

Qualitative Analysis of the Administrative and Managerial Capacity of Ngaka Modiri Molema District, North West Province, South Africa

L. P. Bogopane

North West University, Mafikeng Campus, North West Province, Republic of South Africa
Fax: +27 18 389 2090, E-mail: Peter.Bogopane@nwu.ac.za

KEYWORDS Strategic Planning. Problem-solving. Decision-making. Visionary Leadership

ABSTRACT This article analyses the administrative and managerial capacity of the Ngaka Modiri Molema District. It identifies two pertinent themes of a functional municipality, namely: (1) administrative viability and (2) managerial know-how, and used them as benchmarks for this analysis. Within the context of this article, administration refers to an activity or work done by officials within the spectrum of local government institutions to enable different local government institutions to achieve their objectives. The activity thus includes processes such as policy-making, organising, financing, personnel provision and utilisation (staffing), determination of work procedures, and control. Management, on the other hand, has to do with the implementation of policies, formulation of procedures, establishment of performance standards, and support of administration services. Qualitative data collection methods and analysis and interpretation techniques were employed in analysing the administrative and managerial capacity of the District. The analysis established that the District was in a state of distress due to lack of administrative and managerial capacity. The findings of this analysis were that in respect of administration, the administrative structures, systems, processes, and procedures in the District were not clearly articulated. It also emerged that administrative decision-making and problem-solving skills were not well-integrated. With regard to management, it was discovered that managerial plans, policies, strategies, and tactics were not well-coordinated. Moreover, it was found that management training and empowerment programmes were not adequate to enable the District to live up to its expectations. Based on these findings, and taking the systems perspective into account, the article recommends the *concrete foundation—pillar of strength—solid roof* administration and management model, for transforming the District into a vibrant and functional municipality, and thus restoring the confidence of its residents.

INTRODUCTION

Ngaka Modiri Molema District is located in the North West Province of the Republic of South Africa. Like all district municipalities across the country, this District has a clear constitutional, electoral and developmental mandate to deliver on key priorities that must ensure that visible, tangible and positive changes are felt, particularly those municipalities falling under the District.

With the introduction of the democratic local government dispensation in 2000, the majority of residents of the District have had increased access to a wide range of basic services and more opportunities have been created for their participation in the socio-economic and political landscape. However, notwithstanding the role that the District has played in this regard, some key elements of the local government system have shown signs of distress (Department of Local Government: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs 2009).

The Ngaka Modiri Molema District faces unique challenges of complex rural development such as a massive infrastructure backlog legacy that require extraordinary measures to address, and fund service delivery capacity requirements (Department of Local Government: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs 2009b). Effectively, these obstacles towards effective and efficient administrative and managerial capacity in the District have been cited for lack of critical support to skills development programmes, monitoring and evaluation of management training, particularly in rural and urban municipalities that are characterised by the proliferation of informal settlements.

Despite these difficulties, the District continues to receive support from the provincial and national governments in the form of support programmes that have been put in place in recent years, such as Project Consolidate (which is essential for strengthening the administrative and managerial capacity of the municipality) and Five-year Strategic Agenda (meant to provide a

strategic direction for the municipality), which have both yielded some results. (Department of Local Government: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs 2009). The former (Project Consolidate) assisted in upping the levels of hands-on support provided to the local municipalities, and the latter (Five-year Strategic Agenda) in creating strategic and systematic mechanisms and frameworks for local governments to work within and to report on. Yet these supportive interventions have not been able to sufficiently address the deep-rooted administrative and managerial capacity challenges in the District.

Whilst these supportive initiatives have assisted the District in specific ways, a number of administrative and managerial problems have been identified and some of these include, but are not limited to:

- ♦ *Administrative Capacity:*
 1. Challenges of political/administrative interchange;
 2. Poor financial administration as reflected in negative audit reports; and
 3. Insufficient municipal institutional and infrastructural capacity due to lack of skills (Koma 2010).
- ♦ *Managerial Capacity:*
 1. Poor communication and accountability relationships with communities;
 2. Poor financial management at the higher levels of hierarchy, and
 3. Fraudulent and corrupt activities by officials and other employees alike (Koma 2010);

However, this article is intended to identify and analyse three themes that need to be attended to in order to forge a “Turn-around Strategy” for administrative and/or managerial capacity of the Ngaka Modiri Molema District, and transform it into a vibrant and functional one. The three themes that have been considered to be the focus of this analysis are:

- ♦ Strong administrative and managerial leadership capacity;
- ♦ Institutional and infrastructural capacity; and
- ♦ Sound financial administration/management capacity.

Background to the Problem

The role of administrative and managerial capacity is not afforded the recognition that it

deserves at local government level. This article therefore identifies the mismatch between intent and practice, and assesses how far the Ngaka Modiri Molema District’s administration and management had met their constitutional obligation as outlined in the Constitution of Republic of South Africa Act, Act 108 of 1996 and White Paper on Local Government (March 1998(a)). In terms of Section 53 of the Constitution, a functional municipality is viewed as one that must structure and manage its administration, budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community, to promote social and economic development of the community, and participate in national and provincial development programmes and projects (Local Government: The Department of Local Government: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs 2009b).

This is also emphasised in Section 52 of the Constitution that states the constitutional objectives of local governments as follows:

- ♦ To provide democratic and accountable government to communities;
- ♦ To ensure provision of services to communities in sustainable manner;
- ♦ To promote social and economic development;
- ♦ To promote safe and healthy environment ; and
- ♦ To encourage involvement of communities and community organisations in matters of local government.

In the light of these, the White Paper on Local Government (March 1998a), clearly defines a developmental local government as:

A local government committed to working with citizens and groups within a community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives

Problem Statement

Following from the above overview, the key problem underlying the study is stated thus:

The administrative and managerial capacity in Ngaka Modiri Molema District is insufficient for the District municipality to carry out its mandate.

Contributing to this main problem are the following sub-problems:

- ♦ *Administrative Capacity:*
 1. Administrative structures, systems, processes and procedures are not clearly stated; and
 2. Administrative decision-making and problem-solving skills are not integrated.
- ♦ *Managerial Capacity:*
 1. Managerial plans, policies, strategies and tactics are not well-coordinated; and
 2. Programmes for management training and empowerment are not adequate.

Research Questions

This analysis centres on the following key research question and its sub-questions:

Does the District administrative and managerial capacity delivering on the desired outcomes on a sustainable basis?

Linked to this key question are the following sub-questions:

- ♦ *Administrative Capacity:*
 1. Does the administrative structures, systems, processes and procedure clearly articulated? and
 2. Are administrative decision-making and problem-solving skills well integrated?
- ♦ *Managerial Capacity:*
 1. Are managerial plans, policies, strategies and tactics well-coordinated? and
 2. Are programmes for management training and empowerment adequate?

Research Objectives

Emanating from the research sub-problems alluded above, are the following specific research objectives, which are to explore:

- ♦ *Administrative Capacity:*
 1. The articulation of the administrative structures, systems, processes, and procedures in the District municipality; and
 2. The integration of the administrative decision-making and problem-solving skills in the District.
- ♦ *Managerial Capacity:*
 1. The coordination of managerial plans, policies, strategies, and tactics in the District municipality; and
 2. The adequacy of management training and empowerment programmes in the District.

Theoretical Framework

To understand and appreciate the nature of the administrative and managerial capacity in the District, it is necessary to highlight pertinent elements that are characteristic of administration and management in a so-called “functional municipality”. Administrative and management structures worldwide are preoccupied with implementation, performance, and how to apply good administration and management. According to Fourie and Schoeman (2010), administration and management are good only if the government attains its goals of creating conditions that guarantee satisfactory quality of life for each citizen. Theories of good administration and management maintain that administration and management encompass the principles of political transparency, administrative accountability, which emphasise higher efficiency, efficacy and a custom orientation of public-sector delivery programmes. Thus, in defining administration and management, one refers to an administration and management regime that is based on liberal-democratic polity which protects human and civil rights, linked to competent, non-corruptible accountable administrative and managerial system. Within neo-liberal framework, good administration and management are seen as transparent, representative, accountable and participatory systems of institutions and procedures for public decision-making. Administration and management are defined as “the use of administration and management authority and exercise of control over a society and the management of resources for social and economic development” (Fourie and Schoeman 2010: 153).

Legislative Measures

Linked to the above theoretical framework, are the following legislative measures the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, Act 108 of 1996; Municipal Structures Act, Act 117 of 1998b); Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000; Municipal Finance Management Act, Act 56 of 2003; and White Paper on Local Government (March 1998) which provide municipalities with a legislative structure to manage their administration and management effectively and efficiently. With regard to the Constitution, it is maintained that before municipalities could be fashioned into the image of the Constitution, it

is first necessary to effect the institutional transformation, particularly consolidation of apartheid-based municipalities (Pieterse 2002). In respect of the Municipal Structures Act, there are no longer participatory forums, but ward committees chaired by a ward councillor and comprising no more than ten persons, and with no authority or decision-making.

In the area of the systems Act, the managerial ethos becomes more apparent, as its requirements are those of performance management, municipal service partnerships and so on. Pertaining to Finance Management Act, its stringent and prescriptive requirements regarding financial management and procurement seems to be clearly within the traditional public administration paradigm. There is considerable anecdotal evidence that the Act places major constraints on the establishment of the partnerships envisaged on the White Paper and Municipal Systems Act. They also outline political decision-making systems and principles of structuring administrations at the local government level. The organisational structuring of local municipality is explicitly prescribed in Municipal Systems Act. Section 51 provides that a municipality must, within its administrative and fiscal capacity, establish and organise its administration in a manner that would enable it to:

- ♦ Be responsive to the needs of the community;
- ♦ Facilitate a culture of public service and accountability among its staff;
- ♦ Be performance-oriented and focus on the objectives of local government as set out in Section 152 of the Constitution and its developmental obligations as required by Section 153 of the Constitution ;
- ♦ Ensure that its political structures, political office-bearers, managers and other staff members align their roles and responsibilities with the priorities and objectives set out in the municipality's Integrated Development Plan (IDP);
- ♦ Establish clear relations and facilitate cooperation, coordination, and communication within its political structures and the communities;
- ♦ Organise its political structures, office-bearers and administration in a flexible way to respond to changing priorities and circumstances;

- ♦ Performs its functions through operationally effective and appropriate administrative units, mechanisms, including departments and other functional and business units, and when necessary , on a decentralised basis ; and
- ♦ Hold the Municipal Manager accountable for overall performance of administration and management.

This legislative framework guides this discourse as it provides the necessary blueprint and source of reference required.

Empirical Investigation

The stated problem and its sub-problems, the research questions raised and the objectives identified affected the nature of this discourse and/or ideas by requiring the use of qualitative approach/paradigm; qualitative research design; and qualitative data collection and analysis methods and techniques in undertaking this study. Non-probability purposive sampling was preferred, and the choice of data collection and analysis methods and techniques was justified on the *rationale* that they could enhance the validity, reliability and credibility of data, yet at the same time guard against possible bias in the data.

Qualitative approach was adopted based on the justification that qualitative research captures complexity. This is so because despite commitment to documenting complexity of appearances, and their rejection of approaches which fail to do this, qualitative researchers, nevertheless, are engaged in processes of theoretical abstraction and data reduction, and that they cannot avoid doing so (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias 1996). According to Hammersley (2008), they do not simply render reality in the sense of capturing and displaying it, but rather they selectively collect and interpret data, formulating what is observed and organising it under categories.

The selection of this paradigm/approach was further based on the premise that the primary commitment of research should be to be 'true to the phenomena'—and closely related to this rationale is the fact built into it, with the argument that what is required is to capture the complexity of the real world, rather than seeking to reduce it to some theoretical model or a set of variables and measurement procedures (Hammersley 2008).

Empirical Discourse: Within the boundaries of qualitative research, descriptive and exploratory approaches were followed by focusing on Mahikeng, Ditsobotla, Ramotshere Moiloa, Ratlou, and Tswaing local municipalities that constitute North West Province’s most densely populated local areas. The main exploration concludes with a gap analysis that aimed to determine the required skills in delineating an ideal profile for administrative and managerial capacity at local level (Malefane and Khalo 2010).

Population: The target population selected for this study was five local municipalities constituting the District. The District is located in the North West Province and shares a border with Botswana. It was officially inaugurated in 1995, and its area of jurisdiction covers the following local municipalities: Mahikeng; Ramotshere Moiloa (Zeerust) Ditsobotla (Lichtenburg); Tswaing (Delareyville); and Ratlou (Stella and Setla-kgobi areas). The District covers an area of 31 039 square kms and has a total population of 764 351 (Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality 2010/2011)

Sampling: Purposive sampling technique (Patton 2002) was suitable and most preferred, as it allowed for selection on the basis of knowledge of the population and its elements—in other words, selection of respondents was based on researcher’s judgment and purpose of his study. The sample used in this study is presented in terms of Table 1.

Table 1: The sample of the study

Municipality	Executive Mayor	Municipal Manager	Total
Ngaka Modiri Molema District	1	1	2
Mahikeng Local	1	1	2
Tswaing Local	1	1	2
Ramotshere Moiloa Local	1	1	2
Ditsobotla Local	1	1	2
Ratlou Local	1	1	2
Total	6	6	12

DATA COLLECTION, CAPTURING, PROCESSING, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The qualitative data collection, analysis and interpretation methods were employed with due

care in ensuring that validity, reliability, credibility, objectivity and dependability of data were not compromised. This basic process entailed the following:

Data Collection, Analysis and Interpretation

Participant Observation: This is a research procedure that is typical of the qualitative paradigm as it necessitates direct contact with the subjects of observation. In this procedure, the researcher was involved in the one-continuum ranging from total involvement on the one hand and total observation on the other. This allowed the researcher to decide beforehand on the role he intended to take in the inquiry since the decision affects the total process of the inquiry. The researcher spent lengthy time actively observing participants in their natural setting in their workplaces (Neuman 2000).

In-depth Interviewing: In-depth interviewing is the predominant mode of data collection in qualitative research. All interviews are interactional events and interviewers are deeply and unavoidably implicated in creating meanings that ostensibly resides within participants. The researcher engaged in this mode of data collection knowing that interviewing the participant involves description of the experiences, as well as involving reflection on the description. In this study, after a lengthy uninterrupted period of preliminary interviews, the researcher prepared a detailed open-ended interview schedule and on the basis of it conducted in-depth interviews with the respondents (Krueger and Casey 2000).

Qualitative Document Study: In this study the researcher used a variety of non-personal documents such as minutes of meetings, agendas, internal office memos, newspapers magazines and government’s legislative and policy documentation, with the knowledge that if these documents are studied and analysed for the purpose of scientific research, the method of document study as a data collection method becomes operative. Local government publications, journal articles on local government administration and management, as well as minutes and agendas of the District meetings were used to amass the relevant and required data (Ritchie and Lewis 2003).

Qualitative Case Study: The researcher is of the view that a descriptive or factual statement makes a claim about what really is the case.

Subsequently, there are various kinds of descriptive statements that allow the researcher to distinguish between types of descriptive statements according to the following dimensions: the number of cases covered by the description; the number of variables included in a description; and the level of measurement in this study. Cases lodged with the District and having special contribution to make, were secured and studied for the purpose of this particular analysis (Leedy and Ormrod 2001).

Data Gathering Process

Data was gathered through participant observation and in-depth interviewing of Executive Mayors and Municipal Managers of the District itself, and the five local municipalities constituting the District. Relevant municipal legislative, administrative and policy documents were studied and scrutinised, and appropriate administrative and management cases were explored and analysed. In this process, particular care was taken to ensure that the validity, reliability, consistency, objectivity and authenticity of the data were not compromised. Also, vigilant approach was adopted to guard against bias in the data.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Qualitative Content Analysis: Content analysis is defined as a process of identifying patterns and themes of experiences research participants brings to the study, what patterns characterise their participation in the study, and what patterns of change are reported by and observed in the participants (Patton 2002). As a qualitative research method, content analysis played an important role in this study as it involves detailed and systematic examination of the content of a particular body of material for the purpose of identifying patterns, themes and even biases. The contents of the relevant documents secured during data collection were subjected to a rigorous analysis through this technique. The same is true with the information gathered through observation and responses from the interviewees.

Qualitative Case Study Analysis: Case study is an intensive investigation of a single unit or an examination of multiple variables (Babbie and Mouton 2001). This method has been used in this study as it takes multiple perspectives into

account and attempts to understand the influences of multilevel social systems of subjects' perspectives and behaviours—the defining characteristic of this method is its emphasis on an individual. In this study relevant cases from the District were assimilated and their relevance to the study cautiously scrutinised to assess their contribution to the study.

Findings of the Study

The findings of the study are presented thus: In respect of the research objectives stated, the study revealed that:

- ♦ **Administrative Capacity**

Objective 1: The administrative structures, systems, processes and procedures in the District were not clearly articulated.

Objective 2: Administrative decision-making and problem-solving skills were not well integrated.

- ♦ **Managerial Capacity**

Objective 1: Managerial plans, policies, strategies and tactics in the District were not well coordinated.

Objective 2: Programmes for management training and empowerment in the District were not adequate.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the above findings, the following results and their discussion become eminent:

- ♦ **Administrative Capacity**

Finding 1: For a municipality to be functional, proper administrative structures, systems, processes and procedures, must be established and be clearly defined, and this activity may include the identification of the need for changes to the existing administrative organisation and operations in Ngaka Modiri Molema District. A functional municipality within the context of this article, is the one that is striving for developmental outcomes as specified in the White Paper on Local government (published on March 1998), and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996. Such administrative structures, systems, processes and procedures must be designed in such a way that they (1) fast-track spatial integration and socially inclusive

development, (2) promote equity, social justice, and economic prosperity, (3) promote local democracy, and (4) provide affordable and efficient services.

Finding 2: Lack of decisiveness has been identified as one of the major stumbling blocks towards effective and efficient administrative decision-making and problem-solving in Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality. Some positive changes are needed in this regard and the possibility to rethink on (1) basic administrative principles, (2) common vision for transformation and development, and (4) administrative performance indicators, cannot be ruled out. A change in administrative decision-making and problem-solving skills will assist the District to play a strategic role of (1) coordinating the transformation, (2) providing legislative framework for the District, (3) providing a framework for District's capacity-building and support, and (4) evaluation, monitoring and oversight in the District.

♦ **Managerial Capacity**

Finding 1: Management plans, policies, strategies, and tactics in the District must be well-coordinated and consolidated. This process must include amongst other things, (1) integrated and coordinated approach to delegation of management functions, (2) coordinated decentralisation and assignment of management powers, (3) integrated and coordinated implementation of management programmes, (4) proactive planning to prepare for and prevent disaster, (5) integrated and coordinated environmental impact assessments, and (6) integrated programmes to promote local economic development in the District.

Finding 2: Adequate programmes for management training and empowerment are *sine qua non* to the functionality of any municipality, irrespective of whether is a metro, district or a local municipality. Management's training and empowerment programmes must be designed and structured in such a manner that they provide managers with the required skills that will enable them to execute and perform their duties effectively and efficiently. This management training and capacity building programmes should include (1) skills pertaining to moni-

toring financial status and building financial management capacity, (2) ensuring high standards of accurate information, (3) ensuring uniformity and predictability of intervention mechanisms, and (4) ensuring proper regulation of executive authority to attain and maintain effectiveness and efficiency.

In the light of this, there is a need for the District to ensure that it remains responsive, efficient, and that value for money is realised even with scarce public resources. In the main, in spite of these challenges, there has been little, yet a clear demonstrable progress made by the District in accelerating access to basic services for the poor. For example, it was found that the comparison of access to basic services in 2001 when the District was established to the results in 2007 proves this point (Community Survey Data 2007). Moreover, based on the National Treasury's review of the District, access to electricity increased by 10% and flush toilets by 4%. (National Treasury 2007a)

This approach could further lead to the minimisation of undue allegations and counter-allegations of corruption and fraud associated with management, in which there were two cases where Commercial Crime Unit of the South African Police Services, Auditor-General and National Treasury investigations were underway (Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality, January 2010). Under these particular circumstances, it became evident that needs from the District's perspectives and needs from the residents' perspectives were set aside for narrow political and self-interests (Ingle and Van Schalkwyk 2004).

Financial Administration and Management Position in the District

The financial administration and management position in the District was untenable as it dismally failed to comply with, and adhered to provisions of the Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2005, and National Treasury Regulations. For example, this was clearly highlighted in the Auditor General Report of 2006/2007. Compliance with current financial management systems remained a constant challenge as even audit reports were uniformly poor resulting from the District's inability to manage its annual financial statements. Financial management in the

District was further complicated by poor skills-base, weak support from the national and provincial spheres of government and poor controls that left the system open to abuse, corruption and fraudulent activities (Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality, January 2010).

Within the context of consolidated legal policy framework for the District, the underlying policy development in the area of municipal finances is issues of providing acceptable levels of municipal services to poor households at affordable rates which in turn, requires some redistribution. Poor financial administration and management and lack of controls and accountability systems in the District impacted negatively service delivery and infrastructure development—from lack of water and other services to inadequate funds for technical equipment for servicing infrastructure (Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality 2010/2011)

Problems Associated With Under-Spending and Inappropriate Usage of Funds

In addition to the above mentioned administrative and management challenges in the District, in certain areas there were signs of under-spending, wastage, inappropriate usage of funds, and poor oversight from the part of District's political and administrative personnel. For example:

- ♦ Tendency towards diversion of conditional grants to pay salaries and wages;
- ♦ Instances in which allocated Municipal Infrastructure Grants (MIGs) were used for the District's operational cost instead of addressing the pressing infrastructural challenges;
- ♦ Situations in which considerable investment amounts were being kept by the District, whilst there were huge delivery backlogs; and The lack of monitoring infrastructure projects, especially during the construction phases, and thus resulting in poor workmanship being undetected and having no consequences.

In the light of these developments Van Der Waldt (2007) advises that:

Administration and management are an extremely complex and multidimensional endeavours and therefore attempts to improve the levels and standards thereof need to be ap-

proached from various advantage points, and in order to develop administration and management programmes there should be clear link between the strategic objectives of the municipality and the various programmes and projects for implementation.

Issues Associated With Unauthorised, Wasteful, Fruitless and Irregular Expenditure in the District

The following case study reveals a clear incident of an unauthorised, wasteful, fruitless and irregular expenditure in the District. The focus of this case was on the undertaking of functions beyond the mandate of the District. Under normal circumstances, in the Republic of South Africa, the Constitution provides for the functional split between the three spheres of government. For example, Part A of Schedule 5 to the Constitution makes provision for "Provincial Sport" as falling within the competency of the provincial government—it refers to provincial sport in general, thus implying everything in relation to sport. Moreover, Part B of the same Schedule 5 to the Constitution makes provision for "Local Sport Facilities". This particular provision is specific in that it refers to sport facilities only and not to sport in general. Based on the Constitution, it can be rightly argued that this specific function and power, falls within the competency of local government, implying that, amongst other things, the job of municipalities is to build sport facilities for the youth, and nothing more than this.

The Local government sphere has "two tier systems of government" and Section 84 (1) of the Municipal Structures Act, determines functional split between district municipality and local municipalities. Section 84(1) also provides for the allocation of specific functions and powers to a District. In terms of this provision, the list of functions and powers of the District does not include "local sport facilities", thus making this specific function the sole responsibility of the local municipality. In the light of this it can be argued that the contract and activities pertaining to and undertaken by the Executive Mayor concerning the well-talked about Brazilian project, belong completely outside the functions of the District, and that by undertaking this project, the Executive Mayor acted *ultra virus mores*, and thus led to the following

unauthorised, wasteful and irregular expenditure:

Community service	:	-R 1093 892
Fire and emergency services	:	-R 1000 000
Fire vehicles	:	-R 1000 000
Local economic development	:	-R 1731 000
Corporate services	:	-R 1000 000
Water services	:	-R 2500 000
Roads and storm water	:	-R 2000 000

(North West Provincial government, June 2009)

The minus sign (-) on the above amounts indicates the shortfall suffered by other essential services as the result of Brazilian project. Nonetheless, the District continued to bear the cost, and to date, the total expenditure for 2007 and 2008 stands at R 16 047 504 (Invocation of section 139(1) (b) in the Ngaka Modiri Molema District: office of the Premier North West Provincial Government, June 2009(a)). By implications this means that the District has violated the provisions meant to govern the appropriate allocation of competencies to the district municipalities. In the light of this developments, this analysis discovered that behind this untenable state of affairs, was lack of adequate administrative and managerial capacity which manifested itself in poor governance and visionary leadership capacity, poor service delivery and infrastructural capacity, and poor financial administration and management capacity. Surely, some drastic action has to be taken, sooner rather than later, that will shift the District from this stressful situation and assist it to transform itself into a functional one. Therefore, it is within this context, and based on the findings of this analysis, that the article suggests the following model, that can be employed in leading towards the transformation of the District into a functional and vibrant municipality.

Issues Pertaining to the Filling of Posts per Municipality

One of the major challenges facing the District and its constituent local municipalities is the problem of the number of approved, filled and vacant posts during the financial year 2008/2009. Table 2 highlights some of the dynamics encountered in this regard.

The filled positions represent 35.89% and the vacant positions represent 64.15% of the total approved positions.

Table 2: Number of approved, filled and vacant posts during 2008/9 financial year

Municipality	Approved posts	Filled posts	Vacant posts
Ngaka Modiri Molema	700	250	450
Mafikeng Local Municipality	500	150	350
Ditsobotla Local Municipality	400	150	250
Ramotshere Moiloa Local Municipality	450	150	300
Ratlou Local Municipality	300	100	200
Tswaing Local Municipality	300	150	150
Total	2650	950	1700

Source: Department of Provincial and Local Government 2007(b)

The Suggested Model

The model suggested here is approached from the *systems perspectives* that views administration and management in any organisation as consisting of a set of interdependent and interrelated components arranged in a manner that produces a unified whole. The systematic relationship between these components is demonstrable in the fact that no one of these components is more important than the other, and the absence of one component can have adverse consequences to the system as a whole, and that system will be rendered absolutely dysfunctional, and thus leading to its collapse. In this respect, Robbins (1990) defines a system as a set of interrelated and interdependent parts arranged in a manner that produces a unified whole.

The Characteristics of the Model

This model is built on the understanding that for the District to regain its interrelationships both its internal and external environments, it must:

- ♦ Strengthen its administrative capacity,
- ♦ Enhance and consolidate its managerial capacity, and
- ♦ Unlock, empower and unleash the skills capacity of its employees

Of particular importance in this model, are the internal and external environments, in which the District operates. These environments are important as they provide a feedback loop that keeps the administration and management of the District working on a continuous basis. Within this particular context, the characteristics underlying the structure of the model are identified in Figure 1.

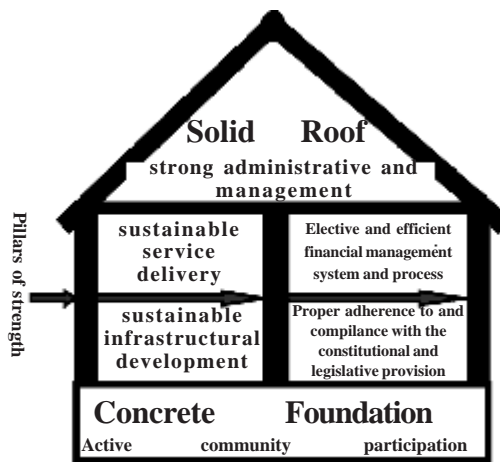


Fig.1. Concrete foundation → Pillar of strength → Solid roof model for administrative/management Capacity

Concrete Foundation: This refers to the base on which administrative and managerial capacity of the District should be built, and suggests that for such a foundation to be concrete, it must represent and reflect the interests of all the stakeholders the municipality is expected to serve, consisting of active community members who take their local civic responsibilities seriously and are always ready to engage the municipality in whatever positive ways possible. In other words, the District must create a concrete administrative and managerial foundation base supported by active community participation on the ground. In highlighting the significance of active community participation, Ababio (2004) states that meaningful community participation is indispensable for a viable local government. As a result, municipal inhabitants must be provided with accessible, timely and accurate information to make informed decisions. The principles of Batho Pele are meant to enhance

community participation in developmental local government for improved service delivery.

Pillars of Strength: In terms of this model, the pillars of strength refers to good administrative and management core; effective and efficient administrative structures, processes, and procedures viable management plans, policies, and strategies, and suggests that the District must enhance, enforce, and consolidate its service processes and mechanisms. This model also calls for clear adherence and compliance to relevant provisions of MFMA, Treasury regulations and Auditor General's directives by those tasked with financial administration and management in the District. In this particular respect Mubangizi (2007) emphasises that the adoption of the 1997 White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service Delivery brought about a new framework in defining the role of the public service with emphasis on:

- ♦ Responsibility and relevance to the needs of citizens;
- ♦ More efficiency and effectiveness in usage of public resources; and
- ♦ More representativeness of the diversity and the needs of all, especially the disadvantaged sectors of society.

Solid Roof: This refers to top level structures in the District, and suggests for a strong and visionary administration and management in the District. Within the context of this article, strong visionary administration and management are taken to represent the understanding that if municipalities are not able to establish a broadly shared vision as envisaged in their IDP methodology, it is very difficult to see how their leaders (political) will be able to navigate their way through competing demands of interest groups within the municipality, other spheres of government and, of course, agendas that stem from within the ruling party or coalitions that govern. In the absence of a legitimate, realisable vision of the District, it is virtually impossible for a municipality to build sound strategic administration and management focus areas.

According to Palmer (2004), such a strategic approach to administration and management is the alignment of organisational strategy and capability with conditions of the environment, a descriptive overview of the operating environment and the external relationships of Western public sector organisations. Moreover, Jarbathan (2009) maintains that transformational

leadership is a new approach that involves a paradigm shift from transactional leadership. The author suggests that transformational leadership style implied that leaders are only leaders by virtue of their leadership role being sanctioned by their followers. He further advised that although transactional leadership has shifted to transformational leadership, most researchers agree on the importance of both transactional and transformational leaders operating in organisations. Indeed, the need for leaders to possess both transactional and transformational skills cannot be over-emphasised.

CONCLUSION

The article is a qualitative analysis of the administrative and managerial capacity in the District. It identified pertinent themes of a functional municipality, namely; proper administrative and management; and used them as benchmark bases for this analysis. Qualitative data collection methods and qualitative data analysis techniques were employed in analysing administrative and managerial capacity in the District. The analysis established that the District was in a state of distress due to lack of adequate administrative and managerial capacity. From the systems perspective, the article recommended the “Concrete Foundation, Pillars of Strength and Solid Roof” administration and management capacity model described in Figure 1, which can be adopted in transforming the District into a vibrant and functional district municipality, and thus restoring the confidence of the residents (African National Congress’ Elections Manifesto 2009). Applying the model suggested could enhance the administrative and managerial capacity of the District.

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