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UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE

**THE IMPORTANCE OF DEMOCRACY IN SOUTH AFRICA: A REFLECTION ON
SUCSESSES AND FAILURES IN THE LAST 23 YEARS OF DEMOCRATIC
DISPENSATION**

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Lehlohonolo Nicolus Mariti, hereby declare that this research and the presented work is my own and all sources used have been acknowledged in through referencing. I also declare that the work is submitted for the first time at the University of the Free State towards the Master of Governance and Political Transformation degree and has never been submitted to any other university/faculty for the purpose of obtaining a degree.

Lehlohonolo Nicolus Mariti

Date

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God bless you all!

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late grandfather and the entire family. Thank you for everything you have done for me. To all South Africans, the future of this country will be judged by the choices you make and decisions you take today!

ABSTRACT

The political landscape of South African democracy has been significant to bear in determining its development and achievements. With the introduction of Constitution of 1996, it was clear that South African history of apartheid was burned to ashes, and the new constitutional order emerged to serve under new democratic South Africa from 1994 to the future.

This study addresses the reflection on the successes and failures of South African democracy with the view from the last 23 years of democratic dispensation. It addresses events and activities that occurred in this process of democracy and determines their relevance and importance in South African democracy. With a view from incidences such as high rate of poverty, unemployment and growing inequalities in the country, the study also provides some reasons contributing to these problems.

Therefore, the study has identified some democratic theoretical approaches relevant to understand the effective process of democracy and how does it reflect in the context of South African democracy commenced in 1994.

On the other hand, the aim of this study measured the relevance and significance of democracy in South Africa at present and to the future. In other words, this study also answered questions as to whether citizens in general still consider democracy important and beneficial, and what could be some failures and successes towards achieving it effectively.

However, the research findings also revealed some of the detrimental and impeding issues to effective democratic governance in South Africa. It has revealed that the issues of corruption, maladministration of state institutions and patronage have impacted negatively on the smooth process of democracy in the last 23 years. For this reason, this saw issues of poverty, unemployment and inequalities increasing higher and higher especially for the past 9 years of President Jacob Zuma administration.

Moreover, this study has provided with some recommendations to the problems existing in this young democracy of just 23 years. That is why this requires good leaders, active citizens and civil society partners to play a critical role to ensure that the Constitution remains undoubtedly the supreme law of the country for smooth democratic governance in South Africa.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC: African National Congress

ASGISA: Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa

BEE: Black Economic Empowerment

CODESA: Convention for Democratic South Africa

COPE: Congress of the People

EFF: Economic Freedom Fighters

Eskom: State owned company that supply the country with electricity

GEAR: Growth, Employment and Redistribution

NA: National Assembly

NCOP: National Council of Provinces

NDP: National Development Plan

NP: National Party

NGO: Non-governmental organisation

NGP: New Growth Path

OUTA: Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse

RDP: Reconstruction and Development Plan

SA Constitution: South African Constitution

SAPS: South African Police Service

SOEs: State Owned Enterprises

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Motivation and rationale

The year 1994 reflected the turning point in South African history. It marked the end of a divided society and the violation of the basic human rights of citizens, and the end of the apartheid system of government executed by the white minority of South Africans. Major changes occurred, such as the introduction of democracy for the first time on South African soil, where all citizens gained the democratic right to vote for a government of their choice, and led by it. Mngcu (in Tulchin, 2002:99) writes that the introduction of a democratic system, which advocated a free society and democratic governance, influenced the social attitude change in broader governance and political transformation. In other words, the end of the oppressive apartheid regime and the beginning of a democratic dispensation marked a new historical era for South Africa and the majority of blacks who live in the country.

In this regard, the notion of democracy ascended to be central in defining the nature and the state of government in the new South Africa, beginning in 1994. However, this notion of democracy became complex to comprehend in the South African context as to what it entails or aims to achieve. Many people, especially amongst the black population or the previously marginalised, have given various meanings to democracy and attached these meanings to various expectations, such as what could it possibly provide or deliver in order to address and redress the imbalances of the pre-democratic society and government.

Therefore, the new dispensation began with many aspirations and promises that raised hopes for the majority of black citizens. During the apartheid system of government, many policies were established, mainly to promote white domination over various aspects of life. Many policies did not accommodate common opportunities between citizens, and only white South Africans could enjoy the privileges of the social services the government provided. There was lack of representation for other racial groups in

government, decisions were only made by white representatives in government; thus, it suppressed the voices of other racial groups.

On the other hand, South Africa over the last 23 years celebrated its fledgling democracy. However, it has been confronted with numerous challenges, such as high levels of illiteracy, poverty, unemployment, pandemic disease and other socio-economic and political dilemmas, which could impede the future of democracy in the country. The concept of social welfare has been working as a critical debate to the extent that it has been strongly criticised as an operational concept for addressing the socio-economic challenges that the country and its people faced after apartheid (Swart et al., 2012:3).

According to Seedat (in Misra-Dexter & February, 2010:227), “political freedoms guaranteed in South Africa’s progressive Constitution, including freedom of expression and assembly, the right to participate in political parties and in civil society, and media freedom, are fundamental not just to participatory democracy, but also to individual human development”. However, in reality, the enjoyment of political freedoms continues to be impaired by social and economic inequalities, since access to the government, courts, civil society and Constitutional Chapter 9 institutions continues to be linked to economic resources.

However, Morris (2004:125) states that South Africans have been enjoying the fruits of freedom and the era of a new democratic dispensation since the demise of the apartheid government in 1994. In this regard, various events took place after the first considerably inclusive democratic and free elections in April 1994. For the first time, people had the opportunity to vote for the government of their choice, and they were able to move to settlements where previously only whites were allowed to live.

In this regard, the introduction of democracy in South Africa has highlighted critical aspects of the rule of law (the Constitution), political representation, respect for human rights and social equalities among citizens, which are imperative in terms of the role and relationship the government must have with its citizens. As many South Africans began to illustrate their needs and expectations with the advent of democracy in the country, a large number of citizens (especially amongst black South Africans and the previously

marginalised) seemed to have expected to have gained more from what the new government was to offer to the people (Herbst & Mills, 2015:40). For example, basic services such as water, sanitation, electricity, housing, employment, health care and other socio-developmental needs began to be the centre of understanding what democracy in South Africa was all about.

Devenish (1998: vii) indicates that the new Constitution embraced the democratic ideals of the entire nation, and provided for the protection of individual rights. It also sought to establish a set of enduring values benefitting a civilised society and outlined a social pact through which reconstruction and development could be genuinely promoted, involving all sections of the community. With this, is an implication that the introduction of the South African Constitution of 1996 served as a machinery guideline aiming to ensure good governance practice through legal and constitutional requirements.

To this extent, the importance of a democratic dispensation in South Africa began with greater promises and raised future hopes, which merged with challenges for many citizens, especially the majority of blacks and those previously marginalised by the apartheid government (Jeffery, 2010:68). Examples of these challenges, which have existed since 1994, will be discussed broadly later in the study, together with the successes of a democratic South Africa.

Furthermore, considering the transformation that took place in state institutions and the government, the adoption of a new constitution, the establishment of constitutional agencies that promote democracy and other agencies, it is significantly important to investigate the importance of democracy in South Africa, whilst addressing the successes and failures. In addition, this will serve as a reflection on how far South Africa has come with the practice of democratic governance since the demise of apartheid, in as far as South African citizens consider democracy a success or failure over the past 23 years.

Therefore, the importance of democracy in South Africa, viewing it from various disciplines, is fundamentally important. In this regard, South African history considerably complements the significance of democracy, as there was an extreme need for the

change and transformation of government in respect of the recognition of the basic human rights of the citizens, public participation in government's decision-making, the establishment of constitutional institutions, and the rule of law under the Constitution (Daniel et al., 2013:152).

Consequently, this study intends to provide a broader outlook and background on the process of democracy in South Africa, since the dawn of the new democratically-elected government in 1994. The study further seeks to reflect on the progress of democratic governance, viewing it from random and specific successes and failures in terms of fulfilling the democratic and constitutional requirements, as they will be explained later in this study.

1.1.1 Why is democracy important in South Africa?

The critical role played by individual citizens and civil society organisations in the struggle against apartheid and in laying the foundation for the successive transition to democracy in South Africa is well acknowledged and much observed. This role culminated in the April 1994 elections, which brought to power a democratic government. Less recognised or understood are the roles of citizens and civil society organisations in the process of socio-political change since 1994 (Camay & Gordon, 2004:7). In this regard, it is fundamentally important to acknowledge the role played by these actors as ordinary citizens and civil society liberating South Africa into what it is today. One could suggest that indirect participation as a constitutional and democratic requirement was there, however illegal to the majority of citizens during apartheid.

According to Maravall and Sanchez-Cuenca (2008:249), democracy is defined as a political system in which the supreme power lies in a body of citizens who elect people to represent them in government. These authors (*ibid.*) further elucidate that it can be defined as the political orientation of those who favour government by the people or by their elected representatives. In other words, a true democracy is one where the supreme power of the government is in the hands of the people, and citizens are actively and effectively involved in the decision-making processes of that government.

In essence, the notion of democracy indoctrinates the idea that people need to actively make their own decisions and participate directly or indirectly in various aspects of government decision-making processes.

However, many writers and political thinkers tended to believe that this single definition could not expand into the details how democracy should be executed. In the context of South Africa, history plays a vital role in attempting to understand the kind of democratic system that was adopted during the commencement of a democratic dispensation in 1994. Practically, the majority of the citizens of the country during the apartheid era did not have an opportunity to be directly involved or participate in the decision-making processes of the previous government. In this regard, South Africa at the beginning of the democratic dispensation immediately advocated for the participation of its citizens as a way forward to address and redress the imbalances of the past.

According to Alonso, Keane and Merkel (2011:2), the invention of representative democracy and its subsequent demonstration was meant to serve the cause of both representation and democracy by improving the effectiveness and legitimacy of government. Representative democracy came to signify a type of government in which people, in their role as voters faced with a genuine choice between at least two alternatives, are free to elect who they want to represent them. These representatives then act in defense of voters' interests by deciding matters on their behalf.

Democratic processes that took place in South Africa included the Convention for Democratic South Africa (Codesa I and II) negotiations, the drafting of the constitution as the supreme rule of law of the country, the establishment of constitutional institutions, and the rearrangement of government institutions, such as the National Assembly (NA) and the National Council of Provinces (NCOP). Additionally, the establishment of the National, Provincial and Local governments as the three tiers of democratic government played a role as a true reflection of the democratic process. Therefore, these processes allowed citizens to be fairly represented in the decisions of the government, also in relation to multi-political party participation in the country.

1.1.2 The value of good governance in enhancing a democratic South Africa

Bolivar writes (in Tulchin, 2002:1) that the difficult choices that face societies today are no longer about war, peace, dictatorship or democracy. In an era of relative peace and the expansion of democracy, national concerns focus instead on how to improve governance and the quality of life, and how to preserve national cohesion against centripetal forces that threaten to tear apart the social fabric. Therefore, good governance and good public administration are essential aspects of democracy in addressing the latter. The ability to distribute the public resources, limit the abuse of power and corruption, and guarantee equality of all persons before the law is fundamental to a well-functioning society. In a democracy, differences and conflicts are dealt with peacefully. A society must develop a range of mechanisms to deal with conflicts that may arise between different stakeholders (Smith, 2007:12). In essence, in any well-functioning and sustainable state the governance and good governance practices are tools to establish greater developments.

According to King and Kendall (2004:58), the power of a state and its relationships with society was a central component of nineteenth century classical sociology. The impersonal and public character of legally regulated government authority, apparently distinct from the self-interested or communal forms of action in civil society, generated controversy as to its neutrality or partiality for various social interests.

In this regard, sound governance requires democratic, regular elections and the constitutionally mandated separation of powers between the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government. Thus, it involves the effective and equitable allocation and management of resources to address collective societal problems. In a broader sense, sound governance is participatory, transparent, responsible and accountable, based on an understanding that the formulation and implementation of government policy will not succeed unless affected citizens and civil society organisations are directly involved in the entire process (Camay & Gordon, 2004:17). For this reason, the good governance principles are set out in the Constitution under the *Batho Pele* (People First) principles. These principles include accountability, transparency, and the rule of law, responsiveness, equity and effective participation by the public in government's

decisions. All these principles go beyond advocating the effectiveness of democratic interaction or the link with governance at all spheres of government. Especially, in the South African context, the provision of the establishment of local government was in a broader sense an attempt to embrace and promote the transparent relationships that democratic South Africa must have with its citizens (SA Constitution, Act 108 of 1996).

Therefore, in a democratic state or government, accountability is one of the major principles of good governance that needs to be advocated in all means of governing. In this regard, the government on its own cannot make decisions that sideline the masses of the country; hence, proper consultation in this regard is one of the most significant elements that forges good relations between government and the people it governs (Landsberg & Venter, 2006:83). In other words, effective accountability holds leaders in government and government responsible for every decision they take that affects the entire population of citizens. Hence, consultation is equally important in this regard.

In addition, the ability of a government to be accountable, responsive, equitable, inclusive and participatory to its citizens forms part of the prerequisites for effective good governance that promotes the key principles of democracy. According to Smith (2007:17), this allows people to feel a sense of belonging and not discriminated against by the government that governs them. In essence, the link between democracy and governance must be visible in various ways, as one cannot function effectively without the other. For instance, in South Africa, over the past 23 years of a democratic dispensation these principles have been essential elements in defining a government of the people with regard to policy decision-making, institutional governance and representation in all spheres and branches of government.

1.1.3 Successes and failures of democratic governance in South Africa

The Interim Constitution came into force against the backdrop of several eras of ethnic and race-based autocratic rule that lacked representative accountability, constitutionalism and equal rights for all races and cultures. It is not an exaggeration to state that in South Africa universally recognised fundamental rights and freedoms were

observed as impediments. A cursory look at the catalogue of fundamental rights contained in Chapter 3 of the Constitution shows that virtually each and every one of these rights were violated by one statutory enactment or another (Basson, 1994:7).

Furthermore, the Interim Constitution laid to rest the dispute on the divisibility and severability of state sovereignty. In South Africa, the Interim Constitution decreed that it shall be one sovereign state, with a unified national territory, common national symbols, official languages, franchise and citizenship. This highlighted the state's responsibility, functions and considerations to citizens' basic human rights (Basson, 1994:9).

Therefore, one of the principal features of the Constitution is the constitutional establishment of public institutions that enjoy independence and are required to act impartially in the exercise of powers and functions accorded to them by the Constitution. Such institutions include the establishment of local government, provincial regions, the Judicial Service Commission, the Public Protector, the South African Human Rights Commission, and the fiscal and financial commissions. They were established under the constitutional obligation to protect, respect and defend the rights of all citizens regardless of race, culture or gender (SA Constitution, 1996).

Even though the Interim Constitution of 1993 and the final Constitution of 1996 laid this firm foundation, South Africa has encountered various challenges based on socio-economic and socio-political challenges or underdevelopment since the beginning of the new democratic dispensation in 1994. Research shows that the issue of inequality is the biggest problem in South Africa. Socio-economic imbalances, along with growing poverty levels, influence the issue of inequality.

As stated by Buhlungu et al. (2007:37), the African National Congress (ANC) has secured political stability since 1994. Political violence has been radically reduced, and territorial conflict, which characterised the 1994 elections, has been reduced. Electorally successful, the ANC has mostly avoided the use of non-democratic means to achieve its goals. It has maintained public participation in democratic elections, albeit at decreasing levels, and it has expanded the integrated programme of government that has helped to contain social conflict and stabilise the democratic settlement.

However, poverty (as a challenge to the new democratic dispensation) has emerged as one of the most vigorous hurdles that the new government has begun to prioritise to eradicate. Even so, it is evident that poverty does not stand alone as a challenge, as its causes and consequences are directly or indirectly affected by the various social conditions of South Africans on a daily basis. Some influences can be traced back to the high illiteracy rate, the low income per household, the unemployment rate (especially amongst the youth) and the unstable economy (Jeffery, 2010:68).

According to a Statistic South Africa (Stats SA) report (2014:50), with a view from 2011, about 92.3% of all poor households had a head (predominantly amongst the black population) that lacked a proper education and skills for development. This remained constant from 2006 with about 92.6% and in 2009 with about 91.6%. As a result, the illiteracy levels amongst the black population continue to impede development in the country, even though education is one of the most important priorities of government, which absorbs a large chunk of the country's budget. The new government has implemented inclusive educational policies that should address this problem. The government has also acknowledged various protests across a number of institutions of higher learning in demand for a government subsidy to help the poor in a campaign called FeesMustFall (Eyewitness News Online, 2016).

Furthermore, economic battles and low income in the majority of households in South Africa are significant challenges. According to a World Bank report (2006), despite all its achievements, South Africa remains one of the highest-ranked countries in the world in terms of income inequality. Inequality is also demonstrated through the lack of access to natural resources, a two-tiered educational system, a dual health system, and other socio-economic dimensions. Previously, only the white minority had access to power and economic opportunities, and this left a brutal legacy in relation to the development of the majority of citizens since 1994.

As a result, the issue of the lack of the provision of basic services became central in the recent decades of a democratic dispensation in South Africa. The lack of services, such as water, electricity, sanitation and housing, still hamper the effective development of the majority of citizens in the country. After 1994, the South African government

prioritised the decentralisation of power, which included the establishment of provinces, local authorities and municipalities. This was to ensure that the provision of basic services, and other developmental needs were rendered close to communities across the country, especially in predominantly disadvantaged settlements and other previously marginalised populations in various municipalities and provinces. This was the most critical step the new government put in place to address and redress the mistakes of the past (Kanyane, 2015:86)

However, in the past decade of democracy in South Africa, the country has experienced massive and violent protests, strikes and riots countrywide, with regard to the issue of poor service delivery, perpetuated by corruption, maladministration and inefficiency in decision-making by the government of the day. Therefore, this brings to light the question of effectiveness, the successes and failures, and the state's capacity to deliver to the people in the promotion of democracy and good governance.

Moreover, lack of transparency and communication by political office bearers is ineffective at various levels of governance in South Africa. Even though the Constitution requires under the *Batho Pele* principles that officials must consistently and continuously communicate with the people they lead, these principles seem to be neglected on a daily basis (Buhlungu et al., 2007:63). For example, at municipal level, protesters have regularly complained about the unresponsiveness of government officials and councillors. In addition, the channels of communication to municipal mayors are blocked, which leads to frustration among citizens, which result in them acting violently in response to government official's unaccountability to the community.

Additionally, during the past 23 years, the government's actions in regard to corruption, nepotism and self-enrichment resulted in extensive municipal malpractice. Thus, South Africa's democratic future has become uncertain based on these controversial practices. Consequently, many South Africans may view democracy as an irrelevant system of government, which only seeks to focus on elevating politicians and abandoning the majority of the people who elected them to power. A more detailed finding in understanding whether South Africa has succeeded or failed under democracy will be provided in the later chapters of this study.

1.2 Problem statement

Over the past 23 years, South Africa has encountered a high rate of violent protests across the country. This is a democratic right of the people to demonstrate their feelings and emotions relating to their discontent at government's performance to deliver services effectively to its citizens. Heywood (2007:72) stated previously that democracy, as it stands, forms direct and indirect relations between government and the people. Thus, people are given the opportunity to choose a government of their choice and vote it into power. However, South Africa after more than two decades of democracy still faces various challenges of a socio-economic and political nature, relating to its inability to meet the people's needs and demands.

Various issues, such as poverty, unemployment, poor political leadership, corruption, state capacity constraints, racism and other socio-economic and socio-political factors, remain a battle in finding solutions to more effective, fair and good governance in South Africa. The main issues of poverty, unemployment, inequality and capacity constraints have remained the fundamental grievances of the people since the inauguration of the new dispensation in 1994. Bentley et al. (2013:15) indicate that the move toward the promise of the Constitution and addressing these issues, carried over from the apartheid era, is complex, even though the Constitution lays the foundation for the establishment of a sustainable society that is based on the democratic principle of social justice and the respect for fundamental rights.

The provision of basic services, such as water, electricity, housing and access to education became central in South Africa's new democratic agenda. In the past, these privileges were scarce amongst the predominantly black population across the country (Daniel et al. 2013:204). In this regard, when the new government came into power it sought to emphasise the importance of improving the inhuman conditions of the majority of South Africans, by putting in place measures, structures and mechanisms that could reform these conditions.

However, corruption and other forms of maladministration, such as the lack of accountability, responsibility and transparency, and poor leadership increased in the

public sphere in terms of the running of the developmental programmes, such as the Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP) and the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategies. These were programmes to build and transform the economy after the apartheid regime's economic isolation and financial sanctions, which were imposed on South Africa by the international community. When the ANC came into power, the RDP became the economic platform to enhance the development of primary socio-economic programmes. The main objective of this socio-economic policy was to establish an equal society through reconstruction and development, as well as strengthening democracy for all South Africans (South African History Online, 2016).

Even though the RDP failed to address all the issues relating to reconstructing and developing South Africans in a more sustainable manner, it was successful in some areas, such as social security, in which the government established an extensive welfare system. It catered for the aged, children in need, foster parents and many others too poor to meet their basic social requirements (South African History Online, 2016).

The RDP was viewed as the cornerstone of the government's development policy, although it did not deliver as expected, particularly in terms of sustainable economic growth, which impacted negatively on the policy itself (Herbst & Mills, 2015:19). The new government had trouble in the implementation of the plan, such as lacking an efficient public service and being unable to build the necessary state capacity, and prioritise the RDP and integrate it as the guiding principle of its socio-economic policies.

When South Africa was faced with the aforementioned constraints, the government introduced the macroeconomic policy framework, called GEAR, in 1996. The principal goal of the GEAR strategy was to stimulate economic growth, which was required to provide resources to meet the country's social investment needs (Herbst & Mills, 2015:22). The policy included most of the social objectives of the RDP and was aimed at reducing fiscal deficits, lowering inflation, maintaining exchange rate stability, decreasing barriers to trade, and liberalising capital flows. However, the policy, with the rising socio-economic demands and foreign policy constraints, led to the review and re-establishment of other modern, inclusive and sustainable strategies that could tackle the

socio-economic pressures in South Africa. In this regard, the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA) replaced GEAR in 2005 and New Growth Path (GNP) and the introduction of the National Development Plan 2030 (NDP) replaced ASGISA in 2010 were established (South African History Online, 2016).

Referring to South Africa's socio-economic challenges, Habib (2013:76) indicates that apartheid left no economic legacy to South Africa. It created high levels of marginalisation and immoderation controlled along racial lines. This was not only blameful, but it also placed limits on the sustainability of the country's economic growth and the development of society in general. Similarly, oppression and economic exploitation of the black majority limited the emergence of a significant domestic market, thereby restricting growth in the manufacturing sector, the creation of sustainable jobs, and equal economic development. Apartheid thus left a bitter legacy of hardship, which bears a shameful testament to this highly oppressive system. Therefore, it can safely be assumed that the path to recovery for South Africa will not happen overnight. In this regard, the process of dealing with the current issues, such as poverty eradication, economic stability and social development, may require more than one specific approach (Camay & Gordon, 2004:38).

More than two decades after the advent of democracy in South Africa, racial discrimination, violent protests and other growing signs of despair regarding the inability of the government to deliver the services that the majority of South Africans expected, still prevail. According to Edigheji and Mhone (2004:69), it is clear that whilst the government performed much better than the pre-1994 government, poverty, sub-standard health services, a severe shortage of housing, criminality and falling education standards still haunt the government.

On the other hand, whilst the shortage of skills does occupy a central position in the delivery of public service, skills shortages alone cannot explain the public service delivery inactivity. Other factors, such as corruption, nepotism and political interference in the day-to-day management and administration of state departments by political principals, hinder the attainment of a transparent and effective democracy. These issues must be addressed urgently if the public service is to improve its service delivery

record and the promotion of the promised democracy in South Africa (Edigheji & Mhone, 2004:76).

Since 2009, under the administration of President Jacob Zuma, there has been an extreme public outcry in the country due to the lack of proper government conduct and the responsibility to exercise the necessary powers. Corruption, political disequilibrium, lack of proper public service delivery, and unconstitutional misconduct are among the dilemmas South Africa face, which has led to frequent appeals by opposition parties and joint civil society organisations for President Zuma to resign because of a lack of confidence in his ability to act as the president (Daily Maverick Online, 2016). As a result, South African democracy is considered unstable and threatened by the present actions in the country, which indicates a state of instability.

The victory of the ANC in the democratic elections of April 1994 inaugurated a representative democracy that was codified in the new Constitution adopted by the Constitutional Assembly. Cuthbertson and Jeeves (2008:1) argue that these developments marked a fundamental departure from the apartheid era and signaled the gains of the period. The new political and institutional arrangements intended to give all South African a stake in government, it recognised the rights of every citizen, it set up a framework for free and fair elections, and created possibilities for the realisation of human potential, irrespective of race, gender, class or creed.

The question however remains as to what degree South Africa has succeeded or failed to promote democracy in the past 23 years, and what measurements support this achievement or failure and the perspective of citizens about democracy and its future in South Africa. Hence, the issues of corruption, poor leadership, lack of accountability, lack of responsibility and lack of transparency are essential governance values that need serious attention if South African democracy is to succeed in the future.

1.3 Aim and objectives of the study

1.3.1 Aim of the study

Heywood's (2007) definition of democracy states that it is a political system of rule and decision-making based on the principle of majority rule. This clarifies that people should be given a direct opportunity to participate effectively and actively in the decision-making processes of government. Evidently, every citizen in South Africa is affected directly or indirectly by every decision taken in the country, particularly by the government of the day.

Thus, the aim of this study is to critically evaluate and examine the importance of democracy in South Africa since the start of the new democratic dispensation in 1994. With a greater vantage point from the past and the present activities of the democratic government, the idea is to investigate how far South Africa has come with the promotion of democracy and its principles, thereby highlighting the successes and failures with regard to issues of governance, administration and a broader implementation of plans since 1994. In this regard, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of the Constitution, the accountability of political office bearers to the people, and the effectiveness of public participation (as addressed as one of the major principles in a democratic government).

1.3.2 Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to focus on the major aspects that are in conflict with an effective democracy and the smooth process of transformation and development in South Africa. Transformation can however be a complex concept in various disciplines. One of the major objectives of this study is to identify the various concepts involved in transformation and democracy; thus, attempting to grasp the theoretical context associated with the process of transformation in South Africa.

As far as democracy is important in South Africa, it is evident that it is complex to put it into practice. Therefore, this study seeks to find solutions as to how the government,

civil society and citizens, through active participation, can maintain the high standard of democratic principles and good governance in trying to address and redress the mistakes of the past for a better future for South Africa and its citizens. In this regard, the study will provide suggestions and recommendations as to what can be done to transform the status quo in regards the socio-economic and socio-political challenges that devalue the effectiveness of democracy in South Africa.

1.4 Methodology

This proposed research will follow a single method approach by utilising qualitative research. It will explore and describe the importance of democracy in South Africa, particularly in the last 23 years. Therefore, the study will focus on the theoretical perspectives of citizens and different authors who address the views of South Africans on the relevance and need for democracy. Since the study is qualitative in nature, it will utilise a variety of primary and secondary sources in order to comprehend the South Africa's history towards democratisation.

This research will focus more on observing and describing past and present events with the goal to discover how they influenced and formed part of the process of democracy in South Africa. The methodology will significantly utilise literature, based on quality and credible information, which will be shared in this study. Therefore, the study will seek to assess and analyse critical data collected from various sources such as scholarly journals, articles and books, and newspaper or media reports, legal documents and statistical data. However, ethical considerations are of a high priority in conducting this research in order to provide valid, trustworthy and reliable information.

1.5 Layout of the study

CHAPTER	DESCRIPTION
Chapter 1: Motivation and rationale	This chapter will focus on the orientation of

	<p>this study, which includes the general purpose, aim and objective, and the research methodology intended to be used.</p>
<p>Chapter 2: Literature review - Theoretical background and conceptualization</p>	<p>Chapter 2 will offer a theoretical perspective and define concepts of democracy. Moreover, the relation between the status of South African governance and the influence of democracy on the South African system will be examined.</p>
<p>Chapter 3: South African democracy</p>	<p>In this chapter, the descriptive nature of the importance of democracy in South Africa will be emphasised. It will also investigate the possible measurements that define South African democracy and their reality in practice.</p>
<p>Chapter 4: South African democracy and the future perspective</p>	<p>With consideration of the status quo in South Africa, this chapter will focus on the future perspective of democracy in the country. It will reflect on the successes and failures of democracy in South Africa since 1994. This chapter will also focus on the various perspectives of scholars, politicians and citizens towards South Africa's democracy, past and present.</p>
<p>CHAPTER 5: Summary, findings, recommendations and conclusion</p>	<p>This chapter will focus on the findings to conclude the evidence and make recommendations on the prospects and relevance of democracy in the South African context.</p>

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW – THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTUALISATION

2. Introduction

Various theorists and political scholars of ancient times and the present developed democratic meaning through numerous theoretical designs and understandings. None considered that their beliefs should agree or disagree with one another, based on what or how democracy should be practiced. In this regard, the migration of ideas went beyond a single thought defining democracy. Therefore, this chapter seeks to offer a descriptive overview of the concept of democracy as a theory and how it really works in practice. First, it defines the concept of democracy and its origins by looking at its characteristics and the elements and features of democracy. Second, it broadly discusses three theories of democracy significant to this study and their differences and similarities in order to comprehend the developments of these democratic theories and their practices. Finally, it elaborates on the definition of governance and its importance for the promotion of an effective democracy.

2.1 What is democracy?

Over centuries, many states across the world have accepted and embraced the idea of democracy, and implemented it as a system of governance. Democracy, as seen in many explanations, allows for a structure of government that puts the people at the forefront in the process of leading and the decision-making process of government. In this regard, democracy has become a common concept of ruling, power and representation. However, all these aspects are implemented in various complex ways by different states. Many political theorists and thinkers have digested this concept of democracy and argued over it regarding its approaches, principles and requirements as a way forward as to how the world of governance will look in future.

The notion of democracy can be traced back to ancient Greece. The term originates from the Greek word *kratos*, which means power or rule. Democracy also means rule by *demos*, which literally refers to the people (all in all it means “rule by the people”). Therefore, it is a political system of rule and decision-making based on the principle of popularity (Heywood, 2007:72). In this regard, power and the people cannot be separated. Therefore, as required by democracy, the emphasis is on the involvement of the people and their participation in matters of power and government. This means that people must be assigned the power to choose who will lead them in government, according to who they favour.

In the first chapter of this study, Maravall and Sanchez-Cuenca (2008:249) defined democracy as a system of politics where power rests in the body of citizens who elect their representation in government. They (*ibid.*) further explained that democracy is a political orientation of those who favour government by the people. Hence, Williams (2003:6) calls democracy “Government of the people, by the people, for the people”. In other words, in a democracy, power cannot rest with the political office bearers or politicians who traditionally made the rules and took decisions on behalf of the people, but people need to decide who holds power or represents them in government by means of continuous or periodic electoral processes, as prescribed by the moralities of democracy.

Moreover, democracy is a system where people have the power to elect or choose their leaders and to hold them accountable for their policies and conduct in office. In this manner, people decide who to lead or represent them in parliament, and who will lead the government at various levels of state institutions (Stanford Education-Online, 2016). In essence, democracy allows for effective functioning, where the respect for human rights, the significance of public participation, and the existence of the rule of law (the constitution) exists. Therefore, democracy is a way of governing a country in the sense that rule by the people is of more importance than an individual authority. In this way, citizens are given an opportunity to choose public representatives to represent them in government through regular and contested elections.

Thus, democracy allows for a structure of government where people can actively participate in the processes of leading and decision-making in government. In this regard, democracy has become a common concept of ruling, power and representation. However, all these concepts are often implemented in various complex ways by different states. According to King and Kendall (2004:58), the power of a state and its relationships with the society was a central key in the nineteenth and twentieth century classical sociology. The impersonal and public character of a legally regulated government authority, apparently distinct from the self-interested or communal forms of action in civil society, generated controversy as to its neutrality or partiality for various social interests. A related issue was whether the modern state was judged beneficial for the society, or rather an alienating, and, ultimately, dislocating force. With this implication, the question was whether power could adequately rest with the people or whether the state was to rule over the people.

However, in considering the nineteenth century interpretations of the liberal democratic state, there are many critics of capitalist democracy from within liberalism itself. To verify this, Mill (in King & Kendall, 2004:58) suggests that “although no advocate of social and political equity regarded the potential for participatory representative democracy as likely to remain unfulfilled unless the extensive social and economic inequalities of capitalism were mitigated substantially”. In this regard, political thinkers like Rousseau (in King & Kendall, 2004:58) emphasised the necessity of equality and direct political participation for the democratic development of an individual and the health of the community. As a result, it was in the liberalism tradition that the idea of representative democracy was formulated to deal with the relationship between the state, citizens and civil societies.

In a broader sense, many people understand democracy as a system of governance or rule. Therefore, it was established according to various values, principles and characteristics that gave effect to its effectiveness and reality. According to Ntale et al. (2011:3), democracy is also considered as a government of the people, for the people, by the people, which gives the people power to rule and govern. These authors (*ibid.*) further indicated that democracy was established under various principles, which aimed

to ensure its effectiveness. These principles are the people's power of choice and the right to elect their leaders at all levels of governance; decisions are made by the majority and have to be accepted by all, but minority interests are respected and protected in a democracy; and, everyone has the right to participate in decision-making, regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity or other criteria.

In essence, democracy allows for the condition of the free and fair contestation of elections, enhanced public participation through all means of governance and the means of voting for their leaders, and the good practice of governance and good governance at all levels of governing. For this reason, according to Ntale et al. (2011:3) democracy is found under the basic values of open and fair competition of consistent elections, public participation that is enhanced in decision-making, and respect for the human and individual rights of the citizens and the values of tolerance, responsibility, honesty, accountability and mutual respect. In this regard, this complements the idea that a fair democracy is one that is inclusive, participatory and considers the will of the people important in any forms of decision-making of governance.

Democracy is therefore beneficial to all citizens in that it allows an environment where all citizens participate fully in the matters of public affairs in government. In this regard, political decisions must always reflect on the will of the people in all aspects or attempts of making decisions. This ensures that respect for the human rights of citizens is the highest priority to limit the abuse of power by politicians or leaders. In essence, democracy encourages diverse opinions and these opinions are tolerated and dealt with in a peaceful manner, without acts of violence (Ntale et al., 2011:4).

However, according to Manali (2008:7), democracy also has disadvantages, especially when not all the citizens are aware of the political scenarios in their country. This may result in people making the wrong choices, especially during elections, without acknowledging the importance of change where or when needed. For example, this may be grounded based on a voter's loyalty to the political party or leadership in power and reluctance to recognise their mistakes and failures to govern effectively. Manali (2008:8) further indicates that government is subject to change after every term; therefore, leaders tend to lose focus on working for the people and rather focus on

winning elections. For this reason, it makes democracy hard to put into practice in terms of improving the lives of the people and governing them effectively.

Additionally, the challenges of the state's incapacity to undertake this form of democratic rule has resulted from economic, social and developmental constraints that overlapped in the previous centuries. This develops a link between democracy and social wellbeing, which it seeks to sustain. Therefore, the inability to distribute resources and the state's dependence on other states to cope with emerging challenges became a recent outcry in democracies. Importantly, social issues of poverty, inequality, unemployment, HIV/Aids and other socio-economic/political challenges have also incapacitated the effectiveness of democracy to take its course, due to these global challenges. In this regard, democracy remains difficult to understand, and what it aims to achieve (Cornwall & Coelho, 2007:227). In essence, democracy is defined to include the "will of the people" in matters of governance; however, it does not stand alone as an issue to achieve good and democratic governance. This also requires the existence of resources, the equal distribution of these resources to all citizens, and the proper distribution of these resources in order to deal with the overall socio-economic issues of citizens. Therefore, this informs the question on how people rule themselves in a democracy and the rationality of the decisions they make to enhance the principle of participation in a democratic state.

2.2 Conceptualisation of key concepts

2.2.1 Democracy

Democracy is a form of control by the people. In a democracy, the people or citizens and government are more involved to various extents of public interest. In this regard, it is a form of government in which people rule themselves directly and consistently without the need for qualified politicians or public officials. According to Heywood (2007:72), democracy is a political system of rule and decision-making based on the principle of majority rule. In other words, the central procedure of democracy is to allow the people the chance to select leaders through regular and competitive elections.

2.2.2 Parliamentary democracy

In a parliamentary democracy, citizens are given the power or the opportunity to democratically elect or exercise their right to choose representatives of their choice by means of voting. This is a form of democratic rule that operates through a majority elected leadership to a parliament or the national assembly, which establishes an indirect and direct link between the government and the people it governs (Heywood, 2007:80). Therefore, in dominant party systems, a parliamentary democracy allows a party to have the majority support in the parliament and make decisions as the voice of the people that chose them.

2.2.3 Governance and good governance

The means through which government is able to act morally and legitimately in its practice constitutes the principle of governance. Governance is about the ability of government to make and enforce rules, and to deliver services to the people. The process of making and implementing decisions constitutes a good governance principle. Therefore, good governance is aligned with a government's ability to be accountable, transparent, responsive, effective, inclusive and constitutional in its practices (Fukuyama, 2013:6).

2.2.4 Representative democracy

Representative democracy refers to the limited and indirect form of democratic government based on the selection of representation to power on behalf of the people. This kind of democracy allows an electoral system of voting as a mechanism that can possibly be utilised by the people to elect and choose any kind of leadership they trust to govern them. Therefore, a representative democracy is a system of government in which all eligible citizens vote for their representatives or favoured political parties to pass laws and make decisions on their behalf (Study.com, 2017).

2.2.5 Apartheid

Apartheid is the name given to the racially intensified form of racial division and white control introduced in South Africa in 1948 (Graham et al., 2014:53). The purpose was to carry out policies that separate the white minority from the black majority of South Africans in terms of the political, social and economic issues of the state at the time.

2.2.6 Constitution

A constitution is the basic and fundamental law of a state that set out the guidelines, procedures, measures, legislation and principles on how the state will be organised and how the powers and authorities of the government will be distributed between the various political units and the citizens. Therefore, the rights and responsibilities of both the state and the citizens are stated in the constitution in order to give direction and guidance in terms of the control, order and governance in the state to prohibit the abuse of power and protect the rights of the citizens (Manganyi, 2004:25).

2.2.7 Constitutional democracy

In a constitutional democracy, power is rooted in the constitution. Therefore, the ultimate authority that governs is found in the constitution. Thus, the constitution remains the ultimate sovereign power that guides political behaviour and actions within the state (Graham et al., 2014:25).

2.2.8 Corruption

Corruption is an improbity or decay in the decision-making process in which a decision-maker consents to deviate from the criterion, which should rule his or her decision-making, in exchange for a reward or for the promise or expectation of a reward, while these motives influencing his or her decision-making cannot be part of the justification of

the decision (Corruptie.org, 2017). This, in many cases, occurs when public officials engage in illegal dealings that compromise the moral practice of good governance for their own self-interest or for the attainment of favours from the corrupters.

2.2.9 Service delivery

Service delivery relates to the distribution of resources to provide what is regarded as the basic needs of the people, such as housing, water, electricity, proper healthcare and social security, to the most disadvantaged societies (World Policy Blog, 2017). Many developing states across the world, which previously did not enjoy socio-economic stability and independence, used this method to provide for the most disadvantaged citizens.

2.3 Democratic theories and background

In most democracies, periodic elections shape and determine how the legislature is contained and who will hold the executive power of government. Therefore, there should be constant free and fair competition among the candidates and political parties who contest these elections. This forms part of the concept of democracy (Dryzek & Dunleavy, 2009:17). In essence, as indicated earlier in the chapter, democracy mainly stresses the idea of a shift of power from individuals or politicians and the state to the entire population or citizens. In this regard, it is important to understand which theories are associated with democracy and what they entail, in order to grasp effective democratic practice.

2.3.1 Classical democratic theory

The classical democratic theory model focuses on political matters and the ability to decide on these matters in favour of majority rule, rather than to uphold individual interests. However, the classical democratic theory does not address unlimited

participation by the public in matters of government. It gives only particular individuals and political officials the power to dictate on government decisions, not taking into consideration the interests of the public (Clawson & Oxley, 2008:4).

In this regard, the classical democratic theory seems to divert from the essentiality of active democratic participation or engagement by the public in government. However, this theory also emphasises the importance of participation through the public electing their own political representatives in government; it also gives a mandate to individuals to dictate on the issues and decisions of government, but not the actual interference of the public in the issues of government (Clawson & Oxley, 2008:4).

Even though the classical democratic theory focuses on political matters that favour the majority interest of the public, participation in this theory is limited in terms of who makes decisions in government. Classical democrats believe that the chosen representatives will act rationally in making decisions on behalf of the public they represent. In this regard, individual power in a classical democracy becomes a problematic characteristic, which it advocates. It could also be characterised as the authoritarian practice, where power is exercised over the public with or without their consent.

According to Nef and Reiter (2009:21), social democrats support a mixed economy with a welfare state, parliamentary and representative democracy, and the existence of labour movements. This, however, revealed a high sense of disorder in that the leaders became more like dictators in their leadership methods, with less consideration of the interests of the citizens they represented. Therefore, Heywood (2007:47) considers classical liberalism as a “commitment to an extreme form of individualism”, which opposes a deliberate democratic collective demonstration.

On the other hand, classical liberalism was the earliest liberal tradition. Its ideas were developed during the process of change from feudalism to capitalism and were important during the early industrialisation of the nineteenth century. Classical liberalism has a number of common characteristics. First, it contributes to egotistical individualism. Classical liberalists view people as rationally individualistic beings, who have a visible

capacity for independence. Secondly, classical liberals believe in freedom. Third, the state is regarded as necessary. Finally, classical liberals have a broadly positive view of civil society as it reflects the principle of balance or equilibrium (Heywood, 2003:47).

In essence, the classical democratic theory is to some extent unfavorable in the sense that public representation is merely considered important to elect individuals into power, rather than participating actively in all aspects of government's decision-making. In this regard, it is considered important to emphasise individual power, rather than the entire public, in any form of government where it is practiced.

2.3.2 Theories of democratic elitism and pluralism

Differing from classical democracy, the theories of democratic elitism and pluralism offer direct participation of the public in government decision-making processes. In the democratic elitism theory, the public exercises indirect power in government. Therefore, democratic elitists consider an ongoing contestation over elections as the only way public participation can be exerted in order for the public to express their voice. In this regard, democratic elitists believe that voters should elect their representatives, who they represent them in government. These representatives remain accountable to the public as they must constantly contest for elections to maintain public confidence (Clawson & Oxley, 2008:6).

2.3.2.1 Democratic elitism

One of the major characteristics of the elitist view on democracy is that voters elect their representatives, who will account to them in government. As there is high competition over elections in democracies, these representatives should sustain their public confidence and remain accountable to the public.

However, according to Walker (1966:286), "the implication of elitist theory suggests that at the heart of the elitist theory is a clear presumption of the average citizen's

inadequacies". As a result, based on elitists' views, democratic systems should depend on the wisdom, loyalty and skills of political leaders, and not on the population at large. In this regard, political elites, such as literates and entrepreneurs, are likely to possess power, as they may be skilled in ideological commitments and manipulative skills, and the citizens at large may have little knowledge, and thus are likely to become less interested in public affairs.

Even though the elitist theory supports participation through elections, to some extent, democratic elitism may only favour the decisions of political officials in power, who are believed to be more knowledgeable about public affairs than ordinary citizens. In this regard, democratic elitism may be irrelevant in the South African democracy, as power could remain in the hands of the rich and the poor could become poorer. In this sense, the resources that should benefit all citizens could be distributed unequally and the elite could manipulate the masses.

Additionally, John (2005:56) indicates that elite's actions, choices and postures can have a formative impact in shaping the way their followers approach political discourse and conflict. In this, opposing party leaders should take the lead in crafting understanding and working relationships that bridge historic differences, which contain expectations and establish longer, more realistic prospects for their plans. Moreover, the elite's immoral actions may constitute public negligence for individual authority.

2.3.2.2 Democratic pluralism

In terms of the pluralist view, the existence of constant elections is an important way in by which elected representatives remain accountable to the public. Divergent from the elitists' view, pluralists consider the important role played by civil organisations and groups as mediators between the public and leaders in representative democracies. Interest groups are essential in communicating the demands of the public to government leaders between elections (Clawson & Oxley, 2008:4).

The pluralists also view elections as an instrument that constantly keep elected representatives in government accountable to their constituencies. Democratic pluralism is characterised by an ideology that recognises the significant role played by civil society organisations and interest groups as mediators between the government and the public. In contrast, democratic elitism focuses on elite rule as a desirable feature of social existence, while the pluralist theory offers a positive image of group politics. Pluralists stress the capacity of groups to both defend the individual from government and promote democratic responsiveness. Decisions are made through complex processes of bargaining and interaction that ensure that the views and interests of a large number of groups are taken into account (Heywood, 2007: 299).

Hay, Lister and Marsh (2006:26) state that for pluralists, the state is fragmented into multiple power centres and borders. According to Dahl (in Hay et al., 2006:26), "It is impossible for any single actor to control all of these centres and any over powerful interest will be constrained by other elements of the system". Dahl continues (*ibid.*) that, in essence, it may be rare for any coalition to carry out its policies without having to bargain, negotiate and compromise with its opponents; therefore, it often wins a victory in one institution, only to suffer defeat in another.

The pluralist theory allows participation through civil organisations, other than state stakeholders. To some extent, people or citizens may not participate directly to influence the decisions of government, but they may hold these social movements accountable to represent their voice actively through bargaining and interaction with the government, as they may be economically stable and have the necessary resources, which will make their participation more viable.

2.4 Participatory democracy

Participatory democracy focuses on the significance of political participation by the public. Even though participatory democrats consider the need for representative democracy in large populations, they also see the possibility and benefits of more political involvement by the public. As participation is associated with social class and

wealth, participatory democrats support the extensive political engagement of all citizens as a way to restore equality (Clawson & Oxley, 2008:9).

Therefore, according to Cornwall and Coelho (2007:4-5), representative democracy encompasses the belief of engaging citizens more directly in the processes of governance for better citizens, better decisions and better government. This form of democracy opens up a more effective channel of communication and negotiation between the state and the citizens they serve to enhance democracy, create new forms of citizenship, and improve the effectiveness and equity of public policy (*ibid.*).

One of the major characteristics of participatory democracy is the representation of the public in government. Therefore, this is a form of representative democracy where a government or political leadership is fairly elected to power by the people by means of voting. Practically, this type of democracy allows an electorate system of voting as a mechanism, which can possibly be used by the people to elect and choose any kind of leadership they trust to govern them (Heywood, 2007:74).

According to Scudder (2010:14), in authoritarian leadership, power is based on limiting the access of others to power because of the selfish considerations or accomplishment of objectives, which is seen as jeopardised by the broader sharing of power. In this regard, authoritarian leaders believe in making decisions on their own without the consent of the governed, which is in conflict with the features of participatory and constitutional democracy.

Therefore, participatory democracy is a process of collective decision-making that combines elements from both direct and representative democracy. Citizens have the power to decide on policy and politicians assume the role of policy implementation (Aragones & Sanchez-Pages, 2005:1). In other words, participatory democracy considers the direct and active participation of the public most significant in the participatory democratic theory. The public choose their representatives by voting for them, and participate to influence the policies and decision-making of the government, which is the requirement for democratic values.

By contrast, the nature of democracy pays attention to central issues, such as who are the people, how should political power be distributed, should people rule themselves or be led by politicians and parties that claim to represent them, and whether it is proper to make collective decisions through the use of democratic processes. Therefore, these democratic theories intend to elaborate more on addressing these questions in order to give an overview of their approach to democratic ideas. Like the classical democratic theory, it may be seen to some extent as advocating the issue of the ruling class, by limiting people's direct or extensive participation in the means of governing. Therefore, this may only contain the individual interest in power for those who believe they are more capable and responsible than the entire public (Dryzek & Dunleavy, 2009:212).

Thus, the elitist and pluralist views differ from the classical democratic view. As for elitists, not everyone has an interest in matters of the public and, therefore, elitists are viewed as more problematic towards democratic governance. Elitists consider people who are politically powerful, and economically and socially stable, more suitable to be in power than others (Clawson & Oxley, 2008:9). These individuals are also likely to be in power for longer periods based on their commitment and accountability to public affairs. On the other hand, pluralists consider the important role played by civic organisations and their commitment to influence government policies as active mechanisms of participation. For pluralists, these groups mediate, negotiate and bargain on the strategies, policies and measures of implementation, which they consider crucial in the representation of the public. Therefore, pluralists offer the most positive image of group politics in that they stress the capacity of groups to defend the individual from government and promote democratic responsiveness (Clawson & Oxley, 2008:4).

Moreover, participatory democracy proposes a broader spectrum of public importance in broader democratic governance and constitutionalism. According to this theory, active participation by the public through all means and levels of government is crucially important, and should be unlimited. In this way, it stresses the extensive political engagement of all citizens as a way to restore equality. Therefore, the public is entitled democratically to the right to choose their representatives in government by means of

voting them into power, and these representatives should be accountable to the public and make decisions with the consent of the public.

2.5 Good governance as a way to promote democracy

The troubled history of South Africa remains a substantial reason why governance and good governance should be considered important in its new democracy. Every citizen, by the requirements of democracy, must be allowed an opportunity to participate in the concerns of government and its decision-making processes. The aim to address social dilemmas, such as the fight against corruption, poverty, inequality and other socio-economic and socio-political ills in a democratic environment requires the people's intervention in matters of governance (Franziska & Mair, 2011:6).

Franziska and Mair (2011:7) state that in a democracy there should be free elections, competing political parties, an independent media, and active non-governmental organisations that operate freely. In addition, politicians in power should be held accountable for their actions. Hence, education and access to information are important requirements. Furthermore, the respect for gender equality and tolerance for all individuals and groups form important features of a democratic culture. A good democracy also requires the division of power between the institutions of government.

Moreover, the quality of governance in many countries is ascribed to the influence of their differences in geography, economics, class and ethnic group dynamics, social capital and political culture. The geopolitical factors, political leadership and differences in historical background can also affect the kind of governance existing in a particular country (Gerring & Thacker, 2008:1).

Governance allows a government to make and enforce rules and deliver services to the people regardless whether that government is democratic or not. In essence, governance is the means of holding a government responsible to control, protect and maintain order in a lawful manner and provide services to the people it governs. Therefore, the process of making informed decisions and implementing them is good

governance. Good governance advocates for a more accountable, transparent, responsive, and inclusive government, which promotes an effective democracy (Fukuyama, 2013:6).

Hence, good governance and good public administration are critical features of democracy. The ability to distribute society's resources, limit the abuse of power and corruption, and guarantee the equality of all persons before the law is fundamental to a well-functioning society. In a democracy, differences and conflicts are dealt with peacefully. To achieve this objective, democracy must ensure the accountability, transparency, responsiveness and inclusiveness of its citizens in all aspects of life (Smith, 2007:12).

In this regard, accountability presupposes that political office bearers should remain accountable to the public. Democracy is a government of the people by the people. In other words, this statement clarifies that the existence of democracy is aligned with government's relations with the public. Therefore, any government that operates under the principle of democracy should be accountable to the people and act responsibly in its day-to-day functions.

Transparency, on the other hand, is one of the important elements characterising democratic principles and good governance. In this regard, people need to know how things are done in government, what services are rendered, and why certain things happen. Therefore, it is their democratic right to be informed and know of any scenarios involving their government (Landsberg & Venter, 2006:83); hence, the need for a government that is transparent and that is guided by the rule of law in terms of decision-making.

Furthermore, governance and good governance principles are fundamental in any democratic state in that they align the operations of government to run in a more effective, lawful and accountable manner. In this regard, participation becomes the strongest element and principle of governance, which links democracy with governance. In essence, participation is also the principal element that promotes democracy of any

form, as it gives the public a mandate to participate through voting; it also gives them a right of choice in terms of government, services and policies.

In this regard, good governance and good public administration are critical features of democracy. The ability to distribute society's resources, limit the abuse of power and corruption, and guarantee equality of all persons before the law is fundamental to a well-functioning society. To achieve this objective, democracy must ensure the accountability, transparency, responsiveness and inclusiveness of its citizens in all aspects of life (Smith, 2007:12).

In addition, anyone in a democratic state is affected directly and indirectly by the decisions their leaders take. Therefore, participation is one of the principles of democracy and an element of good governance, which is essential for policy decision-making, governance and representation in government. To achieve this, the need for inclusive participation is crucial as it closes the gaps between citizens in terms of race, gender, age and other categories.

2.6 Conclusion

Changing times in development intervention have brought forth debates that have absorbed generations of political philosophers in contemporary development policy, from local co-governance and co-management to the explosion in the use of participatory and deliberative mechanisms. In the last decade or so, the voices of the public, especially the ordinary or the poor have increasingly been sought in world politics (Cornwall & Coelho, 2007:4).

In many instances, social movements express a fundamental critique of conventional politics, affirming the legitimacy of alternative models of democracy. Their ideas resonate with an ancient element of democratic theory that calls for an organisation of collective decision-making, referred to in various ways as classical, populist, communitarian, strong or direct democracy against a democratic practice in contemporary democracies, labeled as liberalism, realist or representative democracy

(Porta, 2009:45). In this context, direct participation by the public plays a critical role both as a value and as a practice.

In this regard, the elite theorists predicted that even if a revolution succeeds, it would simply install different elitists in power, leaving the masses as powerless as before. In contrast, pluralists stressed the beneficial consequences of social and cultural diversity; of having many different institutions, values, groups and ways of life. Therefore, they advocated constitutional ways of accommodating different perspectives on public policy issues (Dryzek & Dunleavy, 2009:35-57).

However, the principle of governance and good governance remains one single thought to determine the accountability, transparency, effectiveness and the rule of law in matters of power, state and citizens. As much as the state remains the principal institution of political life, this has become the focus of progressively more intense debates to suggest the relevance of its ultimate power in democratic governance, thereby shifting to the significance of people's power in the state. The state in this regard only needs to act as a watchdog in terms of how governance is entrenched through means of democratic fundamentals.

In addition, the extent to which effective democracy can be practiced is by allowing a more indulgent and direct participation of the people to be more effective and unlimited in all matters and processes of decision-making. This will ensure that leaders or political office bearers act responsibly, account for their actions, and deliver more transparent and effective governance. In this regard, participatory democracy enhances and develops the lives of ordinary citizens and the poor, and respects the most basic human rights of the people, so to avoid the abuse of power by politicians.

The next chapter deals with democratic aspects of South African democracy. This will cover a broader elaboration of the understanding of democracy in South African context its practicalities. The discussion revolves around the implementation of democratic principles through various socio-political and institutional measurements.

CHAPTER 3: SOUTH AFRICAN DEMOCRACY

3. Introduction

When explaining and identifying the need for democratic transition in South Africa, this requires not a single definition or identification to examine what facilitated the process of democracy on South African soil. Many people may argue that the struggle for racial division and inequality influenced the attempts to end the form of oppressive government in South Africa, and move from apartheid rule into a new and inclusive democratic rule. On the other hand, others may argue that the need for the involvement of the majority of marginalised black South Africans in the processes of decision-making in government is the reason. However, there is no single thought or reason that is correct or incorrect to qualify as an explanation for the reasons that led to the processes, which culminated in the democratic dispensation in South Africa in 1994.

3.1 South Africa's transition to democracy

Prior to 1994, South Africa was a different country from what it has become today. The apartheid system of government strengthened the need for change and transformation of the government with regard to the oppressive policies and political practices that excluded predominantly blacks in the country. According to Bond and Saul (2014:15), the apartheid government oppressed and separated blacks from whites, while white control and domination over many socio-economic and socio-political aspects was the government's only priority. In this regard, the apartheid government did not allow for any form of involvement or any kind of participation, exclusively by the majority of black South Africans, in decision-making or consultation with the government.

Therefore, the concept of democracy and a free society in South Africa has been the centre and foundation laid by the new government of the ANC after the demise of apartheid in 1994. Before this period, the majority of citizens in South Africa, especially amongst the black population, suffered human rights violations and social, economic

and political hardships. Many political activists in South Africa and abroad blamed this on the period and system of apartheid that failed to address these challenges due to the racial division and prejudices that the apartheid government endorsed (Reddy, 2015:159).

This behaviour by the apartheid government for many years oppressed and ignored the human rights of the majority of blacks in South Africa, then known as blacks, Coloureds and Indians. Rights such as the right to participation, the right to vote and other rights were mainly disregarded by the apartheid system. The government executed oppressive regulations to ensure that blacks in South Africa did not gain representation in positions of political power. Instead, the government provided the opportunities and privileges over the access of power and the services that the government provided to the white minority (Edigheji, 2010:51). In essence, the apartheid government deprived blacks of their freedom, infringed their basic human rights, and oppressed them since the beginning of apartheid until the end of this era in 1994.

South Africa gained its independence on 27 April 1994 after the ANC defeated the National Party (NP) with a massive majority in the first inclusive and democratic elections held in the country. On this day, South Africans as one nation, for the first time in history, participated in general elections to choose the government of their choice after many decades of torture, oppression and segregation. The ANC replaced the NP as the government, representing all the people of South Africa and the new political administration in the first democratic dispensation (Reddy, 2015:160).

According to Basson (1994:7), the importance of establishing a new order on South African soil was a critical concern for many citizens. The Interim Constitution came into force, in stark contrast to the era of racially oppressive rules, which lacked democratic accountability, constitutionalism and the respect for cultural rights. Radical transformation was needed to ensure that all South Africans were included and engaged in the public affairs and matters of the government.

South Africa has transformed remarkably in many areas, such as the involvement of citizens in the performance of government, the widening of inclusive participation, and

the improvement of social services since the demise of apartheid and the advent of the democratic dispensation (Amtaika, 2013:48). Undoubtedly, democratic governance and the adoption of the Constitution have both positively influenced the development of a democratic and free society in South Africa. The Constitution has broadened the respect of/for the basic human rights of South Africans by ensuring that there is extensive protection, respect and consideration of human rights in a democratic system and the recognition of citizens' rights in matters of governance as a fundamental prerequisite for a successful democratic process (Amtaika, 2013:48).

For the same reason, the new administration under the ANC, together with all the participating alliances and other political parties, developed major policies that sought to address and redress the socio-economic and developmental imbalances of the past. Even though the democratic dispensation intended to fulfill the ambitious promise of addressing these imbalances, it later encountered enormous challenges that many South Africans began to see as the failure of the promise of a better future for all. According to Camay and Gordon (2004:39), democracy began to be understood in terms of the various forms of challenges that were encountered after 1994. Such challenges included the need for the provision of service delivery to the poor, healthcare, socio-economic empowerment and education. These factors needed to be addressed by the state to improve the living conditions of ordinary citizens, especially the marginalised.

In addition, these factors pose a major threat to the relevance and effectiveness of democracy in South Africa. Thus, the need exists to reconstruct and transform some of the methods and approaches of executing democracy in the South African context. This requires more than enforcing governance and good governance principles. Nonetheless, in the last 23 years, South Africa has celebrated its achievements and commemorated the ever-increasing years of a democratic dispensation, even though this has come with major challenges and constraints.

3.2 Measurements of democracy in South Africa

The measurements of democracy in South Africa have been set out in this study as the basic implementation elements that the researcher intends to utilise for identifying the areas that define the pillars of democracy in the South African context. These measurements as drawn on the next paragraph are reflected in this study primarily because they became prominent in defining shortfalls in the historical background of South Africa with regard to addressing the imbalances of power, the rule of law and equal social welfare of the citizens under new democratic governance in 1994. Skjelten (2006:173-173) states that South African democracy was defined by the policy document known as the Freedom Charter of 1955, according to the Congress of the People (the present ANC), which informed what the nature and future of South African democracy would be.

Therefore, measurements of democracy in the South African context answer to the question of the notion of democratic responsibility and implementation and its meaning and understanding in the context of South Africa. This is informed by the notion that democracy do not only aim to address issues of power, but has the perquisite to address the general welfare of the society significantly in the implementation of democratic principles, in order to promote socio-economic development of the society. These measurements include (i) the provision of basic services, (ii) the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, (iii) public participation, and (iv) poverty, inequality and unemployment, which are significant features that deepen the relevance of democracy in addressing the injustices of post-apartheid South Africa (SA Constitution, 1996).

3.2.1 Basic service delivery

In 1994, the new administration faced the major challenges of poverty, inequality and huge expectations for greater access to basic services amongst the citizens. This resulted from the legacy of apartheid, and the new government had to prioritise the challenges to address the imbalances caused by apartheid. It became the major focus of the new democratic government to address these challenges by protecting the

constitutional rights to service access, fundamentally establishing economic and sector policies, and funding significant service delivery programmes (World Bank, 2011:xi).

Section 152 in Chapter 7 of the Constitution provided a legal framework for the establishment of local government with objectives intending to guide and give local government a vision. The first important objective was to provide a democratically accountable government for local communities. The second important objective was to ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner, to promote social and economic development, and encourage public participation in matters of governance of local government (SA Constitution, 1996:74).

Democracy promotes socio-economic development, which requires the involvement of growth in the productive capacity of society. This includes the distribution of the economic assets and income of government, the improvement of health and safety conditions, and improved quality of life in issues of improved access to health care, clean water, education and other sustainable development issues for the welfare of the people (Democracy and Development, n.d.).

In this regard, the provision of basic services such as water, electricity, housing and proper sanitation became central in the new administration of the democratic government. Reflecting on the past, these services were lacking in the areas where blacks lived and it became crucial to understand what the new democracy would mean to these citizens. The purpose that the new government pursued was to emphasise the importance of improving the lives of ordinary people by placing on the table measures and mechanisms that aimed to reform, build and develop the lives of the people who did not benefit from the privileges that the apartheid government offered exclusively to whites (Seekings & Nattrass, 2016:13).

The government since 1994 developed policies that focus on poverty alleviation, improving economic growth, relaxing import controls and reducing the budget deficit. These policies were implemented to ensure proper control over addressing the poor living conditions of the people and to create transparent access to basic services (Triegaardt, 2015:2). Therefore, as indicated in the first chapter of this study, the new

government after 1994 established policies such as the RDP, GEAR and ASGISA as mechanisms that sought to address the issues of service delivery and sustainable socio-economic development across the country. In this regard, the new government under democracy has succeeded to some degree to provide these services.

However, the issue of providing basic services to the people of South Africa across provinces has experienced major hurdles after 1994. According to Edigheji and Mhone (2004:69), a decade after the dawn of democracy, growing signs of impracticalities regarding the inactivity of government to provide the services that the majority of citizens have waited for, and this has replaced the energy that marked the birth of a new South Africa. Whilst the democratic government has performed better than the pre-1994 government, poverty, poor health services, a severe shortage of housing and falling education standards still haunt the post-1994 government.

Even though the tremendous progress has been made over the past few decades in the delivery of services, there are still huge gaps in the attempt to provide basic services to the people to the utmost level. Former Statistician-General of South Africa Dr Pali Lehohla indicated in the foreword of the Stats SA report (2017, xiii) that this hurdle form part of the unequal development troubled by former homeland areas, high levels of poverty, and well as the practical constraints of extending services to far off rural areas at great expense to the local municipality.

Reflecting on two of these services, the Stats SA report (2017: 13) revealed that the percentage of people who used an improved source of drinking water rose to approximately 88.3%, leaving out about 11.7 % of the population still surviving with contaminated water that often leads to diseases. This is also reflect to the approximate percentage of 76.8% of the population that has access to proper sanitation and with more than 23.2% still using dehumanising bucket sanitation in formal and informal areas (Stats SA report, 2017: 35).

To this extent, these conditions remain prevalent after 23 years of democracy in South Africa. Edigheji and Mhone (2004:76) indicated that whereas the shortage of skills does not determine the level of public service delivery, a skills shortage alone could not

account for the public service's inactivity. Other factors, such as corruption, nepotism, interference in the day-to-day management, and maladministration of government departments should also be considered.

Despite that, the South African government after 1994 prioritised the decentralisation of power; hence, the establishment of the provinces, local authorities and municipalities was considered significant for effective and good governance. This was meant to ensure that basic services were rendered accurately, effectively and transparently to communities across the country, especially among predominantly black populations where these services were scarce during apartheid. In terms of promoting democratic principles and good governance this was a good step taken by the new government to address the legacy of the apartheid government (Kanyane, 2015:86).

However, it is evident in South Africa that the high rate of demonstrations and, to some extent, violent protests by communities can be ascribed to insufficient service delivery or the lack of basic service delivery in the country. According to Stats SA (2016), violent protests in the country have taken an uncomfortable path of violence pertaining to the lack of basic service delivery since 2009. Some of these services involve water, sanitation and proper housing, which were also ordinary people's needs in the pre-1994 dispensation. In essence, these attitudes and limitations misrepresent the effectiveness and importance of a democratic commitment to deliver on these socio-economic issues.

According to Amtaika (2013:122), wasteful expenditure has become the norm among cabinet ministers and members of parliament. He (*ibid.*) adds that soon after assuming office in 2009, most of the ministers in the cabinet of President Jacob Zuma spent huge amounts of money on new luxury cars and hotel accommodation, which totaled one billion rand in 2009 alone. In essence, this is an indication that maintaining and sustaining the effective service delivery of basic services is low on the government's list of priorities, which leaves people living in impoverished conditions, while government officials live in the lap of luxury and enjoy their position of power, abusing it to enrich themselves.

In this regard, the culture of entitlement and lack of accountability and responsiveness has penetrated all tiers of government, from central government to local government level (Amtaika, 2013:122). This has led not only to the people suffering from the lack of basic services, but also from the lack of good governance. Furthermore, the poorest of the poor in society suffer because of the bad decision-making of government, which has failed to prioritise the delivery of sustainable services to the people of South Africa and the promises it has made since the beginning of the new dispensation in 1994.

3.2.2 The South African Constitution

The need for checks and balances is a vital tool in the growth and sustainability of every public and private institution. On the legal developmental principle of the separation of powers in the government, the Constitution plays a crucial role in outlining the kind of governance required by the rule of law. The purpose of this was to guide all government practices to operate in a more transparent, accountable and responsive manner, guided by the rule of law, so as to ensure that power, public finances and public resources are not abused by state officials (Regan, 2005:1).

Former President Nelson Mandela also alluded to this, stating the following: “The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, hailed as one of the most progressive in the world, set the foundation for the ambitious task of transforming the apartheid state into a democratic and inclusive state. The Constitution underscored the importance of universal adult suffrage and to achieve this, a national common voters’ roll, regular elections and a democratic government system should be in place” (Mandela, 1996). In essence, the Constitution provided a legal mandate to end racial, ethnic and cultural discrimination and prejudice by transforming South Africa into an inclusive democratic government.

Similarly, Basson (1994:7) indicated that establishing a new order in South Africa was a central concern, while the Constitution addressed the background of a divided and racially oppressive rule that lacked democratic accountability and constitutionalism. In this regard, the need existed for structural reforms and the consideration of basic

human rights to address the inequalities and imbalances between South African citizens, black and white. Hence, the Constitution became the first law of the land that bound the legislative, executive and judiciary organs of the state at all levels of government to promote, uphold and exercise democracy in South Africa.

Therefore, the value of the separation of powers recognises the functional independence of the different branches of government; also, it focuses on the value of checks and balances to ensure that the Constitutional order prevents the branches of government from abusing their power. In essence, this anticipates the necessary or unavoidable interference of one branch on the jurisdiction of another (Regan, 2005:2). This indicates the importance of identifying clear presidential powers and the responsibilities of the head of state and the executive, and their mandate, in executing laws and duties as prescribed in the Constitution in order to abide by the democratic rule of law and the will of the people.

According to Thipanyane (2015:126), the introduction of a democratic state in South Africa was established on the principles and values of human rights and equality. This initiated a government that would be accountable, open, and responsive to the needs of the people of South Africa. A remarkable feature of the Constitution was the constitutional creation of public offices, which sought to enjoy independence, and were required to act impartially in the exercise of the powers and functions accorded to them. The collective constitutional mandate of these institutions is to support and strengthen constitutional democracy in South Africa, with respect to the protection and respect of the rights and demands of the people in terms of the various services they render (Thipanyane, 2015:127). Examples of these constitutional offices are the Judicial Service Commission, the Magistrates Commissions, the Public Protector, the South African Human Rights Commission, and the Public Services Commission.

According to the Constitution, these offices have an important role to play in the oversight of South African governance at all levels. Therefore, the role played by these institutions is to ensure independent and unbiased oversight and to appeal to every institution of government and public office to act transparently and constitutionally lawful in all means of governing and in the services they render at all levels of government. In

essence, they function to execute their own constitutional powers and duties relating to all public and governance matters, as afforded to them in the Constitution (SA Constitution, 1996).

The Constitution further recognises the role of traditional leadership in the democratic governance of the country. According to Pichard and Mogale (2015:225), the ANC government during the democratic transition considered the significance of traditional leadership (i.e. Chiefs) in rural local governance in order to ensure political development in the rural areas of the country. Presumably, this was also to acknowledge that these leaders had to have adequate resources to meet the needs of their rural local communities. According to Picard and Mogale (2015:231), traditional leaders in many rural settlements of South Africa are often poor and illiterate. Therefore, for them to be able to understand and acknowledge the developments in the democratic transition aimed at delivering land administration, the introduction of taxes and levies, the administration of justice, and support for the development of health care and other services, they needed to be more involved and recognised in local governance processes.

Moreover, Pityana (in Bentley *et al.*, 2013:v) states that the Constitution offers a vision for the transformation of the country into a nonracial, nonsexist and equitable society. Its Bill of Rights includes socio-economic rights, such as rights to decent basic education, healthcare and housing, water, a clean environment and social security, among others. In this regard, the Constitution emphatically mandates society in its journey to an equitable dispensation to redress the legacy of inequality. The achievement of the government to execute this mandate, as required by the Constitution, will contribute towards South Africa's democracy and the welfare of its citizens.

The Bill of Rights clarifies the types of rights and freedoms that each citizen is entitled to. Section 9(3) emphasises the right to equality based on race, gender, religion and culture. These are the major personal rights of all citizens, which were not considered during the pre-1994 apartheid government, even though white South Africans enjoyed most of these rights fully.

In terms of Chapter 3, the Constitution recognises the proper guidance of cooperative governance, which states in Section 40(1) that the government is constituted as national, provincial and local spheres of government, which are distinctive, interdependent and interrelated. It further states that these spheres of government must observe and adhere to the principles of cooperative governance and must conduct their activities within the parameters that the Chapter provides in Section 41 (SA Constitution, 1996). Unlike in the past, the Constitution allows the institutions and spheres of government to be interdependent in their decision-making relating to their functions. Further, there is no rule that allows a democratic process of decision-making to take place that oppresses another person or dictates to another person.

In addition, the Constitution emphasises that the power of the legislature is not only to make legislation, but also to ensure government by the people under the Constitution (refer to Section 55(2)). In this regard, it states that the NA must provide mechanisms to ensure that all executive organs of state are accountable, and must implement legislation as prescribed to them. The role of the legislature in supervising the executive actions and holding it accountable to performance of its obligations is thus an important aspect of the separation of powers under the Constitution.

It is evident that democracy has been strengthened by the Constitution since the beginning of the democratic dispensation in 1994. The Constitution sought to ensure that the state is organised in a more democratic manner, which allows for proper and effective governance in a democratic South Africa. Thus, the rule of law under the Constitution also sought to ensure there was no abuse of power by political leaders or infringement of the basic human rights of South Africans, as enshrined in the Constitution.

In addition, the government must be suitably transparent in its actions towards the promotion of democratic requirements and addressing issues of governance for a better society. In South Africa, the Constitution acts as the supreme law of the country that must be respected, protected and upheld by every citizen regardless of their class, race or beliefs. In this regard, it becomes the duty and binding principle of public executives

and officials to respect this guidance of the Constitution at all various levels of executing official powers, governing, and rendering services to the public (Layman, 2003:8).

3.2.3 Public participation

Public participation in the present democratic dispensation in South Africa saw an emphasis in terms of establishing relationships between leaders and the need for a common goal towards democratic development. Thus, public participation represents the process by which Parliament and provincial legislatures consult with the people and interested or affected individuals, organisations and government entities before making a decision (Public Participation Framework, 2013:7). In this manner, public participation expresses the need for the active involvement of the public in matters relating to the decision-making of the government, which forms part of the prerequisites for democratic governance.

Over the past 23 years of a democratic dispensation, public participation has been embraced as one of the most effective mechanisms that could promote democracy on South African soil. Hence, the democratic government under a new dispensation put in place policy frameworks that sought to effect public participation at the different levels of governing, from the national to the provincial and local spheres of government. According to Nyalunga (2006:1), public participation became a new concept critically used in South Africa, since the demise of apartheid in 1994.

Chapter 7 of the Constitution provides for the establishment of local government. Section 152(1) (e) provides that local government should encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in matters of local government. In Chapter 10, under public administration, Section 195(1) (e) also provides that the people's needs must be responded to and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making processes at all levels (Constitution, 1996). In essence, the notion of public participation is entrenched significantly in the Constitution so as to support the promotion of democratic principles in South Africa to ensure that the voice of the people is recognised and taken into consideration with regard to decision-making at local

government level. This concept was not recognised in the pre-1994 government under the unconstitutional administration.

Therefore, South African history reflects very little opportunity for community participation primarily because local government did not have a constitutional safeguard, as it was viewed as a structural extension of the state and a function of the provincial government. Nyalunga (2006:1) states that since the end of apartheid, the government of a new democratic South Africa was bound to establish a space for community participation. It attempted to advocate public participation, engaged in the process of decentralising political and administrative authority, and transferred it to the independent local level.

Hence, public participation in local government takes place through the consultation procedures of the Integrated Development Plan, which allows for public opinion and participation in terms of how plans in the municipalities should be implemented. This further emphasises the role played by civil society organisations, ward committees, community development workers and other community forums as the actors of effective participation in local government. These committees have a closer relationship with the municipal councils to voice out compliments, complaints and dissatisfaction of the people about services rendered and the performance of local government leaders (Draft Public Participation Policy, 2016:10).

Seedat (in Misra-Dexter & February, 2010:227) stated in Chapter 1 of this study that political freedoms, including freedoms of expression and assembly and the right to participate in political parties, are fundamental rights to participatory democracy and human development. In this regard, the Constitution requires periodic elections to take place, whereby citizens participate to choose the government of their choice. Therefore, this is one of the most effective mechanisms that the democratic government deployed to enhance active participation by the people through them voting for the government of their choice during the election process.

However, it may not be clear to many ordinary citizens to what extent this participation in democracy is of critical importance. In this regard, De Villiers (2001:23) argued that

democracy for ordinary citizens must end with formal rights and constant one-person, one-vote elections. Without undermining the authority and responsibilities of elected bodies (Parliament, provincial legislatures, local government), the democratic order South Africa envisaged must foster a wide range of institutions of participatory democracy in partnership with civil society on the basis of informed and empowered citizens; it must also facilitate direct democracy.

Accordingly, this offers citizens an opportunity to play a role of oversight, and exercise checks and balances, when necessary, to replace or retain a particular political party based on their performance after every term served. According to the World Bank (2011:26), the direct relationship between citizens and politicians or policymakers is the first leg of the long route to accountability. Elections are the most powerful of several mechanisms to hold politicians and policymakers accountable; however, elections are periodic, and it is rare that this power is exercised on a daily basis. To some extent, a more fundamental accountability issue may be at play beyond a mere complaint about service delivery.

In 2016, the Afrobarometer conducted a survey on the level of trust South African citizens has on political institutions in the country. This is a pan-African, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions and related issues across African continent (Chingwete, 2016: 1). According to the findings, in South Africa, where economic difficulties and the Nkandla corruption case were the headlines during the time of this survey in August-September 2015, both performance and perceived corruption could be contributory factors to a drop in public trust. This survey revealed that the trust in the president has dropped by almost half since 2011, from 62% to 34%, becoming the lowest since the first survey in 2000. This also added to the loss of public trust in the political institutions with a drop of 54% in 2011 to 39% in 2015 (Chingwete, 2016:2-7).

In this regard, citizens do not perceive the formal democratic system as serving them in the way they expected it to. According to De Villiers (2001:27), public participation is about access to power and decision-makers; even though in most systems, certain people or interest groups have greater access to power and decision-makers than

others do. In this regard, patterns of access to power tend to reflect the socio-economic landscape and inequalities of society, also relatively to well-functioning democratic systems, as they tend to favour the views of the powerful and organised over the poor and unorganised.

As a result, according to Bastidas (2004), in the public sphere and the delivery of services, it is important to ensure extensive public participation in order to ensure that services are rendered in the most accountable, efficient and effective manner for the benefit of the people. In a broader sense, broad public participation becomes a cornerstone of responsible democratic governance and a fundamental prerequisite to achieve sustainable development. It moves beyond traditional methods of public consultation by creating opportunities for the open exchange of ideas, transparency, mutual learning, and informed and representative decision-making processes. In addition, this is a way of making people feel actively involved in the democratic processes of decision-making, which the Constitution requires of active public participation (De Villiers, 2001:32).

3.2.4 Poverty, unemployment and inequality

In the last more than two decades of a democratic dispensation in South Africa, poverty, unemployment and inequality has been prominent among the critical problems that exist for the majority of the country's population (Triegaardt, 2007:1). Even though the first democratic government, led by the ANC, established and initiated strategies and policies such as the RDP, GEAR and ASGISA, amongst others identified in this study, many view these policies as failing to address and redress the issues of poverty, unemployment and inequality in the country.

According to Tregenna and Tsela (2012:1), in South Africa, people with access to wealth experience the country as a developed modern economy, while the poorest still struggle to access even the most basic services. Saul (2014:62) refers to the minimal narrowing of the economic gap between black and white South Africans, which was accompanied by a marked widening of the gap between rich and poor, and a failure to

realise any substantial progress towards tangible development and meaningful popular empowerment. In this regard, South Africa's new struggles have emerged as poverty, unemployment and the gross inequality amongst its citizens.

According to Lewis (2001:i), the most pressing problem facing South Africa is the absence of sustained economic growth and job creation, which are essential to reduce poverty and improve the living conditions of the people of South Africa.

According to Habib (2013:76), apartheid created appalling levels of marginalisation and immoderation structured along racial lines. In this regard, this was not only reprehensive, but it also placed limits on the sustainability of the country's economic growth. Bantu education, as one of apartheid's most notorious policies, also compromised the development of South Africa's human resources, leaving a legacy of skills shortages that continue to burden the economy (Habib, 2013:76).

In this regard, poverty and unemployment as challenges in the new democratic dispensation have become major hurdles that the new government has to earnestly prioritise to eradicate. However, it is also evident that poverty and unemployment do not stand on their own as challenges, since their causes and consequences are directly or indirectly linked to various social factors and the living conditions of the majority of South Africans on a daily basis. Some reasons may relate to the high level of illiteracy, the low wages or income per household, the high rate of inequality between blacks and whites, and the unstable economy.

According to **Stats SA's** indicators (2014), the majority of South Africans, and predominantly blacks, still lack proper education and the skills to development. In this regard, it is clear that even though education is one of the key priorities of the government, which consumes a major chunk of the budget, there are still obstacles in terms of illiteracy in the country. However, the new government has focused on implementing new education policies, which are inclusive, to deal with illiteracy. However, this remains the major obstacle to development in the country, as the focus only accommodates primary and basic education, while tertiary education remains problematically expensive for the poorer sections of society.

Furthermore, the economic battles and low levels of income in many households in South Africa is a significant challenge. Despite improvements in this regard, South Africa remains one of the countries worldwide that leads in terms of income inequality (World Bank Report, 2006). Inequality between citizens is also demonstrated through the lack of access to natural resources; a two-tiered education system; a dual health system; and other socio-economic dimensions. Previously, only the white minority had access to power and economic opportunities, and this has left an indelible mark on the development of the majority of citizens since 1994, which constituted an infringement of their basic rights to equality, dignity and equal social welfare.

Constitutionally, the most basic fundamental human rights provide South Africans equality before the law, regardless of their race, class, financial or social status. These rights provided in the Constitution are the right to human dignity, equality and freedom (Venter, 2015:5). In Chapter 2 of the Constitution the provision of a broad spectrum of these rights fall are under the Bill of Rights, which stipulates the right to freedom of expression, freedom of association, and other individual and ethnic freedoms, which the majority of the people did not enjoy in the past (SA Constitution, 1996).

According to Smit (2013:1), democracy as a concept refers not only to the exercise of political rights, such as voting, party political power and other, but includes the extended notion that democracy is a condition of society that places value on the resolution of problems of communal life through collective participation. This is characterised by a shared concern for common good. In essence, the concept of democracy includes the protection of basic human rights as a constitutive element of a meaningful democracy, which upholds and safeguards the basic human rights of people.

The degree to which the protection of these fundamental basic human rights goes beyond the constitutional mandate to the establishment of a legal framework, it also needs to ensure the protection of these rights in terms of providing a conducive environment for the general welfare of citizens. Therefore, it is based in this instance on the fact that for the past decades of a democratic dispensation in South Africa, the government of the day has strived to redress the causes of inequality, poverty and

unemployment in the country, which draws a visible line between class and social differences among South Africans.

Similarly, the oppression and economic exploitation of the black majority stunted the emergence of a significant domestic market, thereby limiting growth in the manufacturing sector, and the creation of sustainable jobs and an equal economic background for all South Africans. In essence, the apartheid legacy left a trail of hardship. Therefore, South Africa has a long path ahead to recover from these scars. In this regard, the continuity of dealing with issues of poverty eradication and alleviation may require more than one specific approach to resolve the matter (Camay & Gordon, 2004:37).

The issues of growing poverty, a high unemployment rate, especially amongst the youth, and inequality during the last 23 years have been the most critical problems facing the country. There also appears to be no permanent solutions provided by the government of the day as to how to solve these deepening struggles. However, according to Cheeseman (2015) and Gumede (2012), many of the existing developmental problems are a legacy of the apartheid government, which not only led to division among citizens, but also left behind horrendous socio-economic conditions for the majority of the population, especially the marginalised.

3.3 The contemporary status of democracy in South Africa

South Africa's democratic practice has encountered a serious shift from what it believed or hoped to achieve over the past more than two decades. Issues such as poor leadership, corruption, maladministration and the abuse of power by leaders in government have risen drastically and are threatening the future of democracy. According to Cheeseman (2015:10), the cost of reform may be effective in influencing a movement towards eradicating these incidents of poor leadership. Even when the costs of repression rise, leaders are only likely to democratise when they find them less acceptable than the cost of reform. Therefore, how much a leader stands to lose by

implementing reforms depends on what benefits he/she accumulates from holding office and the likelihood that he/she will suffer judgement from those who assume their role.

In many instances, political or democratic accountability in South Africa has been compromised due to ineffective leaders and poor leadership. From 2009, the third period of democratic governance in South Africa, a number of these incidents have occurred, especially in the ranks of the ruling ANC. These instances rose since 2014, when the fourth democratic elections took place in South Africa. The ANC retained political power in 2009 and 2014, and these have been the most difficult years in defining how the future of South Africa's democracy will look after the ANC elected a controversial president, whom many believe is unfit to lead South Africa's young democracy (Cheeseman, 2015:181).

On the other hand, a sense of guilt, anger and fear is deeply rooted in the lives of South Africans. According to Reddy (2015:1), even though it is a society produced through the acts of injustice in the past, the past cannot be deeply etched upon everything. Reddy (2015:1) adds that the democratic gains in 1994 did not change everything as much as expected, especially the divisions amongst South Africans. However, Ken Owen (in Reddy, 2015:1), who describes himself as "an interested observer of South African politics", blamed the "deplorable state" of South African democracy on the low self-esteem of the black leadership. As a result, Owen (*ibid.*) opines, the black political elite are prone to express themselves in "insecurity, desperate greed, excessive concern for status or appearance, a sad reliance on paper qualifications, dishonesty, abuse of the weak, especially women and children, and vain displays of wealth and arrogance". Yet, it is also true that the new government succeeded to overthrow apartheid, defeated a bankrupt and evil system of Institutionalised racism, and the ruling ANC with its alliances succeeded in integrating South Africa firmly into the broader world of global capitalism (Reddy, 2015:2).

According to Saul (2014:62), the narrowing of the economic gap between black and white South Africans has led to a marked widening of the gap between the rich (whites and the minority of black South Africans) and the poor (the majority of black South Africans). In addition, there has been no substantial progress towards tangible

development and meaningful popular empowerment. Consequently, this has led to South African democracy experiencing new struggles arising from the issues of poverty, unemployment, inequality, and inferior education for less fortunate groups, predominantly blacks.

According to Picard and Mogale (2015:249), more than two decades after the end of apartheid, South Africa could not afford its service delivery programme. Therefore, the fundamental issue became the inability of local government to perform basic management functions and deliver services. Picard and Mogale (2015:250) also opine that the political elite and policymakers in South Africa have shown a lack of understanding for the concept of decentralisation. This lack of understanding worsened since the beginning of the Zuma administration. The Zuma administration has been suggested for contemplation. The issues raised emanate from diverse dimensions including governance, ethical leadership, politico-administrative reforms, monitoring and evaluation. In this regard, the Zuma administration need to take seriously issues of fraud and corruption, which bedevil aspects of public service delivery and bring the entire system into disrepute (Kanyane, 2010:92-93).

Considering these incidents, and others not identified, there is no doubt that South African democracy is under siege and is threatened by a lack of moral conduct, the abuse of power, the lack of respect for South Africa as a constitutional state, and acts of individualism by recent political bureaucrats. This has no doubt led the citizens of the country to lose hope in the essence of democratic practice and its relevance in the development of the poor and the marginalised sections of society. South Africans are losing confidence in the government's ability to solve their problems because of the ruling party's internal battles for leadership positions. In this regard, speaking at the Hilton Hotel in Durban, Moeletsi Mbeki, a political economist, said that the current president, Jacob Zuma, relied heavily on the poor and uneducated, which comprised the majority of the population, to exploit and abuse his presidential powers. This pointed directly to Zuma's poor leadership skills to direct the government and lead South Africa (Mbeki, 2016). This may also indicate that the majority of poor and uneducated South

Africans may not be aware of the kind of leadership Zuma is providing, especially in terms of the less advantaged, less educated and ordinary citizens.

Mbeki (2016) elucidated that the poor, the uneducated and the marginalised are unable to see anything wrong in the current situation that triggers a threat to democracy because of their sense of loyalty and their dependence on the ruling party, mainly perpetuated by the historical discourse and the ANC's role in ending apartheid.

However, this alone cannot be considered the only hurdle to South Africa's democracy. The country's transformation into a fully-fledged democracy is still underway, and various challenges have arisen since 1994 that are believed to be more than simply the consequences of the racial divisions of the apartheid system. Moreover, the socio-economic challenges to development have deepened in the new struggle to establish a post-apartheid era.

It is possible to differentiate two dimensions of the process thus far: political democratisation and the transformation of the state, and the restructuring and transformation of the economy and its integration into a globalising world. Political democratisation in South Africa resulted in the excavation and expansion of democracy and the entrenchment of fundamental rights and values. The economic transformation and integration of South Africa into a globalising world proved to be a complex process in terms of balancing the imperatives of the core values of freedom and equality, without considering that democratic liberty and economic transformation run deeply within the society (World Economic Forum, 2004:195).

Mohamed (in Plaatjies, 2011:162) asserts that it is puzzling that South Africa was able to host a world class Soccer World Cup, yet is failing to provide basic services to many poor citizens. In addition, large financial institutions have expanded into global markets, yet banking services and financial support cannot be provided to a large section of the South African society. Therefore, Mohamed (*ibid.*) suggests that South Africa, under the ANC-led government, has struggled thus far to prioritise what is the most basic social demands and needs of the citizens of the country. Rather the government has aimed at

globalising South Africa as an acceptable global partner, before fully developing its own people.

On the other hand, it can be argued that in the past 23 years, the government has to some extent succeeded in delivering on some of its promises relating to water, housing, sanitation, and infrastructure development. These services are however lacking in many parts of the country, which is the reason for the unrest and violent protests that have erupted in the country. In this regard, Mohamed (in Plaatjies, 2011:162) further suggests that the ability to deliver certain types of services are not only a problem of political will. Rather, it reflects the systematic challenges to South African society constituted by the economic policy choices (infrastructure and institutions that developed and how they evolved) since the 1994 democratic dispensation and global factors (globalisation and how people are affected by it), which to some extent hinder progress and development in South Africa.

Furthermore, Friedman (in Plaatjies, 2011:65) states that the ANC's domination in representation and government is detrimental and has undoubtedly contributed towards some of the irrational decisions made thus far. This has resulted in a major decline in fulfilling the promises of constitutional rule that include all South Africans benefiting from the fruits of democracy, and instead has led to an increase in individuals who only serve to fulfill their own individual desires. Therefore, the decisions of the government bureaucrats are not merely based on the informed will of the people; rather, they are based on the wills of individuals who rule to enrich and empower themselves and their friends, which contradicts the requirements of democracy and what it aims to achieve.

3.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, Picard and Mogale (2015: 253-254) opine that South Africa as an emerging economy and a democratic country offers many lessons that can be seen as a cautionary tale for other countries, which have economic potential, but are challenged by weak government structures. In this regard, the silent issues for both democratic governance and decentralised governance continue to be the lack of a political culture

that supports democratic governance and tolerates differences, and the development of a professionalised subnational public sector.

The democratically elected ruling party is centrally accountable for managing government in all the spheres and at all levels, including municipal councils. This includes the protection and support for the constitutional democracy, also ensuring the sustainable welfare of the citizens, as required by the Constitution. Therefore, strategic and operational responsibility, accountability and good performance in the delivery of mandates that benefit the public are the final indicators to determine whether the competency of state institutions is satisfactory (Plaatjies, 2011:106).

Furthermore, according to Seekings and Natrass (2016:277), democracy in South Africa requires a more effective representative democracy through electoral change, as well as a more participatory democracy through institutions, such as participatory budgeting for a social democratic distributional system. In this regard, Gumede (2009:33) indicates that if the current ruling party does not establish a new democratic culture that accepts criticism and dissent, it will adopt the ways of the state they inherited from the apartheid government. This will open the door for a return to a non-democratic state and deterioration to a narrow nationalism and racial division in the country.

In addition, a well-functioning democracy is the form of government that allows citizens the opportunity to participate fully in matters of government. This involves an opportunity to participate through electing effective leaders during election contestation without fear or intimidation, providing socio-economic opportunities to the people, and enabling structures of government to function openly and transparent in all means of governance to promote democracy and good governance in state institutions. This will transpire and give effect to what Nelson Mandela said in one of his parliamentary address that “My wish is that South Africans never give up on the belief in goodness, that they cherish that faith in human beings as a cornerstone of our democracy” (Brand South Africa Reporter, 2004).

The next chapter deals with the South African democracy and its future perspective.

CHAPTER 4: SOUTH AFRICAN DEMOCRACY AND THE FUTURE PERSPECTIVE

4. Introduction

In the previous chapters of this study, the broader context of the South African processes that led to the democratic dispensation in 1994 was discussed; moreover, measures were identified for the country to build an effective democracy. It is however also important to navigate in the direction that South African democracy is moving. It is in this context that this research seeks to answer the question of the effectiveness of democratic practice in South Africa, and whether in general it is failing or succeeding, and what effect these practices have to inspire or threaten the existence of democracy in future.

One of the core characteristics of democracy is that democracies understand that one of their prime functions is to protect the basic rights of citizens, such as freedom of speech and religion, the right to equal protection under the law, and the opportunity to organise and participate fully in political, economic and cultural life (Cincotta, 2007:3). According to this study, these are qualities that did not exist in South Africa before the dawn of democracy in 1994. Apartheid left the majority of South Africans in impoverished conditions as far as socio-economic development, the recognition of the equality of citizens, and their basic human rights were concerned. The question that needs to be answered is, has something gone awry in changing these conditions over the past 23 years of a democratic dispensation in South Africa?

4.1 A future perspective on South African democracy

The analysis made in the process of this research is that South Africa has turned into more of an elitist democratic state, with little respect for constitutional democracy, which embraces the principles of participatory and representative democracy (see Chapter 2 for more on this topic). Heywood (2013:101) concurs with this view by emphasising the statement by the classical elitist, Gaetano Mosca: "In all societies, two classes of people

appear - a class that rules and a class that is ruled". In his view, the resources are always distributed unequally and a cohesive majority will always be able to manipulate and control the masses, even in a parliamentary democracy. Therefore, this provides the masses with little, or rather indirect, influence on policy and decision-making. This is what Gumede (2012:81) also believes, namely, that the outcomes of democracy in South Africa are only benefiting a small group of the political elite (i.e., the class who rules) at the expense of the masses (i.e., the class who is ruled).

According to Picard and Mogale (2015:254), some of the worst practices in South Africa pose a warning of a slight decline in democratic morale in the country. Such practices include patronage, nepotism and corruption, which remain unacceptably high in South Africa. Therefore, one can assume that these practices changed the entire democratic culture, which cares for its people, and generated the emergence of new movements like the Congress of the People (COPE) and the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) in response to the loss of direction by the ruling ANC to effect a democracy that caters for all citizens in the country.

According to Weale (1999:54), in terms of democracy and political equality, in order to promote or protect certain common interests of society, it is important to establish a legislative body that seeks to address the demands of the society and its members. Therefore, regardless of the condition of these demands, the legislative body should rather be democratic in dealing with the matters concerning common interests and the matters of the society. This anticipates that the notion of democracy is founded on the idea that each citizen is to be given equal status within the system of collective political authority. Hence, as Weale (1999:54) so eloquently states it: "One version of the principle of political equality may be expressed in the maxim that each citizen is as well qualified as any other to contribute to the formation of political community's decision-making and policy-making".

Even though a new democratic dispensation was established in South Africa in 1994, it is evident that the country remains under tremendous threat to its democratic process, particularly where poverty, inequality and unemployment is concerned. Inequality is deepened more as a product of poverty. Similarly, the high rate of unemployment that

still exists in the country is considered the result of the economic climate in the country. South Africa is unable to generate sustainable and sufficient job opportunities for those seeking work; there are also grave concerns regarding the high rate of illiteracy and the major lack of skills among South Africans (Hoffman, 2012:1).

Hoffman (2012:2) indicates that addressing these threats is a major preoccupation of those responsible for the proper understanding of the government's constitutional responsibilities; it is also vital for sound policy implementation in the practices of government. Moreover, there has been no success thus far in addressing the discourse that still leaves many South Africans, especially the majority of blacks, in impoverished circumstances. In this regard, Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) laws, policies, measures, charters and practices have not filtered down to the poor; instead, they have empowered those who were previously disadvantaged at the expense of the poor, whose lot in life has remained materially unchanged after the end of apartheid (Hoffman, 2012:2).

As a result, according to Gumede (2012:81), since the advent of the democratic dispensation in 1994, the economic gains of South Africa's democracy have only benefited a small group of the elite; hence, this group of black elite has joined the apartheid-era white establishment. Thus, the majority of black South Africans remain trapped in a cycle of poverty, with the gap between the rich and the poor widening; thus, leading to the country being named the most unequal society in the world. In essence, this is a clear indication that the struggle for democratic liberation in South Africa did not end with the fight against the apartheid oppressors; instead, it established new elite who have become the oppressors of the poor in a democratic South Africa.

Is this what the liberation movement, the ANC, who won South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994, intended to achieve? It may be true that economic challenges are not new in the South African context and did not emerge for the first time in the new dispensation. However, according to Herbs and Mills (2015:5), the country has considerable resources that could allow it to go down another path. Instead, there is the chronic failure of the education system to deliver the necessary skills to South Africans; this can be a sign of the dysfunctional and corrosive effect of political mismanagement.

The status quo in South Africa will probably exist for the foreseeable future, and with more and more unemployed and impoverished people, the high level of illiteracy and the loss of investment to boost growth, the country will not be able to meet its ambitions for its population (Herbs & Mills, 2015:6). It is therefore evident that millions of South Africans, who thought they would benefit from the freedoms produced by the struggle, still await many of the economic benefits that were assumed to come with liberation.

According to Ramphele (2012:117), the failure to transform the socio-economic relations inherited from the apartheid state has made freedom an empty dream for the majority of South Africans who remain at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder. The failure to engage in national discussions on the nature of the socio-economic transformation the people seek is a major obstacle to the establishment of a social justice framework. Therefore, despite some achievements with certain government policies (such as the RDP), this has left South Africa facing huge challenges of growing inequality between those who do not have access to basic infrastructure and public services and those who have moved into the middle class (Ramphele, 2012:117).

According to Harrison et al. (2008:135-136), at the beginning of the democratic dispensation, the ANC government was committed to the idea of social transformation, reflected in its election manifesto, which intended to build an equal, democratic, non-racial and non-sexist future for South Africa. However, the strategy did not deliver a successful social transformation of the people by attempting to eliminate socio-economic differences and inequalities, and in particular, it did not address sustainable economic growth. The new government faced fiscal constraints to grow the economy, organisational constraints due to the lack of an efficient public service to build state capacity, and the inability to prioritise the RDP and integrate it with the guiding principles of its socio-economic policies (SA History Online, 2017).

Acknowledging these challenges facing the South African democracy, it must be said that they will remain if proactive measures are not taken to tackle them. Reddy (2016:21) suggests that these challenges do not stand alone as some frustrations of a liberal democracy in South Africa, but are important for what he calls the “national-modern crisis in the ‘intermediary class’, national liberation and compromise”. In this

regard, the ruling party does not see its main goal as achieving democracy, but rather to make progress in the nationalist struggle. Therefore, the struggle remains undefined, but revolves around reversing the power relationship between whites and blacks, or the superiority-inferiority complex associated with the settler-colonial rule.

On the other hand, the settler-colonial dynamic and legacies make the subaltern in South Africa a politically significant figure for the purpose of the nationalist middle-class. Additionally, Reddy (2016:23) comments that opposition parties, whether black or white, that oppose the ANC government's failure to actualise democracy effectively are viewed as illegitimate and as a possible threat to the government and security, especially those parties that have even tenuous cultural ties to white citizens. Therefore, they are often discredited with accusations of standing up for the former white minority, which is detrimental to achieving the inclusive, democratic and non-racial society South Africa ought to be (Reddy 2016:23-25).

Furthermore, the much-celebrated attainment of formal independence no longer unreservedly amounts to liberation, and neither to the creation of lasting democracy. Now, closer inspection is paid to both the inherited and self-developed structural legacies, which have imposed limits on realising real social and economic alternatives in the post-colonial era (Melber, 2003:xvi). The ruling elite of the ANC have shown that their chief concerns are with self-interest and the retention of power, and that constitutionalism counts for little. In addition, the government's ability to deliver services to its citizens continues to fall below popular expectations. Such realities could lead to long-term political instability and a fruitless democracy in the country. Therefore, there is a burning need for the state to grow the economy of the country and promote political accountability at all state levels to enhance the effectiveness and practice of the rule of law (constitutionalism) and the sustainable democratic future of South Africa (Kahn et al., 2011: 214-217).

4.2 Potential threats and their impact on the future of South African democracy

Political stability and social and economic development are the hurdles facing many African states, including South Africa; even though the situation in South Africa is better than in many African states (Mbeki, 2011:9-11). These identified threats are anticipated in this study as detrimental towards the development, success and future progress of South African democracy. According to Held (2006:2), democracy as a concept has been defended because it comes closest to achieving one or more of the fundamental values, such as rightful authority, political equality, freedom, moral self-development, collective decisions, social welfare, and other developmental values. Therefore, the researcher intends to identify the potential threats in the context of South Africa, which could likely hinder progress in the process or impact negatively on South African democracy.

4.2.1 Corruption

As Hoffman (2012:1) indicated earlier, the issue of inequality in a society is considered a by-product of poverty. Therefore, unemployment is the result of the economic order being unable to generate sufficient viable work opportunities for those seeking work, considering their level of education and lack of work experience. In support of this, Mohamed (in Mbeki, 2011:15-17) indicates that these are key trends in the South African economy that place the performance of the economy at risk considering the level of income of most South Africans and wealth inequality, as well as the high levels of poverty and unemployment.

In 2010 at the National Conference on Corruption and Governance in Nigeria, the former Public Protector, Thuli Madonsela, delivered a keynote address from a South African perspective. In her address, she pointed out that “a huge part of the human element, which is critical for promoting good governance, involves the values of the community within which we seek to fight corruption” (Madonsela, 2010). She added, “These are the values of each individual, community and political will at all levels of leadership. It is particularly important that the community understands of corruption and

consensus on what is inappropriate is in sync with those that are formally charged with combating corruption". Hence, political will is a critical factor in the fight against corruption and the promotion of good governance (Madonsela, 2010). Madonsela (2010) also underlined the importance of moral conduct as a shared vision and goal for all parties involved in political, community and governance structures.

According to Pillay (2014:2), instances of corruption in the South African Public Service (SAPS) are reported on a daily basis. Corruption has become a universal phenomenon that takes many shapes and forms. South Africa is however moving towards recognising the devastating effects of corruption; the population also realises its enormous impact on the economic, social and political scenario. In addition, corruption in South Africa leads to resources being misdirected; this discourages investment by the private sector and hampers the economic growth of the country. This also has a significant impact on the fabric of society, as it creates a culture of poverty and crime and deprives the neediest sections of society from realising the benefits of government resources. The political costs of corruption can also be enormous. In this sense, vibrant democratic institutions depend on the consent and support of the government. In this regard, corruption negatively affects the public confidence in these institutions; while it is crucial that these institutions of government should be healthy and successful (Pillay, 2014:1).

In addition, lack of public accountability by public officials not only results in corruption and the waste of precious development resources, but also seriously compromises the quality and effectiveness of policy-making, planning, and the provision of services to meet citizens' basic needs. In this regard, lack of accountability denies citizens their democratic right to influence decisions that directly affect their lives and to hold state officials accountable for the public resources with which they are entrusted (McNeil & Malena, 2010:1-2).

Corruption Watch in South Africa is an NGO that plays a major role of oversight, checks and balances, and being a watchdog of the government on behalf of the general public. It relies on the public to report corruption to it; furthermore, it uses the reports as an important source of information to fight corruption and hold leaders accountable for their

actions. According to Corruption Watch's organisational report for 2017, the public reported more than 14 000 cases of corruption to them. Many of these cases related to public schools, roads and traffic, licencing, immigration and housing institutions engaging in extensive acts of corruption (Corruption Watch Report, 2017:13). Evidently, acts of engaging in corruption in the public sector have become an enormous problem that hampers development and sustainable economic and democratic progress in South Africa.

Another matter of public concern was the controversial issue of President Jacob Zuma who allowed R246 million to be spent on the upgrades to his homestead in Nkandla. The National Treasury held the President responsible for R7, 8 million of the total amount, following a Constitutional Court ruling in March 2016. Many politicians and concerned citizens felt that the exorbitant amount, used to upgrade a house for a single person, could have assisted in alleviating some of South Africa's social challenges (BusinessTech, 2016).

Another followed the so-called Nkandla saga the drowned the state finances millions of rands is the Guptagate that later became known as "state capture". These incidences recently became critical issues that define the state of corruption in South Africa linked with President Jabob Zuma and his allies. According to Solomon (2016:22), "state capture is the actions of individuals or groups in both the public and private sectors, influencing the formation of laws, regulations, decrees and other government policies to their own personal advantage". This behaviour of public officials is closely linked to the absence of accountability for their actions. The argument is that these activities associated with the construction of Nkandla and the involvement of the Gupta family in exhuming billions of rands in the State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) have constituted their acts unlawfully engaging in corrupt and dodgy dealings to acquire financial provision from state coffers. According to Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse (OUTA) report (2017:4), deviations from legal due process in procurement may themselves be symptoms of corruption. This poses a real danger to South Africa's developing democracy as it undermines the ability of SOEs like Eskom power utility to meet their commitments to deliver services to the public and contribute to the economic growth of

the country. Accountability in this regard is of the concern in the domain of President Jacob Zuma leadership. McNeil and Malena (2010:1) define accountability as the cornerstone of good governance. In this regard, public officials need to be held accountable in order to uphold the benefits associated with good governance, such as social justice, poverty reduction, and development.

Furthermore, democracy does not only imply political freedom from oppression, as many people believe is its main purpose. It as much implies freedom for economic and social development to occur, specifically as far as the people and the government are concerned. Thus, corruption does not only hinder progress in this regard, it also threatens the sustainable future and the effectiveness of democracy in South Africa (Mangcu, 2008:85). Hence, this requires immense accountability from public officials, transparent and effective implementation of public finances and infrastructure, and proper practice of the rule of law in government.

4.2.2 The standard of education in South Africa

Section 29 of the Constitution provides citizens with the right to education. This right includes the right to basic education, including adult basic education for those who did not have access to education previously. Section 29 also assures access to education, equity and the need to redress the results of the racial discriminatory laws and education practices of the past (Constitution, Act 108 of 1996).

According to Ramdass (2009:111), the education of the South African people is important as they are required to become responsible, participatory and reflective citizens who contribute to an emerging democracy. However, the government is faced with many challenges that hinder South Africans from becoming an educated nation. There is the assumption that education plays a major role in improving the economic status of a nation. Ramdass (*ibid.*) says the education system in South Africa is categorised into three sectors, namely, primary, secondary and tertiary. They are interlinked in such a way so as to determine the educational success of individuals. In

this manner, education within these different sectors can contribute to the building of a skillful, united, peaceful and democratic country.

According to Mobius (2017), without an educated population, a country cannot progress, not only in terms of economic development, but also in terms of political development. This implies that an educated nation will also be able to make rational decisions about the political landscape and future of their country. Mobius (2017) adds that even though education in South Africa is significant for the development of the country and the empowerment of the nation, the government has never been able to supply sufficient learning facilities, such as classrooms, for those of school-going age and of a low income, and many existing government facilities in low-income areas offer poor quality education. According to Mobius (2017), given the capacity and quality issues in government schools, as well as the lack of schools in newly developing areas, middle-class families are enrolling their children in lower-cost private schools in greater numbers. As a result, only a small percentage of South Africans who can afford it receive quality education and are likely to make it in life. This implies that with the major influence that education has on economic advancement, there is an urgent need to uplift the education system to cater for the poor and less privileged so that they too can access good and quality education.

Moreover, tertiary education plays a central role in poverty alleviation, job creation, and reducing inequality. In the South African context, greater access to tertiary education is essential to overcome the historic inequalities and prepare the economy for rapid advancements in the global marketplace (KPMG, 2016:4). In October 2015, a nationwide campaign called FeesMustFall was launched. The campaign aimed to convince the government and tertiary institutions to eliminate tuition fees. The campaign thus advocated for free tertiary education for all students attending South African universities. The government's response to the campaign resulted in negotiations with tertiary institutions for a 0% increase in fees for 2016/2017 (KPMG, 2016:6). This generated more aggressive, violent and disruptive action from students in response to the decision, which resulted in many university facilities being set on fire by disgruntled students.

According to Naidoo (in Heffernan & Nieftagodien, 2016:180), the October 2015 student uprisings in South Africa has been compared to the student uprisings of June 1976. In June 1976, thousands of youths took to the streets to protest against the apartheid government policy that Afrikaans be a compulsory medium of instruction in black schools. In 2015, students were against the commodification of education by calling for free, quality, decolonised education and expressing dissatisfaction with the rate and depth of change two decades after South Africa's democratisation. Therefore, Booysen (2016:17) believes that the activities of October 2015 also challenged the principle and effectiveness of governance in the South African political order.

For Booysen (2016:17), most governance definitions encompass the aspects of authority, decision-making and accountability. The notions of authority and accountability add the aspect that citizens are active participants in governance relationships in that they grant authority and through their voices they can change the rules, the system, and also the nature and quality of decisions that emanate from that political system. In this regard, the FeesMustFall student movement unleashed social and political power that challenged the established political order, brought university managements to heel, and changed the social fabric of universities and sections of the society. On the other hand, the students changed the rules of the universities, held the government to account, and changed both national fiscal planning and higher educational praxis to cater for all, especially the poor and less privileged (Booyesen, 2016:22-23).

In addition, access to proper education in this sense contributes to the socio-economic development and political development of the country. In this manner, an educated nation succeeds to hold the government accountable in decision-making, not only with regards to matters of governance and the promotion of democratic principles, but it also enables progress in terms of solving social problems in societies for a progressive democratic governance (Drazonova, 2010:7-24).

4.2.3 The current political culture in South Africa

According to Steyn Kotze (2015:248), the Constitution commits the South African political society to a political culture rooted in a strong human rights tradition. The doctrine of non-racialism as an ideology can serve to unite a fragmented South African society. With traces of the Freedom Charter visible in it, the Constitution envisaged a South Africa that belonged to all who live in it, black and white.

Political culture in the context mentioned above is defined as the people's predominant beliefs, attitudes, values, ideals, sentiments and evaluations about the political system of their country, and the role played by them in that system. For Steyn Kotze (2015:249), democratic values are central to the survival and consolidation of democracy in transitioning and democratising states. Steyn Kotze (*ibid.*) further indicates that democratisation is associated with an all-encompassing process of socio-political and socio-economic change. This includes constitutional changes to create a democratic state and institutions, the society's view of democracy as legitimate, and the political elite being committed to abide by the new laws and rules of democracy as a way to signal to the society that they respect democracy and its rules.

In contrast, it is difficult to exaggerate the importance of moderate and astute leadership during this time, which does not embrace the principles of constitutionalism that provide a secure framework in which social, political and economic interactions can occur. In the recent years of democratic transition, there has been a push back against constitutionalism, with the emergence of populist attacks on the Constitution. On other hand, the Constitution provides for important democratic institutions, such as a multiparty system, regular elections and independent statutory bodies, known as Chapter 9 institutions. However, the question arises whether these institutions are sufficiently established, independent and impartial to act in the broader interest of the public, rather than to succumb to political pressure and the partial interests of the dominant party (De Jager, 2015:302).

The perspective is that the permanence of the ANC's dominance in power becomes a serious concern for as long as it allows its members within the state to continue to use

the state as a vehicle to accumulate wealth for personal advancement to the detriment of the broader public interest. This behaviour also weakens the parliament's authority to play its role to promote good governance, as the majority of the executives are in the dominant party. With these tendencies, in light of a strong substantive understanding of the democracy characterising South Africa's political culture, where democracy is seen as a means to an end, the country has become particularly vulnerable to populist rhetoric and an alternative authoritarian regime, which promises access to substantive benefits. It is thus important for the future stability of the South African democracy and the well-being of the people that issues of education, poverty, unemployment and inequality are addressed (De Jager, 2015:303).

In this regard, the Constitution dictates the separation and independence of the judiciary, the executive and the legislature. Together with the other public institutions mentioned earlier, they are individually and collectively responsible for the deepening of democracy. According to Platjies (2011:95), the value of the independence and autonomy that applies to these organs of governance underpins their separation of powers. Though this autonomy is important in the state, the Constitution requires the various spheres to cooperate in the prudent management of South African affairs. Therefore, cooperative governance is not only a constitutional principle in this regard, but it also sets out the form and structure for governance's smoothing of checks and balances. Zille (2011:108) emphasises that the positive outcome of South Africa's transition to democracy can be ascribed to the constitutional framework for the country's system of government, which all parties had to commit to honour and respect. However, it has become clear that the ruling ANC is battling with allowing the structures, which were formed according to constitutional requirements, to function effectively (Zille, 2011:111).

As a result, Schwella (2013:65) says, South Africans continue to be exposed to allegations of bad leadership in the public sector. These allegations and, in some cases, resultant legal action, permeate all three spheres of government. According to Cilliers and Aucoin (2016:5), "Since the inauguration of President Jacob Zuma, the integrity and independence of constitutional institutions has been subject to unprecedented levels of

political interference, partially in the choice of unsuitable and inadequate leaders who are descended in as part of the ANC policy of cadre deployment or personal loyalty to the president". Consequently, corruption and patronage have compromised the strength of many constitutional institutions and resulted in declining socio-economic development, policy implementation and international confidence in the country's potential (Cilliers & Aucoin, 2016:5).

All these factors have contributed negatively towards the political culture of South African democratic governance. With no doubt, at presidential and top ANC political level, the series of crises read like a roll of dishonour (Booyesen, 2015:6). This includes the Nkandla saga, Guptagate, the arms deal, tolerance of corruption in the upper echelons of government, clampdowns at the parliament, and more. The failure to create enough jobs to match the growth in the labour force, the poor and erratic quality of services delivered, and the inability of local government to be disciplined and improved have all resulted in South Africa's democratic institutions suffering and the erosion of the ANC government's moral authority (Booyesen, 2015:6).

In addition, Seale (2017) indicates that change in the political and social culture of the country has a direct effect on the change that occurs in the institutional culture of the public sector. Therefore, the current administration operates in such a way that the ruling party in government has become an instrument for private advancement, from the top level of leaders to the bottom level of society (Pithouse, 2016:91). This has thus resulted in a shift to a political and societal culture that is undemocratic, in that consultation is limited; inequality amongst citizens is promoted; it is unreliable and not committed to the people; and it is not trusted to fulfill South Africa's purpose for a democratic liberation.

4.3 Conclusion

According to Matlosa (2003:86), political culture denotes a broader array of norms, values, beliefs, attitudes and traditions that shape the systems, institutions and processes of governance. These cultural conventions directly and indirectly impact on

the efficiency of all state organs, such as the executive, legislative, judicial and bureaucratic, and society at large, to the extent to which political stability and democratic governance is assured, nurtured and consolidated. Matlosa (*ibid.*) also states that the importance of culture to societal development, identity and destiny is as critical as that of political culture to a political system; hence, political culture has a direct and indirect bearing on political and economic governance processes and, as such, influences the instability or stability of political systems.

In this regard, the current government finds itself immersed in unintended consequences, with unaccountability, corruption and particularism embedded in the fabric of the public service and the state. In the previous decades of cadre deployment and redeployment, inadequate training, poor management and discipline, as well as increasing evidence of the abuse of state funds and processes, the country has experienced increasing service delivery protests and a breakdown of the labour relation system (Franks, 2014:55). Thus, democracy and its ability to achieve social justice and good governance continues to be compromised by many of the illegitimate actions and poor governance of the South African government.

It is important to note here that the Constitution regulates the behaviour of government and the operation of state institutions. It provides in Chapter 9 for the establishment of six independent state institutions that support constitutional democracy. These institutions are independent, and subject only to the Constitution and the law, and they must be impartial, exercise their powers, and perform their functions without fear, favour and prejudice (Murray, 2006:1). Hence, these institutions should play a critical role in the promotion and protection of effective democracy in South Africa. This should hold political officials and the government administration accountable for their actions so as to ensure that they do not deviate from the constitutional mandate of their duties.

By contrast, in all forms of indirect or representative democracy, the public's power of decision is limited to choosing those persons or bodies charged with the institutional responsibility for making the final decision. However, even within representative governments, there are substantial variations in the extent to which popular control is conceptualised as playing a role in decision-making (Weale, 1999:85). Resultant from

this, Reddy (2016:155) refers to the problem of the proportional electoral system and the party list system as contributing to the lack of accountability among public servants and leaving them out of touch with ordinary people or the voters. This also places the ruling ANC in a position where it can abuse its power as party leaders can pressure lower-ranking members to conform or face exclusion from the party list of public office bearers.

Moreover, it is also evident that there is growing evidence of informal patronage-based political networks working in parallel with, and sometimes in opposition to, the impersonal political institutions of the state (Beresford, 2015:3). The nepotistic distribution of employment opportunities also limits access to job opportunities and contributes to the symptom of unaccountability and the failure of the ANC government to fulfill its constitutional democratic obligations effectively. According to Beresford (2015:8), this results in political appointments in the public sphere at all levels, including premiers, mayors and municipal managers, being made on the grounds of political loyalties over competence; it also leads to those who oppose the ANC to be removed from public office or their position within the party.

In this following discussion, a summary, findings and recommendations to effective implementation of democracy and its future in South Africa are provided to guide the process of democracy in South Africa. This includes the consideration of respect for this Constitutional state and its institutions that drives it to be progressive for the benefit of South African citizens.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The history of South Africa's political transformation took a major turn with the advent of democracy in 1994. The first chapter of this research proposed to address the importance of democracy in the country, whilst reflecting on the successes and failures over the past 23 years. It defined democracy as "rule by the people". In this regard, although South Africa adopted this form of government in 1994, the question remains as to how effective it is, and to what degree its effectiveness can be measured. This research attempted to answer this question and others through various perspectives linked to the South African democratic dispensation.

According to Mangcu (2008:99), the introduction of democracy in South Africa presented, for the first time, a system of government that supported the notion of a nation who was free to make their own choices. This included the right to make political choices that shaped the country into what it has become over the past 23 years. This right was amongst the other rights that were taken from blacks, namely, to vote for the government of their choice, during the apartheid era. This contributed towards the suppression and oppression that many black South Africans endured for the many years of a segregated and oppressive system of government. On the other hand, Swart et al. (2012:3) stated that the problems and challenges inherited with a democratic dispensation in South Africa went beyond the right to participate in the decision-making processes of government. They were also associated with the social welfare of citizens, which included healthcare, education and other issues of inequality significant and problematic towards achieving a true and effective democracy in South Africa.

Indeed, the introduction of democratic governance in South Africa also engineered the establishment of constitutional democracy, as the Constitution played a major role in shaping the transition to South Africa's democratic governance. According to Devenish (1998:vii) and Seedat (2010:277), the Constitution did not only recognise the human rights of the citizens, but also gave effect to the principles, guidelines and mechanisms

the new South African government under democracy should follow in conducting the government's affairs and meeting its responsibilities. Hence, constitutional rule established the most fundamental institutions, which were intended to act to uphold, respect and protect the rule of law in all functions of government and state institutions.

Therefore, in order for the country to achieve the latter more effectively, the significance of good governance has been emphasised, which is critical to determine the performance and level of effectiveness of government institutions to fulfill their constitutional mandate. Smith (2007:12) also underlined that good governance enables the government to distribute public resources effectively, limit the abuse of power and corruption, and ensure the equality of all citizens before the law. In this regard, democratic, regular elections and the constitutional mandate of the separation of powers (legislature, executive and judiciary) play a major role in the context of well-functioning democratic governance. This, in a broader sense, establishes an environment where transparency, responsibility and accountability are principles employed to conduct all government's activities. It is for this reason that the Constitution in Chapter 10 provides the basic values and principles of governing public administration as a way forward towards carrying out the responsibilities of the government to the citizens of South Africa (Constitution, 1996). This could therefore, if implemented effectively, reduce the levels of corruption and maladministration in the South African government.

Chapter 2 explored the theoretical development and conceptualisation of the study, which sought to elaborate on and understand the concepts and their meanings relating to the notion of democracy. The chapter also provided theories of democracy, which fitted into this context and their functions in a democratic state. Firstly, it addressed the concept of democracy, which it explained and defined in its various developments. In this regard, Heywood (2007:72) provided a definition of democracy in its original form. Democracy was developed through understanding that *kratos* (rule) can only be effective with the involvement of the *demos* (the people). This development intensified the foundation of creating a political system of rule and decision-making that depended on the "will of the people", which is what the concept of democracy seeks to achieve.

Therefore, political power in a democratic political system rests with the people, who elect their representatives in government, and, according to Maravall and Sanchez-Cuenca (2008:249), this is what occurs in a democracy. The relationship between the state power and citizens was also identified as a key element (King & Kendall, 2004:58). The related issue was whether the state power is beneficial for the society, or alienating, and whether citizens should rule themselves under state laws. In this regard, Rousseau emphasised (in King & Kendall, 2004:58) that equality amongst the people and direct political participation are important elements for the democratic development of an individual and a healthy society.

Thus, democracy thrives under the principles of open and fair competition of regular elections, public participation and respect for the human rights of citizens (Ntale et al., 2011:3). This does not exclude the involvement of the people in the political processes and decision-making. This could however be a disadvantage if not all the citizens of a democratic country are aware of what is happening in their country. Manali (2008:7) highlighted that this could result in people making the wrong choices, especially during contested elections, without acknowledging the importance of change – where and when needed. Therefore, the principle of democracy needs to consider the “will of the people” as important in a political system, but it also should not stand alone as a mechanism to achieve good and democratic governance. This also requires the existence of resources, the equal distribution of these resources to all citizens, and the proper utilisation of these resources in order to address the socio-economic circumstances of the people.

Chapter 2 also dealt with the definition of concepts relating to democratic discourse. Such concepts include parliamentary democracy, governance and good governance (as discussed previously in Chapter 1), representative democracy, constitution and constitutional democracy, apartheid, corruption and service delivery. These are all concepts that contribute towards understanding the context of this research with regard to the transition of South Africa to a democratic dispensation and its political transformation.

Moreover, the democratic theories were also significant in understanding the theoretical approach and the background to the study. These developed processes, thoughts and strategic approaches to a broader understanding of democracy. The identification of theories, such as the democratic theories of elitism and pluralism, the classical democratic theory, and participatory democracy assisted in understanding the context of South African democracy in practice. South Africa is viewed through the lens of the participatory democratic theory as a democracy based on the representative ideology, which consists of a large population participating and benefiting from the political developments of the country (Clawson & Oxley, 2008:9). This method of democracy is seen as giving citizens the power to decide on policies and giving politicians the mandate for implementation. However, Dryzek and Dunleavy (2009:212) argued that this form of democracy could be detrimental in the sense that it emphasises the individual interest in power, which could lead to the belief that these individuals are more capable than the entire population they represent.

Chapter 2 was significant in that it presented the theoretical approach to the development of democracy. This assisted in terms of identifying the methods and concepts that can be used to understand the transition of South Africa to a democratic dispensation, and the theories applied to its construction. The study also engaged in various principles and values, which are involved in the process of implementing democracy, such as governance and good governance as mechanisms that can be used to give effect to and promote democracy.

Chapter 3 focused on the South African democracy in a broader and more general sense. The significance of the chapter is derived from the reflections on and the understanding of South Africa from a democratic viewpoint. The chapter, for instance, established an understanding of the measurements of South African democracy, such as service delivery and its implementation, the Constitution, public participation, and poverty, unemployment and inequality, as critical in understanding what democracy ought to achieve.

As Bond and Saul (2014:13) highlighted previously in the study, democracy in South Africa is important as its major task is to address the general welfare of the citizens who

the apartheid government marginalised. This includes providing the socio-economic and socio-political privileges to the previously marginalised majority in South Africa. Reddy (2015:159) also emphasised that the majority of black South Africans suffered oppression in many different ways during the apartheid era. This included human rights infringements, socio-economic and political factors being extensively disregarded due to racial divisions, and the system of prejudice executed by the apartheid government.

Amtaika (2013:48) highlighted the significance of the Constitution as a critical component that established a democratic system that recognises citizens' rights in matters of governance as a fundamental requirement for a progressive democratic process. The World Bank (2011:xi) has however underlined the problems that the new government under democracy still face. They include challenges of inequality, poverty and the high expectations of citizens to access basic services. In this context, provision of services such as water, electricity, proper housing and sanitation become central to address in the new South African democracy.

The failure of the South African government to address these challenges beyond citizens' expectations has resulted in widespread citizen unrest. This is clearly indicated by the **Stats SA** report of 2016. It states that violent public protests pertaining to citizens' dissatisfaction with regard to the lack of the provision of basic services have taken place since 2009 (**Stats SA** Report, 2016). This can be ascribed to the government's failure to commit more to service delivery, and rather focusing on spending money on cabinet ministers and members of parliament. This is reflected in the Zuma administration's commitment to the culture of entitlement, and the lack of accountability and responsiveness to developing all spheres of government (Amtaika, 2013:22).

Furthermore, understanding the status quo of the South African democracy, Chapter 3 highlighted the various elements involved as a reflection of the successes and failures in the process of democracy over the past 23 years. It was indicated that issues of poor leadership, corruption, maladministration and the abuse of power by leaders in government increased to such an extent that it was detrimental to the principles of democracy in South Africa. This has been observed more frequently since the beginning of 2009, the third period of democratic governance in South Africa, with

leadership battles raging internally and externally, and the tendency to be power hungry for undesirable reasons, especially in the ruling ANC (Cheeseman, 2015:181). According to Picard and Mogale (2015:249-250), over the past 23 years, leaders have shown very little understanding of the democratic processes in South Africa. This has resulted in the country not being able to afford many of its social programmes, such as basic service delivery.

Lastly, looking at the future of the South African democracy, Chapter 4 outlined the possibilities and the impracticalities aligned with making democracy work in the South African context. The significance of this chapter was to provide and underline the issues pertaining to the current state of democracy in South Africa and the impact these issues could have in defining and understanding the future and relevance of democracy in the country.

One common understanding of democracy is that it is a government of the people by the people. However, many authors have raised concerns about the fact that the current South African democracy seems to be deviating from this definition. As Gumede (2012:81) has indicated, the benefits that should have come with South African democracy seem to be enjoyed by only a few political elite, and not by the majority of citizens in the country. Picard and Mogale (2015:254) also highlighted the slight decline in democratic morale in the country. This is in view of the fact that practices of patronage, nepotism and corruption have become commonplace in the state and its institutions at all levels of government.

This worrisome situation has accelerated the challenges and hurdles facing South Africa, such as increasing poverty, inequality amongst citizens, and high levels of unemployment. Moreover, these issues pose a potential threat to the democratic processes in the country. Undeniably, these challenges form part of the priorities the new government sought to address with the advent of a democratic dispensation. According to Pillay (2014:2), incidences of corruption in the South African Public Service have risen drastically. This included public officials abusing public funds for personal enrichment, which has led to worsening economic prospects and growing uncertainty about social development and political accountability.

Consequently, this hampers the government's ability to provide citizens with equal access to quality services, quality education, and socio-economic developments; instead, it raises the levels of inequality in the country. In addition, Pithouse (2016:91) has said that the current government has become an instrument for private advancement for individuals; moreover, it no longer serves the people. Hence, this has resulted in a shift to a new political culture and societal culture that is undemocratic and uncommitted to the will of the people and democratic governance. In this regard, the reflection is that political leaders who rise to positions of power, but fail to uphold and protect the constitutional requirements of governance and the promotion of democratic principles, have poisoned South Africa's young democracy with their lack of commitment.

5.2 Findings

This study has found that to accelerate democracy in South Africa, a deeper commitment to good governance is needed. If this is achieved, democracy could be effective in the future. This includes educating the citizens about the significance of democracy in South Africa and the role they need to play to ensure its success.

The new democratic dispensation produced various laudable achievements, such as the Constitution. However, many South Africans are not familiar with its content, especially the illiterate. For the majority of citizens, democracy simply means the provision of basic services and the general welfare of the people. This points to an uninformed nation, who are not aware of what democracy means or entails in real terms; this, in turn, results in a political leadership who are not held accountable for their deeds (as reflected in Chapter 3, page 56).

This study further indicated that South Africa implemented a system of democracy that operates within a constitutional state, with the principle of representation, and participatory and parliamentary democracy. This is reflected in Chapter 2, page 31, where the participatory democratic theory is discussed. In this regard, over the past 23 years, the ANC government has led South Africa. This enabled the ANC government to

make laws, pass laws and execute decisions in the various political, economic and social spheres of life in South Africa. According to the study, the form of democracy practiced in South Africa occurs mostly in representative democracies, whereby an electoral system enables the citizens to choose the leadership or political party they trust to govern them. This, by implication, made the ANC the majority representative of citizens at all levels of government and in all state institutions in South Africa.

Evidently, South Africa's democracy commenced with its fair share of challenges and constraints that were beyond the capacity of the new government to deal with in a short space of time. This played itself off against the raised aspirations and expectations of the majority of citizens with regard to what the new government could offer them. The pertinent issue in this research was that the new democratic government needed to resolve various challenges pertaining to the inequalities, as far as socio-economic and socio-political issues were concerned. Authors like Bond and Saul (2014), Reddy (2015) and Edigheji (2010) support this view that the challenges inherited at the beginning of the democratic dispensation related to the social welfare of the citizens, who were marginalised by the previous government. These challenges, in a sense, became the meaning of democracy to many ordinary South Africans, despite them having the right to elect the government of their choice and the introduction of constitutional rule in South Africa.

As a result, the mandate of the new Constitution was clear - the new democratic government needed to address these challenges in the most effective manner. Therefore, the Constitution mandated the government to be non-racial, to promote the equality of citizens, to be accountable, and to respect the human rights of its citizens in the practices of its duties and responsibilities. This is reflected in Chapter 2 of the Bill of Rights, Chapter 3 on Cooperative Government, and Chapter 10 on Public Administration. They serve as the guidelines for the practice of government and governance in the new South Africa (Constitution, Act 108 of 1996).

In addition, this study outlined the role and responsibilities of the Chapter 9 institutions, which were established by the Constitution with the aim to protect and defend the democratic principles on behalf of citizens. In this regard, referring to Chapter 3, page

10, of this study, Thipanyane (2015) describes the roles and duties of the Chapter 9 institutions in the democratic dispensation of South Africa. This research however found that in recent years there has been less recognition of and respect for the powers and responsibilities of these institutions to practice their duties effectively, especially the Office of the Public Protector. Reflecting on Chapter 4, page 72, it can be deduced that the current administration pays less attention to implementing the remedial actions suggested by the Public Protector and the recommendations as to what should happen concerning cases of corruption in state institutions and the maladministration of resources in other spheres of government.

Consequently, these incidences contribute to what Edigheji and Mhone (2004:69) (in Chapter 3, page 14) view as growing signs of the lack of commitment by the government to carry out its responsibilities legitimately and to provide the basic services that the majority of citizens have waited for since the birth of the new South Africa. This brought about a change in the perspective of many South Africans on what democracy could really offer to them, as their leaders in government abused their power without any respect for the rule of law and the democratic principles guiding their conduct in respect of effective democratic governance.

Despite these challenges and many others the country still faces and will continue to face in the next few decades, the country under a democratic dispensation has experienced a major transformation in a number of ways, including the involvement of citizens in matters of governance through a broader implementation of public participation mechanisms and the development of social services (Amtaika, 2013:48). This may be seen in many instances, for example, where the majority of citizens have access to water and sanitation, housing, improved healthcare, electricity and free access to primary education, especially in disadvantaged and marginalised communities.

However, the latter achievements cannot disguise the fact that millions of South Africans still live in abject poverty and battle the indignity of unemployment. Even though the government over the past 23 years managed to tackle some of the basic service needs of citizens, the growing rate of poverty, unemployment and inequality

overshadows the issue of service delivery. According to Saul (2014:62), together with acknowledging the economic gap between black and white South Africans, there is also a growing gap between rich and poor, with a failure to understand the significance of progress towards the general empowerment of all South Africans. In this regard, many political leaders continue to enrich themselves without considering the conditions the majority of South Africans live under (as reflected in Chapter 3, page 51).

On the other hand, Habib (2013:76) commented that the economic problems in South Africa are as a result of the apartheid government, which left no sustainable economic legacy for South Africa. The new government inherited the difficult task of developing economic strategies to grow the economy and fund its socio-economic programmes. Therefore, there was no way South Africa, in the first period of its democratic dispensation, could have managed to deal with the numerous challenges with limited resources, an ailing revenue, and unsustainable economic growth. The World Economic Forum (2004:195), on the other hand, has maintained that South Africa's problems to deal effectively with these challenges may be associated with its economic battles in the global domain. This is because the economic policies that deal with the alleviation of poverty, inclusive economic quality, and the capacity to create sufficient employment are lined up with South Africa's economic transformation and integration into a globalising world. Thus, this has proved a difficult task in terms of balancing this reality with the socio-economic needs in the country, which depends on its economic growth (as reflected in Chapter 3, page 57).

On the other hand, there have been indications that in recent years democratic accountability in South Africa has been under siege due to poor political leadership and ineffective leaders. Since 2009, various challenges and concerns have arisen regarding the effectiveness and the future of democracy in the country. As Cheeseman (2015:181) mentioned (in Chapter 3, page 55), the period of 2009 to 2014 has been the most difficult years in South Africa in terms of defining what the country's democracy will look like in the future after the ruling party decided to elect a controversial leader to occupy the presidential office. Picard and Mogale (2015:250) support this view by

indicating that the lack of skills and knowledge to drive democratic governance in South Africa has worsened during the Zuma presidency.

Further, this has brought citizens to doubt the future success of democratic practice in South Africa, and its relevance to the country. Many citizens still feel left out of this new system and see no benefits in the new dispensation besides that it only serves the political elite and comrades who are close to the ruling ANC, while the masses suffer on a day-to-day basis. According to Moeletsi Mbeki (2016), all this has happened because President Zuma relies too heavily on the poor and uneducated masses, who are the majority of the population, to exploit his presidential powers upon. This gives him the power to run the government in a manner, which democracy did not aim to achieve (Mbeki, 2016).

These incidents of poor leadership continue to compromise the vision and mission of democratic effectiveness in the country, and its significance for the country. However, the democratic dispensation in South African remains important considering the long and painful history of the country prior to 1994. Therefore, a commitment by citizens and political leaders is critical to give effect to the dispensation and to understand what democracy aims to achieve in the country. Significantly, the Constitution characterises the most important and core characteristics of democracy, such as to protect the basic human rights of the people, which fully requires their active participation in the political, economic and socio-cultural spheres (as reflected in Chapter 4, page 60). Therefore, it sketches a clear mandate and provides guidelines as to what democracy aims to achieve in South Africa's political transformation in this era of a democratic dispensation.

5.3 Recommendations

According to Basson (1994:7), the first fully democratic elections in 1994 held the promise of a new democratic order in South Africa. This was informed by the Interim Constitution, which led to the Constitution of 1996, which came into force against the backdrop of many years of ethnic and racial oppressive rule that lacked democratic

accountability, constitutionalism and cultural rights. Therefore, this constituted the creation of constitutional governance in the new South Africa, which would take a democratic route that executed the most significant principles of democracy, including the protection of basic human rights, governance according to the will of the people, promoting the welfare of the citizens, and increasing political or government accountability to the people. In this regard, the current government is therefore obliged to refer back to the principles and requirements of the Constitution, and give effect to it in terms of their daily practice to lead South African democracy to a better future.

The optimism of democratic doctrine is to involve citizens as active participants in all processes of government and governance by the state. This entails the decision to decide how to be led and whom to be led by. Heywood (2007:72) affirmed that democracy as the system of rule by the people requires citizens' and government's involvement in matters of public interest. Therefore, the central procedure involved in the process of democracy encompasses the selection or election of leaders through competitive and constant elections by the people they govern. In essence, Williams (2003:6) states (in Chapter 2, page 3) that in a democracy, power does not rest with political office bearers who traditionally made the rules and took decisions on behalf of the people, but the people hold them accountable as their representatives and continuously elect them through periodic electoral processes, as required by democratic moralities.

In this regard, people need to be educated to be aware of their responsibilities and they have to hold their political leaders accountable and be able to acknowledge when they abuse their power or lead them illegitimately. This, in a sense, will prevent political representatives in government from abusing their power, misusing state resources or exploiting citizens in various ways as they continue to lead them. Manali (2008:7) supports this (see Chapter 2, page 5), by stating that democracy becomes detrimental when not all citizens are aware of the political scenarios in their country. As a result, this could lead them to make the wrong choices, especially during elections, without acknowledgement of the significance of change where and when needed. Therefore, this usually leads citizens to vote for political parties or leaders, based on loyalty. Their

sense of loyalty results in citizens being reluctant to consider their representatives' wrongdoings, and their failure to govern them effectively.

It is evident that South Africa has acknowledged the formal and first democratic electoral process, which took place in 1994, as it marked the beginning of a democratic dispensation. This electoral process continues to be held after every five-year period of a particular government administration. According to Ntale et al. (2011:3), this prescribes to the democratic values of open and fair competition of contested elections, public participation and enhanced decision-making in respect of the human rights of citizens and the values of tolerance, accountability and responsibility. Therefore, this important democratic culture seeks to uphold, respect and promote the "will of the people" in respect of participation through political decision-making processes in all matters of public affairs. In this regard, South African citizens need to consider the right to vote as critical to hold politicians, or rather their representatives, accountable in government. In this way, they may consider a change of government necessary or detrimental, based on how the particular government delivers or responds to the needs and demands of democracy in the country.

As the findings of this study have indicated, South Africa implemented a system of democracy that operates within a Constitutional state, with the principles of representative, participatory and parliamentary democracy. Therefore, over the past 23 years, the country has been ruled by a dominant party, the ANC, which succeeded to make laws, pass laws and execute decisions in the various political, economic and social spheres in South Africa. As indicated, this form of democracy occurs mostly in representative democracies, where a system of electoral process enables citizens to choose a leadership or a political party they trust to govern them. Heywood (2007:80) described this form of democracy as a parliamentary democracy. This is informed by a system that operates through majority representation, which occupies the majority of power in the National Assembly. Therefore, citizens choose their representatives by means of voting and these representatives hold the majority of power in the National Assembly as they make laws, and enforce and pass these laws. In this way, the ANC became the majority representative of citizens at all levels of government and state

institutions in South Africa. However, to some extent, this has become detrimental when considered from 2009, in other words, the beginning of the Zuma administration, when ANC leaders began to abuse power by engaging in corrupt practices and having less respect for the rule of law in the country. In this regard, Mbeki (2016) affirmed (see Chapter 3, page 56) that because of majority representation, President Zuma tends to exploit and abuse his presidential powers with or without any opposition to his decisions (Mbeki, 2016). This may therefore be a wake-up call for South Africa's minority opposition parties and citizens not to let any political party have absolute power over the government decisions of the country. The people can influence this through an equal share of votes during the electoral processes; this will limit the abuse of power by any leaders and will give effect to consultation and consensus as critical elements in the process of an effective democracy and accountability.

South Africa is a multiparty state, as supported by the Constitution. In this regard, the majority of power being held by one party in South Africa has not been beneficial to the country. This has not allowed other political parties in the National Assembly to vote against illegitimate decisions made by the ANC. Friedman (in Platjies, 2011:65) supports this view by indicating that the dominance of the ANC in representation and government has been detrimental, and has undoubtedly contributed towards the frequent irrational decisions. There has been a decline in what democratic and constitutional rule requires of government in the conduct of its duties, and this has led to patronage that seeks to uphold and enrich individuals at the cost of the citizens of South Africa. This implies that citizens have to be aware of the current situation in the country and decide in the next electoral process whether they want the current government to continue to lead them, or if there is a need to decrease party dominance in the decision-making processes of government.

The study's findings further indicated that South Africa still faces serious levels of inequality, poverty and unemployment, yet leaders in government continue to misuse public funds and loot state resources for personal gain. This has led to violent protests by citizens due to their frustrations about government's failure to execute its duties and deliver basic services effectively, as required by the Constitution. Hence, there is an

urgent need for leadership in the implementation of democratic and governance principles in state institutions and the country at large. This may be enforced according to the requirements found in Section 152, Chapter 7 of the Constitution regarding how the government should provide a democratically accountable government to South African citizens in their respective local communities across the country (Constitution, Act 108 of 1996).

Therefore, South Africa's future democratic leaders will have to move away from what Amtaika (2013:122) calls the culture of entitlement and lack of accountability seen at all levels of government and in state institutions. This will ensure an effective execution of the democratic principles and enhance the level of governance by the government. In this regard, the value of the separation of powers should be recognised and respected in the execution of leaders' duties, without any interference, which prevents them from executing their constitutional mandate. In essence, this will be significant in promoting effective democracy and it is necessary to avoid the abuse of power (Reagan, 2005:2).

Then again, the South African government still needs to deal with the issues of inequality, poverty and unemployment as major hurdles. This calls for the government to prioritise public-private partnerships to grow the economy in order to deal with these issues effectively. In this regard, Chapter 3, page 41 of the study outlined that socio-economic development requires the extensive equal distribution of the economic assets and income of government, an improved health care system, the supply of clean water and sanitation, and greater access to quality education for all citizens (Democracy and Development, n.d.). Therefore, in order to address these problems, there is a great need to grow the economy and distribute wealth equally to benefit all South Africans.

However, other deepening challenges facing the country, which are detrimental to the progressive democratic process in South Africa, are the growing levels of corruption and maladministration. Picard and Mogale (2015:254) indicated that patronage, nepotism and corruption were worrying practices in the South African government, which posed a serious threat to the country's democratic morale. If these practices continued in this young democracy, South Africa may find itself losing the battle to build an effective democracy. These practices oppose the promotion of democratic principles and good

governance, and are disastrous to implementing constitutional rule that caters for all citizens in the democratic dispensation. To avoid this, South Africa needs visionary leaders who are committed to the service of the people and who will respect the Constitution and the requirements for good governance in the country.

Furthermore, the discussions presented in this study have shown that South Africa's democratic processes have taken many forms in an attempt to implement democracy over the past 23 years. However, it is evident that democratic governance in South Africa remains the centre of hope for the improvement and sustainable development of the majority of citizens. According to Plaatjies (2011:106), strategic and operational responsibility, accountability and good performance are the final measures of service delivery, which are used to determine if the competency of state institutions is satisfactory. If it is not satisfactory, citizens have the constitutional right and mandate to remove the government in power and replace it with another government that will execute these prerequisites effectively in a democratic manner. In this regard, Seekings and Natrass (2016:277) opined that the South African democracy required a more effective representative democracy through electoral system change and participatory democracy through institutions for participatory budgeting.

Moreover, as Matlosa (2003:86) stated, the political culture in the country could directly or indirectly affect the political and economic governance processes and, as such, influence to a considerable degree the stability or instability of the political systems. With this perspective in mind, the ruling ANC is no longer being praised for its achievements in changing the political landscape of South Africa. Rather, it has been criticised for its political and economic misconduct involving its current leader, Jacob Zuma, and for developing a political culture in South Africa that is unconstitutional and corrupt. Therefore, according to Gumede (2009:33), if the ANC does not establish a democratic culture that accepts criticism and dissent, it will adopt the culture of the colonial or apartheid government, which will turn the country back into a non-democratic state that promotes narrow nationalism and racial divisions. Therefore, it can be said that these unconstitutional and corrupt acts are unhealthy and threaten the well-established democratic dispensation of South Africa.

Moreover, the democratic system in South Africa must do more to be inclusive and non-racial in that every citizen, despite their level of education or status in life, should participate fully in the political and social life of the country. Therefore, with the array of rights covered in the Constitution, it is equally important to give full effect to the right to freedom of speech and expression, media, assembly and freedom of association in the democratic process. This comes with the freedom to choose your own representatives in government without any fear of intimidation; hence, it is important that civil society organisations, political parties and the government should teach ordinary citizens about their rights and responsibilities, as prescribed by the Constitution. In this way, it will promote and uphold democratic governance in South Africa, which recognises the Constitution as the “supreme law” of the country. Equal treatment from both government and other citizens is significant in ensuring that the elected majority respect the elected minority in the decision-making processes to make the right decisions in parliament. In this regard, good governance will become the cornerstone of the state’s affairs and this will enable South African democracy to flourish and prosper in the future.

5.4 Conclusion

This study sought to conclude why democracy is important in South Africa. If one considers the drafting of the Constitution, the establishment of constitutional institutions, and the development of socio-economic policies (as covered in Chapter 1 of this study), there is no doubt that democracy and its future in South Africa is necessary and significant. Referring back to what Cuthbertson and Jeeves (2008:1) indicated in the rationale of this study, these developments marked a fundamental departure from the apartheid era. Therefore, the new political and institutional arrangements that came with the democratic dispensation gave people the mandate to have a say in government and recognised the rights of each citizen, regardless of their race, class or gender.

However, after 23 years of a democratic dispensation in South Africa, the country still battles with many complex problems, which the country and citizens face on a daily basis. With the aim to evaluate and examine the importance of democracy in the South

African context, this study found that racial differences amongst citizens, violent service delivery protests, and the lack of good governance in state affairs have accelerated to unacceptable levels, which are likely to jeopardise the achievements of democracy in South Africa. Edigheji and Mhone (2004:9) commented on this by stating that, even though the government has achieved much more than the pre-1994 government, the challenges of poverty, poor healthcare and failing education standards are detrimental to the democratic government in South Africa. In this regard, this is a clear indication that the government needs to step up to the plate and provide the necessary leadership to address these challenges in a constructive and decisive manner.

Therefore, with the objective to identify the conflicting aspects to an effective democratic process in South Africa, the study has achieved to identify some of the most problematic indicators that threaten the smooth process of the democratic dispensation and, which will definitely have an effect on the country's future, if not corrected. The indicators were identified as the high levels of corruption, patronage, political disequilibrium and nepotism, which have increased in the country over the past eight years. This has resulted in poor leadership, lack of basic service delivery, and unconstitutional rule in the country. These indicators raised their ugly heads for the first time during the presidency of Jacob Zuma, which began in 2009, the third phase of South Africa's democracy.

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