



Consultocracy in South African public service: A case of repositioned public administration curricula



Authors:

Arthur M. Shopola¹ 

Ricky Mukonza² 

Rasodi K. Manyaka³ 

Affiliations:

¹Department of Public Administration and Local Government, Faculty of Humanities, North-West University, Mafikeng, South Africa

²Department of Public Management, Faculty of Humanities, Tshwane University of Technology, Polokwane, South Africa

³Department of Public Administration and Management, Faculty of Economics, Development and Business Sciences, University of Mpumalanga, Mbombela, South Africa

Corresponding author:

Arthur Shopola,
shopola3@gmail.com

Dates:

Received: 20 June 2023

Accepted: 06 Feb. 2024

Published: 25 Apr. 2024

How to cite this article:

Shopola, A.M., Mukonza, R. & Manyaka, R.K., 2024, 'Consultocracy in South African public service: A case of repositioned public administration curricula', *Africa's Public Service Delivery and Performance Review* 12(1), a747. <https://doi.org/10.4102/apsdpr.v12i1.747>

Copyright:

© 2024. The Authors.
Licensee: AOSIS. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution License.

Read online:



Scan this QR code with your smart phone or mobile device to read online.

Background: This article attempts to make a reasoned case for re-thinking and repositioning public administration education curriculum in South Africa considering the emerging 'consultocratic' regime in the public service. It appears that public managers are determined to outsource private knowledge and expertise with little efforts made to build their own internal capacity.

Aim: To establish ways in which the higher education sector can help in preparing future public servants in South Africa.

Setting: The article is an extract of the study that was conducted in 13 Limpopo-based municipalities, including provincial Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) and South African local government association.

Methods: Qualitative methods were used to obtain perspectives from officials and practitioners involved in local government in order to establish reasons why public institutions over-consult.

Results: The main finding of this study shows that public institutions, municipalities in this case, over consult because of limited inhouse talent and skills shortage. Participants agreed that while municipalities take blame for ineffective recruitment strategies, higher education sector can play a bigger role in building future skilled graduates. A lack of critical thinking skills was said to be the main problem. With the backup from critical thinking theory, the study proved the need for revised Public Administration (PA) curricula.

Conclusion: The repositioning of PA education is encouraged considering that the public sector governance approach is said to be inspired by the market – oriented ideology, the New Public Management, which favours outsourcing against the central role of government.

Contribution: Inclusion of critical thinking as module in the PA discourse is recommended. Public sector is also urged to ease legislative red tapes to encourage innovation in the public service. This will guarantee skilled and readily available recruitment pool from which public sector can source talent from, but most significantly, a cultivation of tactical, critical, and strategic thinkers will positively challenge the prevailing consultocratic regime.

Keywords: consultocracy; consultants; public administration; qualification; South Africa.

Introduction

This article is a report on the findings of the research project that investigated 'consultocracy in the South African local government'. It is based on one of the objectives designed to establish ways in which the higher education sector can help in preparing future skilled public servants in South Africa. In their article titled 'South Africa's universities aren't training future civil servants for what the country needs' Maserumule, Ngcaweni and Nkuna (2023) blamed the public administration education that is not fit for purpose for the weakened state capacity in South Africa. In other words, there is a gap between public administration education and training as currently offered in a university and the needs of the country. The reason the country is in this dilemma is that the training of the current and future public servants lacks interdisciplinary approach needed to meet the country's complex challenges, failure to grasp new problem solving and effective governance solutions and prospects that comes with technology, and lastly relying on the colonial theorisation of public management (Maserumule et al. 2023). Unfortunately, this problem is also writ large in the emerging practices of consultocratic managerialism, which have now become a resident within municipal governments. 'Consultocracy' refers to the heavy influence of non-elected private consultants on the elected government or authorities in the

Note: Special Collection: Social Economic Transformation in a Dynamic World.

execution of public or constitutional responsibilities (Hood & Jackson 1991:24). This concept is used in this study in order to characterise the growing usage of consulting practices within the South African public sector, and local government in particular.

According to Auditor General (AG) South Africa (2018–2019, 2020–2021), consultancies or consulting as practice in public institutions, has yielded nothing more than perpetual frustration on the part of public budget. One of the few studies that analysed this phenomenon in South Africa (Theletsane 2015) concluded that government should not entertain any idea that suggests complete ‘stoppage’ on outsourcing but rather should leverage skills from the consultantship processes to build own internal capacity. Meanwhile this study agrees on the need for public service to build own administrative capacity; it argues that the prevailing conditions call for a different analytical direction from which new contributions can be made. As such, this contribution sets out to establish firstly, the reasons why public sector organisations, municipalities in this case, over-rely on consultants advise for service provision and key areas that they consult on. This will then lead the second part, which explores the role of a university as a preparatory ground for future public servants to establish ways in which their public administration curriculum can be re-designed to frustrate the culture of consultocratic managerialism before it can permanently embed itself within the public sector. The study was guided by the following research questions: why do municipal governments outsource private advice? In addition, how can the higher education sector assist in building future skilled or fit for purpose recruitment base for public sector through social science courses such as public administration?

Background of the study

Historical discourse on the usage of consultants in South Africa shows that the practice can be hinged both during the apartheid period (pre-1994) and in the post-apartheid period (post 1994). As pointed out by Oothseizen (2003), in the late 1990s consulting was so widespread that one would hardly find a state organ without consulting team somewhere in their corporate structure. A similar trend could be seen after the 1994 elections under the new government led by African National Congress (ANC), and this time was even marked with greater demands for the services of consultants around the world (Oothseizen 2003:17). Currently, 7 in 10 public institutions are involved in the consultantship programme in South Africa (AG 2021). Recent literature shows that South African public sector is faced with skills challenges and there is welter of evidence showing that public servants are faced with skills inertia, which perpetually hinders effective public administration at all levels of government (Auditor General of South Africa 2021; Human Science Research Council 2022). To deal with such crises, public managers resort to seeking external backup from their counterpart private sector. For some reasons, this practice has become commonplace where service delivery institutions at all levels of government from

time to time will engage management consultants for managerial solutions. In 2021, the AG found that over 70% of all the 258 municipalities in the country had a recurring use of management consultants (AG 2020–2021). Government departments at national and provincial levels have not been exempted from this situation as they recorded over R 102 billion consultant fees from 2013 to 2015 (AG 2015).

A literature search into the use of consultants in the South African public sector points to the following areas of consulting, and may serve as significant indicators to determining the kind of skills needed by students and public servants in the immediate and long-term periods: Planning (internal strategic planning, engineering, land, etc.); Designing of roads; Facilitation (negotiations, workshops, etc.); Organising functions; Compiling financials; Developing and compiling of asset registry; Conducting research; and Legal services (AG reports, 2009–2010; 2010–2011; 2013–2014; 2020–2021). The AG reports, on the use consultants at national and provincial departments between the financial periods 2008–2009 and 2010–2011, shows that R100 billion was used mainly in the areas of planning, monitoring and evaluation of performance. Recently, local government has used over R100 billion for planning, compilation of financials, development and compilation of assets registry in the 176 of 258 municipalities country-wide (AG 2021). As indicated previously, the regrettable outcome of this audit is that very little positive outcomes were realised as the bulk of such departments and municipalities continues to receive qualified audit outcomes.

Furthermore, consultants such as McKinsey & Company, Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler (KPMG) and Deloitte have recently come under huge criticism, after it has been revealed during the State Capture Commission of Enquiry 2021 that they have [allegedly] corruptly acquired contracts with state-owned enterprise during the Zuma administration (Mazzucato & Collington 2023). Apparently, McKinsey & Company agreed to repay R 1 billion to government for the work it did at the financial and operationally troubled Eskom, the state power monopoly, alongside with the Gupta family – a wealthy family that was accused of using its proximity with the former president Jacob Zuma to influence cabinet decisions. In light of the aforesaid, it must be highlighted that South Africa is unfortunately not the only country where the above-listed consulting companies were implicated in ‘problematic’ billions worth contracts. Indonesia and the Kenyan governments have also had a fair share of similar experiences (Mazzucato & Collington 2023:28).

Apart from the above-listed big consulting companies, the South African government is also consulting various other domestic firms at various levels of government. In the past, calls for government departments and local government to refrain from ‘consultocracy’ have been made. In 2013, 2015 and 2018, former ministers of finance, Pravin Gordhan, Nhanhla Nene and Tito Mboweni failed to deal with this problem despite cautioning organs of government about the use of consultants (Gordhan 2013; Mboweni 2019; Nene

2015). In the 2022 medium term budget policy statement, the current finance minister Enock Godongwana announced that allocation of consultant services has been capped, which means that public institutions will have to apply for funding and file a strong motivation why they need funding for consultancy services (Godongwana 2022).

During the State Capacity conference held in KwaZulu-Natal province in November 2022, the Director – General in the National School of Government (NSG) mentioned that over R 2 billion is spent annually to train and capacitate public managers in all state departments, to which she lamentedly said very little is realised in return. Against this backdrop, this article suggests that the search for a solution should go beyond the existing options such as the training workshops conducted by the NSG, Public Sector Education Training Agency (PSETA) and Local Government Sector Education Agency (LGSETA). ‘Consultocracy’ does not only signify a lack of in-house skills and competencies on the part of the public managers but also highlights the disconnect between the calibre of public servants needed and the kind of education and training offered within the responsible sectors for preparing the future labour force.

The foregoing is consistent with the National Development Plan 2030’s (NDP 2012) call for vocational education and training colleges and universities to actively serve as preparatory ground among other things, for future public servants. According to Department of Higher Education and Training (2014:5), the curriculum for post-school education and training in the higher education should be ‘critical thinking, be relevant and respond to the changing national and global environment, [and] rapid changes in technology’. We further hold a view that the continual use of consultants in the public service, to some extent, demonstrates a problem of skills transference and containment during the consultancy process, but more importantly, it exposes the disconnections between the calibre of public servants needed at a particular period and the existing public administration curricula within the higher learning sectors where future public servants are prepared. For this, insights are drawn from one of the learning theories found in the discipline of education known as critical thinking theory not only to respond to questions of inter-disciplinary approach as lamented by Maserumule et al. (2023) but to also try and build future public managers equipped with necessary critical thinking skills needed for innovative thinking, problem solving and big data management. Understood from this premise, we do not withstand other possible factors such as corruption, nepotism and favouritism that may be contributing to the declining state or municipal capacities in South Africa but the argument, which we make throughout the article, is that these factors are not a direct reason why municipalities over-consult. Therefore, there is a need to confront this question and this study is an attempt to address the problem of consultocracy through higher education sector, in particular through the repositioned public administration education curriculum. The curriculum

aspects are further dissected in the literature section and the intention is to contextualise the curriculum from the disciplinary perspective, dynamics, and other related issues.

Literature review

The current section is important as it aims to contextualise the key units of analysis, that is consultancy and public administration, within the existing body of knowledge. This is in relation to what previous studies have established regarding these phenomenon. The first part presents dynamics of the public administration discipline and their related impact on how the educational programme is designed.

Public administration: The identity crisis and its impact on the educational programme design

As an academic discipline, Public Administration dates back to the 18th century, and it is a common knowledge that it first appeared in print in the famous article by Woodrow Wilson in 1887 (Woodrow 1887). It is a popular held view that discipline dates back to that period even though others argue that it predates Wilson’s era. It is one of the disciplines that have gone through perpetual hardships in academia, with its identity questioned at some point in history. Going into the 1970s, pessimists such as Parker (1965) and Mosher (cited in Stillman 2000:4) had already predicted the demise of Public Administration. Just like some political scientists who ‘systematically downplayed Public Administration as either a field unworthy of serious study or even an essentially non-political activity’ (Riggs 1994:25), Parker and Mosher (cited in Stillman 2000:4) were extreme in their views. They argued that Public Administration does not exist at all. However, credit to the young academics who called for a conference known as *Minnowbrook I* in 1968 to respond ‘largely... to a question of relevance of Public Administration to the contextual dynamics and realities of that time and its future as an academic discipline’ (Maserumule 2010:356). They were able to cover handful issues including acceding to the fact that there will be change in paradigms (New Public Administration, New Public Service, Governance and New Public Management–NPM) but not the demise of the discipline. Notably, the ‘predominance of the market ideology under the doctrine of NPM in the development of Public Administration has had significant implications for public administration education’ (Basheka & Dassah 2015:196).

However, despite criticism on the identity of public administration the truth of the matter is that this discipline is interdisciplinary in nature and its defenders have not disputed this. According to Kayuni (2015:167), the interdisciplinary nature itself is not a concern, rather the fear is that public administration tend to somehow lose its identity in the process. To this end, observations by scholars such as Moharir (2000) and Caiden (1994) are unavoidable because they aptly summarise some of the fundamental identity crisis facing public administration when they say:

Medicine borrows from other physical and social sciences but maintain their separate integrated identity as a profession, public administration has not been able to do that.... [*Yet, other disciplines*] dictate the contents and orientation of Public Administration. (Moharir 2000:73–78)

The most pressing issue is the separate identity of something calling itself Public Administration... Public Administration has yet to decide whether it is a supra-discipline, or sub-discipline and whether its practitioners belong to a master profession that includes all public employees. It does not know whether it is any of these or just a special focus of interest ... it cannot decide where in this universe of the administrative state it should confine itself ...it cannot fend off powerful rivals that nibble at its edges. (Caiden 1994:51)

These are some of the problems that affect the public administration programmes in higher education. It is for this reason, as per Basheka and Dassah's (2015:196) experience of Ugandan situation, that 'public administration graduates continue to compete with business administration graduates, with the latter receiving, by default, preference from most government departments because of favourable policy directive'. The same observation was made in South Africa, where Shopola, Mudau and Mukonza (2021) stressed the need for 'hall marking' the discipline of public administration to avoid employment competition with graduates from other disciplines.

The relationship between public administration as a discipline and practice remain significantly important for this study because the former is considered an important antecedent to the latter, especially in the context of skills and labour production for the state. According to Kroukamp (2012:13), the complexities and ambiguities around government and its constitutional mandates in the 21st century calls for a properly designed Public Administration training or instructional programme, which aims to 'capacitate future public servants to think analytically and critically'. Public Administration in South Africa is offered in the traditional universities, universities of technologies, and technical vocational education and training colleges, and it is also believed to be the biggest recruitment base for government institutions because of its the theory part, which is clocked around government processes and structures. The design of the public administration curricula and contents thereto in the higher education institutions is set out in Appendix 1. Related analysis and unpacking of the curriculum contents of Public Administration as offered in South Africa is performed during the analysis of findings.

Consulting as a practice in public sector organisations – From Reagan and Thatcher's perspectives

Outsourcing of public management responsibilities to consultants and their reliance thereof in the global public administrations has been on the spike since 1980s. It was during this period that the two famous school of thoughts on why consultants complete so much work for governments advanced by the former United States (US) president Ronald Reagan and former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher

emerged. The first one is on the capacity argument, where governments were downsized in favour of the NPM reform package (i.e. privatisation and austerity budgets) especially around 1980s. At this time in point, most governments lost their internal capacity to produce the intended policy outcomes thereby turning to private sector firms for advice, new knowledge, and skills (Selepe & Shopola 2023).

It is from this continuum of inertias demonstrated by governments that neoliberalism, the umbrella theory of NPM paradigm, gained influence and this is what has precipitated the private sector perception that government is a problem, and they are a solution (Manyaka & Mukonza 2022). It can be argued that despite the global spread of neoliberalism and neo-institutionalisation of NPM into states craft, there has not been solid proof that it can drive a democratic developmental agenda. South Africa being an example, particularly since the advent pro-neoliberal policies such as Growth, Employment, and Redistribution (GEAR) to the current NDP, has been experiencing massive corporate corruption and poor governance despite the involvement of private sector through the contracting methods (privatisation or consultancy or public private partnerships). Overall, Reagan and Thatcher's argument on capacity might be legitimate but consulting has failed to guarantee government the much-needed capacity to meet its constitutional obligations, instead evidence shows that it is responsible for breeding anti-social and or democratic practices such as 'consultocracy'.

The second school of thought is that consultants are uniquely placed to offer a neutral advice to leaders and the assumption that they possess up to date knowledge clothed with sophisticated business-oriented practices. One is somewhat inclined to agree with this argument, especially looking at the academic history and qualifications of the likes of McKinsey and Company, the founder of McKinsey and Company, and many other professional consultants from the so called 'Big 5' international consulting firms. They have a demonstrable academic and experiential record from the worlds' rated research-based universities. Nevertheless, critical authors have disputed this argument, on the score that in certain cases public managers or leaders are reluctant to use the existing in-house skills and rather favours external consultants, which is considered more objective (Lapsley & Oldfield 2001). Although there is truth in this contention, it can also be argued, certainly, that issues of trust and biasness from those in the officialdom can also be a source of fear to leaders. Public office is time-bound, with politicians often clouded by the desire to get re-elected, they are certainly afraid to fail; hence they often outsource advice from outside. Of course, this has nothing to do whether there is internal talent and capacity rather they believe that consultants are well placed to offer objective advice because of the inherent business knowledge but also that they can also be easily used as 'scapegoats' by leaders to escape public accountability (Steiner & Reichmuth 2015).

The educational perspectives

This educational perspective is an extension of the foregoing second argument by Reagan and Thatcher, and it lays a good basis for this study's contention that perhaps the solution to

deal with consultocratic tendencies lie not only in the training of officials in the work environment but also in the public administration curricula. As such, the educational background of consultants could be another interesting angle from which the question raised through the heading of this section can be addressed. Indeed, some in the academia have observed that the national provision of business schools, and Master of Business Administration in particular, corresponds strongly with consulting usage (Momani & Malecki 2012). Therefore, it is equally important that the 18th century that saw the emergence of one of the first consultants in the engineering sector, Fredrick Taylor is revisited, and this provides a meaningful basis for the interrogation of the South African public administration qualification design, which is done at a later stage of the article.

Taylor worked for Manufacturing Investment Company of Philadelphia as an engineering consultant in 1893. In 'Principles of Scientific Management', written in 1913, Taylor raised the possibility of thinking management needs as a true science, resting upon clearly defined laws, rules and principles. Historical recollections show that Taylor's managerial ideas influenced the curriculum of the first class of Harvard Business School in 1908 (StrategyU 2023). It is also worth noting that although engineering disciplines remain a point of departure, the history of consulting industry has reinvented itself many times and played numerous different roles. This part of history is important because it explains the consultants' source of attraction. Harvard is a private research university and has consistently been ranked one of top business schools in the world. O'Mahoney and Sturdy (2016) noticed that in the US and the United Kingdom and other countries where business schools are highly valued, strategy consultancies specifically can better exert forms of direct and indirect power. Sturdy et al. (2009) concur, and further added that this relationship can be explained through ready supplies of recruits for consultancies, and more diffusely, via clients and consultants sharing a language or mind set and thus attributing greater legitimacy to this management knowledge. Therefore, as seen in the study by Engwall et al. (2016), the ties between business schools, publishers and or media and consultancies, in the US especially, are central to 'defining management' itself as well as enabling the dominance of a business education for elite graduates who often draw on consultancy-type problems and solutions.

Moreover, the orthodox literature suggests that consultants are those private persons who possess high level critical and strategic thinking skills, and have demonstrable ability to solve challenges of the business matrix; hence, it is by no surprise that many public administrations around the world have become the biggest consumers of consulting services (Consulting Readiness Index 2018; Source Global Research 2015). There is also a belief that consultants are problem solvers, efficiency experts or business healers who study the organisational or business matrix to understand certain occurrences and how such occurrences can be translated into actions in order to generate workable business solutions (Theletsane 2015:276). And to greater extents, this is the reason why the consulting industry has been attractive to other

businesses and largely, to governments. In addition, the global public administrations are increasingly 'guided by private sector models and interests rather than democratic consensus and bureaucratic accountability' (Ylonen & Kuusela 2018:243).

Theoretical insights

Generally, this study drew theoretical insights from a number of theories including the neoliberal theory, resources-based theory, the principal-agent theory, collaboration theory as well as the critical thinking theory. However, critical thinking theory is presented for purposes of the current article. Therefore, as aptly indicated earlier on, the modern-day public administration has proved to be complex and its constantly changing environment makes it very challenging to fulfil constitutional obligations. In this instance, the need for critical thinkers as part of the bureaucratic regime cannot be over-emphasised. Also, the introduction of neoliberal paradigm that involves outsourcing of public responsibilities to the private sector signifies among other things a gap in the state craft. Outsourcing of advice from private sector that has become a common practice in the post-World War II is an appreciation on the part of bureaucracy that they lack skills (analytical, problem solving, cognitive or otherwise). Higher education can therefore play a productive role for critical thinkers or future public administrators. As UNESCO (2015:39) correctly pointed out, education in the 21st century should include critical thinking, independent judgement, and debate. Resultantly, this study draws insights from the critical thinking theory, and this selection is informed by the theory's reflective and analytical abilities as well as cognitive flexibility to interrogate the etymology and ontological base of a phenomenon for correct judgement and decision making.

Generally, critical thinking theory involves 'thinking about thinking in an intellectually disciplined manner' (Paul 2005:28), which amounts to a 'purposeful, reasoned and goal-directed' (Halpern 1998:450), aimed primarily at 'deciding what to believe or do' (Ennis 2011:1). From the perused literature there is no consensus on what critical thinking is but this is understandable because it is a highly contested concept in the discipline of Education where it originates. Some in the academia posit that critical thinking is a cross-disciplinary concept and is also found in 'everyday life, when time comes for dialogical interaction and decision making and problem solving' (Franco, Vieira & Tenreiro-Vieira 2018:133). However, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (cited in Franco et al. 2018) offers six-clustered innovative pedagogical framework from which critical thinking can be inculcated in the context of higher education, and public administration curricula stands to benefit from this (Figure 1).

Meanwhile some of the clusters in the OECD framework may be covered in the design of public administration curricula in South Africa, it can be said that elements such as experiential learning, computational thinking and multiliteracies and discussion-based learning are very crucial but lacking. Computational thinking that involves decomposition of

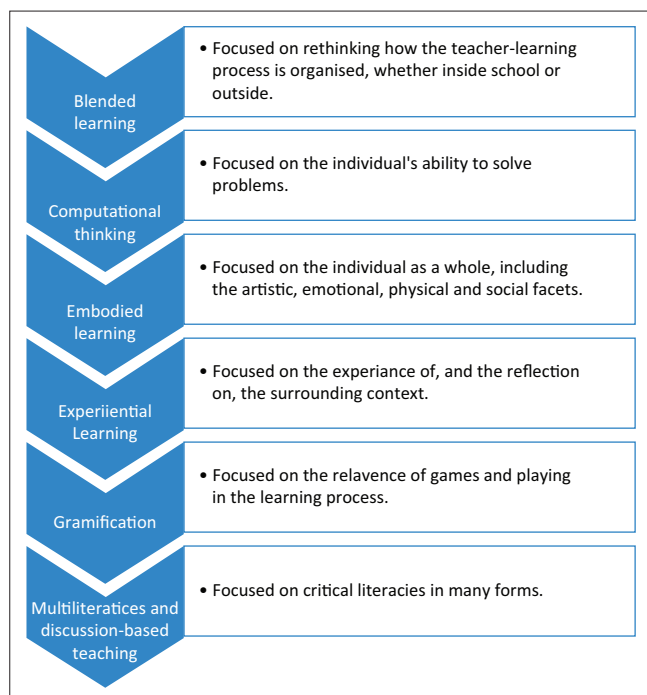


FIGURE 1: Six clusters of innovative pedagogies.

complex issues into manageable parts, pattern recognition, abstraction, and algorithms (Bitesize 2023) can contribute greatly to problem solving and innovativeness within state craft. As reminded by Paniagua and Istance (2018:20), 'pedagogy is at core of teaching and learning' thus it is critical skills such as computational thinking that guarantee an increase into one's ability to solve complex problems, but this must start in the classroom.

Therefore, the critical thinking theory is used in this study to argue for the inclusion of critical thinking as one of the key modules in the South African public administration curricula, and the expectation is that it would mould university or college students (also considered to be future public administrators) with critical and strategic thinking abilities. This understanding is consistent with the general assumption held by some theorists that the development base of critical thinking is supposedly in the higher education sector as well as 21st century skills (Arum & Roksa 2011). The belief, therefore, is that if public service is clouded by critical bureaucrats or public managers there will not be a need to seek external expertise, especially for simple administrative responsibilities such as compilation of financial statements, records management etc.

Research methods and data collection

This study was qualitative in its orientation and was guided by interpretative paradigm, which aims to make sense of the verbal or written words or responses of the participants (Brynard, Harnekorn & Brynard 2014:39). Brynard et al. (2014:39) said interpretative paradigm complements qualitative methods in many ways as they are both 'concerned with understanding more than explaining'. In the quest to

achieve the objective reported in this article, the authors engaged 40 senior officials [through semi-structured interviews] who were purposively selected from the 10 municipalities that comprised of both the district and local municipalities. The other two institutions that were included were South African local government association (SALGA) and Cooperative Government Housing and Traditional Affairs (COGHSTA) in Limpopo province.

Ethical issues were adhered to throughout the study, including validity and reliability of data as the most crucial aspects for quality assurance in a qualitative study. The findings were accurately reported as transcribed interviews were sent to the participants for verification before the actual reporting was performed. Different alphabets were attached to the interviewees for reporting purposes and also to protect the participants' identities.

In addition, data were analysed thematically. This included transcription and sorting of data, arranging and rearranging of themes and reporting. Moreover, the primary study was complemented by literature review (books, scholastic reports, and academic journal articles as well as authoritative literature, which in the main included government reports, legislation, and published statements) (Sefotho 2021). Meanwhile 'consultocracy' represent the object of this study, the design of the public administration curricula in South African universities was interrogated in order to locate the place of 'critical thinking' module as a possible game-changer and a bridge between public administrators and their counterparts in the private sector. Critical thinking thus constituted an analytical and theoretical framework for explaining impediments to skills generation and continuous usage of consultants in the public administration environment. In the next section, we present and analyse the findings of the study.

Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance to conduct this study was obtained from the Tshwane University of Technology Faculty Committee of Research Ethics – Humanities (FCRE-HUM). (No. FCRE/PM/STD/2022/13)

Results and analysis

The purpose of this section is to present and analyse our findings. Essentially, the findings from the primary study that emanated from the following questions: (1) Why do municipal governments outsource private advice? (2) How can the higher education sector assist in building future skilled or fit for purpose recruitment base for public sector through social science courses such as Public Administration? A list of services that all the selected Limpopo - based municipalities currently performs with the assistance of consultants were collated and presented in the main study, and such services provides the basis for the afore-mentioned questions. These include but are not limited to development and review of annual financial statements, compilation of valuation roll, development and writing of policy (integrated

development plans, local economic development etc.), legal services, roads and transportation, environmental analysis, as well as development of by-laws and regulations. This information formed part of the findings and its significance is that it does not only inform the current questions but also provides a broader picture of that which municipal governments are seeking advice on but are not recorded or attended to during auditing by AG, usually on the grounds of scope and resources. Next we detail how the questions were answered and analysed as per the developed themes.

Theme 1: A lack of in-house talent, skills and competencies

We confirmed through interviews with officials in the municipalities that public managers are relentlessly seeking consultant's advice on managerial functions because of limited inhouse capacity, skills and competencies. One senior official in Vhembe District Municipality had this to say:

[W]e are honestly handy capped because of lack of skills and internal talent. Look, in one of my division I have many officials who have been in the system for more than fifteen years, we train them after every two years, but we can't see the results because when time comes to compile AFS they offer nothing.' (P1, female, senior official)

The official further concluded that 'in that instance we cannot risk ...we hire consultants' (P1, female). McMaster (2019) raised the concern about officials inability to develop skills and understand job description despite having spent more time in the same office. Ijioma and Nzewi (2016) recommended 'right attitude' for learning, and properly applying the work procedures. This recommendation complements critical thinking theory, which suggests that attitude, work and procedural applications, critical reflection of the envisaged outcomes and the immediate and long-term goals are needed to determine the kind of attitude from employees and their leaders.

Other participants from Mopani District Municipality, Ba-Phalaborwa Municipality and Waterberg Municipality echoed the afore-quoted sentiment, with P5: male official in Waterberg Municipality plainly stating that 'consulting is something we will not stop anytime soon for as long we hire people who are not equipped and ready to serve'. Despite the aforesaid, Capricorn District Municipality presented a completely different case in that they are the only municipality that did not hire consultants for the development of annual financial statements in the past five years. One of the senior officials in the Finance and Budget Unit revealed that their strategy lies in the higher education sector:

'We hire student for 24 months...train them on the National Treasury materials and then we are done. Students are easy to train, and we take advantage of their eager to learn as they are fresh from class'. (P8, male, senior official)

Asked whether they think universities and colleges can help in developing skilled future officials, the majority of participants agreed. This brings us to the next theme that

looked into the curriculum of public administration since it's the biggest contributor of graduates to the public sector workforce (Shopola et al. 2021). One of the most important services that this theme rendered to the discussion herein is that it confirms that public sector is faced with the problems of skills and talent and consultocracy. In other words, the premise under which a proposal for repositioned public administration curriculum is made clear, thus justifying the author's argument about the need to interrogate the role that universities can play in building the future civil servants.

Theme 2: On the role of higher education in designing public administration curriculum

The current theme is not borne out of the primary data as with the previous theme. It is a finding from the reviewed authoritative and scholastic literature. Essentially, it reports and discusses issues of public administration curricula design and further assesses whether its current form can be trusted with the responsibility of producing critical skills that, as desired, can interrupt and counter the emerging consultocratic practice in the public service. Appendix 1 details the overall design of public administration curricula in various universities and colleges in South Africa. This it does by focussing the name of university or college, qualification type (which for sake of this study diploma or degree were chosen), course duration and levels, as well as key modules or subjects offered under each of the 3 years (see Appendix 1). As a matter of re-emphasis, and as indicated in the introductory section, it is expected that upon interrogating the design of learning and training programmes in South Africa, this study will establish ways in which the higher education and training sector can help in preparing future public servants to frustrate the culture of consultocratic managerialism before it can permanently embed itself within the public sector. Next, the authors offer their observations of the curricula in its current design (as outlined in Appendix 1) and in the process problematic areas are identified and dissected.

Firstly, public administration in South Africa is offered under different names but with not so different curricula content. For example, in Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) the qualification is called Public Affairs while in other institutions such as North West University, Unisa and in TVET colleges it is in different names. But what could be the reason for that? The cause might be the disciplines' identity crisis that has been alluded to somewhere in the texts of this article. Thus, the likes of TUT have recently redesigned its programme to the name *Public Affairs* (TUT 2019), and the suspicion is that they wanted to address the criticism raised in Mount Grace conference in 2001 where upon evaluation it was said that the teaching and theory and practice of Public Administration is 'too descriptive: lacking sufficient analytical, explanatory and predictive techniques' (Cameron & Milne 2009:386). Most importantly, it could also be that TUT, in moving away from Public Management to Public Affairs, was trying to avoid the conceptual error by some scholars who in the past conflated public administration with

public management. The fallacious assumption that the introduction of public management into the theory and practice of public administration somehow relegates or subsumes the discipline of PA should be avoided. Schwella et al. (1991) are correct to say that public management represents only a foci which are 'useful for teaching and for managing public institutions... [and] they do not negate the need to study other aspects of public administration'.

Therefore, such alignments and conceptualisations of the public administration instructional programme are quite important, especially in the context of the changing world of the 21st century and the challenges of globalisation that have, thus far, presented a compelling basis for developing countries such as South Africa to create a 'sustainable intellectual capital for their effective competitiveness in the international economy' (Maserumule 2010:77). Thus, with the intellectual capital it is expected that students will demonstrate the quality and relevance of knowledge that does not only place the country at competitive advantage in the broader scheme of global economy but also to build the envisaged skilled and professional bureaucracy, which is central to the developmental state discourse.

The last and second observation that authors made about public administration curricula (Appendix 1) is that it does not offer critical thinking as a module. None of the institutions does that. Of course, we now know from the theoretical discussion that critical thinking is one of the most important aspect of life and higher education is a strategic centre where critical skills can be cultivated for social good (Francho et al. 2018; UNESCO 2015:39). The call for critical thinking modules in this study stems from the need to produce critical, competitive and strategic thinkers in the public administration discourse. These elements, as the authors observed, are part and parcel of the educational package in business schools where the consulting industry recruits from. From literature, there is also no doubt that, as part of the education and training, business schools prepare their students to understand and manage complex business situations. Coming from this background, consultants regard themselves as critical thinkers who are well equipped when it comes to strategic, tactical and operational skills (Ibatov, Kuzmenko & Klychova 2018). Hence, they use words such as 'business healers' or efficiency experts to brand or sell their products (Management Consulting Association 2019), and their largest product consumers, in the main, is government sector.

On that score, the authors agree with Basheka and Dassah (2015:196) that public administration graduates are continually in competition with business administration graduates, with the latter receiving, by default, preference from most government departments and municipalities because of favourable policy dimensions. South African government is a fan of the market ideology under the doctrine of NPM and for the fact that NPM is a private or business inspired paradigm, it disadvantages an ordinary public administration graduate. This study does not only stress this problem but argues for a change in public administration

curricula to support the call by NDP (2012) and DHET (2014) subsequently, to position higher education sector as a proper recruitment base for skilled bureaucrats who will be able to drive service provision and solve complex government problems of the 21st century. The critical thinking theory promises that graduates with critical thinking skills are able to draw interconnections between their immediate actions and future consequences, and they are better positioned to make proper judgements for social good.

As opposed to 'consultocratic' regime that thrives in a problematic environment, the foregoing can lead to administrative stability and culminate into a long-term sustainability of good governance practices in the public service. As observed in the critical research by Ylonen and Kuusela (2019:243) in Finland, the problem with consultants as the 'contract – based actors who sell expert knowledge' to government organisation is that they tend to influence such organisations to hire them. This is done so that a dependency system is built for continuous profit making tendencies. One of the modus operandi to achieve that, as argued by Ylonen and Kuusela (2019), includes monopolisation and privatisation of knowledge. To augment this, the authors provide the following description:

Consultants have brought changes in the way public administrations handle information and knowledge. When contracting out expert services, publicly owned and available information [*or information that could, in principle, be publicly owned*] is transformed into a private commodity. Therefore, information that is frequently used by public administrators [*i.e. computer programs, algorithms, benchmarking data, and indicators*] becomes an asset for private consulting firms. The ownership [*thus*] result in information advantage for consultants that may lead to various dependencies and rent-seeking behaviour by consultants. (Ylonen & Kuusela 2019:248)

In addition, it can be said that these dependencies are central to the creation of consultocratic managerialism in the public sector. Also, because of skills shortage and the inherent inertia to produce a pool of graduates with critical thinking skills by universities and colleges in the higher education, government is likely to sustain the consultocratic approach as a way to meet its constitutional obligations. The regrettable truth, again, is that once these dependencies thrive it makes it very challenging for the public managers and ordinary government officials to harness the needed critical skills from consultantship processes, as an expected outcome by guidelines on cost containment measures like the National Treasury Instruction 01 of 2013/2014 and many other guidelines.

The South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (2021) is correct to submit that it is impossible to enforce the transfer of skills from a consultant to municipal officials unless officials have the appropriate skills. Looking at the findings from this study and that of the HSRC (2022) study that investigated municipal skills and capacity assessment, it is clear that the consultantship programmes requires further interrogation in as far as skills transference is concerned. To this end, it will be difficult to ignore Barley's argument in the

Resource Based Theory when he says that the competitive strength of private firms lies in the protection of their main 'skill' or 'ingredient' against any form of exposure (Barney 1991). This might justify the criticism levelled against consultants that they sometimes deny public officials an opportunity to harness skills from consultancy process.

Conclusion and recommendations

This study aimed to establish ways in which universities and colleges as institutions of training and education can help in preparing future public servants to frustrate the emerging culture of consultocratic managerialism within public sector. To quote Ijioma and Okafor (2015):

[T]he public administration education and training should be designed to practically and theoretically prepare and motivate students through relevant knowledge, skills, and competencies to effectively, and efficiently deal with public sector challenges. (p. 118)

Indeed, the current dynamics presented by changing public administration environment where the business inspired dogma, the NPM, dominates the policy sector it will be prudent that higher education sectors also adjust the course designs and contents to produce the up-to-date graduates.

The study's findings revealed two crucial things. Firstly, as confirmed by participants, the problem of consultocracy has to do largely with limited in-house talent and skills. The majority of participants also acknowledged that meanwhile their recruitment strategies are not perfect, institutions of higher learning such as universities and colleges can assist greatly by preparing graduates who are equipped with the needed skills to solve complex governance challenges. For this to happen, we suggested that students need to be taught critical thinking which is one of the commendable modules for resilience, knowledge and data management, among others (OECD 2018). Secondly, as the findings further revealed, none of the universities and colleges in South Africa offers critical thinking as part of public administration undergraduate qualifications. This presents a disconnect between the current public administration environment and the type of knowledge that universities and colleges equip future public administrators with. Resultantly, the authors submit that adding the critical thinking modules throughout the duration of public administration qualification will make a long-term solution to counter consultocracy. However, much as this recommendation is crucial for uprooting consulting dependencies in public service, government will still need to do the following things:

- *Adaption of the legal framework to allow innovativeness* – currently the legal framework is rigid, for, it is difficult for officials to propose programmes or new ideas. It seems although that new ideas or proposals are only valid if they are private sector sponsored. Hence, in Reagan and Thatcher's understanding, leaders believe consultants are best positioned to offer objective advise or expertise.
- *Change in recruitment government philosophy* – the mentality that business administration graduates are better compared with public administration should change.

- *Hall-mark the discipline of public administration* – the competition with people from other disciplines is somehow caused by the lack of strict professional hall-marks for the discipline of public administration (Shopola et al. 2021).

Acknowledgements

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

Authors' contributions

A.M.S., R.M. and R.K.M. contributed significantly in this study.

Funding information

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

Data availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, A.M.S., upon reasonable request.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and are the product of professional research. It does not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated institution, funder, agency, or that of the publisher. The authors are responsible for this article's results, findings, and content.

References

- Arum, R. & Roksa, J., 2011, 'Limited learning on college campuses', *Society* 48, 203–207. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12115-011-9417-8>
- Auditor – General South Africa, 2015, *Municipal financial management report, 2014/2015*, Government Printers, Pretoria.
- Auditor – General South Africa, 2019, *Local government consultants audit report 2018/2019*, viewed 20 February 2023, from https://static.pmg.org.za/200902amBriefing_notes_Nat_PC_on_Mopani_2Sept2020_PPTX.pdf.
- Auditor – General South Africa, 2021, *Municipal financial management report, 2020/2021*, Government Printers, Pretoria.
- Auditor – General South Africa, 2022, *Online portal: Municipal financial management reports*, viewed 04 March 2022, from <https://www.agsa.co.za/Reporting/MFMAReports.aspx>.
- Barney, J.B., 1991, 'Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage', *Journal of Management* 17(1), 99–120.
- Basheka, B.E. & Dassah, M.O., 2015, 'Public administration training and development in Africa: The case of Uganda (189–208)', in P.F. Haruna & S. Vyas-Doorgapersad (eds.), *Public administration training in Africa: Competencies in development management*, CRC Press, London.
- Bitesize (Online), 2023, *Introduction to computational thinking*, viewed 18 May 2023, from www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zp92mp3/revision/1.
- Brynard, D.J., Harnekom, S.X. & Brynard, P.A., 2014, *Introduction to Research*, Van Schaick Publishers, Pretoria.
- Caiden, G., 1994. 'Globalisation: The Theory and Practice of Public Administration', In J. Garcia-Zamor & R. Khator (eds.), *Public Administration in the Global Village*, Praeger, London.
- Cameron, R. & Milne, C., 2009, 'Minnowbrook, Mount Grace and the state of the discipline', *Journal of Public Administration* 44(2), 380–395.

- Consulting Readiness Index, 2018, *Towards the consulting readiness index*, CMC-Global, Zurich.
- Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET], 2014, *Annual Report*, Government Printers, Pretoria.
- Engwall, L., Kipping, M. & Usdiken, B., 2016, *Defining Management: Business Schools, Consultants, Media*, Routledge, London.
- Ennis, R.H., 2011, *The nature of critical thinking: An outline of critical thinking dispositions and abilities*, viewed 10 May 2023, from http://faculty.education.illinois.edu/rhennis/documents/TheNatureofCriticalThinking_51711_000.
- Franco, A., Vieira, R.M. & Tenreiro-Vieira, C., 2018, 'Educating for critical thinking in university: The criticality of critical thinking in education and everyday life', *ESSACHESS – Journal for Communication Studies* 11(2), 131–144. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssaoar-61542->
- Gondongwana, E., 2022, Speech: *Consulting Engineers South Africa Infrastructure Indaba*, viewed 03 March 2023, from <https://www.gov.za/news/speeches/minister-enoch-gondongwana-consulting-engineers-south-africa-infrastructure-indaba-18>.
- Gordan, J.P., 2013, *National Budget Speech*, 2012/2013, Government Printers, Pretoria.
- Gordon, P.J., 2014, *National treasury: Budget Speech*, viewed 04 August 2023, from www.nationaltreasury.gov.za.
- Halpern, D.F., 1998, Teaching critical thinking for transfer across domains: Dispositions, skills, structure training, and metacognitive monitoring', *American Psychologist* 53(4), 449–455. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.53.4.449>
- Hood, C. & Jackson, M., 1991., *Administrative Argument*, Aldershot, Dartmouth.
- Human Science Research Council [HSRC], 2022, *Municipal Skills and Capacity Assessment Study*, HSRC, Pretoria.
- Ibatov, A.Z., Kuzmenko, V.I. & Klychova, G.S., 2018, 'Key performance indicators of management consulting', *Management Science Letters* 8(5), 475–482. <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.msl.2018.3.004>
- Ijioma, E.O.C. & Okafor, C., 2015, 'Public administration training and education in Nigeria: A reflection', in P.F. Haruna & S. Vyas-Doorgapersad (eds.), *Public administration training in Africa: Competencies in development management*, pp. 107–138, CRC Press, London.
- Kayuni, H.M., 2015, 'Public Administration Training and Development in Malawi', In P.F. Haruna & S. Vyas-Doorgapersad (eds.), *Public Administration Training in Africa*, CRC Press, London.
- Kroukamp, H., 2012, *Excellence in public administration and learning: Lessons from the South*, viewed 23 November 2023, from <http://www.Pa-education.eu>.
- Lapsley, I. & Oldfield, R., 2001, 'Transforming the public sector: Management consultants as agents of change', *European Accounting Review* 10(3), 523–543. <https://doi.org/10.1080/713764628>
- Management Consulting Association, 2019, *MCA Annual Report*, viewed 07 July 2023, from www.mca.org.uk.
- Manyaka, R.K. & Mukonza, R.M., 2022, 'Re-tracing our (mis) steps in the making of a post – Apartheid South Africa: An analysis of recent riots in South Africa', *African Journal of Democracy and Governance* 8(3&4), 65–79.
- Maserumule, M.H., 2010, 'Impact of Ipsedixitism on Public Administration Scholarship South Africa', *Journal of Public Administration* 45(1.1), 74–94.
- Maserumule, M.H., Ngcaweni, B. & Nkuna, R., 2023, *South Africa's University are not training future civil servants for what the country needs*, viewed 08 December 2023, from <https://theconversation.com/south-african-universities-arent-training-future-civil-servants-for-what-the-country-needs-216180>.
- Mazzucato, M. & Collington, R., 2023, *The big con*, Penguin Press, New York, NY.
- Mboweni, T., 2019, *Seven ways National Treasury aims to tighten municipal spending*, viewed 24 March 2023, <https://www.timeslive.co.za/politics/2019-06-13-seven-ways-national-treasury-aims-to-tighten-municipal-spending/>.
- McMaster, X., 2019, *Fiscal Health, Audit Outcomes and Aspects of Development: A study of South African local government (2011–2016)*, University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- Moharir, V., 2000, 'Administrative reforms and socio-economic change: Some international perspectives on their implications for education and training', in F. Theron & E. Schwella (eds.), *The state of public development management in South Africa*, School of Public Management and Development, Cape Town.
- Momani, B. & Malecki, M., 2012, *The global reach of management consulting firms. [Occasional Paper]*, University of Waterloo, Canada.
- Mosher, F. & Stillman, R., 1982, *Professions in government*, Transaction, New Brunswick, NJ.
- National Development Plan [NDP], 2012, *National Development Plan vision 2030*, Government Printers, Pretoria.
- National Treasury (RSA), 2014, *National Treasury Instruction 01 of 2013/2014*, Government Printer, Pretoria.
- Nene, N., 2015, *National Treasury: Budget Speech*, Government Printers, Pretoria.
- O'Mahoney, J. & Sturdy, A., 2016, 'Power and the diffusion of management ideas: the case of McKinsey & co', *Management Learning* 47(3), 247–265.
- OECD., 2018, *Fostering Students' Creativity and Critical Thinking*, OECD Publishing, Paris.
- Oosthuizen, H., 2003, 'The management consulting industry in South Africa - a strategic assessment', *South African Journal of Business Management* 34(4), 15–26.
- Paker, R., 1995, 'The end of public administration', *Public Administration* 34, 99.
- Parker, M.B.E., 1965, 'The end of Public Administration', *Australian Journal of Public Administration* 24(2), 99–103.
- Paul, R., 2005, 'The state of critical thinking today', *New Directions for Community Colleges* 130, 27–38. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.193>
- Riggs, F., 1994, 'Global forces and the discipline of public administration', in J. Garcia-Zamor & R. Khator (eds.), *Public administration in the global village*, Praeger, London.
- SAICA, 2021, *Are consultancy fees and municipal salaries fruitless and wasteful expenditure?*, viewed 20 May 2023, from <https://www.saica.org.za/news/are-consultancy-fees-and-municipal-salaries-fruitless-and-wasteful-expenditure>.
- Saint-Martin, D., 2000, *Building the new managerialist state: Consultants and the politics of public sector reform in comparative perspective*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Schwella, E., Burger, J., Fox, W. & Muller, J.J., 1991, *Public Resource Management*, Juta & Co, Ltd., Kenwyn.
- Sefotho, M.M., 2021, 'Research and professional practice', in C.B. Fousche, S. Strydom & W.J.H. Roestenburg (eds.), *Research at Grassroots*, pp. 3–22, Van Schaick Publishers, Pretoria.
- Selepe, M. & Shopola, A.M., 2023, 'Rethinking the boundaries of public administration: a conceptual exploration', *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Sciences* 12(6), 221–227.
- Shopola, M.A., Mudau, J. & Mukonza, R.M., 2021, 'Public administration and management training in South African technical and vocational education and training colleges: Unpacking its relevance in the contemporary time', *African Journal of Development Studies* 2021(Special Issue 1(1)), 199–218. <https://doi.org/10.31920/2634-3649/2021/sin1a11>
- Source Global Research, 2015, *Consulting Industry*, viewed 03 August 2023, from <https://www.consulting.ca/consulting-industry>.
- South African Institute of Chartered Accountants [SAICA], 2021, *Are consultancy fees and municipal salaries fruitless and wasteful expenditure?*, viewed 08 August 2023, from www.saica.org.za.
- Steiner, R. & Reichmuth, L., 2015, *Saints or seducers? The role management consultants in the public sector. Conference Paper Presented at the International Congress of IISA in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*, viewed 13 August 2022, from <https://boris.unibe.ch/85939/>.
- Stillman, R., 2000, *Public Administration: Concepts and Cases*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston.
- Strategy, U., 2023, *A brief history of management consulting*, viewed 16 September 2023, from <https://strategyu.co/strategy-consulting-history/>.
- Sturdy, A.J., 2009, 'Popular consultancy critiques and politics of management learning', *Management Learning* 40, 457–463.
- Theletsane, K.I., 2015, 'Use of consultants in the public sector: A waste of in-house talent', *Journal of Public Administration* 50(2), 276–285.
- Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), 2023, *Diploma in public affairs*, viewed 12 May 2023, from https://www.tut.ac.za/ProspectusDocuments/2020/Dip_Public%20Affairs_2020.pdf.
- Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), 2019, *Prospectus, 2024: Part 5*, Pretoria.
- UNESCO, 2015, *Rethinking education – Towards a global common good?*, viewed 20 May 2023, from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002325/232555e.pdf>.
- Ylonen, M. & Kuusela, H., 2019, 'Consultocracy and its discontent: A critical typology and a call for a research agenda', *Governance* 32, 241–258.

Appendix starts on next page →

Appendix 1

TABLE 1-A1: Public Administration course outlook in some South African universities and TVET collages.

Undergraduate Programme in Public Administration	University of South Africa	North West University	Tshwane University of Technology	University of Pretoria	Capricorn TVET College
Qualification	Diploma in Public Administration and Management	Bachelor of Arts in Public Governance with Public Administration	Diploma in Public Affairs	B Admin (Public Management and International Relations)	Public Management: Offered under 191 Nated 6 (equivalent to National Diploma)
Key/compulsory modules					
First level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Management IA 	Public Administration; Political Studies; Sociology and History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance and Public Leadership IA Public Sector Economics IA Public Affairs AI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Administration Politics Economics Public Resource Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Administration Public Finance Computer (9 months)
Second level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Management IIA Human Resource Management IIA 	Public Administration; Political Studies; Sociology and History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication for academic purpose IA Public Sector Economics IB Public Affairs IB Managing Human Capital in Public Sector IIA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Administration Political Science OR International Relations Communication Management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Administration Municipal Administration Entrepreneurship Business Management (9 months)
Third level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Financial and Procurement 	Public Administration; Political Studies;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International relations IIIA Public Affairs IIIA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Administration Political Science OR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiential Learning (18 months)