

## The African National Congress and South Africa's Public Service: A Crisis of Dominance and Accountability

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### ABSTRACT

This article explores the impact of African National Congress-led government's dominance on South Africa's public service. On one hand, the African National Congress since the 1994 democratic elections had many achievements in advancing South Africa's democracy and responding to the citizens' needs through countless development and policy initiatives that were designed to cater to the basic needs of the citizens. On the other hand, it has become less responsive to citizen needs and this is evident as citizens have taken to the streets to protest for service provisions throughout the country. Citizens' discontent can be seen in the rapid decline of the African National Congress' political dominance and the formation of political coalitions. South African public service delivery has been marked by a lack of public accountability, corruption, cadre deployment, state capture, and procurement system manipulation as a result of the African National Congress's dominance since the country's first democratic elections. It is important to note that most South African citizens depend on the public sector and the African National Congress's dominance in the public sector has damaged its ability to be responsive to citizens' needs. This article relied on secondary sources, by reviewing current literature on the ramifications of having one political party dominating the country's political space for decades.

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## INTRODUCTION

South Africa is characterised by one-party domination and "monopolistic clientelism," where one party - the African National Congress (ANC) - mostly provides and distributes things through clientelist techniques (Dawson et al., 2023). The ANC got 66.25% of the vote for national parliament in the liberation elections of 1994, and their majority expanded to 66.35% in 1999. The ANC won 66.68% of the vote in 2004, as well as control of two of the nine provinces established in 1994 that had previously evaded its control. There were fears that the entire core of democracy in South Africa was under threat due to one party domination (Southall, 2005). The overwhelming electoral success of the ANC and the seeming resiliency at the polls have made it a dominant force in South Africa. The ANC has followed in the footsteps of the former governing National Party in undermining state apparatus independence, most notably via the practice of 'deploying' party members to public jobs. This merger of party and state has weakened the liberal ideal of division of powers and diminished parliament (Southall, 2014). According to the narrative of the dominant party, the ANC poses a danger to democracy due to its inability to be held responsible. The only way to preserve democracy's long-term viability is to have a variety of credible opposition groups that can challenge the current administration (Giliomee et al., 2001). The ANC has been South Africa's dominant political party for more than two decades and left behind an overwhelming majority of votes in six consecutive national elections. Because of the ANC's history as a liberation movement, which resonates with most of the voting public, the party has held power in South Africa for the last 25 years (Khambule et al., 2019).

Between 1994 and 2014, South Africa's most prominent political party, the ANC, gained 60 to 70 per cent of the vote in five elections Carlin et al. (2019). The ANC has been South Africa's dominant political party for more than two decades, winning six consecutive national elections with an overwhelming majority of votes. South Africa's ANC has held power for 25 years, partly owing to the party's history as a previous liberation organization, which resonates with most of the voting populace (Khambule et al., 2019). Five elections between 1994 and 2014 have seen the ANC win 60 to 70% of the vote with margins ranging from 40 to 57%, making it the most dominant party in South Africa Carlin et al. (2019). The ANC has won more than 60% of the vote in every election since 1994 except for the 2019 general election, when it received 57.5 percent of the vote. It has also held control of eight out of the nine provinces since 1999, despite losing KwaZulu-Natal to the IFP and then the Western Cape to the Democratic Alliance (DA) in the succeeding years (although it gained the more populous KZN through electoral attrition and floor crossing in the mid-1990s). In local government

elections since 2000, the ANC's record has been less outstanding, although it has gained a majority in each of the four elections, despite losing full power in metropolises such as Cape Town, Tshwane, Johannesburg, and Nelson Mandela Bay. [Battera \(2020\)](#) indicated that the ANC controls the legislature in South Africa, the selection of the country's next president is often a contest amongst members of the party.

In December 2017, Ramaphosa defeated Dlamini-Zuma for the party's presidency, securing his candidacy. On 22 May 2019, the NA voted unanimously to re-elect him as president for a second term. The ANC continues to maintain its position of power, but without an absolute majority, and has assumed the role of an opposition party in certain regions of the nation, particularly in urban towns. There exists a prevailing trend wherein the ANC continues to maintain a significant level of support and devotion from voters. These voters exhibit unwavering allegiance to the ANC, regardless of its capacity to effectively deliver essential services to the community ([Kgarose & Mashilo, 2023](#)). The ANC's national dominance is most noticeable, but at the municipal level it is becoming more challenged. This was amply demonstrated by the fact that the 2016 local elections saw the fiercest competition in the nation's democratic history. According to [Dawson et al. \(2023\)](#) the ANC had its worst electoral performance since the first democratic elections in 1994 and lost control of several significant cities, including Johannesburg, Tshwane, and Nelson Mandela Bay. Prior to the 2019 election, which was the sixth election since democracy was established, [Schulz-Herzenberg and Mattes \(2023\)](#) claim that a sizable majority of South Africans had grown increasingly dissatisfied with the performance of the African National Congress (ANC), the country's ruling party since 1994, as well as the larger democratic system. The detrimental effects of poverty and unemployment were exacerbated by the escalating government dysfunction associated with the tenure of former President Jacob Zuma from 2009 to 2018.

The objective of this research is to examine the effects of a single dominating political party on the provision of public services. This study aims to ascertain the indicators of ANC (African National Congress) dominance in the public sector and assess the consequences resulting from these elements. This research paper is significant in the context of South Africa because many citizens rely on public service sector and African National Congress dominance over the years has damage the public sector sustainability. The public sector is no longer able to respond to citizens needs. This can be attributed to lack of public accountability, corruption, cadre deployment, state capture, and procurement system manipulation as a result of the African National Congress's dominance since the country's first democratic elections.

**METHODOLOGY**

This article adopts a qualitative approach as it relies heavily on secondary data as a technique for gathering relevant and essential information to achieve its objective and answer its underlying issue. It analyzed the existing literature on the idea of one-party dominance and its repercussions on service provision. As a consequence of the ANC’s hegemonic status, the party has been used to corruptly enrich political leaders and their families while simultaneously supporting economic progress. As a result of the enormous amount of data provided and the research approach utilized, the article was able to draw a meaningful conclusion.

**Table 1.**  
Article Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Date of publication	Articles published From 2005 to 2023 Which Enable Collection of rich On Domiance of ANC in public Sector.	Articles published before 2005 and articles not relevant to the Study.
Article type	Original research Articles: Reviewed Published thesis and Dissertations.	Conference proceedings Unpublished thesis and Dissertations.
Language	English Articles	Other Languages Articles
Articles Relevance	Articles that Address one party Dominance on civil Services provision (Ramifications)	Articles not relevant to the research topic in question.

Table 1 presents the criteria utilized to determine the inclusion and exclusion of publications in the literature review. The scientific databases were utilized to get the publications. The reports were obtained from several sources, such as Google Scholar, Web of Science, published reports, Science Direct, and EBSCOHost, among others.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

The ANC’s dominance in South Africa from the 1994 election until the 2019 election, when they lost their majority, has impeded public service delivery and good governance. Because of the ANC’s control, the party’s senior office bearers and public employees are more likely to engage in corruption, manipulation of procurement systems, and wasteful expenditure. The ANC’s top leaders have benefitted from state capture, and cadre deployment has been utilized as a tool for maladministration and corruption. The ANC has enjoyed a legislative majority in South Africa since the country’s first universal

suffrage elections in 1994, which abolished apartheid. In May 2019, the ANC secured a majority in the national assembly with 57.5 per cent of the vote, its smallest margin ever. Ramaphosa was re-elected president by the Assembly after the elections (Cook, 2020). Despite the positive consequences of this dominating party system, various concerns threaten the quality of South African democracy. Parliamentary accountability and supervision, as well as corruption at the highest levels of government, jeopardize the democratic process's aims of legitimacy and stability (Mancebo, 2020). Public accountability, on the other hand, is far more difficult to achieve in ANC-controlled towns, where fewer residents want it and a higher risk of a politicized organizational structure. South Africans believe that the ANC is dominant at the national level but ineffective at the local level (Zimbalist, 2021). Zuma and his network of business and political associates were allegedly involved in so much corruption that it was dubbed "state capture." Zuma is also facing charges related to a weapons procurement scheme in the 1990s. The broadest challenges include severe poverty, social inequality, unemployment, and inequitable access to public services. Such challenges disproportionately affected the poor black population, who were apartheid's primary victims (Cook, 2020). The current political leadership of the ANC has no public accountability. It is the duty of individuals who have been entrusted with public funds to report back to those who have entrusted them regularly. When public resources are used, public bodies must answer for the allocation, use, and consequences of such resources. This means that public accountability's main objective is to ensure that public funds are utilized effectively, that no money is wasted or stolen, and that the public receives real value from those monies (Khan & Chowdhury, 2007). Between 1994 and 2008, corruption in the public sector cost South Africa R185 billion. According to estimates, 20% of the R150 billion budget for government procurement is misappropriated or stolen each year, or R30 billion. This means that during the past 23 years, South Africa has lost more than R700 billion. Millions of dollars could have been utilized to assist all South Africans, particularly the poor, but instead millions of dollars were wasted by the ANC-led government's corruption (Kgatle, 2017). In South Africa, cadre deployment is linked to public servants being accused of operating immorally solely to benefit politicians who "want to promote and defend their empires" and set the goals of governmental institutions. If such government employees, also known as cadre deployees, continued to support and show loyalty to their well-known political masters, they would be rewarded with job opportunities. The entrenchment of sexism and nepotism in South Africa has been ensured by this network of political collaboration. President Jacob Zuma replaced personnel at all levels of government and on the ANC's election lists using the deployment committees after previous President Thabo Mbeki was defeated

at the 2007 Polokwane conference. Because so many of the cadres selected for this factional strategy lacked the essential skills, corruption and favoritism were made easier (Jankielsohn & Mollentze, 2021). Many developing nations face difficulties in providing services. In this environment, several South African districts have seen increased violence in service delivery demonstrations during the last decade. Protests in South Africa's ANC-led government may be traced back to the organization's inability to deliver enough basic services. Service delivery discontent is exacerbated by inequality, relative poverty, and apartheid imbalances, exaggerated and unfulfilled political promises, and uneven access to services. Citizens' frustrations are worsened by a lack of responsiveness from political office bearers, in addition to limited or ambiguous communication and poor service standards (Masiya et al., 2019).

### **The Dominance of the ANC: A Lack of Public Accountability**

In South Africa, democracy came after apartheid. Inadequate parliamentary supervision, escalating corruption, state takeover, and misuse of authority and state institutions plagued the fifth democratically elected parliament (2014–2019). A dictatorship employed majoritarianism to thwart legislative oversight processes and escape responsibility from the legislative and executive branches of government. Service delivery has consequently declined in South Africa's multiple government ministries (Khambule et al., 2019). Local government in South Africa confronts a number of difficulties, including poor service delivery and a lack of openness. Public accountability is a crucial feature of local governance because it promotes community involvement and engagement. A system for delivering services from start to finish is local government. Effective municipal leaders are required to gain the trust and confidence of local communities in order to provide housing, water, sanitation, and roads (Ijeoma & Sambumbu, 2013).

Democracy and good governance in South Africa are in danger due to long-term erosion or loss of institutions, particularly government responsiveness and accountability, because of a lack of internal party democracy inside the governing ANC (Lotshwao, 2009). The Institute of Security Studies claims that there are at least five demonstrations over inadequate or nonexistent public services, governmental corruption, and a lack of citizens' accountability every day in South Africa. Society in South Africa is not very trustworthy. The growth of a functioning society depends on its citizens having a culture of trust, both with their governments and with one another. When confidence in a society is poor, disagreements are typically addressed violently because people would rather withdraw into tribal laagers. The hostility between white and black South Africans from the apartheid era has proven intractable. Regardless

of race, low quality service delivery, a lack of transparencies, and high levels of public corruption erode public confidence in government (Gumede, 2015). According to De Jager et al. (2015), the first top members of the ANC had ideals such as individual responsibility, ethics, and a sense of social awareness. Although the ANC has been the dominant party in South Africa since 1994, it appears that its leaders are run by a different set of principles. Growing corruption and poor service performance make this clear. In various sectors of administration, the ANC government has already demonstrated that it is both notably unresponsive and unaccountable; unresponsive due to a lack of internal democratic involvement; and unaccountable since the institution of accountability is under the party's control. The poor level of service delivery in the nation's local governments is a result of the ruling party's incapacity to meet popular demands (Lotshwao, 2009). There has been a wave of protests against poverty in South Africa since 2004. It has been widespread and severe, even emulating an insurgency-like scenario in certain cases. On the surface, the protests have been about service delivery and against corrupt municipal officials. Because to the ANC's inattentive, irresponsible, and self-serving elected office bearers, South Africa has experienced several service delivery protests in recent years (Alexander, 2010).

### **The Dominance of the ANC: A Tool for Corruption in the Public Sector**

Weak political leadership, widespread patronage networks, rent-seeking, and corruption have all been present in ANC-led municipalities in South Africa, and they have all had an impact on the institutional functioning of the municipality (Nzo, 2016). Corruption has been detected in all three branches of government in South Africa. Although corruption and the misuse of power can be identified and prevented, these instruments are not being effectively applied (Kroukamp & Cloete, 2018). Corruption networks associated with the African National Congress (ANC) amassed enormous wealth both domestically and abroad, all the while operating with impunity, dodging or buying off law enforcement, and deceiving Parliament, taxpayers, and voters (Koelble, 2022). After 25 years of democracy, corruption has become a major roadblock to the nation's growth framework. Massive corruption scandals involving the ANC government have been ongoing since 1994, benefiting a select few cronies at the expense of the general public (D. N. Mlambo, 2019). In South Africa, financial irregularities, poor administration, and corruption frequently impede the provision of services. Violent service delivery protests are the result of ineptitude and inefficiency on the part of local government (Napier, 2018). Allegations of pervasive corruption in local government and a deficiency in public service delivery have sparked protests against the ANC-led Government. Numerous

residents have turned to violent riots since 2004, setting fire to residences of unhappy local government leaders as well as schools and libraries. The hardship of the poor and the lack of service delivery in underprivileged areas are made worse by corruption, bad financial management, and cadre deployment, particularly among those associated with the ruling African National Congress (ANC) (Breakfast et al., 2019). South African politics have been dominated by the ANC ever since apartheid ended. Simultaneously, the party has been accused of corruption and misbehaviour by the government (Jävervall, 2021).

### Table 2.

The number of service delivery protests from 2009-2018

Year	Number of Recorded Protests
2009	107
2010	111
2011	81
2012	173
2013	155
2014	191
2015	164
2016	137
2017	173
2018	237

Source: (D. N. Mlambo, 2019)

According to the Table 2, the ANC-led government has experienced several service delivery strikes as a result of poor service delivery, corruption, and maladministration in the local government realm. The ANC political office bearers disrespect the community because they think that the ANC will always have the ultimate power and control in South African politics. In general, South Africa is on a rocky path after the apartheid period, with news on poverty, crime, unemployment, inequality, economic greed, corruption, incompetence, and inefficient administration making headlines. Corruption exists at all levels of government in South Africa, including municipal, provincial, and national levels. Corruption in South African municipalities is accompanied by a lack of accountability, poor governance, maladministration, and corruption (D. N. Mlambo, 2019). Johannesburg was administered by an ANC-led administration from the city's first democratic local government elections in 2000 until the most recent local government elections in 2016. During the ANC administration, the city saw an increase in corruption and a decrease in government accountability, leading to a loss of trust in the government. The ANC's post-apartheid ascent corruption and the



misappropriation of public funds are commonplace in South African politics, and no one is held accountable. For better or worse, corruption has been on the rise under President Zuma since the state capture fiasco, the Nkandla affair, and ANC efforts to weaken parliamentary oversight and accountability have all taken place during his time in office. Nelson Mandela's and Thabo Mbeki's presidencies were no exception (Khambule et al., 2019).

### **Cadre deployment as an indication of ANC dominance in the South African Government**

The ANC's cadre deployment mentality is directly responsible for the subpar performance of South Africa's public services. Since the ANC agenda consistently places dependability over legitimacy and even ability, it is a real obstacle to effective open governance. In spite of their inability to properly manage their public offices, it is frequently believed by contemporary South Africans that persons with political connections hold key positions in government organizations (Isaacs, 2016). Politicians and other dishonest public officials frequently abuse the idea by prioritizing personal wealth, which is contrary to the legislation's original intentions. When formal credentials are not taken into account when hiring public employees and no assessments are made of a person's suitability for holding a public position, criticism of the cadre deployment method is valid. In many South African government agencies, these ineffective habits have resulted in subpar performance management (Shava & Chamisa, 2018). Evidence that more than half of municipal administrators lack the necessary qualifications for their positions supported the institutional collapse of the state through cadre deployment. Cadre deployment violates the Public Services Amendment Act and runs counter to sound governance principles (Qobo, 2019).

The ANC seeks to delegitimize not just the white opposition but also any concentrations of power inside the party that may undermine the leadership. The ANC approach should 'constantly strengthen its ability and competence in using and transforming power tools.' To accomplish so, the ANC required a "cadre policy" that ensured it played a leadership role in all centres of power (Giliomee et al., 2001). Cadre deployment is one method through which the party-state link is blurred. During Zuma's tenure, this cadre deployment strategy evolved into a personalistic system in which people who were personally devoted to Zuma were selected regardless of their abilities. When the deployment of cadres undermines sufficient political supervision, both the functioning of public institutions and the delivery of excellent public services suffer (Qobo, 2019). The increased deployment of politically connected individuals in local governments and other public organizations has a substantial

influence on levels of government corruption. Various examples of corruption, such as the embezzlement of public funds and the underdevelopment of local communities, have been documented in South Africa since the inception of the cadre deployment program. Cadre deployment has exacerbated corruption and is an obstacle to accomplishing a developing state's goals and objectives in many parts of the economy (Shava & Chamisa, 2018).

### State capture as evidence of ANC dominance in the South African government

The term "state capture" refers to the exploitation of public institutions for personal gain. Creating a well-organized network of corporations and individuals strategically positioned to redirect major state institutions' public interest emphasis and drain public money from state coffers into private hands. 2017 (Swilling). The ANC has ruled since April 1994, winning six consecutive general elections. The former liberation movement still has an absolute majority of votes, but in recent years, the number of eligible voters who have ceased voting has surpassed the ANC's support. The country has degraded into a one-party state, with popular support fast eroding. Jacob G. Zuma, his ANC group, and commercial networks perfected state capture from 2009 to 2018, resulting in unparalleled levels of corruption in South Africa (Engel, 2021). Evidence of state capture was so prevalent under Zuma's presidency that it prompted an official investigation by the Public Protector, whose report titled 'The State of Capture' was released late in 2016. The Zondo Commission of Inquiry was formed as a result of this, with various political figures testifying about significant mismanagement, corruption, and personal partisanship during South Africa's so-called "nine squandered years" (Fredericks & Jager, 2021). According to Dassah (2018), President Zuma's associates are accused of selecting cabinet members and key government officials as well as obtaining lucrative state contracts. According to reports, the Gupta brothers have significant ties inside the ANC and considerable influence in its procedures and across the state, and the benefits of their influence reach three provincial premiers (the Free State, North-West, and Mpumalanga).

According to Bhorat et al. (2017), the ANC's state capture conundrum is the product of a fight over strategic aims between constitutionalists and radical reformers. Proponents of constitutional change think that increasing governmental capability will assist the new South Africa in fulfilling its 1994 promises of equality and progress. On the other side, radical reformers think the only way to fulfill the promise is to destroy legally enacted laws. The political elite and former and long-serving bureaucrats from South Africa's transitional administration also use subnational institutions to carry out state capture.

In 2018, municipalities spent R3.4 billion on consulting fees, the majority of which were awarded outside of the purview of traditional procurement procedures (National Treasury, 2019). A state-business nexus made feasible by the political class is the fundamental problem of state capture in South Africa. The government's political elite controls the currency and takes advantage of its economic development capabilities to maintain patronage systems. There was no urgent plan to close the socioeconomic gaps in the nation between 2009 and 2018 (Khambule, 2021). Eskom's situation in the state capture case is highly symbolic, emphasizing both the plight of the economy and the ANC's failure to provide public goods to the bulk of the country's impoverished citizens. Eskom is heavily indebted, just like many other state-owned businesses, notably South African Airways. By the end of 2019, Eskom owed \$26 billion (Engel, 2021). According to De Klerk and Solomon (2019), state capture in South Africa is comparable to a covert coup; a political aspiration made possible by the ANC's radical economic transformation goal.

### **Dominance of the ANC: Procurement System Manipulation of the procurement system and wasted expenditure**

The tenderpreneur is a South African term for a businessperson who uses political ties to get public procurement contracts (called "tenders"), sometimes in exchange for favors or benefits. Tenderpreneurship has a bad connotation related to unethical behavior. The relationship was especially visible in state procurement procedures, as bids to deliver products and services were progressively handed to people with personal ties to the dominant political party, the African National Congress. Tenderpreneurship has been associated with tender manipulation and corruption in state procurement under Zuma's presidency, particularly in large-value contract procurement to provide South African state-owned enterprises with products and services (Piper & Charman, 2018). Municipal authorities ignored procurement business procedures and SCM regulations during the COVID-19 outbreak. According to the Central Supplier Database approved by the National Treasury (CSD), local authorities inflated several procurement awards, and certain suppliers were paid more than the amount specified in their award letter (V. H. Mlambo & Masuku, 2020). The theft of resources is attributed to clientelism politics and administrative involvement in tender processes by public officials; however, it should be attributed to a feeling of envy and greed in the desire to progress one's life and those around them unfairly and criminally (Masenya, 2017).

The deliberate under utilization of human resources while squandering physical and financial resources, such as procurement processes, skills development levies, and bribe payments, is all part of achieving the so-called "transformation

objectives." Procurement methods were designed to protect businesses from specific groups of powerful individuals, according to Pravin Gordan, a former finance minister who resigned in 2009 [Verhoef \(2020\)](#). There were ZAR 65.5 billion in "irregular" and "wasted" spending by the federal, provincial, and municipal governments in South Africa, as well as ten of the 21 state-owned firms, according to the country's Auditor General's 2015/2016 consolidated audit reports. This year's total was more than twice as high as the year before. Corruption in government and severe poverty in the nation raise the issue of whether the high levels of 'irregularity' and 'wastage' are reducing the level of fiscal citizenship, or whether it is just a matter of people not paying their fair share of taxes [\(Tickle, 2018\)](#). According to the Auditor General's report, pointless and wasteful spending in 2014/15 was R1.34 billion, more than R1 billion more than in 2010/11, and illegal expenditure has tripled to R15.32 billion. Municipalities spent an additional R14.750 billion on irregular spending in the previous fiscal year due to non-compliance with Supply Chain Management (SCM) laws [\(Kroukamp, 2017\)](#).

### **Future Prospects of South African Political Space and Power**

It is a new era in South Africa's political landscape. For the first time since apartheid ended, Nelson Mandela's ANC has failed to win most of the seats in the municipal elections in 2021. As expected, the political stronghold of the ANC in South Africa is eroding. South Africa's next general election, scheduled for 2024, is the focus presently. By putting together a group of people, it may be feasible to continue. Politicians are already debating the prospects for South Africa's post-ANC future [\(The Editorial Board, 2020\)](#). Corrupt officials, weak administration, and poor management are all problems in South Africa. The ANC has been the leading political party since 1994, it is currently facing disunion and fall in popularity. The party popularity in South African political space has dropped below 50% in the 2021 municipal level elections, and the future of Africa's oldest liberation party is gloomy. The ANC continues to be the South Africa's biggest party by a broad margin. However, it is becoming more dependent on local businesses, rural support base and groups from its past homelands to maintain its sustenance. Ramaphosa has been accused of ineffective leadership, the negative impact of cadre deployment on service delivery, and all-consuming factional infighting. Elections have become a matter of life and death. To an outsider, the ANC of 2022 seems to be a self-serving alliance with no clear concept of its purpose or South Africa's future [\(Cilliers, 2022\)](#).

Electoral democracy in South Africa has made significant strides, especially at the local government level. These include power swings in big cities, the fall and revival of major parties, different forms of youth participation, and

coalition experiments. All elections have become referendums on electoral democracy. In addition to new campaign finance restrictions, a split between major political party lines, a loss of the main opposition and the growth of new political groupings, and a dithering government, the election's unique dynamics affected both voters and political parties and communities (Fredericks & Jager, 2021). South Africa's political environment is about to undergo significant transformation as a result of coalition discussions and the formation of new alliances. The general election in 2024, which might be the most significant since the end of white minority rule in 1994, could serve as a litmus test for what to anticipate (Maseko, 2021). In November 2021, opposition parties like the Democratic Alliance and the Economic Freedom Fighters seized control of several of South Africa's most major metropolitan municipalities. After decades of corruption, poor management of public resources, and poor service delivery, popular support for the ANC is waning. So, the ANC's vote share in the next general election might be as low as 49%, opening the door for the opposition to form an alliance and unseat the ANC (Müller, 2021).

The national ANC is severe peril. It views its adversary as the possibility of losing a national election to a coalition of its opponents, rather than any one party. In the 2021 municipal elections, its total support decreased to 44%, despite low participation. In reality, less than one in ten South Africans voted for what was once dubbed "the liberation party" (Christianson, 2022). The municipal council has legislative and executive responsibility under the Constitution. The efficient performance of these responsibilities is critical for a competent and developing local government. Managing a municipality, setting a strategic direction, and making crucial decisions are solely the responsibility of the council, which is the highest decision-making body. As a result, coalition members must work closely together to ensure that the council's commitments are met. As a rule, though, coalition governments are unstable and generally break apart early in their tenure. A local coalition's inability to enact rules and ordinances, employ senior leadership, and even approve a budget could have major implications (Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2021). When it comes to coalition politics, there is a clear difference between those working toward a solution and those fighting against it. Anyone who saw the pandemonium in Johannesburg and Tshwane during the portfolio chair selection process might be forgiven for believing that the problem parties were winning. Even Nevertheless, coalition governments continue to be the best route forward for South Africa's varied difficulties (Christianson, 2022).

## DISCUSSION

Cadre deployment is the strategy or approach that is employed by ANC to award person who are loyalist to the party with the jobs. The strategy has yielded adverse consequences within the public sector, particularly at the local government level, when persons lacking the necessary skills and knowledge are being appointed to key positions within the local government domain. The deployment of cadres undermines the essential role of local government, which is mandated by the South African Constitution of 1997 as a sector of governance that is closer to the people and responsible for delivering fundamental services to local communities. As a result, this practice has significant ramifications. The absence of public accountability within the South African sector is a notable difficulty that has arisen because of the dominant presence of the African National Congress (ANC) in the government. The implementation of consequence management across many government areas is lacking. The behaviour of high-ranking politicians does not consistently align with exemplary leadership, since they frequently engage in inappropriate actions and often evade accountability for their misconduct. The prevalence of corruption within the South African public sector is notably high, mostly attributed to the absence of sufficient public accountability mechanisms. Corruption practises are depleting the funding intended for the provision of services. The instances of state capture that the nation has witnessed under the leadership of the African National Congress (ANC) serve as a vivid illustration of the consequences associated with the presence of a single dominating political party in government. These incidents included influential public figures who were elected to office by the citizens yet were ultimately responsible for orchestrating the state capture. The primary responsibility of those holding political office is to fulfill the needs and interests of the public. Regrettably, there are instances where these individuals prioritise their own personal gain and engage in acts of embezzlement from public funds. The public sector in South Africa is currently facing several issues that pose a danger to the long-term viability of providing effective services to its inhabitants. This situation is concerning as a significant portion of the population in South Africa relies on the government for essential services, mostly due to the high unemployment rate and an economy that lacks substantial advantages for its residents. With the forthcoming 2024 elections in South Africa, a range of contrasting sentiments are being expressed. These elections hold significant implications for the African National Congress (ANC), as they will determine whether the party maintains its prevailing position of influence within the national sphere of governance or experiences a decline in dominance. The overwhelming control exerted by the ANC has led to a departure from its core principles and a change in priorities towards the personal gains of politicians, rather than the welfare of

the public. The present state of the South African public sector is characterised by inefficiencies, and it is the economically disadvantaged citizens that bear the consequences of this dysfunctionality, which may be attributed to the dominant influence of the ANC.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The ANC's hold on the South African government has degraded good governance, democracy, and service delivery, while denying people the ability to live a more satisfying life. The ANC-led government has been suffocated by corruption and corrupt office bearers who have used cadre deployment and state capture to further their personal interests. After successfully winning elections and dominating South Africa's political arena since 1994, the African National Congress (ANC) government has lost its parliamentary majority while it retains most political seats. In South Africa, the collapse of the ANC in power may be attributed to the government's failure to respond to people's requests, internal party divisions and disputes, and corruption, which has impeded the delivery of public services.

## **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The subject of ANC dominance in the South African public sector has been extensively studied, yet evidence is scarce about the effects of this dominance on service provision. The researcher dedicated additional effort to comprehensively analyze the implications of African National Congress (ANC) supremacy on service delivery. This study involves identifying a limited number of research studies that address the topics of state capture, manipulation of the procurement system, cadre deployment, lack of public accountability, and corruption within the public sector of South Africa. The aim was to examine the impact of these issues on the provision of services.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The authors unequivocally affirm that there are no existing financial or personal conflicts of interest that could influence the outcome of this study. Additionally, no financial assistance or remuneration has been received for the execution of this research or the composition of this article. We also confirm that we have no direct financial or personal affiliations that could potentially bias the results or interpretations presented herein.

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