enable students to repay back the loans that will enhance the access to higher education by other intending loan applicants. The students should have access to information on repayment modalities such as interest rates charged on loans.

Table 4: Regression

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	.802	.178		4.510	.000
	Loan Coverage	.212	.072	.237	2.958	.004
	Loan Targeting	.280	.064	.343	4.380	.000
	Loan Repayment	.201	.048	.313	4.189	.000
	Dependent Variable: **Access To Higher Education**					
	R	.703				
	R Square	.494				
	Adjusted R Square	.480				
	Std. Error of the Estimate	.316				
	R Square Change	.494				
	F Statistic	37.039				
	Sig.	.000				

The results show that loan coverage, loan targeting and loan repayment has the potential to explain 48% of access to Higher education (adjusted R square=.480). This regression model was statistically significant (sig.<.01) showing that indeed, if Loan Coverage was prioritized, it would reliably and positively influence Access to Higher Education; that if loans are targeted, they will positively influence access to higher education, if loan repayment was well conducted, it would reliably and positively influence access to higher education.

7. DISCUSSION

This study revealed that student loan scheme greatly contributes towards access of higher education at Makerere University in Uganda. This finding can be established by the fact that the findings indicate loan coverage as being a significant predictor of access to higher education; that the student loan targeting is positively related to the access of higher education and that loan repayment conditions are positively related to the Access to Higher Education as revealed in the study. Increase in higher education will generally improve the living standards of the average Ugandan citizen in so

many ways, validating what is widely believed that improved access to higher education improves the prospects of success in one's life as argued by Stone et al. (2012). Elements of loan targeting such as assigning priority to students for the loan scheme depending on their performance, using a fair system to select students from all the parts of Uganda without partiality or giving unfair consideration to some regions, will give some more students from different ethnic and social backgrounds a chance to access higher education.

However, there is no guarantee that after acquiring the student loan all students are always able to find a good job and thus repay the loan while meeting their other life demands as indicated in ASA (2012). Also considering the works of Gale (2014) with an increasing student debt, there is likely to be more limited access of higher education by other students because funds are held up by the students who have not repaid their loans.

In addition, it has been argued that the access to higher education may not necessarily enhance the standard of living of an individual as many of these students with high student debt may end up being stressed and less productive at the places where they have secured employment and all this because of the student debt (Cooke et al. 2004). It is therefore very important that the student loan recipients' and the loan granting body take into account all these the implications in the process of loan scheme management.

8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and discussions, the paper arrives at the following conclusions:

- Since student loan coverage was positively related to access of higher education in the loan scheme that has just been initiated by the government of Uganda, it implied that if the elements of student loan coverage such as eligibility and objectives of the scheme are upheld, there is a great possibility that the number of students accessing the loans will increase overtime.

- Loan targeting had a slightly stronger relationship with access to higher education than the other two measured on loan coverage and loan repayment. This suggested that if the loan scheme was extended to students pursuing both undergraduate and post-graduate studies, access to higher education would increase.

- Loan repayment is noted to be a significant predictor of the access to higher education. The results clearly suggest that repayment shall ultimately

lead to access to higher education. However, since in Uganda, the loan scheme is quite novel the repayment by students is yet to be observed.

The article makes the following recommendations which, if implemented, would hopefully improve access to higher education through the loan scheme:

- The loan body should award loans to both undergraduate and graduate students; and should cover all the academic and non-academic expenses and required by the student such as accommodation, books, stationery and feeding. These can be achieved through setting up a Board Committee responsible for awarding loans.
- The loan selection process should continuously be assessed or contrasted with that of the countries especially in the western world and other African countries where the loan schemes have been used for quite some time.
- The Student Loan Board should put in place measures to ensure that loan scheme processes if fair and transparent. The criteria used in the selection of the students should be made known to the general public after each selection process. The information regarding the loan process should be through popular media in all regions of the country.
- The loan-granting body should step up measures to ensure that the students repay the loans. Such measures may include helping students maintain a positive attitude towards the repayment of the loans through clear and regular communication in the form of reminders for payment schedules and amounts due.

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES, TRIPLE CHALLENGES AND CONSEQUENCES OF INEFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

This article describes the significant role that government and trade union leaders should adopt to enhance economic growth and confront the triple challenges facing South Africa: inequality, poverty and unemployment. Trade union leaders, in particular, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) in alliance with the African National Congress (ANC), the ruling party in government, and the South African Communist Party (SACP), are expected to be major role-players in the formulation of economic policies regulating labour matters via platforms such as the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) as well as the bargaining councils to negotiate strategies to build improved socio-economic levels in South Africa. Political and organised labour's leadership in a democratic state such as South Africa should provide expression to the common interest and should give direction to policy formulation and its implementation. The Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) of South Africa and legislation such as the Labour Relations Act (Act 66 of 1995) endorse the existence and operation of trade unions such as COSATU. As the largest workers' federation, COSATU has a strong alliance with the ruling party in government upon which it has an advantage as a bargaining entity. However, it appears that both political leaders in government as well as leaders of the organised labour (COSATU) engage in delaying tactics which derails socio-economic development. This conduct has a negative impact on society and perpetuates high levels of unemployment which leads to poverty and contributes to ongoing inequality. This article argues that inconsiderate and ineffective leadership from both political leaders in government and organised labour militates against the development of a truly democratic South Africa. A recommendation from this study is that the policymakers and structures which serve towards formulation of labour policies such as the NEDLAC must seriously pursue effective initiatives to moderate the level of labour matters. Effective political leadership demonstrated by government and the organised labour can help to yield results that can reduce socio-economic inequalities.

Keywords: Trade Unions, Poverty, Inequality, Unemployment, Government, Democracy

1. INTRODUCTION

The ongoing public protests on service delivery and the unending strike actions on issues of labour and political disagreements are negative elements which the liberation movement, through their former leaders, vigorously opposed (Alden, 1993; Mpehle, 2012). Yet, these protests are symptoms of ongoing corruption and the perpetuation of cronyism within the ANC symbolising the loss of hope and mistrust in the general populace towards the ANC and its alliance such as the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) (Agang SA, 2014: 11).

South Africa like most of African countries as proclaimed by President Zuma faces serious problems regarding unemployment, poverty and inequality pronounces (Zuma, 2012). To overcome these triple challenges, trade unions' leaders and government leadership have a major role to play to build and develop not only the social living standards, but more so to create economic growth in South Africa.

Fakir (2009: 6) is of the view that senior government officials and leaders in corporate entities and labour should help fight the corruption and non-caring leadership to defend democracy in South Africa. The current leaders of the ANC and its ally COSATU as the largest organised labour movement appear to be failing the good intentions of the serving and empowering the struggling majority of South Africa and its working class. Based on information reported by the Statistics South Africa through the media (*Business Day*, November 21, 2016) 47% of employed people in South Africa earn less than R3 500 per month. NEDLAC, chaired by the Deputy President of South Africa Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, met on 20th November 2016 and announced its proposal that the National Minimum Wage (NMW) be set at R 3500 per month. COSATU and the National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (NUMSA) rejected this proposal (ANN7, 2016).

So the question remains: what more needs to be done to find agreement between labour and political leaders? The trade unions are expected to be at the forefront of coordinating the workers' issues which aim to promote a better life for citizens based as embedded in the Constitution of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996, here after referred to as the Constitution) which endorses the existence and operation of trade unions as Ndou (2016:32) strongly argues. Section 77 of the Labour Relations Act (LRA) (Act 66 of 1995) gives NEDLAC the responsibility and duty of building ongoing relations between various parties (business, labour and communities), mainly the workers and employers in an attempt to resolve the causes of the strike or protest action.

In South Africa, supposedly a constitutional democracy, the respect for human rights and the rule of law is not just significant but forms part of our constitutional rights and must be always adhered to (Silima, 2016: 5). Equally so, the involvement and full representation of a trade unions in various authorised institutions or platforms recommended by the state put both trade unions and the state in a better position for positive working relationships. Institutions

like NEDLAC and platforms such as the bargaining councils are relevant fora in this regard. This paper departs from other research work explored in socio-economic and labour discourse since it takes a narrative form to examine the operations of trade unions in South Africa, particularly COSATU as an alliance to the ruling ANC. The literature reviewed provides the base which underpins this piece of work.

The article is thus arranged to provide the introduction, the conceptual framework and synthesis, literature review on the stance of trade unions, political influence and trade union's reactions and links to politics in South Africa, the relevance of political affiliated trade unions in post-apartheid South Africa, the impact of politics on labour issues as a commotion to socio-economic development as well as conclusion and recommendations.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND SYNTHESIS

This article is largely based on a conceptual context which seeks to provide integrated perspectives on existing theoretical views while addressing innovative and new issues (Watts, 2011). Thus, in an attempt to address and raise arguments on this paper, a conceptual analysis which narrate the views claimed on this piece of work utilising literature review and secondary data would be followed (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2012). The central issues of concern on this paper revolves around the socio-economic stance in South Africa whereupon, the trade unions or its leadership have been drawn as the source of derailment in advancing the lives of the working class while concentrating [trade unions] more on politics than labour matters (Maqhina, 2015). The theory on socio-economic aspects derives from the development stance of a country which primarily entails that a country's progress constitutes from the level of its economic growth, the level of employment and the social status of its society (Friedman, 2014).

The theory of development implies to the structure of the social formations determined by social power and wealth in a country as maintained by Magubane (1979) whereupon inequality arise. Magubane (1979) further argues that inequality translates from different social status which in the South African stance, even race becomes associated to inequality. Socio-economic status therefore, refers to the ability to produce an adequate and growing supply of goods and services efficiently to accumulate capital and distribute production adequately (Jaffee, 1998). This postulation is in line with the government's responsibility to its citizens or society in terms governance and allocation of resources.

The article does not aim to demonstrate relationship of African leaders versus European leadership, but rather the position of leadership is looked at in terms of the stance of South Africa post-apartheid under the leadership of the ANC and its ally organised labour COSATU simply because both ANC and COSATU intended to uplift the socio-economic status of the majority of South Africans which happens to be black (Buhlungu, 2005). Thus, the

leadership of the ANC and COSATU should not be confused with race. In as much as the ANC and COSATU contains a majority of black people in their leadership positions, these organisations are non-racial and could be led by a person of any race for as long as such cadre is deemed fit to uphold the principles of the organisations (Jeffery, 2016). In this regard, it should be acknowledged and admitted that elements of corruption could be confused to race as it happens through media reports and by other people in society who confuses politics and administration (Sebola, 2014).

The reference and use of leadership on this paper primarily refers to the leadership role played by government or rather political leaders and leaders of the organised labour with specific reference to the ANC and COSATU's leadership since there is an alliance between these organisations.

The alliance was established prior apartheid mainly for the betterment of lives of the poorest of the poor which its majority are the blacks South Africans (Buhlungu, 2005). The leaders of these prominent political and labour movements appear to be failing to uplift the socio-economic status of South Africans, thereby failing to focus on addressing and tackling the triple challenges which is unemployment, inequality and poverty facing South Africa and /or Africa as a continent.

3. BRIEF OVERVIEW ON UNIONISED ACTIVITIES

Historically, trade unions have influenced and impacted the establishment of labour rights as well as socio-economic and political reform in most countries some of which are indicated on table 1 in this subsection far below (Bhorat et al., 2014). The trade union membership rates and trade unions' coverage often varies from one country to another and density may change in each sector over time. In countries such as United States of America (USA) where there are liberal market economies, unionised employees are covered by a union contract at their workplace environment and they (members) may choose not to be covered (contracts) to the trade union which represents them.

This, therefore, implies that the union membership rates in liberal market economy countries such as the USA are typically lower than union coverage rates in those that are not liberal market economies. Countries such as Denmark, Finland and Sweden are referred to as continental market economies, which apply that the multi-employer bargaining and public policy principles negotiated contracts to non-organised sectors are very high coverage (Barker, 2015).

Collective bargaining determines and encourages employment relations in various sectors in countries such as Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland including South Africa (Wilton, 2010). Hence, Antonio Gramsci (the prominent leader of Italian Communist Party) during the 1920s

regarded collective bargaining mainly as "industrial legality" which marked a victory for the Italian workers as the communist militants had been granted a platform to negotiate with the "bourgeoisie employers" who were in control of the workers and means of production (Annunziato, 1988). Trade unions' recognition remains relevant and workers believe that through trade unionism their voices and concerns are better heard and that they have more power through collective bargaining than via a single employee's voice or concern. In exercising the workers' rights and power trade unionism had been understood to be on the forefront of worker's rights based on Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (OECD, 2015).

In countries such as South Africa trade unions or organised labour are recognised through Constitutional rights (Section 23) and the LRA as enshrined under Section 37. The level of unionisation in South Africa stands above 40% (Adcorp, 2013). According to Balkaran (2011), in South Africa there are, at most, four trade union federations, namely, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the Federation of Unions of South Africa (FEDUSA), the National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU) and the Confederation of South African Workers' Unions (CONSAWU). These trade union federations represent organised labour in South Africa and are key members and role players in the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC), the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC), the South African Local Government Bargaining Council (SALGBC). They are also involved in government and political structures (Balkaran, 2011). Trade unions in South Africa are powerful organisations given their right to bargain freely and their recognition in the country's Constitution. The membership of the registered trade unions forms approximately 43% of the formal employment in the country (Adcorp, 2013) which, in respect of measurements of the international standard and scales of developing countries, is a high density. One of the major roles of the trade unions is to prevent workers' exploitation and ensure that the wages are satisfactory to the working class (Barker, 2015). In this regard the role of the trade unions, government and employers in the bargaining council is significant while the government is regarded as the legislator, regulator and conciliator (Maree, 2014).

Creativity of trade unions is displayed in campaigns run in countries such as Brazil and Germany which reveal a new approach in the way trade unions view how they should operate as opposed to the 'traditional way' which focuses solely on wage issues. Through these campaigns, trade unions pay attention to strategise on workers' demands and benefits while also investing for workers, not for their own gain or profit by leaders and for leaders but more so for workers' benefit mainly. During his time as COSATU leader, Willie Madisha amongst others was involved in a financial scandal about trade unions' funds, and lately, Vavi was expelled

on account of issues which involved misuse of trade unions' funds amongst other reasons (Losi, 2015). It would appear that trade unions in South Africa are less interested in workers' interests and protection, but more interested in gains for their leaders with no energy for innovative ideas which would culminate in mutual benefit to employers and ordinary union employees. Trade unions in the public and private sector should be seen to be promoting and exercising alternative approaches to enhance workers' conditions and to pave ways for job opportunities and employment creation.

South Africa is described as a striking nation based on the number of trade union strikes which have taken place more frequently since the dawn of democracy (Greg, 2013). This conduct by South African trade unions, in particular COSATU as the main trade union federation in South Africa, hasten the country's degeneration into poverty and economic stagnation and do nothing to alleviate the triple challenges facing South Africa as it also happens in African countries such as Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Angola and others (Webster, 2007: 3).

Strikes and protests occur mainly due to high demand for wage increase and better living conditions since most of the low-paid workers live in squatter camps, with bad or no proper water, sanitation and waste collection (Bench Marks Foundation, 2012). The trade unions blame employers of exposing employees to unhealthy working conditions while they persistently pay low wages as demonstrated during the strike actions which took place in 2007, 2010 and 2012 by the public service and mining sector workers respectively (Alexander, 2013).

Employment opportunities are directly affected by the high increase in the demand of higher wage levels often promulgated by trade unions neglecting to seek possible avenues for mediation in the bargaining councils (Urbach, 2010). In the third quarter of 2016 the unemployment rate stood at 27.1% based on information from Statistics South Africa's Statistician-General Pali Lehohla (Lehohla, 2016).

Surely this must be a matter of concern considering that job losses have been increasing since 2010 when approximately 750 000 jobs were lost (Urbach, 2010). According to Maree (2014), the role of the state or government in the South African bargaining councils is legislative, regulatory and conciliatory. The bargaining councils create a forum for collective bargaining, which is the appropriate platform where trade unions and employers' organisations and the state maintain labour peace. Subsequently, the bargaining council agreements contain mainly substantive items and include a peace obligation which is a declaration of negotiating in good faith for all parties or role players involved in collective bargaining (Davids & Meyer, 2012).

Some of the influential factors which strengthen unionised activities include trade unions' capacity, trade density and structural adjustments of unions as they gain power through bargaining

councils (Jose, 1999; Webster, 2006). Trade union density is defined as the total membership of the unions at a percentage of the number of employed workers as determined in the national labour force (Barker, 2015). The changing economic environment is often linked to globalisation which is threatening to trade unions. As such, the unions tend to respond in different ways, and by responding to such threats as outsourcing and subcontracting of workers (Barker, 2015: 95). Barker (2015) further elaborates that the hiring of temporary workers directly by the company or through an agency has been long considered as atypical employment but that practice has become common in South Africa. The workers employed under these types of employment are insecure because their employment contracts do not last long and benefits are few or not available at all. As the result of temporary contract employment most workers appointed under these contracts are often not unionised according to National Labour & Economic Development Institute (NALEDI) (NALEDI, 2006). Temporary or casual workers who are used by employers as replacement workers to get business and or production rendered during strike actions are a major cause of strike actions turning violent (Tenza, 2015). Tenza (2015) argues that casual or replacement workers are exposed to danger since striking workers become increasingly angry at employers both for failing to meet their demands and for employing casual workers to run their business.

Trade unions in virtually all developed economies have lost membership in recent decades, and the decline has been sharp, especially in Britain. The union density in the UK stood at 27% in 2010, compared to 30% and 50% during the years 2000 and 1980 respectively as argued by Wright (2011: 3). Table 1 below depicts the top ten highly unionised selected countries as well as the ranking of South Africa globally in terms of unionised sectors from the year 2005 until 2014. The US statistics of unionisation have been captured as a point of referral since the USA is used in many instances for measuring various rates of socio-economic aspects including labour (OECD, 2016).

Table 1: Most Highly Unionised Selected Countries

Most highly global unionised selected countries as per OECD statistics										
Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Country										
Iceland	84	85.1	84.8	84.6	85.1	85.4	85.2	85.2	85.5	86.4
Finland	70.6	70.4	70.5	69.8	69.2	68.6	69.6	69.8	69	..
Sweden	76.5	75.1	70.8	68.3	68.4	68.2	67.5	67.5	67.7	67.3
Denmark	70.7	68.4	67.9	66.3	67.7	67	66.4	67.2	66.8	..
Belgium	53.7	54.8	54.7	54.4	54.9	53.8	55.1	55	55.1	..
Norway	54.9	54.2	53	52.6	53.6	53.7	53.5	53.3	52.1	..
Italy	33.8	33.6	34	33.9	35.2	36	36.3	36.9	37.3	..
Austria	33.9	31.6	30.5	29.7	29.4	29	28.4	28	27.8	..
Canada	27.7	27.4	27.3	27	27.3	27.2	26.9	27.2	27.1	26.4
United Kingdom	28.6	28.2	28.1	27.3	27.3	26.6	25.8	26	25.8	25.1
United States	12	11.5	11.6	11.9	11.8	11.4	11.3	10.8	10.8	10.7
South Africa	22[1]									32*

Source: OECD, 2016; ITC-ILO Country Report (South Africa) 2014

In most countries the union density is generally larger in the public than in the private sector since the former is often characterised by a strong bureaucratic undertone which facilitates conditions in the workplace where employees need a collective voice (Amstrong & Steenkamp, 2008: 25; Bhorat et al., 2014: 5). Based on Amstrong & Steenkamp's (2008: 25) views, the trade unions in the public sector appear to have been primarily effective and most interested in matters relating to the increase of wages for their members. Like many organised labour movements, COSATU declares itself as striving for better wages and no exploitation to workers (Buhlungu, 2005). [1]However, the outright dismissal and rejection of the recently proposed NMW as an initiative to find ways to uplift the wages earned by the lowest paid employees in South Africa is evidence that COSATU has less interest to constructive labour matters other than destructive ideas opposing meaningful proposals. This is found to be a violation of negotiating in good faith which seeks to destroy the power of bargaining by trade unions as laid out under section 77 of the LRA. As argued by Sidler (2014), that ongoing protests and persistent strike demonstrated by trade

1.The trade union density in South Africa has been reported being above 22% since 2005 and by 2014, trade union desity has been reported being at *32% (Rautenbach 2014)

unions negatively affect industries while contributing to the job losses and unemployment rate. Instead of trade unions playing leading role on labour resolutions and meaningful proposal such as the recent NEDLAC proposed NMW, COSATU drags the implementation of this initiative. The economy has struggled over the years as a consequence of the incessant strike actions and resistance by trade unions to find labour solution to help enhance economics stance. This has increasingly contributed to government's struggle to achieve its objectives of reducing inequality, poverty and unemployment as stated in the New Development Plan (Koma, 2013).

4. POLITICS AND TRADE UNIONISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

According to Duncan (2006), the manifestation of violence in a society results from citizens frustrated over the failure of government to deliver basic services such as electricity, water, sanitation and so on. Violence is demonstrated through protests, strikes and marches which are all daily occurrences in South Africa where even members of the ruling party [ANC] join or lead the marches to legislative structures like parliament and other government offices - marching "against" their own leaders.

This conduct appears to be absurd as Maluleka (2016) suggests. Surely, the governing body or the ruling party can do something about a system which is evidently wrong or any unprincipled mechanism which hinders government operations? At the same time, both political and trade union leaders keep fueling the fire to suppress lower and middle class workers since the dismally fail to discuss rewarding labor issues which could help enhance the economic status of the country than degrading employment and job opportunities (Hartford, 2012). According to Hartford (2012), visible displays of ignorance and a lack of care on the part of union and government leaders exacerbates inequality, poverty, and unemployment while political leaders claim to empower black entrepreneurs and create better employment opportunities for lower earning working classes (Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014). Instead, strike actions seem to be the inspiring factor which workers are willing to take irrespective of the outcomes thereof and to force employers to meet their demands.

Personal attributes and popular cliques would appear to take precedence over sound political philosophy in South Africa resulting in a lack of responsibility and accountability (Prah, 2015: 3). Mafunisa (2003: 97) strongly maintains that political office bearers have a major role to play in a democratic state since they are the ones who provide expression to common interest and give direction to policy formulation and implementation.

Therefore, the honor of any political office bearer or senior government official lies solely in their personal attributes, conduct and ethical responsibility for their actions in and out of office. Unfortunately, the lack of leadership ethics wipes out all the good work done by prominent past leaders of the ANC who applied their minds

intellectually and constructively even during very difficult times during apartheid and other trying times during the early years of democracy in South Africa (Mandela, 1993). Poor, weak and ignorant leadership as seen currently in the ANC's senior leadership eradicates the good ground work already done in making South Africa successively governable as a "rainbow nation".

The ANC's leadership, particularly under the steerage of President Zuma, continues to defend an array of improprieties including the Nkandla saga which started in 2009, and continue to disrespect the Chapter Nine Institutions as laid out in the Constitution (Section 181(1)(a)) such as the office of the Public Protector. In all these scandals, COSATU has not condemned this conduct until recently when it (COSATU) declared its stance to support the Deputy President Mr Cyril Ramaphosa (*Business Day*, November 21, 2016) for presidential candidate as the next ANC president. This move does not indicate that COSATU or rather its current leaders are independent as organized labor which stands for workers and labor issues. COSATU is still trying to cling onto the wing of political milieu of the ANC despite the acknowledgement that a move such as that of pronouncing its support of presidential leadership of ANC may have cost COSATU a lot since the Polokwane Conference resolution in 2007. This argument is confirmed by claims made by Losi (2015) and Mashele (2016) that Zwelinzima Vavi, the former General Secretary of COSATU and Irvin Jim including NUMSA (former COSATU affiliate) as an organized labor were all leaders who are now out of COSATU yet they were vocal and helped Zuma to lead the ANC. The significant point made here is that the current COSATU leadership does not seem to learn from history as they repeat the same error which they are likely to regret later. The government and the trade union leaders must surely be concerned about the condition of the society's living standards. When the economic conditions of the country deteriorate and the strikes continue in the main industries that generate employment opportunities such as the mining and manufacturing sectors, then most people will lose jobs as companies will retrench if they cannot make profit. The relevance and role played by trade unions post-apartheid could then be questionable since there are platforms such as the bargaining councils, NEDLAC, the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) which stands to maintain employment relations unbiased, yet trade unions such as COSATU forsakes these platforms.

5. RELEVANCE OF POLITICALLY AFFILIATED TRADE UNIONS IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

The socio-economic development of a country and the country's attraction to investors lie mainly on how the state is governed (Carothers & Brechenmacher, 2014: 20). Public governance is about authoritative and equitable allocation of resources to citizens. In this regard, a democratically governed country such as South Africa or where multiparty democracy is practised, government must ensure that the public resources are allocated

sufficiently and equitably to all (Mondli, 2016). This practice resonates with service delivery principles and the values of the Constitution as set out under Section 1(a). The leadership of COSATU as a trade union and an alliance partner to the ANC which is in governance appear to have allowed the negative attributes of an uncaring leadership in direct opposition to what the alliance originally stood for. Such conduct practised by the current organized labor's senior officials and political leaders defeats the very purpose of the entire alliance's existence and its principled uniqueness to other political parties. Bhorat et al. (2014: 16) contend that:

> "Employers' organizations and trade unions are not merely economic agents they are necessarily key actors in the political arena. These organizations influence the laws that regulate labor markets and may even influence policies beyond the sphere of labor relations".

The main objective of the South African democratic government through its ministries and parliamentarians as well as organized labor, COSATU included, should still be to build a new legacy to be supported by younger generations. In line with these sentiments, it is appropriate to repeat an observation made by scholars such as Adriansen et al. (2016), Naidoo et al. (2016) and Southall (2016) that, worldwide, amongst other social impacts, education has emphatically enhanced skills development and knowledge in the developing and the developed countries in recent times. Why do trade unions and political leaders in democratic states like South Africa fail to use their power and proper platforms which they have an opportunity to enhance education and skills development for example? Such initiative will aid skills development which may translate to a less number of unemployment rates. By so doing, the country does not only have a chance to develop but also to create opportunities and set itself up for advancement in the global economy.

Trade unions such as COSATU through NEDLAC and the bargaining council fora via their affiliates such as the South African Democratic Teachers` Union (SADTU) are supposed to play a major role in uplifting the standard workers as the social problems such as the issue of basic and higher education. In this way, the positioning of higher education for instance, is a "fundamental inventory centre" for economic development (Naidoo, 2011: 8).

Naidoo (2011) maintains that the economies of developing countries have been strengthened and empowered through the recognition of higher education yet in low-income countries since the 1990s trade unions are not playing vital role in this regard. A significant moment was the recognition by the World Bank that through appropriate implementation and policy enforcement, higher education could be regarded as an investment and a means of uplifting the socio-economic status of the country (Castells, 2001; Kubler & Sayers, 2010; Naidoo, 2011). However, the major challenge for both

government and society in countries such as South Africa is the high level of poverty, inequality and unemployment which carries elements of racial divisions, amongst other factors, in South Africa (Brady et al., 2007).

Trade unions' leaders are not to be regarded as isolated from participating in social problems such as the crises of funding education. They hinder economic stability with all these ongoing strike actions and rejection of initiatives made at the NEDLAC level instead of playing a vital part to the positive resolutions taken at these forums. For instance, the NEDLAC proposal emanating from the resolution taken on Sunday 20th November 2016 is that the lowest earning employees in the work force cannot be paid less than the set NMW as proposed.

Trade unions have been vocal about the issue of NMW yet COSATU rejected the proposal, suggesting that the NMW must be raised from R4 500 to R6 000 while NUMSA has reported that the NMW must be R10 000. In this extreme response, trade unions do not seem to support good initiatives by government or any stakeholders who are visionary in helping economic growth (ANN7, 2016).

6. IMPACT OF POLITICS ON LABOUR AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The combination of labour and politics makes it difficult for the employees in both the public and private sectors to see realization of the labor matters being resolved through bargaining chambers. For instance, COSATU's main interest post-apartheid (1994) shows lack of continuation of policies intended to uplift living standards of the working class which it demonstrated quite well prior democracy. During its transition to a democratic South Africa, COSATU in their alliance with the ANC proposed the Reconstruction and Development Policy (RDP) which COSATU rightfully served a central part to develop (Govender, 2011). It could be stated that COSATU aimed to achieve most of what were seen as the working class' interest including proposals to the living wages and or the minimum wages during its inception in 1985 and during the time it joined alliance with the ANC (Buhlungu, 2005).

The impact made by trade unions on employment relation debates from structures such as NEDLAC carries more weight and have a positive impact to workers' concerns than the more political stance and attention trade unions such as COSATU seem to be spending on political matters than workers' issues. COSATU opposes economic policy initiatives proposed and implemented by government such as the National Development Plan (NDP) and other economic policies like the New Growth Plan (Koma, 2013: 155) citing that such policies are not in favor of the working class but are capitalist based.

As a result, this reaction by trade unions impedes economic performance in many ways (Koma, 2013). Trade unions seemed to be more involved in strike actions than meaningful proposed resolution to embark on workers' issues and wages. Amongst other effects,

violence engaged in by striking trade union members not only impairs human rights but infringes on the good purpose of democratic principles as promulgated in Section 23 of the Constitution. As outlined in subsection 3 of the White Paper (1997): "a democratically elected government has a mandate from its electorate and is responsible to Parliament for ensuring that the mandate is fulfilled". Ministers or government have a duty to provide leadership and so should the trade union leadership.

Government plays a significant role in building social life particularly in a democratic state such as South African where civilians' cooperation and participation is essential as that of trade unions expected to play vital role of employment relations (Silima, 2016).

The concerning factor is that low-earning employees in the labor force are still in large numbers even after apartheid and they, (the majority are black) are the ones suffering while trade unions keep delaying the progress and initiatives which emerge from time to time from government or employers. Trade unions are supposed to help government to uplift and help poor-earning workers which is implied as a step in the right direction via the NMW proposal made recently.

Political and trade union leaders must walk the talk and engage in negotiations which are beneficial to the working class in the labor force. Yet trade unions do not seem to be proactively thinking of those who may be victims when NMW is not implemented on time (*Business Day*, November 21, 2016).

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this article an attempt was made to understand the role of the leaders of organized labor as well as that of the political leaders which both have significant role in a democratic country. The outcomes of this article emanate from a theoretical exploration of the above discussions. Regulatory labor and attributes of good governance in South Africa informed by how trade unions have operated in other countries, particularly developed countries, has been used to showcase the stance of South African politics and trade unionism.

Trade unions' alliance to the governing party and politics contributes to a state of lost relevance to the working class or those employees who are supposed to benefit from and be protected by trade unions. This then raises a question for future studies to investigate the relevance of trade unions in contemporary South Africa or rather to question the impact and significance of trade unionism for the low-level working class in particular the black society in general in South Africa.

It has been suggested that the failure of union leaders have consequences in exacerbating the triple challenges in Africa, namely, inequality, poverty and unemployment all of which are on the rise despite policies and regulations designed to ease this burden as Bhorat et al., (2016) and Greg (2013), strongly contend.

Not only are high levels of unemployment experienced year after year in South Africa, but more so, trade unions appear to be a stumbling block to the positive initiatives pledged either by employers and or through government instigation. The current reaction of COSATU and NUMSA regarding their dismissal of the recently proposed national minimum wage of R3 500 per month to all low level paid employees is a clear sign that instead of cooperating in finding a starting point, trade unions are at all too ready to refute initiatives to find solutions either to shape better labor market opportunities or to reduce high levels of unemployment. It could thus be concluded that the South African trade unions contribute significantly in perpetuating the triple challenges which South Africa faces like many other African countries. This reaction by trade unions do not only defeats the purpose of this developing state (South Africa) but more so it strongly opposes democracy in that only the few who are employed benefit and trade unions are even willing to lose members through retrenchment than to help create employment in the country. As a way forward to ease the situation, a recommendation from this study is that the policymaker must seriously pursue effective initiatives to moderate the rate of unionised strikes and protest by organised labour in South Africa. Importantly so, the institutionalised means of dispute resolution and structures such as NEDLAC and the bargaining chambers must be embraced and enhanced to assist socio-economic development in South Africa for the better of the working class and society at large.

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ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AS A PANACEA TO REDRESSING XENOPHOBIC ATTACKS IN SOUTH AFRICA: A FOCUS ON SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

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ABSTRACT

A democratic South Africa has witnessed recurrent xenophobic attacks in recent years, especially during 2008 and 2015. Most of the attacks involved native people looting the goods of immigrant businesses, impacting negatively on South Africa's economic growth through the effects on the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). It has been established that foreign-owned SMEs provide livelihoods for the majority of people in South Africa's poor settlements. Ironically, there is a claim that xenophobic attacks are perpetrated due to frustration among the native SME owners who are unable to compete with the foreign-owned counterparts. Hence, a public rhetoric has been created to suggest that native SME owners blame foreigners for taking all the business opportunities and markets. Given this strife, this paper endorses entrepreneurship education as a possible antidote. SMEs do play a crucial role in the development of local economies; and, this paper investigates the role of entrepreneurship education as a panacea to redressing xenophobic attacks. Entrepreneurship education raise peoples' awareness of self-employment as a career opportunity, promotes the development of personal qualities that are relevant to entrepreneurship such as creativity, risk taking, and responsibility, and provides the technical and business skills that are needed in order to start and grow a business venture. Furthermore, entrepreneurship education helps to transmit and impart entrepreneurial competencies and concepts required to start and run a successful venture. The article proposes that entrepreneurship education should be introduced as part of the school curriculum from primary school to university level in order to equip learners with entrepreneurial thinking as a lifelong phenomenon.

Key words: Entrepreneurship Education, Immigrants, Native, SMEs, Xenophobia, South Africa

1. INTRODUCTION

The terms entrepreneurship and small to medium enterprises (SMEs) are used interchangeably to mean one thing in the existing literature. As indicated by Ukpere (2011), South Africa like any other developing country is faced with developmental challenges such as unemployment, poverty and income inequality.

Ramukumba (2014) states that SMEs in developing countries have become important because of their potential to improve income distribution, create new employment, reduce poverty and facilitate export growth. SMEs enhance forward and backward linkages between economically, socially and geographically different segments of the economy.

They offer opportunities for enhancing and adapting suitable foreign and indigenous technical methods and provide an outstanding breeding ground for entrepreneurial and managerial ability (Ilegbinosa & Jumbo, 2015). In South Africa the SMEs sector has been hailed by the government in its role towards fostering economic growth and development, creating a host of government initiatives to address the financing needs of SMEs; foster and increase entrepreneurship activity in the country and creating profitable opportunities for indigenous entrepreneurs (Ngek, 2014). SMEs contribute to economic development in various ways by creating employment for the growing rural and urban labour force, providing necessary sustainability and innovation in the economy (Kongolo, 2010). Abor & Quartey (2010: 218) note that SMEs account for an estimated of 91% of businesses in South Africa, contributing between 51% and 57% of the gross domestic product and 60% towards employment. Katua (2014) found that SMEs play a vital role in reducing poverty as they tend to employ poor and low income workers and sometimes they are the only source of employment in rural areas and poor regions. Immigrant entrepreneurs form part of SMEs in South Africa.

The foreign owned businesses contribute to the development of local economies by offering affordable goods and services mostly to marginalised rural areas. However, the potential and capacity of the SME sector was shattered in 2008 and later in 2015 due to xenophobic attacks which mushroomed in most parts of South Africa. According to Khosa & Kalitanyi (2014), the xenophobic attacks made foreign owned SME business activities to halt with majority closing their businesses completely. Most of the attacks featured a number of local people looting the goods of foreign owned SMEs.

Cooper (2009) notes that an approximate of 342 shops were looted and 213 shops were raised to the ground by the local marauding xenophobes as the violence raged

on around the country in 2008. This impacted negatively on the economic growth of the country due to the fact that SMEs contribute immensely to the economic growth. One of the causes of the xenophobic attacks was perpetrated by the local SME owners failing to compete with the foreigners. In addition, local SME owners blame foreigners for taking all the business opportunities and markets.

Given this strife, this article endorses entrepreneurship education as a possible antidote. An entrepreneurship education programme creates self-sustainable individuals who are able to identify opportunities where others see a challenge. Entrepreneurship education raise peoples' awareness of self-employment as a career opportunity, promotes the development of personal qualities that are relevant to entrepreneurship such as creativity, risk taking, and responsibility, and provides the technical and business skills that are needed in order to start and grow a venture.

Entrepreneurship education can be imparted through institutions of higher learning as well as via skills transfer through collaboration between native and immigrant entrepreneurs. Once equipped with the entrepreneurial skills, the native people will be able to survive in the market place and hence that brings the bad blood between these two groups (natives and immigrants).

2. XENOPHOBIA IN SOUTH AFRICA

Xenophobia is a complex global phenomenon that differs on intensity and manifestation in depending on the contexts where it is found (Masuva, 2015; Tirivangasi & Rankoana, 2015). The common definition of xenophobia is "the hatred or fear of foreigners, combining the Greek *xenos* (foreign) with *phobia* (fear)" (Crush, 2008: 15). Tirivangasi & Rankoana (2015) define Afrophobia as strong hatred or insecure feelings towards fellow African deeply rooted in the frustrations over competition for few resources.

Xenophobia includes "all forms of discriminatory attitudes towards non-nationals, whatever their source or nationality" (Landau et al., 2005: 4). According to Neocosmos (2010: 13), it is a discourse and practices which results in the social and political exclusion of its targets from the rest of the population. Xenophobia in South Africa is manifested in the prejudice, discrimination, hostility and violence directed towards foreigners (Masuva, 2015).

Xenophobia in South Africa is peculiar and, in this paper, it is equated with targeted xenophobia. It displays at least three characteristics which probably differentiate it from other forms of xenophobia in other countries or continents. It is predominantly directed at black African foreigners, hence the term "Afrophobia". This is the violence which was directed towards fel-

low African people. Harris (2002) observes that xenophobia in South Africa is not against all foreigners but however, a certain group of people. South Africa since the acquiring of a democratic rule, it experienced an inflow of migrants from all parts of the world, however, a larger number of people came from its neighbouring countries. The migrant's influx from the African continent was driven by a number of factors which include, economic crisis, political refugees and others seeking greener pastures. This group was targeted due to the fact that they fit on the lower cluster of the South African community, resulting in competition for jobs, houses, services and business opportunities.

Masuva (2015) notes the second feature of xenophobia in South Africa is the violent manifestation of xenophobia beyond xenophobic attitudes. Xenophobia manifested itself in 2008 and 2015 with violence as the most notable feature to draw the attention of the people across the globe. The violent attacks resulted in sixty-two (62) deaths in 2008 and seven (7) people died in April 2015 (Matunhu, 2011; Masuva, 2015).

The third feature and the most important part of this study is the looting of immigrant owned shops. In each xenophobic attacks which occurred the foreign owned shops were looted as the anger of people rise. This research focuses on behavioural aspects of xenophobia, the looting of foreign owned shops by the local citizens which resulted in victims from either side. In most cases, the owners were left vulnerable and without the means of sustenance after their businesses were looted. Yet in some cases, it resulted in injuries from sides, the owners and the members of the community. Consequently, the foreigners lost and the process of reintegration becomes even more difficult due to their non-acceptance by the communities which they save.

3. XENOPHOBIA AND THE LOOTING OF FOREIGN SHOPS

The main incidents of xenophobia occurred in 2008 and 2015 despite the isolated incidents between 1994 and 2008 (Nyar, 2009). These were the large incidents which drew the attention of the world globally and resulted in many casualties. The most notable feature of these xenophobic attacks was the looting of goods from both shops and the houses of immigrants. Cooper (2009) notes that an approximate of 342 shops were looted and 213 shops were raised to the ground by the local marauding xenophobes as the violence rages on around the country in 2008.

Table 1: Xenophobic attacks around South Africa

Province	Shops/ houses looted	Shops/ houses burnt	Suspects Arrested
Western Cape	33	2	435
Mpumalanga	44	3	49
Eastern Cape	2	0	5
Gauteng	155	202	227
Free state	5	0	97
Limpopo	0	0	--
North West	16	3	298
KwaZulu Natal 87 2	87	2	121
Total	**342**	**213**	**1384**

Source: SAPS (2008 in Cooper, 2009)

Petersen (2016) highlighted the protest which took place in Dunoon. During protests over housing in Dunoon, foreign owned shops and containers where targeted for break-ins and looting, with "everything from clothing to food" stolen. However, from the whole scenario it could not be established whether the attacks were xenophobic or not. The Ward Councillor Lubabalo Makaleni believed the looting was not motivated by xenophobia, but was rather simple acts of crime committed by opportunistic thieves during the protests (*News24*, 2015; Petersen, 2016). This is an explanation given by the authoritative figure of his nature but given the history of xenophobia in South Africa wherever, there is an attack on foreigners is accompanied by the looting of goods. This is what many scholars such as Crush (2008) and Dodson (2010) have described as denialism, whereby those in authority fail to acknowledge that its xenophobic act when the looting of goods occurs rather than categorising under crime. There is seemly a continuation of denialism in regard to looting of goods as xenophobia, one minister was quoted saying:

> "The looting, displacement and killing of foreign nationals in South Africa should not be viewed as xenophobic attacks, but opportunistic criminal acts that have the potential to undermine the unity and cohesiveness of our communities" (Crush 2015: 4).

Further, in the midst of xenophobic attack in April 2015, *News24* (2015) describes an incident which happened in Limpopo whereby members of the public in Thabazimbi looted four Pakistan shops. This resulted in the arrest of 13 people who were involved. However, the police had this to say:

> "As the provincial government of Limpopo we do not believe the looting and burning of the shops belonging to foreign nationals were part of xenophobic attacks" (Phuti Seloba, spokesperson of Limpopo SAPS, *News24*, 2015)".

The failure to acknowledge such acts as xenophobic hinders the process of finding the underlying cause of the problem taking place within communities. Consequently, Tshishonga (2015) notes that the failure to restore stability engenders lawlessness whereby locals, including the passer-by people, get to be preoccupied with looting of stock and destroying stalls belonging to immigrants. Basing on the sequence of events narrated during the xenophobic attacks in South Africa, this study can establish that the looting of foreign owned shops cannot be separated from xenophobic acts.

4. CAUSES OF THE LOOTING OF IMMIGRANT-OWNED SHOPS

In the past decade, South Africa experienced a sharp increase in the number of African and Asian immigrants who opened small shops at the periphery of the central business district (CBD) or have engaged in various street trading activities in various cities (Tevera, 2013). The presence of foreign immigrants was met with different views from the members of the community. To some poor classes they are welcomed because they offer relatively cheap products to low earning members of the society; it was seen as an improvisation of their life.

However, on the other hand, they have become a source of bitterness to local shop owners who feel that they are being pushed out of business and would like to see the government introduce legislation that restricts the operations of foreign traders in South Africa (Tevera, 2013). This is evidenced by the results from the study conducted by Crush (2008: 2) who states that about 74% of South Africans support deportation of anyone who is not contributing economically to South Africa (Crush, 2008). Sixty-one percent stated that foreign nationals should not be able to start a small business in this country (Crush, 2008: 2). There is a serious competition between the locals and the foreign SMEs owners.

Further, a study by Hunter & Skinner (2003) revealed that most African migrants in Durban effectively used the informal sector as the entry point to other entrepreneurial activities in the formal sector. The migrants often find themselves competing with nationals for street space and for the same clientele. This direct competition with locals partly accounts for the often tense relations between South African SME owners and African migrant traders operating in the informal sector as *spaza* shops owners

(Hunter & Skinner, 2003). Fatoki & Oni (2016) define a spaza shop as an informal business that is conducted from a shack or a room. Spaza shops are normally located in the community neighbourhood or street corners. The South African Migration Project (SAMP) findings also reveal that nationals did not want it to be easier for foreign nationals to engage in street trading or to operate small businesses in South Africa or to obtain South African citizenship.

Furthermore, a report by a Special Reference Group on Migration and Community Integration in KwaZulu-Natal was appointed by Premier Senzo Mchunu to investigate the causes and consequences of the March-May 2015 violent attacks against foreign nationals in the province revealed that many South Africans operating in the tuck shop and spaza sector made allegations that businesses owned by foreign nationals thrive due to unfair advantages, and that these improprieties directly undermine the viability of locally-owned businesses (Madlala, 2016).

Madlala (2016) records some of the allegations levelled against foreigners. These include the fact that immigrants' businesses are not registered and they do not pay taxes; foreign nationals sell products at prices below those that local business owners conclude are feasible and are therefore receiving illegal support.

Moreover, foreign nationals receive unfair privileges from wholesale companies due to shared religious beliefs; Foreign nationals intentionally open spaza shops within close proximity to locally-owned businesses, thereby capturing some of the locals' markets; Foreign-owned businesses sell fake goods or non-South African products; Foreign businesses owners operate their shops for nearly 24 hours every day and even have workers sleeping there (Madlala, 2016). The foreigners displayed the entrepreneurship skills hence, the availability of such accusations from the local SMEs owners.

Madlala (2016) notes that foreign SME owners did not come into the communities seeking competition. However, they rented space from the locals who close their businesses on their own accord due to failure to run them or love for rental money. The following statement exemplifies this:

> "Most cases foreigners had in fact taken over existing shops from locals who had either abandoned their businesses altogether or rented them out and earned higher incomes than they did while operating the shops" (Madlala, 2016).

The foreign owned businesses succeed because they are run with expertise and skills which enable the owners to pay rent and strive in

their businesses. This led us to a situation noted by (Adam & Moodley, 2015). The two scholars found out that the very presence of thriving Somali shops insults unsuccessful, impoverished township dwellers. They endure daily exposure as failures. Envy breeds resentment (Adam & Moodley, 2015). This is what makes the local people and the native SMEs business owners to feel like engaging in the looting of foreign owned business. Consequently, the looting of goods can only be achieved by exerting violence on foreigners and this action is called xenophobia.

5. SOCIAL CAPITAL THEORY: TOWARDS COLLABORATIVE NATIVE-IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS APPROACH

This research adopts Social capital theory as the means to resolve the problem of the looting of foreign owned shops by the local people. The social capital theory was pioneered by the works of (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Coleman, 1990; Lin, 2002). Bourdieu (1986: 248) underlines that "Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition". Similarly, one can say social capital is made up of social obligations and connections within members in a group (Lin, 2002). Coleman (1990) highlights that social capital indicates the resources, real or potential, gained from relationships. In other words, it is a public good, and as public good, it depends on the willingness of the members of the community to avoid free riding. For this purpose, norms, trust, sanctions and values become important in sustaining this collective asset. According to Putnam (2000: 19), social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. It can well be noticed that when both native and immigrant entrepreneurs understand the importance of social capital, they will be able to resolve collective violence more easily.

The social capital theory helped the researchers in trying to find amicable ways of ensuring co-existence between the native and the foreign SME owners. The researchers argue that, given the bases of the social capital theory, the native and immigrant SME owners can embark on the following: (1) form business partnerships; (2) create a business forum where they meet and discuss ideas; (3) use media platforms like WhatsApp groups where interaction is promoted; and, (4) creation of workshops on entrepreneurship. Putnam (2002: 18) concurs with the above information when he states that "the networks that constitute social capital also serve as conduits for the flow of helpful information that facilitates achieving our goals. The goals of these SME owners will be to engage in fair business, make

profit and maintain viable business in a safe environment. Collaboration between the two groups removes suspicion and strife between them and promotes unity. Adam & Moodley (2015) note that "Somali tenants mostly start from scratch with loans from relatives and also engage in collective entrepreneurship". Yet this can pinpoint to the use of social capital by the foreign business entrepreneurs, there is a need to extend the networking beyond family and include native entrepreneurs. The social capital theory can solve the problem of looting by implementing on a bigger scale than a family as unit. It promotes dependency among groups which are otherwise antagonistic.

The implementation of the proposition of social capital theory results in trust being established between the native and foreign business entrepreneurs. The authors of this paper are of the opinion that instead of competing for markets and being involved in xenophobic attacks, native entrepreneurs can benefit much by collaborating with immigrant entrepreneurs. More importantly is the skills transfer and fusion among these two groups. It goes without depth not to mention the synergy that can come with this collaboration. The easy flow of information makes issues like prices, retail outlets and management of these businesses to be shared easily among the owners. This will also help to repel the mistrust and allegations labelled against the two groups. The social capital theory works extremely well in the process of ensuring sustainable SMEs growth in South Africa given the history of looting, mistrust and the existence of the "other" (outsider). In its implementation, the sharing of information, ideas, wholesale suppliers, markets will go a long way in ensuring success of SMEs in South Africa.

Entrepreneurship education as a societal institution presents a better platform to implement the propositions of the social capital theory in South Africa. In a bid to explain and understand the role of entrepreneurship education as an antidote to xenophobic attacks in South Africa, it is important to define entrepreneurship as well as immigrant entrepreneurship.

6. IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURSHIP: WHAT IS ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

According to Ahmad & Seymour (2008), there is no universally agreed upon definition for the term entrepreneurship. Rwigema & Venter (2004: 6) defined entrepreneurship as "the process of conceptualising, organising, launching and through innovation, nurturing a business opportunity into a potentially high growth venture in a complex and unstable environment". Schumpeter (1934) as cited in Ahmad & Seymour (2008: 7), defined entrepreneurs as innovators who implement entrepreneurial change within markets. This definition forms the crucial aspect of

modern entrepreneurship which is driven by innovation. It is the ability innovate that separates successful entrepreneurs the one struggling.

Entrepreneurship has received recognition worldwide as an engine for economic growth and development (Cooney, 2012; Naudé, 2013). As reported by Kritikos (2014), entrepreneurs can invigorate the economy by creating jobs and new technologies while at the same increasing productivity. The activities of entrepreneurs (SMEs) can therefore transform economies through the multiplier effect where one transaction can lead to an expansion in incomes. Furthermore, entrepreneurship as career is responsible for creating most of the jobs in South Africa. According to Abor & Quartey (2010: 218), SMEs contribute approximately 60% towards employment in South Africa. Sata (2013) notes that an entrepreneurship career offers momentous opportunities for individuals to realise financial independence as well as benefit the economy by contributing to job creation, innovation and economic growth.

To better understand the context of this study, it is important to distinguish between local and immigrant entrepreneurship. This distinction is crucial as it lays a foundation to understand whether a set of entrepreneurial start-up factors affect these two groups the same way Radipere & Dhliwayo, 2014). According to Volery (2007), an immigrant entrepreneur can be defined as a person who starts a business in the host country. As indicated by Fatoki (2014: 722), "immigrant entrepreneurship contributes to employment creation, poverty alleviation and economic growth in their host countries". Most immigrants are highly entrepreneurial. In most cases, their business is located in marginalised areas such as rural areas hence their presence in these areas brings development in terms of infrastructure.

Infrastructural development is attained in the sense that immigrant entrepreneurs rebuild or renovate the old grocery shops in these rural areas. In addition, the road network is re-developed since it is frequently used when they purchase stock. Garg & Phayane (2014) concur by indicating that immigrant entrepreneurs occupy abandoned buildings in most townships hence making the owners to obtain value again from these assets. According to Turkina & Thai (2013), immigrant entrepreneurship through their innovativeness and job creation capabilities contribute immensely towards the socioeconomic development of the host countries. Furthermore, immigrant owned businesses are known for quite affordable prices as well as convenience as they open in the early hours and close late at night. These among others give immigrant entrepreneurs an upper hand in the market over their native counterparts.

7. ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AS A PANACEA TO XENOPHOBIC ATTACKS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Entrepreneurship education if well-articulated can help the natives to understand the field openly at a tender age. This can go a long way in helping them to sustain competition from immigrant entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship education equips people with skills which can improve their entrepreneurship alertness. Fatoki (2014) emphasises that entrepreneurial alertness enables entrepreneurs to easily identify opportunities which does not seem obvious. This is exactly what the native entrepreneurs need in order to be competitive. Entrepreneurship education raise peoples' awareness of self-employment as a career opportunity, promotes creativity and innovativeness which are crucial elements to new venture creation (European Commission, 2008).

According to Drucker (1985, cited in Cooney, 2012), entrepreneurship is a discipline which is something that can be learnt. Entrepreneurship education helps to change the mind-set of people so that they act and think entrepreneurial. The authors believe that it is the mind-set of the native people which need to be changed if the issue of xenophobia is to be addressed. This move can reduce jealous among native people which are one of the key factors which orchestrated xenophobic attacks given that they can now be equipped with skills to run successful entrepreneurial ventures like their counterparts. Cooney (2012) assert that an effective and efficient entrepreneurship education programme should aim at imparting entrepreneurship skills, technical skills and management skills. Entrepreneurship education empowers native people to be employers instead of job seekers (Matunhu, 2011).

Kelley, Bosma & Amorós (2010) believe that for entrepreneurship education programme to have long-term benefits, it should also aim to equip communities rather focusing on entrepreneurs only. The general public can be educated through the medias such as televisions, radio and community outreach programmes. Studies such as Van der Merwe & de Swardt (2008) as well as Agbenyegah (2013), among others, indicate that in South Africa most SMEs are run by people with matric or equivalence. As indicated by Kutzhanova, Lyons & Lichtenstein (2009), entrepreneurial skill development process occurs over a period of time. This raises a serious need to consider introducing entrepreneurship education at the early life stages. Hence, Matunhu (2011) propose that entrepreneurship education should be introduced as part of the school curriculum right from primary school to university level to equip learners with entrepreneurial thinking at an early age. This goes a long way in transforming the nation as people can start to think and act entrepreneurial in their

jobs and in every income generating activity they are involved in regardless of not advancing to tertiary institutions. This not only reduces unemployment but can also alleviate poverty in these communities. Given the above evidence in support for entrepreneurship education as a possible antidote to xenophobic attacks in South Africa, it is hypothesised that there is a significant positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and an end to xenophobic attacks in South Africa.

7. CONCLUSION

This paper was aimed at investigating the role of entrepreneurship education as a panacea to xenophobic attacks in South Africa. The paper has argued that xenophobia includes all forms of discriminatory attitudes towards non-nationals, whatever their source or nationality. Then, the paper highlighted the point that xenophobia in South Africa is manifested in the prejudice, discrimination, hostility and violence directed towards foreigners. From the extant literature it was deduced that xenophobic attacks were perpetrated out of frustration of native SME owners who have been unable to compete with the foreign counterparts. Ordinarily, native SME owners blamed foreigners for taking business opportunities and markets, leading to destruction of immigrant-owned business property and the looting of their stock. These atrocities negatively impacted on the contribution of the SME sector in South Africa since immigrant entrepreneurs form part of the SME group. It is documented that foreign-owned SMEs' operations were halted for some time while some closed completely. This paper argued that entrepreneurship education could be a possible antidote to redressing xenophobic attacks in South Africa. To help understand how information and skills can be fused among native and immigrant entrepreneurs, the Social Capital Theory was used as a basis to explain this collaboration.

On that note it was suggested that native and immigrant SMEs owners could embark on the following: (1) form business partnerships; (2) create a business forum where they meet and discuss ideas; (3) use media platforms like WhatsApp groups where interaction is promoted; and, (4) creation of workshops on entrepreneurship. By this, the authors believe that it helps to repel the mistrust and allegations labelled against the two groups and hence promote unity. This collaboration can only be facilitated through education. It was discovered that entrepreneurship education equips people with skills which can improve their entrepreneurship alertness which is a crucial ingredient towards opportunity identification. Furthermore, it was deduced from extant literature that entrepreneurship education raised peoples' awareness of self-employment as a career opportunity, promotes creativity and

innovativeness which are crucial elements to new venture creation. The paper concludes by proposing that entrepreneurship education should be introduced as part of the school curriculum right from primary school to university level to equip learners with entrepreneurial thinking at an early age. This is based on the fact that the entrepreneurial skill development process occurs over a period of time.

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Twenty-Four Years of Decentralised Local Government in Uganda: Measuring Responsiveness, Effectiveness, and Accountability

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ABSTRACT

The article explores the implementation of decentralised local governance in Uganda and the factors that inhibit the realisation of decentralised local governance. Decentralisation efforts seeks to promote a more responsive, efficient and accountable governance at the local level. The 1995 Constitution of Uganda and subsequently the 1997 Local Governments Act, gave impetus and legal backing for the decentralised local governance in Uganda. Since their establishment in 1997, local governments have played a fundamental role in democratisation, service delivery, maintaining security, expediting local justice, enhancing local economic development and above all promotion of good governance in Uganda. Based on the local council system, local governments have undoubtedly been critical channels of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) – the ruling party's manifestos and governance agenda. The concern among scholars, practitioners and the civil society is the need to generate a balanced assessment of the governance achievements and challenges facing the local governments in Uganda. Whereas government and the policy makers argue that this system has been a great success, many scholars, academicians, civil society and even street level bureaucrats are of the view that all is not well. This article intends to address this gap by making a balanced assessment of the governance achievements and challenges of the local council system in Uganda. The study present findings based on analysis of available literature, reports and assessments carried out on the performance of local governments in Uganda in the period 1997- 2016. The article shall make suggestions on enhancing responsiveness and accountability in decentralised service delivery in Uganda.

Key Words: Decentralised Local Governments, Responsiveness, Effectiveness, Accountability

1. INTRODUCTION

Decentralisation is defined as the transfer of responsibility for planning, management, resource raising and allocation from central to lower levels of government or other agencies (Rondinelli, 1986). The underlying assumption is that lower levels of government are more responsive and accountable to addressing local concerns and are more effective in delivering services to local people (Ojambo, 2012).

Decentralisation is therefore an important institutional reform effort

pursued in all developing countries (SAITO, 2001) Decentralisation usually takes both political and administrative forms. Political decentralisation takes many types ranging from Privatisation, Delegation, Deconcentration and also Devolution (Agrawal, 1999). Whereas there is no country in the world without any form of decentralisation, countries adopt different types of decentralisation with varying degrees of responsibility transfer.

Some decentralisation systems have resulted in improved quality, effectiveness, accountability and responsiveness of public service delivery at local level, while other systems have created chaos and anarchy (Treisman, 2002). Since 1997, Uganda adopted a hybrid type of decentralisation operationalised through a local government system. (Lambright, 2011) This paper assesses responsiveness, effectiveness and accountability issues in the local government system in Uganda over the last twenty-four years.

The history of decentralisation in Uganda can be traced back to as far as the pre-colonial times. Before independence and before formal declaration of Uganda as a British protectorate, there existed both state and stateless society from whom Uganda was forged as a nation. In both pre-colonial state and stateless societies, there existed forms of power sharing and division of responsibilities between the kings or paramount chiefs and the subjects in distant territorial boundaries.

The kingdom of Buganda, for example, had counties - Saza and county chiefs, as well as sub-county – Gombolola and Gombolola chiefs, parishes – Muluka and Muluka Chiefs up-to village chiefs. All these tiers of local administration enjoyed some forms of decentralised responsibilities. Similar forms of decentralisation existed in the kingdom states of Bunyoro, Toro and Ankole. Even in stateless societies, there were paramount chiefs who shared some of their political and administrative functions to clan leaders and other the king –Kabaka.

Between 1884 and 1962 when Uganda was under British colonial rule, the colonial administrators governed Uganda through a formal decentralised structure operationalised through several colonial ordinances (Ministry of Local Government, 2014). Notably, the 1919 native Authorities Ordinance that gave district commissioners supervisory powers over appointed chiefs at county, sub county, parish and village levels. The 1949 Local Government Ordinance was probably the most effective colonial ordinance aimed at ushering decentralisation to the Ugandan protectorate.

This ordinance established four kingdoms (Buganda, Bunyoro, Ankole, and Toro) and eleven districts covering the rest of the protectorate. The 1949 Local government Ordinance also established elected district councils mandated to oversee district administration. However, the district commissioner and local chiefs remained responsible to the colonial government (Ojambo, 2012). The 1955 District Administration Ordinance established local councils at district and county levels

and granted them several local functions including collecting and spending locally collected revenues and taxes. The 1959 Local administration (Amendment) Ordinance empowered the Governor to appoint District Chairpersons and members of district appointments boards (Ministry of Local Governmnet, 2014).

The first efforts towards decentralised governance in post-colonial Uganda were reflected in the 1962 independence constitution. This was a semi federal constitution that among others attempted at devolving powers of the central government to lower levels especially in the functions of tax collections and administration, land management, rural water and roads maintenance, agricultural extension services, as well as primary education. The 1962 constitution gave federal status to Buganda kingdom and semi federal status to the kingdoms of Bunyoro, Ankole, Toro, and the territory of Busoga. The rest of the country was administered through elected district councils. These areas included the districts West Nile, Bukedi, Bugishu, Acholi, Kigezi, Madi, sebei, and Lango (Ojambo 2012).

The 1962 constitution was abrogated and a republic constitution of 1967 re-centralisd almost all the local government functions that had been created by the 1962 independence constitution. Notably, the 1962 Local Government Ordinance was repealed and the Urban Authorities Act (1964) and the Local Administration Act (1967) passed into law. These two acts recentralised all the functions that had been granted to the local governments and their powers vested in an appointed minister responsible for local administration, directly under the control of the president (Nsibambi, 1988).

In the period 1971 -1979, Uganda was under the rule of President Iddi Amini. President Amini dissolved parliament, the constitution, and rule of law and the country was administered by military decrees. District and urban councils were dissolved as well and the country ten provinces headed by royal military generals also named governors (Hamilton, 2005). During this time, there was total collapse of al government structures including all elements of decentralisation, the economy, and even security.

The period that followed after the overthrow of President Iddi Amini was also characterised by little efforts to re instate decentralisation and local governance. In 1981, national elections were held but local council elections were never held. The Local Administration Act (1976) that had been suspended by President Iddi Amini was re- instated and district commissioners were appointed by President Milton Obote and posted to all districts. The basis of this appointment was loyalty to the ruling political party- Uganda People's Congress- UPC.

Staff were recruited by the central government and de-concentrated to districts and could be transferred to other districts by posting instructions from the centre. Because the was little efforts to re-introduce democratic

governance, especially re-establishing district councils and holding local elections, there was an urgent need to re-establish democratic governance, peace and security in most parts of the country. Many parts in central Uganda were already in civil wars that saw the National Resistance Movement - NRM capturing state power in 1986.

When the NRM captured power democratisation and good governance were already very critical. Even before capturing state power in 1986, the NRM bush war tactics of the 1980s had developed a grassroot community mobilisation strategy commonly known as "Resistance Committees". Whenever NRM fighter capture territory in the bush war, residents in the captured territory were mobilised to form resistance committees, some of the objectives of which were to safeguard and manage local security in areas captured by the fighters and to provide an alternative to local administration which was lacking because it had been neglected by President Milton Obote's government (SAITO, 2001).

The resistance committees would manage local governance including local dispute resolution, resource mobilisation, environment, security, and above all, local politics. The resistance committees were composed of nine members directly elected on "individual merit" and not political party sponsored. Gradually, members of the resistance committees became converts, sympathizers, mobilisers, spies, and later cadres of NRM. On capturing state power, the bush war Resistance Committees were gradually transformed into "Resistance Councils" and institutionalised into the local government structure. In 1987, the Resistance Councils and Committees Statute was passed that paved way to non-political party elections of resistance councils from Resistance Council 1 (Village /Cell), Resistance Council 2(Parish / Ward), Resistance Council 3 (Sub-county/ Town Council/ Municipal Division), Resistance Council 4 (municipalities), Resistance Council 5 (Districts/ Cities) and the National Resistance Council –NRC (National Assembly).

A committee of experts that was appointed to study and recommend a local government system for Uganda recommended the decentralisation system of local government that was based on the resistance committees/ councils structure. Decentralisation as a local government programme was launched in 1992 and a year later, the Local Government (Resistance Councils) Statute was passed. The constituent assembly –CA recommended the decentralisation system of local government and the constitution adopted the devolution type of decentralisation which was operationalised in 1997 in the Local Government Act –LGA. Resistance Councils were renamed "Local Councils" and granted six devolved local government functions, viz: executive/ political, planning, budgeting, administrative, legislative, and judicial functions (Government of Uganda, 1995). Twenty-four years after establishing local governments in Uganda, this paper aims at measuring for responsiveness, accountability and effectiveness of these local governments towards the objectives of de-

centralisation upon which they were premised.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical underpinning of decentralisation, and of this study, can be ably quoted from (SAITO, 2001:1-2) in which he states:

> "Decentralisation brings public services closer to people, who have more opportunities to participate more actively in decision-making process of local policies and activities than in centrally decided ones. This participation in turn contributes to improve accountability of public services, because people can scrutinize local governments more closely than central governments. The services are also delivered more speedily than in the case of a centralized administration, since decentralization reduces often lengthy bureaucratic procedures for decision making and implementation. The services then become more responsive to and are tailored for different needs of different localities. Accordingly, often large bureaucracy at the center can be reduced, and limited public resources are more efficiently and effectively utilized".

Decentralisation is both a political and an administrative intervention to enhance government's responsiveness to local needs by involving local people to find local solutions to solve local problems. Decentralisation is also an economic intervention as well as an intervention of administrative theory (Hart, 1972). This therefore brings us to the conclusion that no single theory may ably explain decentralisation in any country. Since decentralisation is a convergence of several disciplines, theories underpinning it are related to the various disciplines and angles upon which decentralisation has been directed. For purposes of this paper, several theories were relied upon and included, but were not limited to the Rational Choice (Tiebout Model), The Principal- Agent Theory and he Normative Theories and Principle of Subsidiarity.

The rationale for decentralisation therefore is that the central government is very far and even if the central government wished to solve local problems, it will do so with macro and magnified lenses. Finding local solutions to local issues would not only be cheap, but also would take less time. Local responses to local issues make public management more effective because solutions can easily be identified and implemented. The above theoretical underpinning to decentralisation is double edged and only applicable to some limited degree. Sometimes, local problems can be locally solved, in other instances local interventions may fail to handle them, depending on the degree of magnitude of the issue at hand.

Quite often, the issues may either be of a national or global nature (such as natural disasters and epidemics) or the local skills and resources cannot ably give a workable solution to what seems a local problem such as floods

and landslides. Therefore, in as far as citizens are to be involved in solving local affairs, the public administrator should gauge the capacity for them to accomplish specific tasks (Mamdan, 1996).

Decentralisation theory is therefore not exempted from criticism. Some scholars have paraded a number of short comings linked to decentralisation theory. SAITO, (2001) has highlighted possible challenges of decentralisation theory. Decentralisation may result in local royalty when it breeds localism that may harm both regional and national interests and at worse incite sessionism. Besides decentralisation may be manipulated by the local elites who may hijack decentralised services for personal interests. Some scholars are of the view that decentralisation breeds local corruption especially when local resources become scanty to support the decentralised functions. In some cases, when some regions are more endowed with resources than others, decentralisation may results in uneven development within a country with resource endowed regions prospering more than those with meagre resources. In all, decentralisation theory may either be good or bad depending on particular contexts and practices and it is therefore untenable to judge it as good or bad theory (Litvack, 1998; Crook, 1999).

3. DECENTRALISATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability has been defined as the obligation of a decentralised unit to answer to a hierarchically super-ordinate body of government for its activities and also to the citizens and the public (Christiph Demmke, 2006). Accountability is a key public management lever and is not only a tool but also an indicator of effective and good governance (OECD, 2005).

Enhancing local accountability is one of the foundations of decentralisation and hence public accountability and decentralisation are mutually exclusive. Accountability entails that decentralised local governments are in position to respond to questions relating to abiding by the rules and procedures, complying with the expectations of the principal, meeting external expectations, giving performance information and responding to performance consequences. Accountability therefore results in effective delivery of public services. In a decentralised government system, accountability is simplified by narrowing the distance and time between the principal and the agents. Responsiveness on the other hand is the capacity of decentralised units to address local concerns in terms of quality, quantity, cost and time. Several studies such as that of (Sjahrir, 2013) have generated empirical evidence to prove that decentralisation increases responsiveness to local gaps in service delivery. Indeed, there it is global conviction that decentralisation, participation, and responsiveness indicators of good governance and result into effective service delivery.

However, responsiveness especially to vulnerable groups may be hampered by lack of political accountability (Crook, 1988). Decentralisation is broad and cross cutting ranging

from administrative, political, economic and also public management. The objectives and measuring of decentralisation are as wide as its forms. This paper limits itself to measuring decentralisation as has been implemented under local governments in Uganda in the last twenty-four years. In this article, decentralisation is measure in three mutually inclusive parameters: Responsiveness, Accountability, and Effectiveness.

Uganda established a decentralised local government system based on an elaborate, representative, democratic and a unique model. Saito (2000) identifies three features that make Uganda's decentralisation system unique. First of all, unlike decentralisation in many developing countries that was donor driven, decentralisation in Uganda was born out of the aspirations of Ugandans driven by internal desires to enhance democratisation through participatory democracy and inclusiveness. Secondly, Uganda's decentralised local government system is based on the "movement" system which limits political party activities at local level and encourages a united non-political party approach to managing local affairs. Lastly, the local government system is based on the local council system is also a tool for democratization, development and local security management. The local government structure is based on the local council's system with five levels of local councils (LC). Firstly, there is a Village/ Cell Local Council- LC (LC1) as the lowest LC, (LC 1). The second level is the Parish/ Ward –LC 2, the Sub-County/ Township is LC 3, the County/ Municipality is LC 4, and the District / City is LC 5. Some LC are local governments while others are administrative units. In turn, the local government system is based on the district as a unit under which there are several other local governments and administrative units (Government of Uganda, 2010). The district/ city is a higher local government – HLGs, while municipalities and towns are lower local governments - LLGs of the districts where they are situated. LC 1, LC 2 and LC 4(in rural areas) are administrative units of their respective local governments. In terms of numbers, as by 1st July 2016, there are 134 districts, 249 counties, 1,403 sub counties, 7,431 parishes, and 57,842 villages that all in all total to 67,060 local governments and administrative units (Ministry of Local Government, 2016). The structure is demonstrated in Table 1

Table 1: Local government structure

Local Council Level	Rural	Urban
LC 5	District	City
LC 4	County	Municipality
LC 3	Sub county	Municipal Divisions
		Town Council
LC 2	Parish	Ward
LC 1	Village	Cell

Local governments are governed by directly elected local councils with the district as a unit and other lower local governments and administrative units. The elected local councils have supreme political, executive and legislative powers over their areas of jurisdiction. (Government of Uganda, 2000). Local councils are highly representative and are composed of elected chairpersons, councilors representing electoral areas, two youth councilors (one of them female), two councilors with disability (one of them female), two elderly persons (one of them a female), one third of the whole council should be women. The chairpersons of local women, youths, and disability councils, as well as elected leaders of higher electoral constituencies in a particular local government are ex officio members of council (Government of Uganda, 2000).

Local councils are mandated to provide the basic public services to the local communities and to bring service delivery closer to the local people (Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development, 2013). The Second Schedule of the LGA gives the functions of the central government and local governments and specific functions for districts and lower local governments in both rural and urban areas.

In all, most of the operational government functions other than those of maintaining macro stability are vested in local governments. The objective of involving many stakeholders at all levels of local governments and administrative units was to improved quality of service delivery at the grassroot level (Nsibambi, 1988).

4. DECENTRALISATION PROBLEMS IN UGANDA

Several studies, reports and analyses depict Uganda's decentralised local government system as an ideal model in the developing world that is exceptional in terms of the scale and scope of devolution (Steiner, 2006). The local government system was hailed as one of the most far reaching local government reform programmes in the developing world (Paul & Robert, 2003).

Uganda's local government system was described by (Mitchinson, 2003) as one the most far reaching reform programmes in the developing world. Local governments in Uganda were established to fulfill specific policy objectives; notably, enhance local participation, improve quality of the public good, make efficient and effective use of local resources, quicken decision making, improve local democratic participation, promote local ownership of government programmes and enhance local economic development (Ministry of Local Government, 2011).

The specific objectives of Uganda's local government system therefore are in line with the conceptual objectives of decentralised governance of creating an enhanced environment for responsiveness, accountability and effectiveness (Government of Uganda, Decentralisation: The Policy and its Phyilosophy, 1993; Governmnet of Uganada, 1994).

After twenty-four years of local government's administration in Uganda,

a lot of achievements and challenges have been realised. There is mixed interpretation of the achievements of the local government system in Uganda. Whereas some analysts regard the local government system in Uganda as a success story worth emulating by other developing countries (Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Local development in Uganda, 2014), others have reservations when it comes to measuring its achievements (Golooba-Mutebi, 2005).

Studies carried out in other parts of the world have concluded that decentralised governments many sometimes fail to achieve the objectives of their formation (Ergas, 1980; Furguson, 1990; Mawood, 1993; & Rondinelli & Cheema, 1983). This paper fills this discrepancy by providing an independent analysis of twenty-four years of local governments in Uganda in terms of responsiveness, accountability and effectiveness. With increasing globalisation and inter connectedness, the experience gained from twenty-four years of local governments in Uganda can be shared with other parts of the world.

Achievements and challenges may be compared with the aim of improving public management generally and local governance in particular.

5. UGANDA'S DECENTRALISED LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The physical and social conditions in Africa, the inability of the governments to reach to all its people, the expansion of the democratic processes and the quest for improved governance, inevitable place decentralised local government at the forefront of public sector reforms in the developing countries (Kasfir, 1993).

Whereas in many developing countries decentralisation was conditioned by donors, (Steiner, 2006), in Uganda's case it emerged to an internal quest for improving delivery of public services by government institution. With over 67,000 local governments and administrative units, Uganda's local government system is by far among the most popularized in the world.

The local governments system in Uganda is premised on, among others, the objective of improving delivery of quality services by creating mechanisms that enhance responsiveness, accountability and effectiveness. There is mixed experience of decentralised local governments in Uganda (World Bank, 2003).

The underlying factors for establishing local governments in Uganda were similar to that elsewhere in the developing world. First of all, the central government had failed to provide basic services such as education, health, community roads and even rural water to the people. In Uganda, the civil wars of 1980s and 1990s made it practically difficult for government to provide basic services to the communities. There was a lot of political uncertainty and in period 1980 – 1986, Uganda was governed by six heads of state. None of them had ample time to plan and deliver basic services to the communities which resulted in national crisis in delivery of basic services. Even the few

funds that managed to be transferred to local communities did not translate into improved outcomes because of corruption, political uncertainty, and absence of a framework for public monitoring and evaluation.

The other factor underlying the quest for decentralised local governments in Uganda was the belief that local problems needed local solution. Central government was either too far or not in good position to provide sustainable appropriate solutions to local problems. Therefore, there was need to mobilise local people into local governments to forge local solutions to local problems. Whether the above assumptions were genuine, requires another forum of debate.

However, what is undeniable is that local governments faced many challenges in executing their created mandate. First of all, they lacked local capacity in form of education, skills, and experience to manage the government functions. Many elected councilors were illiterate and even those who were literate; had not skills in public management. Technical staffs recruited to guide political leaders were no better. Besides, the country experienced budgetary shortfalls because of low tax base and tax capacity.

This meant that the created local governments could not get sufficient budget to execute their functions yet at the same time, local governments had been created in regions with no known or proven local economies. Functionality of the local governments therefore met a snag from inception. Other challenges faced by early local governments included the increasing pressure on the central government to give semi autonomy to minority groups that ignited the demand for more local governments. Of course more local governments meant increased public expenditure.

With twenty-four experimental years, local governments have become of age and therefore need to measure their responsiveness, accountability and effectiveness. This article analyses the twenty-four years of local governments in Uganda under two broad themes: responsiveness and effectiveness, and accountability and effectiveness.

5.1 Local Governments' Responsiveness and Effectiveness

Conceptualisation of local governments to service delivery cannot be stated better than Akapan, (2008:9). It is argued that the lower levels of government can deliver services such as water, education, sanitation and health effectively. Also, at the lower levels of government, politicians and civil servants are more aware of the needs of their community that will be more responsive to providing such services. Preferences of local populations are better known at lower levels of government.

As previously stated, there are mixed evaluations of the responsiveness of local governments in delivery of public services (Akapan, 2008). Whereas some analysts such as (Kato, 1997; Ministry of Local Government, 2016) cherish local governments in Uganda

for having improved responsiveness to the delivery of public services, others like (Saito, 2000; Golooba-Mutebi, 2005) are of the view that the local governments have not done much. Ahamad *et.al.* (2005) further analysed the responsiveness of Universal Primary Education schools in delivery of quality education and identified challenges that restrict local governments in being responsive to service delivery.

These include the limited budgets; recruiting, motivating and retaining staff; corruption, misuse and abuse of resources; and low institutional capacity to deliver services. In order to come up with a standing analysis of whether local governments have been responsive to service delivery, let us briefly highlight the legal and institutional frameworks guaranteeing responsiveness of local governments in Uganda:

- Article 176(3) (Government of Uganda, 1995) provides for a local government system based on directly elected councils on the basis of universal adult suffrage.
- There are over 67,000 local councils established for all districts, counties, sub counties, municipalities, municipal divisions, towns, parishes, wards, villages and cells throughout the country.
- The Political Parties and Organisations Acts (Government of Uganda, 2005) provides for political parties to sponsor, mentor, and groom members and potential election candidates.
- Section 3 of the Local Government Act Cap 243 and The Second Schedule of the same Act share government functions between central and local governments (Government of Uganda, 2010) with the following functions devolved to local governments:
  - ✓ Planning Powers (Section 35)
  - ✓ Legislative Powers (section 38)
  - ✓ Administrative Powers (Section 45) and,
  - ✓ Financial Powers (Section 77)

The above framework provides for rich avenues of enhancing local governments' responsiveness to service delivery. However, the outcome of the above framework varies from local government to another. There are some local governments which have used the framework to enhance service delivery and there also others which are performing below expectations.

This article is of the informed view that to enhance responsiveness in the local government system, we have to operate beyond the legal and institutional framework. There is no doubt that the framework for local governments responsiveness is one of the best in the developing world (Francis & James, 2003), but it is also true that different participants apply the framework differently and this makes it hard to come to a common conclusion. For effective delivery of public services, local

governments build capacity among the stakeholders and in the institutions themselves necessary to spearhead the devolved functions.

5.2 Local Governments, Accountability and Effectiveness

Putting people at the center of service delivery and enabling them to monitor the service providers gives a framework of best practices for enhancing service delivery in developing countries (Word Bank, 2004). Effective service delivery requires a strong accountability relationship among the actors who may be the citizens, government and service providers (Ahmad, Devarajan, Khemani, & Shah, 2005).

Effective accountability therefore takes a long route by citizens demanding services from the government, the government holding policy makers accountable, and the proper rules and procedures are followed. Accountability in delivery of public services is conceptualized on the notion that by narrowing the jurisdictions of governments, citizens are in better position to monitor and evaluate programmes because they are visibly near and at hand.

Local governments therefore bring government closer when local people exert more pressure on governments to provide accountability (Devarajan, Eskeland & Zou, 1999). Recent debate has put emphasis on political accountability as key requirement for effective local governments (Besley & Coate, 1999; Persson & Tabellini, 2000; Seabright, 1996). Central governments have continuously given up tasks they could not perform well to other tiers of government which could be more effective perform them (Ahmad *et.al,* 2005). In many developing countries including Uganda, creation of local governments has acted both as a tool and approach to enhancing accountability (Bardham & Dilip Mookherjee, 2006). Such views are held by other scholars such (Mitchinson, 2003; Nsibambi, 1988; Rondinelli & Cheema, 1983). However, there has been growing debate to the contrary that creation of many local governments that are inadequately facilitated, as the case is in Uganda, breeds corruption (Khaman Stuti, 2000). Several reports by ACODE (a local NGO spearheading good governance and public accountability in local governments) have continuously unearthed shocking levels of corruption and abuse of public resources in several local governments in Uganda (Jonas Mbabazi *et.al,* 2016; Lillian Muyomba- Tamale, *et.al,* 2010; Naomi Asimo *et.al,* 2014).

In Analysing as to where twenty-four years of local governments have enhanced accountability, this article shall first highlight the accountability of institutional and legal frameworks in Uganda.

- Article 164 of the constitution provides for accountability by all public officers and empowers the state to recovery from the personal estate of public official who fail to account for public funds (Government of Uganda, 1995).
- The Leadership Code Act provides for the establishment of

the office of the inspectorate of government to enforce accountability in government institutions (Government of Uganda, 2002).

- The Uganda Police Force, Uganda Prisons Service, Courts, Tribunals and Commissions of inquiry formed from time to time.
- The offices of the Auditor General; Accountant General; Public, Education and Health Service commissions.
- Section 173 of the Local Government Act Cap 243 operationalizes Article 164 of the constitution and provides for the establishment of several public structures enforce accountability in local governments (Government of Uganda, 2010). These include: The District Public Accounts Committee, District Service Commission, District Land Board, District Contracts Committee, internal audit, District Physical Planning Committee, district, municipal, sub county and town councils (Government of Uganda 2010), to mention but a few.
- The general public can also engage local governments to account through Barazas-community engagements; the media, civil society organisations, and their elected representatives.

The above framework gives unmatched opportunities for citizens to engage their local government and demand accountability. This article therefore presents the view that accountability in local government is Uganda has been greatly enhanced. However, two questions still arise: (i) Why is corruption still rampant in local governments in Uganda? (ii) Why is has the quality of decentralised service delivery (such as in education, health, community roads, water and sanitation) not improved over the last twenty-four years? Answers to the above queries seem to lie in other factors that are not directly related to accountability in local governments. Concerns of high population growth, high poverty levels, increasing informal sector, ineffective regional development planning, and or high levels of unemployment may account for the above challenges.

6.3 Policy Recommendations

From the above study, this article proposes the following policy recommendations to enhance effective responsive and accountable service delivery in local governments.

- To address the challenge of inadequate funding of local governments which in term hampers their effectiveness in responding to local issues, this paper recommends the following:
  - That their regional development planning should be introduced as another tier of national develop-

ment plans. Regional development plans should address regional development issues that cannot ably be handled by individual local governments.

This recommendation is in agreement with Article 178 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (Government of Uganda, 1995).

- For full utilisation of the devolved functions of local governments, creation of new local governments should consider local economies of these governments. If local governments are created to bring services closer to the people, they should have economic capacity to provide these services. Relying on central government grants and transfers not only undermines the spirit of devolution, but also inevitably comes with conditionalities which in many cases are contradictory to local priorities.

- Human resource capabilities of both technical and political staff in the delivery of services should be emphasised. Inadequate skills especially by elected leaders hamper their capacity to formulate, manage and spearhead local development. When the leadership lacks appropriate skills, local governments cannot effectively respond to and manage local needs.

On the side of accountability, as this paper observed, the factors responsible for the established accountability frameworks not to effectively facilitate improved delivery of quality services lie outside the local government system itself. For example, corruption in Uganda is national problem and cannot squarely be attributed to local governments. This paper, therefore recommends the following policy interventions:

- Government should priorities the control population growth. Uganda has one of the world's fastest growing populations with a mean population density of 173 persons per square kilometer and a mean household size of 5.5 persons (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2016). Accountability challenges facing local governments have traces in the high levels of population and the scramble for the ever diminishing public services.

- Government should intensify programmes to eradicate poverty which has created big challenges to accountable delivery of services in local governments. Cases of corruption experienced in many local governments are out of need (Nsibambi, 1998). To address these challenges, we need to address its root cause- poverty.

- There is need for national cul-

tures and ethical conducts that emphasize public accountability. Uganda has a diverse culture of mixed religions, tribes, traditions, beliefs, value systems, languages, and ethnic groups that have shaped public behaviour (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2016). Because of intermarriages, migrations and integration, national accountability values have been eroded. This trend has to be reversed by government in creating national values that emphasize public accountability.

6. CONCLUSION

Local governments have played an important role in the delivery of decentralised services in Uganda. The local government system in Uganda, which was launched in 1997, has become of age necessitating its evaluation. Local governments were premised on the general theory of decentralisation with aims bringing government closer to the people. This paper conceptualized on three theoretical underpinnings of decentralisation: Responsiveness, Accountability and Effectiveness in public service delivery. However, available literature gives mixed evaluation of local governments in Uganda, some calling it a success story and others as not good enough.

Bearing in mind the afore contradictions, this paper has zeroed on two main findings: First, that there is an adequate legal and institutional framework for local governments in Uganda which has been emulated by many countries and international institutions such as the World Bank. Secondly, that local governments in Uganda are experiencing delivery challenges that are mainly arising outside the frameworks for local governments. The general findings of this paper therefore, echo several similar findings on local governments and service delivery in other parts of the world.

These findings therefore have implications for both public administrators and scholars. First, the capacity of local governments to respond to local needs depends not only on the legal and institution frameworks accorded to particular institutions, but also to the budgetary allocations apportioned to these institutions and to the capacity of the human resources in charge of the institutions and the feasibility of the institutions themselves to undertake designated functions. In this case good legal and institutional frameworks may not be translated into responsive agents of local service delivery. Secondly, accountability challenges facing many local governments are just part of the national and global ethical challenges and cannot be addressed at or accounted to individual local governments.

This article leaves many unanswered problems surrounding service delivery in local governments. For example, issues of allocative efficiency, local governments as channels of democratization and good governance, forms and nature of local participation are all that can be subjected to future study. Finally, the challenges faced by local gov-

ernments in Uganda and elsewhere, as presented in this paper, do not in any way suggest that recentralization is the solution. As systems mature, their functions also keep on changing. Over the last twenty for years, the functions of local governments have gradually changed to emphasizing poverty eradication and spearheading local economic development.

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