

# Using Grounded Theory to Derive a Performance Improvement Model for South African Municipalities

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**Abstract:** The dawn of democracy in 1994 was preceded by widespread political violence in black communities across South Africa. Thirty years into the democracy, communities continue to use violent protests albeit not for political reasons but as an expression of anger and frustration over poor service delivery. To address this problem, the democratic government introduced performance management reforms. Literature shows that the success of these reforms depends on the ability of public institutions to adopt and sustain a performance-oriented culture. Therefore, the increasing wave of service delivery protests in South African Municipalities is a response to the failure of the democratic government in this regard. The debate on the causes and consequences of poor service delivery in South Africa has been raging for long. Even though there is little space to contribute on this topic, the author observed inadequate use of grounded theory as a strategy to develop empirical solutions to poor municipal performance. Therefore, this paper uses constant comparative analysis and theoretical sampling to derive empirical an empirical solution to the performance challenges engulfing the South African municipal landscape.

**Keywords:** Grounded theory, South African Municipalities, Performance improvement, Constant comparative analysis

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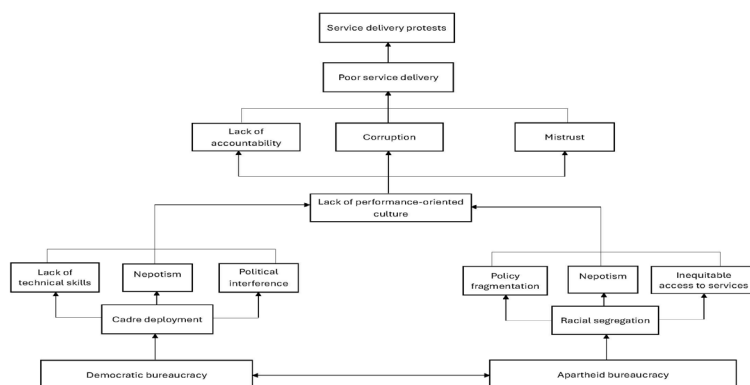
## 1. Introduction

Given its historical background of Apartheid, South Africa has a culture of violent protests. This culture is predominant in black communities that were deliberately subjected to poor service delivery compared to their white counterparts. Therefore, transforming the Apartheid bureaucracy and building a professional public service capable of delivering equitable services to all, remains a key priority of the South African democratic government. To this end, the government adopted performance management reforms aimed specifically at improving service delivery in Municipalities (Munzhedzi, 2020). Thirty years later, service delivery protests continue unabated indicating a spectacular failure of the democratic government in reversing the Apartheid legacy of poor service delivery in black communities. Several scholars largely attribute this failure to corruption, political interference, and nepotism (Dlamini & Migiros, 2016; Kariuki & Reddy, 2017; Masiya, Davids, & Manga, 2021; Mello, 2018). However, this attribution does not reveal the underlying cause of poor municipal performance, which according to Gumede (2015), is the inability of the democratic government to transform the administrative culture of Apartheid. International evidence highlights the significance of organisational culture as a performance-enhancing attribute (Bradley & Parker, 2001; Harrison & Baird, 2015). However, inadequate recognition of this thinking in South Africa, coupled with inadequate use of grounded theory in management studies, has created dearth empirical solutions for improving the performance of South African Municipalities. Therefore, this paper demonstrates the importance of constant comparative analysis and theoretical sampling in providing empirical solutions to poor municipal performance. The use of these techniques comes against the author's observation of inadequate use of grounded theory in management studies (Ndevu, 2019; Mabaso, 2018; Pretorius & Schurink, 2007). Therefore, this paper demonstrates how the two grounded theory techniques were used to derive a performance improvement model for use in South African Municipalities. Before doing so, the next Section interrogates literature to understand key dimensions of poor municipal performance. The third Section presents the empirical evidence that informed the proposed empirical solution while the last concludes the paper.

## 2. Literature Review

This paper is premised on the argument that South African municipalities are engulfed by poor performance arising from political interference. Thus, this Section interrogates literature to understand the root cause of this phenomenon as well as current and previous attempts to address it in the context of South African Municipalities. As a point of departure, the paper concurs with Samsonowa (2012) that public management literature identifies effectiveness and efficiency as indicators of performance. Therefore, poor performance as used in this paper, refers to the inability of South African Municipalities to deliver quality services. The issue of poor service delivery in South African Municipalities has been discussed at length with most scholars attributing its origin to corruption, political interference, and nepotism amongst others (Dlamini & Migiros, 2016; Kariuki & Reddy, 2017; Masiya, Davids, & Manga, 2021; Mello, 2018). Without negating the contribution of these scholars, the paper points to inadequate analysis of the root cause of poor performance in South

African Municipalities. Therefore, this paper applies problem tree analysis to offer an improved analysis of underlying factors giving rise to poor municipal performance.



(Source: Author)

**Figure 1: Root causes of poor performance in South African Municipalities**

Figure 1 presents two ideological positions that shape the structural and operational architecture of the South African public service. First is the policy of racial segregation introduced by the National Party in 1948. This policy created partisan control of bureaucracy (Cameron, 2010) characterised by patronage employment for white public servants (Posel, 1999). For example, a pre-1994 survey of Director-Generals shows that 54 percent were appointed on political considerations (Miller, 2005). These political loyalists were used as agents for implementation of separate development where service delivery became a privilege of the white minority. This means that the administrative culture of the Apartheid public service was characterised by nepotism, fragmentation, and inequitable service delivery.

When the ANC assumed power in 1994, its priority was to eliminate racial inequalities in service delivery and create a new bureaucratic order based on principles of democracy. According to Gumede (2015), the ANC partially achieved its objective of dismantling the racial configuration of the Apartheid bureaucracy. However, the growing discontent on poor service delivery in black communities demonstrates continued existence of inequitable service delivery. Several authors attribute this to the ANC policy of cadre deployment which entails the appointment of political loyalists to senior positions across the public sector. As De Jager and Steenekamp (2015) point out, cadre deployment was introduced in furtherance of inward-looking, self-seeking, and self-preserving culture. For example, it has normalised political interference which according to Ndevu and Muller (2018), allows the ANC to decide on who should get government contracts. Further, it has entrenched a culture of nepotism and favouritism that has weakened the performance management system (Shava & Chamisa, 2018). Thus, Kariuki and Reddy (2017) attribute the prevailing shortage of technical and leadership skills across South African Municipalities to the appointment of political loyalists to key positions that they are not competent for. In addition, this shortage results from the factional battles of the ANC, which as Maqoko (2015) points out, lead to purging of qualified and skilled municipal managers. This explains why Kariuki and Reddy (2017) as well as Mello (2018) identify high staff turnover and incompetence as constraints to effective delivery of services across South African Municipalities.

On the issue of incompetence, the paper concurs with Ndevu (2019) that political patronage has resulted in the appointment of unqualified officials who are unable to perform their duties. Specifically, Masiya, Davids, and Mangai (2021) found that Municipalities lack technical competence in the provision of water and sanitation, electrification, and refuse collection. These findings echo Zindi and Sibanda's (2022) observation that recruitment practices in most Municipalities are improper resulting in the appointment of unsuitable candidates. This impropriety is an indication of the weak performance management system as deserving individuals are often overlooked for promotions in favour of the politically connected. This may be a reason why Ndevu (2019) attributes poor performance in South African Municipalities to mistrust amongst leadership and employees. Lack of trust amongst employees is also linked to the collapse of accountability mechanisms within Municipalities. In support of this view, Gumede (2015) argues that ANC appointees to government account to the ANC structures not the public. This leads to weak consequence management for non-performance (Ndevu, 2019) and contributes to increased corruption in municipal procurement systems (Moeti,

2004). Collectively, these factors have collapsed service delivery to the point that Municipalities across South Africa struggle to provide equitable basic services such as water and sanitation. For example, educated and employed whites living in the city are more likely to enjoy good-quality services than the less educated, unemployed and non-whites living in rural areas (Nkomo, 2017). Therefore, it is not surprising that service delivery protests emanate from poorer neighbourhoods, especially shack settlements and townships, rather than the better-off suburbs (Alexander, 2010).

Generally, service delivery protests are characterised by blockading of roads, burning of tires, looting, destruction of property. Because of these elements, researchers often classify service delivery protests as violent (Mello, 2018; Paret, 2015; Visser, et al., 2012). In light of this, the paper argues that violent service delivery protests is the symptom of poor municipal performance whose origins are deeply embedded in the culture of appointing political loyalists to key positions within the public service. Therefore, addressing poor service delivery is a function of creating and infusing a performance-oriented culture across South African Municipalities. Therefore, the next Section explains how grounded theory was used to construct a performance improvement Model that puts leadership at the centre of creating a performance-oriented culture in South African Municipalities.

### 3. Methodology

Glaser and Strauss (1967) discovered grounded theory together but later took different paths that led to the emergence of multiple brands of grounded theory. Although constant comparative analysis and theoretical sampling remain the hallmark of different types of grounded theory, these techniques are not adequately used in performance management studies in South Africa. For example, Ndevu (2019) created categories from the data collected through content analysis but did not explain how theoretical sampling enhanced data collection and analysis. The same weakness is evident in a recent study where the author failed to explain how these techniques facilitated generation of empirical theory to explain performance management issues in South African municipalities (Ndevu, 2022). Further, Pretorius and Schurink (2007) used Strauss and Corbin’s (1990) coding techniques but did not mention constant comparative analysis and theoretical sampling anywhere in their paper. In recognition of these weaknesses, the paper adopted a three-phased approach to grounded theory. In compliance with established ethical protocols, the first step was to seek ethical clearance from the University. Through this clearance, the author was able to access the research setting and establish contact with the research participants. After obtaining access, he developed consent forms that were signed by the participants to ensure their voluntary participation. To ensure confidentiality, the author prepared an information note outlining the objectives of the study. In addition, the note articulated steps that the author took to ensure confidentiality.

After complying with ethical considerations, the author commenced the second phase of grounded theory. This involved intensive literature review to understand theoretical performance challenges in South African Municipalities. Consequently, this understanding was used to develop the structure of semi-structured interview schedules used to obtain data from 24 participants selected through purposive sampling. This procedure enabled the selection of 4 Divisional Heads who were provided credible information on the performance issues within the Municipality under investigation. This phase also involved open coding where the data from the initial interviews was recorded, transcribed, and coded.

**Table 1: Open coding (Source: Author)**

Excerpts	Excerpts from the interview data	Initial codes	Refined codes
Excerpt 1	The IDP and the SDBIPs are the basis for performance agreements. And implementation of SDBIP fully is contained in the Individual performance	Performance management tools Implementation of performance management	Instruments of performance management
Excerpt 2	Performance management is provided for in the Municipal Systems Act and other regulations	Legal frameworks for performance management	
Excerpt 3	Getting performance management rolled out into the City structures has been quite challenging	Difficult rollout of performance	
Excerpt 4	Permanent employees resist performance management system	Lack of cooperation from permanent employees	

As noted above, the four interviews generated preliminary codes that describe tools used for performance management as well as difficulties involved in the implementation of performance management in a particular Municipality where the study was undertaken. Based on personal experience and knowledge, the open codes

above are consistent with the general literature on performance management in South African public institutions. Therefore, the paper concurs with Glaser and Strauss (1967) that prior review of the literature enhances theoretical sensitivity. To test the researcher’s knowledge of the literature against emerging data properties, the author compared the initial codes extracted from transcripts 3 and 4 against each other and back to the interview data bearing in mind the insights from the literature. This led to the refinement of initial codes and the creation of expanded codes as presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Outputs of theoretical sampling and comparative analysis (Source: Author)**

Excerpts	Excerpts from the interview data	Initial codes	Expanded codes	Subcategories	Core categories
Excerpt 3	Getting performance management rolled out into the City structures has been quite challenging	Difficulty in implementing performance management	Lack of skills Nepotism Lack of leadership Lack of consequence management Political interference Political instability	Incompetence Cadre deployment Lack of accountability Poor consequence management	Politicised bureaucracy Incompetent leadership Lack of accountability
Excerpt 4	Permanent employees resist performance management system	Lack of cooperation from permanent employees	Lack of consultation Negative attitudes Disgruntlement Mistrust	Poor leadership Lack of communication Conflicts between management and staff	Low staff morale

After the refinement of the initial codes, the author embarked on the second phase where theoretical sampling was used to inform more data collection to explore the expanded codes. For example, the hostility between management and staff implied in the data extracted from transcript 3 required further exploration. Therefore, theoretical sampling was used to select additional participants who could provide more information on the apparent lack of cooperation between employees and management. These participants included senior management (Directors), leaders of the Labour Unions, members of the Labour Unions, and unorganised employees. After identifying additional participants, the author adjusted the initial data collection instruments to include specific questions for this group. As noted in Table 2, theoretical sampling allowed the author to obtain information that confirmed his suspicion that management and staff had a frosty relationship. Using selective coding, the author compared newly obtained information to existing data properties to create a category of *low staff morale* as the main concept underpinning consequences of inherent conflict between management and staff. The same procedure led to the emergence of politicised *bureaucracy* as a critical concept that defines the administrative culture of South African Municipalities. This culture is characterised by incompetent leadership, lack of accountability, and low staff morale.

In sum, Table 2 demonstrates how theoretical sampling and constant comparative analysis enhanced the author’s understanding of underlying causes of poor municipal performance. Thus, the paper has successfully addressed the weakness observed in Pretorius and Schurink (2007) and Ndevu (2019; 2022) who have not adequately explained the importance of these techniques in their grounded theory studies. According to Flick (2019), constant comparative analysis and theoretical sampling are critical for effective application of grounded theory methodology. Therefore, this paper provides useful insights on how to effectively use grounded theory in the field of public management in South Africa.

#### **4. Empirical Factors Underlying Poor Performance in South African Municipalities**

Having demonstrated the importance of grounded theory in determining the root cause of poor municipal performance, the next step is to present a Model that may resolve this problem. Therefore, this Section presents empirical results that inform the construction of the proposed Model for improving performance in a South African Municipality. These results converge on cadre deployment as the key determinant of politicised bureaucracy that defines the structure and operations of South African Municipalities.

##### **4.1 Cadre Deployment**

The encroachment of politics into administrative space in the South Africa Public Service is expressed through cadre deployment. Shava and Chamisa (2018) define cadre deployment as a system of political patronage through which the ANC appoints its members to prominent positions in the public sector. The authors further mention that this system leads to poor performances in government institutions and in the nation at large. These views were corroborated by empirical evidence obtained from the research participants who mentioned that cadre deployment gives rise to political interference which in turn, creates mistrust, lack of accountability, and incompetence. Highlighting the significance of cadre deployment as the source of performance challenges engulfing South African Municipalities, one participant mentioned had this to say: *‘appointing wrong people without requisite skills, leads to poor performance because some cadres appointed to senior positions within*

*the Municipality cannot even think strategically. As a result, they are unable to perform their strategic functions and provide leadership where necessary.*' This response confirms the findings of previous studies showing that cadre deployment results in the appointment of incompetent individuals who are unable to perform their functions effectively (Shava & Chamisa, 2018; Twala, 2014).

#### **4.2 Manifestations of Cadre Deployment**

Based on the empirical data obtained from the study that informed this paper, the author points to different manifestations of cadre deployment. In explaining the effects of cadre deployment on performance, one participant mentioned that *'after being appointed to powerful positions on political grounds, the officials appoint their friends and relatives without due process'*. This revelation is consistent with the literature showing that the ANC leaders have seized the duties and responsibilities for recruiting and selecting municipal workers without following the proper procedures and protocols (Shongwe & Meyer, 2023). It also confirms Kgatle's (2017) attribution of poor service delivery in Tshwane to the ANC's practice of appointing political allies, friends, and family. Empirical evidence further shows that the political patronage leads to the appointment of underserving and unqualified persons to key positions. As Shava and Chamisa (2018) point out, this has compromised the human resources management in the public sector and resulted in recruitment processes are marred by inconsistencies that affect the performance of handpicked cadres. Another dimension of cadre deployment that emerged is the shortage of qualified and competent employees at strategic positions within Municipalities. In this regard, the participants specifically mentioned that cadre deployment has compromised service delivery because people are appointed to senior positions based on political instead of academic credentials. Recent literature confirming this aspect points to the shortage of qualified and competent individuals at senior management level in South African Municipalities (Makole, 2022) with Kariuki and Reddy (2017) attributing the shortage of technical skills in these entities directly to nepotism.

On a slightly different note, the empirical evidence shows that cadre deployment has eroded accountability mechanisms. In explaining this, the participants were unanimous that ANC cadre deployed in a particular Municipality disregard established protocols and report administrative issues to their political masters who deployed them. This evidence corroborates Gumede's (2015) argument that cadre deployment has created a culture where ANC cadres deployed in government think they are untouchable. According to Shava and Chamisa (2018), wherever corruption thrives, accountability and transparency disappear. A similar view was expressed by the research participants who mentioned that cadre deployment has weakened accountability and consequence management to the point that ANC cadres openly engage in corrupt activities knowing that they have political protection. In support of this empirical evidence, Moeti (2014) as well as Shava and Chamisa (2018) argue that local government corruption emanating from cadre deployment is rampant, especially in the procurement systems.

Apart from corruption, weak accountability is expressed through unfair labour practices resulting from ineffective use of performance management systems. In this regard, the empirical evidence shows that deserving professionals are overlooked for promotions in favour of politically connected and incompetent employees. In addition, the empirical data revealed that inconsistent application of performance management system leads to low staff morale, mistrust, and conflicts between management and staff. On the issue of low staff morale, the empirical evidence reiterates the findings expressed in previous studies connecting cadre deployment to low staff morale (Shava & Chamisa, 2018). Further, the empirical evidence on the existence of mistrust owing to cadre deployment and inconsistent application of performance management system confirm Ndevu's (2019) argument that political interference leads to mistrust between politicians and officials in Municipalities. The empirical data on inconsistent use of performance management resonates with the findings of existing studies that municipal managers lack adequate understanding on how to use performance management system (Ndasana, et al., 2022; Masiya, Davids, & Mangai, 2021).

On the issue of conflicts between management and staff, one participant mentioned that staff uses Labour Unions to avoid accountability for poor performance. On the other hand, a labour representative mentioned that management use performance management system to reward their allies and punish politically neutral but performing individuals. This empirical evidence reiterates Mokhatso's (2008) finding that South African Unions focus more on protecting their members rather than engaging in constructive strategic issues that improve governance and service delivery in municipalities.

In sum, the empirical data that informed this paper puts cadre deployment at the centre of poor performance in South African Municipalities. In particular, the evidence shows that cadre deployment manifests in nepotism, incompetence, mistrust, conflicts, and lack of accountability. These revelations confirm existing

literature on causes of poor performance across South African Municipalities. Based on the empirical evidence and the author’s insights obtained from the literature, this paper argues that cadre deployment has entrenched a culture of poor performance across South African Municipalities. The paper further argues that this culture manifests in nepotism, incompetence, mistrust, and lack of accountability. Collectively, these manifestations lead to poor service delivery which ultimately gives rise to violent protests.

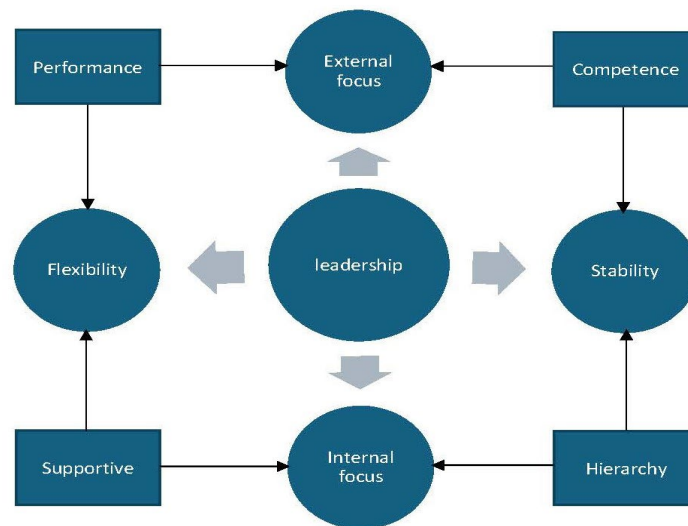
### 5. The Empirical Model for Improving Performance in South African Municipalities

Drawing from insights obtained from the literature and from the empirical data, this Section proposes a Model for improving performance in South African Municipalities. This Model is premised on the argument that improving municipal performance is a function of transforming attitudes, norms, practices, and systems that give rise to the incompetence, mistrust, and lack of accountability. The need for addressing these attributes of poor performance emerged from the interviews. Specifically, the participants mentioned that improving municipal performance requires capable leadership with skills and experience in creating a supportive organisational culture anchored on meritocracy, communication, and trust. This thinking resonates with Schein’s (2004) notion that culture creation is a function of leadership. When the issue of leadership emerged during data collection, the author employed theoretical sampling to identify additional participants who provided useful insights on key attributes of leadership required for improving municipal performance. These attributes are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Empirical attributes for creating performance-oriented culture (Source: Author)**

Raw data	Initial codes	Sub-categories	Core categories	Empirical themes
Management does not engage staff in critical decision-making. What happens is a one-way communication where management decides and then sends an email to inform staff about decisions. Therefore, there is a need for a more interactive and participatory engagement where employees could have a voice in decision-making.	Exclusive decision-making One way communication Email communication Need for interactive and participatory engagement Staff have no voice in decision-making	Exclusion of staff in decision-making  Poor communication  Interactive and participatory engagement strategy	Lack of participation in decision-making  Communication improvement strategy	Enhanced accountability and transparency through interactive and participatory communication  Reducing corruption through communication
Communication enhances transparency and can serve as a deterrent to corruption because the community would have necessary information to hold councillors accountable	Communication enhances transparency. Communication deters corruption. Use of communication for accountability	Improved accountability and transparency through communication Reduced corruption through communication	Benefits of communication	
Management should create a friendly environment where subordinates are encouraged to communicate ideas freely. If there is freedom of expression where feedback is given due consideration, employees would be motivated and trust, loyalty, and productivity would increase.	Creation of friendly environment by management Management should encourage free communication. Freedom of expression motivates staff. Freedom of expression improves trust. Freedom of expression improves loyalty. Freedom of expression improves productivity	Functions of management Benefits of freedom of expression	Creation of supportive work environment	Management creates a supportive culture characterised by trust, loyalty, motivated and productive employees
Building the capacity of managers on leadership can improve municipal performance	Leadership training enhances fairness in staff recruitment and performance management Capable leaders improves trust Capable leaders promotes open communication Capable leaders enhances participatory decision-making Capable leaders develop and implement the vision	Benefits of leadership training  Characteristics of leadership	Leadership competencies for improving performance	Centrality of leadership as a performance-enhancing attribute

In sum, Table 3 underscores the centrality of leadership and a performance-enhancing attribute. Specifically, the centrality of leadership in creating a supportive culture characterised by trust, accountability, and open communication emerged from use of constant comparative analysis. For example, the categories presented on the Table were compared against each other and back to the initial codes. In addition, the categories were compared to the raw data leading to the emergence of empirical themes pillared on leadership as a key attribute for performance improvement. The empirical themes were further compared to the literature using a selective coding process. Through this process of iterative comparison, the author identified four concepts that match the established empirical themes. The first is hierarchy (Cameron & Quinn, 2011), which in this paper is renamed bureaucracy for its emphasis on hierarchical relationships of power entrenched in laws and regulations. The second concept derived from Schneider (1999) is competence, which directly links to the participants’ idea of improving competency through leadership training and meritocracy. Closely related competence is Harrison’s (1972) notion of goal-oriented culture. Inspired by the New Public Management (NPM) movement, this concept resonates with participants’ view that participatory communication that promotes employee’s participation in decision-making promotes loyalty, builds trust, and improves productivity. As noted in Table 3, the same empirical attributes are linked to the concept of a clan culture expressed in Cameron and Quinn (2011). This culture promotes values of teamwork and family like values hence the reference to supportive environment. The four concepts derived from the literature and linked to the empirical data constitute the pillars of the performance improvement Model presented in Figure 2.



**Figure 2: The proposed model for improving performance in South African municipalities Source: (Bless, 2023)**

Now that the four components constituting the structure of the proposed performance improvement Model depicted in Figure 2 have been established, the next step is to describe how the Model works. First, hierarchy/bureaucracy is dependent on stability and internal focus. These elements of bureaucracy are derived from Weber's (1946) argument that bureaucratic rules and regulations create predictability, enhance accountability, and promote fairness. However, the empirical data presented earlier shows that failure to apply existing rules and regulations governing employment and staff assessment has entrenched cadre deployment leading to poor performance. Therefore, maintaining effective bureaucracy requires capable leadership to maintain stability through effective application of existing rules and regulations to maintain. This means that a stable environment where rules and regulations for individual and organisational performance management systems are applied fairly and competently, is a precondition for improved performance. Thus, unlike Heckscher (2007) who calls for alternative organisational forms to replace bureaucracy, the paper calls for its augmentation by introducing the principle of meritocracy. As indicated in Figure 2, meritocracy is equated to competence to underscore the need to address the incompetence associated with cadre deployment.

Table 3 identifies required leadership competencies for enhancing performance in South African Municipalities. These competencies include the ability to build trust, promote open communication, develop, and implement organisational vision. Specifically, open communication promotes accountability and transparency and connects to the empirical evidence highlighting the role of leadership in creating a supportive environment that promotes trust, loyalty, and performance. As Drucker (1959) points out, a supportive environment is necessary to promote workers' participation in decision-making and motivate them to achieve organisational goals. Because of its strong emphasis on creating trust within organisations, a supportive culture is internally focused. Therefore, this Model shows that principles and values of a supportive culture should be implemented within the confines of the existing rules and regulations provided under bureaucracy.

Although bureaucracy provides necessary stability for an effective administration, its rigidity curtails quick decision-making and ultimately results in poor staff attitude. For this reason, Figure 2 shows that an effective supportive culture requires flexibility to ensure adequate response to unique personal needs of employees. Based on the prescriptions of New Public Management (NPM), organisations that embrace flexibility are conscious of the external environment. Most importantly, being to the external environment creates the opportunity for bringing new competencies required to sustain performance in light of the ever changing environment in which Municipalities operate.

## 6. Conclusion

This paper used literature review to argue that failure to transform the administrative culture of public institutions is the root cause of poor performance across South African Municipalities. In this regard, the paper contributes new knowledge on the significance of organisational culture as a performance-enhancing attribute

in South Africa. In addition, the paper used grounded theory to demonstrate the value of constant comparative analysis and theoretical sampling in generating empirical solutions to performance challenges engulfing South African Municipalities. Therefore, the paper makes a significant contribution towards improving methodological weaknesses observed in current and previous studies that have used grounded theory to explore the question of poor service delivery in South Africa. After diagnosing the root cause of poor performance and demonstrating the importance of grounded theory in management studies, the paper provides an empirical Model for improving performance. Anchored on theories of organisational culture, this Model underscores the centrality of leadership in creating a performance-oriented culture. Most importantly, the paper concludes that building a culture of performance requires competent leaders with adequate skills to adapt principles of bureaucracy to the changing external environment within which South African Municipalities operate.

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