Professionalizing the Public Sector in South Africa: Challenges, Opportunities and Prospects

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Abstract

This paper examines the possibility of professionalizing the public sector in South Africa and its associated challenges, opportunities, and prospects. We argue that a lack of skills, talent, and the consolidation of ethics characterizes South Africa's public sector. As a result, this has given rise to service delivery protests across the country. This paper employed a qualitative research approach. This paper reviewed current literature to broaden the understanding of professionalizing the Public Sector in South Africa. It was revealed that issues such as cadre deployment, lack of investments in skills development, and corruption in the public sector had given rise to the need to professionalize the public sector to ensure efficient public service delivery.

Keywords: *Development; Public; Africa; Opportunities*

Introduction

Lapsley and Miller (2019), in their study on the transformation of the public sector, highlight the strides that the public sector has taken to professionalize and consolidate ethical conduct. Globally, the public sector has faced challenges, from riots, protests, lack of skilled personnel, corruption, and a changing socio-economic and political environment. In South Africa, public sector participants include state-owned enterprises (SOEs), municipalities, national and provincial governments, universities, and other agencies. These participants have a mandate (directly and indirectly) to deliver improved and

efficient health care, equal educational opportunities, infrastructure investment, housing access, and other social programs (McKinsey, 2022). However, for this to happen, Machobane et al. (2020) ascertain that the need to support and maintain talent within the public sector is critical in delivering on these mandates.

Therefore, professionalizing the public sector can enable these parties to execute these mandates successfully and ethically. Professionalizing the public sector is about strengthening public financial management and leadership through education, training, and development. However, Masuku and Jili (2019) raised concerns about the inefficiencies in service delivery in South Africa. They argued that this resulted in prolonged service delivery riots across the country due to the government's failure to provide essential basic services. To address the challenges the public sector faces, it is paramount for the South African government to invest in developing its talent and retaining it. Therefore, among its policy priority areas, investments towards professionalizing the public sector can successfully transform it and achieve public sector reform (Al-Mawlawi, 2020). Adopting and maintaining professionalization within the public sector for both executives and support staff is essential for ensuring the development of their professional skills and competencies toward optimally performing their duties (Profiroiu & Simion, 2021).

Therefore, this article reviews the opportunities and prospects of professionalizing the public sector in South Africa. The article deliberates on the South African public sector, the role of the government in professionalizing, and its importance. This paper employed a qualitative research approach. This paper reviewed current literature (on public sector professionalization) to broaden further the understanding of its challenges, opportunities, and prospects. The South African government has argued the need to professionalize the public service. Globally there has been a push to ensure the consolidation of ethics and a people-oriented approach in the public sector. Hence, the paper draws its arguments from ample literature, thus the justification for employing this research approach.

Literature Review

Civil service Reform to Improve the Public Service

Civil service reform was accelerated in most African nations in the 1980s due to the perceived underwhelming performance of the public sector. The reform aimed to streamline operations and reduce the size of the civil service (Sulle, 2011). For instance, Tanzania's civil service back in the 1960s and early 1970s was smaller but more effective and resistant to corruption than it is now. The government became a significant provider of social services and a player in socioeconomic development following the adoption of socialism in 1967, coupled with a state-controlled economy (Tuwa, 2009). Similarly, between 1963 and 1991, in Kenya, the civil service employed 274,000 people, a yearly growth rate of 5.5 percent (Otenya, 2006). However, the rapid expansion of the civil service worsened the financial capacity of many African governments. As a result, many African governments saw the New Public Management (NPM) approach as key, especially regarding reforming the civil service.

Most African nations decided to implement civil service reform, which included shrinking the number of those employed in the public sector. In Tanzania and Uganda, the civil service was reduced by 55% and 22% by the 1990s (Hope, 2001). In Tanzania, the civil service had been cut by 30% by December 1997 (Otenya, 2006). The civil service in Africa also needed to be reformed because it had several flaws. These included the inability to solve challenging problems, corruption, and political overreach (Rubakulo, 2014). The African civil service had to reform, and the reform needed new concepts and methods for managing public services in addition to the institutional restructuring of the civil service. For instance, the government of Tanzania implemented several reform initiatives, including establishing executive agencies that are essentially independent of their parent ministries and adopting management strategies like result-based management (Sulle, 2011).

Since NPM was adopted in Africa, the public sector globally has undergone a structural and procedural transformation. For Africa, the fundamental shift is in how African nations today approach development by adopting a new functional model that, through reforms, allows the public and private sectors to function more similarly. For example, before such reforms, economic progress in Africa was constrained, which led to problems like famine, starvation, malnutrition, and a general decline in the quality of life (Rubakulo, 2014). Nevertheless, according to Engida et al. (2013), public sector reform in post-colonial Africa has lacked political and community support since the reform process is regarded as externally led with limited local comprehension, commitment, and ownership. Therefore, public participation in all pressing issues must be given more significant consideration if NPM changes succeed in reforming Africa's public sector. Even though African governments have struggled to provide public goods and services adequately, Africa must shift its focus from aid distribution to initiatives that foster long-term growth. This can only happen if African nations reconsider their development plans and pace themselves more realistically than they are currently.

Governmental Strategies and Efforts towards Professionalization

Talent Management within Public Service Institutions

According to Kaizer (2022), talent management in South Africa's public sector should be seen through the prism of a developing state that expects accountability and performance to eliminate poverty, inequality, and unemployment. The South African government requires adaptive, professional, technically proficient, and imaginative workers. In support, Kotze (2017) alluded that the South African public sector has to be professionalized, and public workers' skills need to be improved in order to realize the ambition of a competent and developing state. Rust and Koketso (2012) expound that talent management promotes the professionalization of public service via a set of developed techniques and procedures to guarantee a steady supply of trained and competent people to meet public sector demands. Bwowe (2015) indicated that utilizing a skilled workforce to enhance and advance efficient service delivery should be the goal of talent management in the South African public sector.

Career Development within Public Service Institutions

Civil servants must be taught and developed in order for them to be efficient and successful in carrying out their duties. They must constantly carry out tasks in an empowered and effective manner by emphasizing community services and enhancing professionalism and welfare. According to Napitupulu et al. (2017), professional development is advancing one's position within an organization along a predetermined career path. To reach that aim, one must increase one's job performance. Career development is the negotiation of workers' values, expectations, and ambitions for their career growth, linked with the demands and goals of the organization to build efficient working relationships. According to Eisenberger, Rhoades, and Cameron (1999), career possibilities and advancement positively influence organizational support. Public officials tend to position themselves by gaining skills, knowledge, education, and training as they pursue these opportunities. This process improves the professionalization of public service. Ahmad and Saad (2020) alluded that the professionalization of the public sector depends on solid career development; hence motivation plays a key role.

Merchant (2010) stated that career development improves public service professionalism by allowing workers to explain their particular goals and determine what pathways they might pursue to achieve them and receive valuable rewards. Employees are more likely to be dedicated to an organization and its aims if it can aid them in meeting their requirements. According to Moldoveanu and Dobrin (2012), the career of a civil servant evolves through the following stages: expansion - development: new skills are gained, knowledge multiplies, and new competencies emerge at a steady rate; stabilization occurs when the skills and information gained during the advancement (expansion) stage are put into practice, tested, changed, and enhanced by experience and civil workers have a well-defined professional

path and progress following their talents, motivation, and opportunity. Each public servant grows and matures at a different rate, which implies that once reaching maturity, one either continues to progress or limits themselves (while still doing beneficial tasks) or stagnates and takes a downturn (Moldoveanu & Dobrin, 2012).

Competency Based Training in Public Sector

Competent workers only stay competent for a while. Skills erode with time and may become outdated. As a result, competence training is required to maintain professionalism (Stephen,2001). According to Gosselin and Heene (2003), a competence-based strategy uses the competency and performance of the best individuals on the job as its frame of reference. Organizations may increase their overall performance by employing people with the necessary abilities or by educating current employees to equip them with competencies specific to an organization's operational, business, and performance goals.

According to Kobia (2015), the following elements serve as the foundation for the competency-based approach; finding the appropriate skills for the position: by using a competency-based approach to recruitment, selection, and development, organizations may boost the likelihood that they will find and develop the perfect applicant for the position, whose value to the organization will more than offset the expenses of hiring them, organizational strategy and employee reward: competency models may also be used in the organization to organize business requirements and strategic direction, communicate a company's values and purpose, and reward employees who learn and display the defined organizational skills, the negative long-term economic consequences of employing an incorrect individual were examined, and they included: financial resources lost on training and development and low productivity.

Regardless of the strategy an organization chooses for its recruitment and selection process, it is necessary to take into account the hard costs associated with filling a vacancy, such as advertising and recruitment expenses, lodging, and, where appropriate, entertainment expenses and creating a human resource management manual: The traits of great employees in the organization may serve as a model for various HR management procedures, including hiring, training, succession planning, performance management, promotion, and career advancement.

Leveraging Performance Management Systems (PMS) for Professionalization of Public Service

PMS is a general term for performance evaluations, creating objectives, outlining expectations, observing, recording, providing feedback, and encouraging staff to improve their abilities (Manyaka & Sebola,2012). When civil servants' performance is evaluated, reviewed, and improved, the public sector becomes more professional, and the ability of employees to succeed in their performance improves. According to Munzhedzi (2017), PMS improves public service professionalism by assessing and controlling performance within a defined framework of goals, standards, and competence requirements. Performance management assists institutions, teams, and individuals in achieving better results.

How PMS Process Promote Professionalization of Public Service?

As the initial phase in the PMS process, performance planning fosters the development of performance expectations and targets for people. It encourages them to aim their efforts toward achieving institutional goals. Performance planning includes the development of a mission, performance targets and strategies, work-related competencies, and supportive behaviors (Mokoele et al.,2018). Performance planning helps to professionalize public service; consequently, it is the point at which an employer and an employee begin the performance management process; all work objectives are presented to the employee, and the employee recognizes them by signing the performance agreement.

As the second step, continuous communication is a process in which a supervisor and a subordinate collaborate to provide information regarding work progress, potential hurdles and difficulties, potential solutions, and how the manager might assist the subordinate (Boninelli & Meyer, 2004). Ongoing performance communication enables supervisors to get an awareness of their subordinates' requirements and the challenges they confront, as well as to guarantee that there is a continuing dialogue about performance metrics and that workers stay professional in carrying out their jobs. The third phase in the process of acquiring information essential to improvement is data collection. Observation is a way of acquiring data while documenting the data obtained may be utilized (Bacal,1999). At this stage, the professionalism of public service is improved by keeping records. The purpose of documentation is threefold:

1. To show that management is concerned about underperformance.
2. To help improve the subordinate's performance.
3. Keep a record of management's efforts to work with the subordinate in case of an appeal.

As the last step, the performance review is a process in which a supervisor and subordinate collaborate to analyze the subordinate's progress toward the objectives stated in performance planning, as well as to summarize what went well and poorly during the time under review (Fletcher, 2008).

This is the most crucial stage, as performance reviews are the foundation of the performance management process and are critical to employees' continued growth. Professionalizing public service is encouraged by recognizing and addressing poor performance and its causes.

Professionalization of the Public Service and Cadre Deployment in the Public Service

According to (Afegbua, 2010, p. 107), the word 'professionalization' is derived from the word 'profession'. The Oxford English Dictionary (cited in Willbern, 1954) defines the word 'profession' as a "vocation in which a professed knowledge of some department of learning or science is used in its application to the affairs of others or the practice of an art founded on it ." For Tawney (1951), a profession "is not simply a collection of individuals who earn a living for themselves by doing the same kind of work; it is a body of men who carry their work following rules designed to enforce certain standards both for the better protection of its members and for the service of the public."

Professionalization refers to transforming occupations into independent professions with specific characteristics, including full-time occupational performance, formal educational requirements, a code of professional ethics and rules, and forming professional associations and professional identities. For McDonald III (2010: 824), professionalization involves how an occupation becomes a profession. Furthermore, the CBE Policy Position Paper (cited in Hart, 2012) defines professionalization as "how an occupation alters its socio-professional situation and becomes a profession by acquiring professional attributes.

The concept of professionalization is familiar to the intellectual discourse. Discussion on the concept of professionalization dates back to the 20th century (Afebgua, 2010, p. 105). As observed by Meintjes and Niemann-Struweg (2009: 1), the discussion on professionalization emanated from an observation regarding a growing authority as it relates to the "bureaucratic management, process-driven working methods, and de-skilling of the labor middle-class." Conversantly, Pratt, and Adamelenkun (2008: 25) observe that in recent times, the best interest of professionals is constantly being undermined by innovation in work procedures and technological advancement. Accordingly, Gold, Rodgers & Smith (2002: 48) note that although most innovations mean no harm and, to a greater extent, are beneficial to professionals and their organizations, some innovations have a different capacity to undermine the security and stability of professional practices, and the practice of Public Administration is no exception to this assertion.

Accordingly, the global shift towards professionalizing the public service has gained momentum over the past quarter of a century (Afegbua, 2010, p. 105). For Geoghegan & Powell (2006, p. 845), the move towards professionalization of the public service by democratic governments around the world is necessitated by a need to establish partnership governance arrangements to realize socio-economic development initiatives that are guided by transformative policies on social development. To this end, governments worldwide are putting considerable effort into creating an effective public service (Afegbua, 2010), and the South African government has seen this as an essential process.

In dealing with the professionalization of the public service, a fundamental question may be asked regarding what is meant by the professionalization of the public sector. In an attempt to answer the latter question, Meriam (1937: 59) observes that professionalization of the public service refers to "the establishment of a class of positions for entrance into which is demanded professional, scientific, or technical training equivalent to that required for graduation from a college, university, or professional and technical school recognized standing. Meriam's definition affirms that education and training are some of the most critical features in professionalizing the public service. Therefore, necessary to build state capacity for adequate public service provision.

Conversantly, it is acknowledged that professionalizing the public service entails building state capacity for adequate provision of services. This is through education and training; a fundamental question remains "how is a public servant to be trained and capacitated in such a way as to make the public service perform its democratic mandate (Afegbua, 2010, p. 106). To answer this question, efforts were made to establish a Joint Universities Public Management Education Trust (JUPMET) with European Union donations, which marked a significant improvement in the functionality of the public service (Shava & Chamisa, 2018, p. 5). Regrettably, JUPMET collapsed around 2000 because "the consortium was seen to be rather exclusive and parochial, contrary to some of the inclusiveness and developmental objectives they subscribed to" (Clapper, 2007, p. 38). Additionally, Shava and Chamisa (2018) attribute the main failures of JUPMET training initiatives to cadre deployment practices.

Meanwhile, it is acknowledged that the deployment of political cadres negatively affects public service training in numerous ways (Franks, 2014). The South African government established the National School of Government (NSG), whose vision is to build "an ethical and capable public sector in service of the people ." The vision of the NSG exhibit characteristics of professionalizing the public service by equipping public officials with the necessary skills and expertise to improve public sector operations.

Improving public service through building professional capacity has long received recognition from an academic perspective (Afegbua, 2010). Notwithstanding the progress in professionalizing the public service, especially in South Africa, various institutions have designated curriculums necessary for consolidating professionalization of the public service. One such institution is the National School of Government (NSG), whose mandate is to capacitate public officials with the necessary skills and expertise that will enable them to provide an effective and efficient public service.

In South Africa, public service is characterized by corruption, non-responsiveness, and to some extent, unprofessionalism. This requires a transformation in applying progressive policies and removing or modifying policies seen as unsatisfactory. One such policy is the 'cadre deployment policy of the African National Congress (ANC). While it has been acknowledged that the 'cadre deployment policy of the ANC is not an official government policy, Magomane (2012: 18) notes that at present, there is no clear legislative framework regulating the implementation of the policy on cadre deployment, except it being a party policy, in this case, the policy of ANC.

Ideally, one would argue that cadre deployment in democratic states meant no harm. According to Davis (2010), cadre deployment is unique to political parties (such as the ANC) and rooted in the

traditions of Leninist democratic centralism. Accordingly, cadre deployment is the placement of loyal political cadres in state positions to consolidate power and influence by the political party (Cheeseman et al., 2019; Pattilo, 2012). For Ndedi and Kok (2017), cadre deployment is a practice of appointing party loyalists to government departments and institutions by a governing party to circumvent public reporting lines and accountability and bring departments and institutions under the control and influence of a party instead of the state.

Conversantly, Kota, et al. (2017) regard cadre deployment as a global phenomenon that is administered by various ruling political parties to provide state employment opportunities to loyalists. However, within the African context, the cadre deployment phenomenon is regarded as means to induce poor institutional quality or result in poor implementation of progressive policies by the State (Shava & Chamisa, 2018), and South Africa has no different offering.

Makole (2022: 22) attributes cadre deployment to the elevation, transfer, and movement of public servants or employees within public service. Kota et al. (2017) alluded that the latter is a global practice of ruling political parties to consolidate power by providing employment opportunities to party cadres. As noted by Mpapela (2017: 13), in the context of South Africa, the ANC in 1997 adopted the cadre deployment as part of the strategy to transform and reinforce the party's legitimacy in governance during the transitional period. Sebake and Sebola (2014) observed that in its 50th National Congress, the ANC believed the cadre deployment policy should be linked to the National Democratic Tasks as detailed in the party's Strategy and Tactics document.

Consequently, the ANC's notion of cadre deployment was widely criticized and regarded as means and ways in which the party sought to consolidate power across spheres of government, as well as take full control of the administration of the state in order to make way for "loyalists who would, in turn, create space for the inclusion if the political ideology of the ruling party (Sebake & Sebola, 2014). Meanwhile, the intentions of cadre deployment may be suitable. However, the practice of cadre deployment, especially in the South African public service, exhibited many challenges, thereby questioning the professionalization of the public service in the public eye.

Meanwhile, the desire to professionalize the public service is inevitable; the cadre deployment practices, particularly in the South African public service, remain a daunting challenge to ensuring that the public service is wholly transformed into one that is effective and responsive to the needs of the people. As noted by Lankeu and Maket (2012: 265), to transform the public service characterized by so much negativity in the public eye into a responsive, functioning, and performance-based one, there must be both behavior and culture of public servants.

The Centre for Development and Enterprise (cited in Kanyane, 2014) notes that "the ANC's cadre deployment systematically places loyalty ahead of merit and even competence and is, therefore, a serious obstacle to an efficient municipal service. Politically connected, and in many cases, incompetent people are deployed in senior positions. Unqualified people are unable to deliver services efficiently and effectively. The underlying thinking in cadre deployment practices resonates with the works of Meriam (1937: 60), who adopted the philosophy that government work was so simple that anyone could do it. In line with the latter, the standard of professionalism has been compromised, especially in the South African local sphere of government, where service delivery happens due to cadre deployment practices.

In 2009, the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) reported that South African parastatals were in disarray due to cadre deployment practices. The latter exhibits how cadre deployment practices in South Africa challenge the notion of professionalizing the public service by employing incapacitated individuals in professional positions. As noted by Butler (cited in Shava and Chamisa, 2018), several local government municipalities across the country fail to effectively plan their

work, manage their projects in a skill-full manner, wisely plan their budgets, and are unable to recognize the fact that a lack qualified experts in the technical field 'inhabits their capabilities'.

Cadre deployment is not just placing loyalists in the employment of the state to serve party interests. To a greater extent, cadre deployment exhibit characteristics of political interference in the administration of the state. As noted by Ndevu and Muller (2017: 18) that local government, as detailed in the National Development Plan (NDP), admits that political interference in the decision-making process of the state as well as political appointments resulted in 'turbulence that has undermined the morale of public servants and citizens' confidence in the public institution and municipalities are no exception to this assertion.

Meanwhile, it is acknowledged that not all inefficiency problems directly result from the cadre deployment policy of the ANC (Kanyane, 2014). In its fourth policy conference recommendations, the ANC acknowledged 'setbacks related to cadre deployment and recommended that a rigorous system underpin cadre deployment. Additionally, Kanyane (2014) observes that the latter includes the proposal that cadre deployment should consider academic qualifications and ensure that loyalty does not take precedence but be considered along attributes such as skills, competency, and merit. Considering the latter would not only ensure that the right person for the job in terms of qualifications, skills, and expertise are considered but also plays a pivotal role in professionalizing the public service by finding the right 'fit for the purpose.

Cadre deployment is practiced by political parties worldwide. Conversantly, authors such as (Mafunisa, 2004; Mashabela & Sebola, 2008; Sebola, 2010) (cited in Sebake & Sebola, 2014) observe that the ANC's cadre deployment policy in South Africa was not aimed at employing academically qualified cadres against those who are unqualified. Consequently, the latter indicates that the ANC's cadre deployment policy has no intention of professionalizing public service and building a capable state that is responsive to the needs of the people. Notwithstanding the progress made in building state capacity and professionalization of the public service, not all cadres are academically unqualified, and not all are incapacitated in discharging roles attached to the public office; however, the primary requirement of professionalization is nothing short of education and training acquired from a recognized institution of higher learning.

Meanwhile, cadre deployment considers loyalty a prerequisite to the state's employment. The ANC's policy on cadre deployment undermines the values and ethos of public administration, as noted by Makole (2017: 22); the deployment of political cadres to state positions undermines human rights and public service values that the ANC espoused in its Reconstruction and Development Programme policy document (RDP). Hoffman (2013) posits that the ANC's policy on cadre deployment creates room for corrupt activities, lack of answerability and transparency, and lowers the effectiveness and impartiality of the public service.

Sebake and Sebola (2014: 749) caution that the ANC's policy on cadre deployment is not immune to 'unintended negative consequences. During the national democratic revolution, the ANC's cadre deployment policy was centered on noble recruitment principles, political education, and training, promoting accountability cadre preservation (African National Congress, 1985). Furthermore, Sebake and Sebola (2014) argue that the cadre deployment policy 'has opened up a way for corruption in the employment of public servants, which ultimately promote nepotism, favoritism, poor service levels and brutal gate-keeping against the non-loyalists in government service. Despite the challenges associated with the cadre deployment policy, the ANC defended its policy on cadre deployment by stating the importance of the policy by ensuring that the individual that is deployed into the employment of the state performs optimally under the supervision of the party (Mlambo, Zubane, and Thusi (2022: 12).

The cadre deployment practice within the context of South Africa has done more harm than good. Ideally, the public service is regarded as the vehicle through which democratic government uplifts the quality of life, and the latter is no exception in the South African context. The former can only happen if people with the right qualifications, skills, and expertise are employed in public offices; for instance, in South Africa, it is in the local government sector where service delivery happens.

In South Africa, cadre deployment practices are associated with issues such as corruption, nepotism, and low productivity in performing public administration functions of the state. Thus, the majority of the problems encountered in the public service result from the cadre deployment policy and practices. In line with the latter, Patton (cited in Makole, 2017) notes that the President of the Republic of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa, admitted before the Commission on State Capture that "there are instances whereby political cadres are deployed to strategic government positions thus undermining the capacity of the state to improve service delivery."

Furthermore, various studies conducted on the implication of cadre deployment policy and practices in the professionalization of the public service reveal that cadre deployment is a contributing factor to poor service delivery and thus ultimately contributes to the creation of unprofessional public service that is characterized by corrupt practices, non-responsiveness, and nepotism. A study by Mlambo, Zubane, and Thusi (2022) reveals that cadre deployment promotes a culture of impurity and lacks accountability. Additionally, a study conducted by Banjo and Jili (2013) revealed that the culture of the so-called 'cadre deployment' and nepotism contributes to poor performance by municipalities and thus exhibits characteristics of being unable to serve South African communities. Furthermore, the study by Magagula et al. (2022) also reveals that cadre deployment practices contribute to unprofessionalism in the public service by appointing unskilled personnel to serve in public office.

Professionalization of the public service requires those appointed to serve in the public office to be in a position of relevant academic qualifications and equipped with the necessary skills and expertise. The latter will enable public officials to guide and reform the public service as it relates to the professionalization of the public service. Conversantly, public service is about providing goods and services to communities and encompasses developmental responsibilities as espoused in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, for local government municipalities. Furthermore, public service also entails formulating, implementing, and evaluating policies and strategies necessary to improve local communities quality of life. Accordingly, the latter requires relevant academic qualifications, skills, and expertise to ensure that the public service achieves its mandate.

Moreso, employment in the service of the state should be based on merit, thus eliminating cadre deployment practices that favor unqualified political cadres to the disadvantage of qualified, skilled, and experienced candidates. Public officials that are already employed in senior positions of the state without the necessary qualifications, skills, and expertise should be capacitated through recognized institutions, for instance, the National School of Government (NSG).

To a greater extent, the application of the cadre deployment policy in South Africa works against the professionalization of the public service, as the policy favors loyalists over merit appointments to state positions.

Concluding Remarks

Unproductive, unprofessional, unethical, and incompetent public servants have characterized the South African public sector. This is detrimental, as most South African citizens rely on state services. The unproductivity of public servants has been felt most acutely in local government, which is the closest to the public. Cadre deployment generates a lack of competence and professional staff by deploying people

without skills and competencies to strategic positions critical to public service delivery. This has had disastrous consequences for public service delivery. It is important to note that the South African Constitution promises and guarantees citizens access to public services. The authors agree that the government in South Africa still has a long way to go to ensure that public service delivery is professionalized. This is because politics heavily influence the South African public sector. The South African government has witnessed numerous service delivery protests, also attributed to a lack of professionalization in the public sector. The government must devise strategies to encourage the professionalization of public service.

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