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Moral Values and Ethics as Antidotes for Corruption in the South African Public Service and Administration

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the relationship between morals, ethics, public administration and corruption. The argument advanced is that morals and ethics are antidotes for bureaucratic corruption in public service and administration. Currently there seems to be low ethics and morality in public service and administration in South Africa. The discussions in this paper consider the obligations under the South African National Development plan 2030, African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption, the African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration, and the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralization, Local Governance and Local Development for a corruption free and ethical public service and administration.

Keywords: African Union, Corruption, Ethics, Morals, Leadership, Public Administration, Public Agents, Public Services, Public Interest

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Scope of the paper*

This paper is about enhancing normative and institutional strategies to combat corruption, with emphasis on requiring moral values and principles, and ethical leadership and conduct as invaluable in combating corruption in the public service and administration. The argument advanced by the researchers is that morals and ethics are antidotes for bureaucratic corruption in public service and administration. Whitton (2001) once observed that “[e]thical conduct and corruption in the public sector are the two sides of the one coin”, in particular stating that “[t]o the extent that an organisation succeeds in enhancing its own ethical climate internally, and that which it operates in externally (for example, by including suppliers and contractors within the scope of an ethics programme), it reduces the acceptability of corruption. Conversely, control opportunities for corruption and you make room for ethical practices to become established.” The discourse of public administration morality and ethical leadership are omnipotence in public administration, particularly considering the current corruption and maladministration involving public offices is endemic, pervasive and chronic in South Africa. The view by the researchers is that moral values and ethics are antidotes for corruption in public service and administration in Africa. A typical case is South Africa, which is currently facing multiple corruption and maladministration related commission of enquiries and investigations including.

There seem to be low levels of ethics and morality in public service and administration. Currently under enquiries such as the Zondo Commissions of State Capture and the VSB Scandal are demonstrative of public administration lacking in accountability and transparency. The discussions in this paper consider the obligations under the South

African National Development plan 2030, African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption, the African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration, and the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralization, Local Governance and Local Development for a corruption free and ethical public service and administration.

Making reference to Hanekom *et al.* (1990), Puiu (2015:605) identifies the seven most common unethical problems in public sector, namely: bribery, nepotism and theft; conflict of interest; misuse of insider knowledge; use and abuse of confidential information for personal purposes; public responsibility and accountability; corruption; and the influence of interest and pressure groups. Corruption is the greatest challenge that cannot be addressed without reference to ethics. Africa needs ethical and servant leaders who have the political will to combat corruption.

1.2 The Ills and Impacts of corruption

The ill-effects of corruption on the society, polity and economy of a country are far-reaching. As correctly noted by said Budhram (2015:49), "corruption has wide-ranging corrosive effects, from undermining democracy and the rule of law, to providing the fertile ground in which organised crime and terrorism flourish". It is the epicentre of many political, economic and social ills in many countries. It is omnipresent in different forms and proportions, with devastating effects on the lives of common citizens and the whole of society (Sibanda, 2015:1). Its corrosive effect has been more pronounced and deeply felt in the public sector of developing countries like South Africa. As Hanna *et al.* state (2011:2), "[i]n many developing countries, public sector corruption is a key barrier to effective service delivery... On a macro level, many scholars believe that corruption impedes economic growth and development".

1.3 Rampant Corruption in the South African Public Service and Administration

The National Development Plan 2030 (NDP) has as its vision a state free of corruption and corrupt activities (see Pillay, 2016:124 and Budhram, 2014:53). This vision appears to be fast becoming just a pipe-dream. Like in many countries that have transitioned from undemocratic to democratic government South Africa has not been saved from the rise and prevalence of acts corruption and other corrupt activities. There is a non-abating prevalence and evidence of the scourge of corruption and other self-serving behaviours, often amongst the upper echelons of governing power.

The South African Constitutional Court in the case of *Glenister v the President of the Republic of South Africa and Others* (Glenister II), observed that "[c]orruption has become a scourge in our country and it is posing a real danger to our developing democracy. It undermines the ability of the government to meet its commitment to fight poverty and to deliver on other social and economic rights guaranteed in our Bill of Rights". The same sentiments were expressed (Liberati, 2000), who pointed out that corruption "...threatens the rule of law, democracy and human rights, undermines good governance, fairness and social justice, distorts competition, hinders economic development and endangers the stability of democratic institutions and the moral foundations of society".

In the public service and administration domain corruption is likely to take place in many areas (Ahmed *et al.*, 1992). Examples are the state procurement and tender processes; the disposal, sale and allotment of government property; embezzlement of public funds; and many other shop-floor malpractices. Notable cases of grand corruption, maladministration and illicit enrichment include the following, for example:

- The then head of the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) Willie Hofmeyr in his report to the Portfolio Committee for Justice and Constitutional Development in October 2011 stated that "SIU was investigating 588 procurement contracts valued at R9.1-billion and about 360 conflict-of-interest matters valued at R3.4-billion" (Sibanda, 2019a).

- The Public Protector of the Republic of South Africa, report *In the extreme: Report No.11 of 2011/12 of the Public Protector on an investigation into allegations of a Breach of the Executive Ethics Code by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Mr Sicelo Shiceka, MP*, which addressed allegations that the late Sicelo Shiceka, then Minister for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, misused government resources by visiting “ a girlfriend in a Swiss prison” (Sibanda, 2019a).
- The Public Protector report entitled *Against the Rules Too, Report of the Public Protector in terms of Section 182(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 and Section 8(1) of the Public Protector Act, 1994 on an investigation into complaints and allegations of maladministration, improper and unlawful conduct by the Department of Public Works and the South African Police Service (SAPS) relating to the leasing of SAPS accommodation in Durban*, 2011. The report followed an investigation that Gwen Mahlangu-Nkabinde, then Minister of Public Works, was involved in the “awarding of two tenders worth R1,116 billion and R604 million respectively to a politically well-connected businessman for the lease of new premises for the SAPS at above reasonable market prices” (Sibanda, 2019a).
- Public Protector report, entitled *Secure in Comfort: Report by the Public Protector on an investigation into allegations of impropriety and unethical conduct relating to the installation and implementation of security measures by the Department of Public Works at and in respect of the private residence of President Jacob Zuma at Nkandla in the KwaZulu-Natal province*, Report No: 25 of 2013/24, March 19 2014, which “revealed that the former president and his family had unduly benefited from upgrades which has escalated from R60-million to R246-million in costs” (Sibanda, 2019a).
- Reports of ethical scandals are commonplace in the world (Agbim, 2018:20), from the Enron scandal in the US to state capture in South Africa. Also, corrupt activities as revealed in the *VBS Mutual Bank – The Great Bank Heist* report released on 10 October 2018 which in our view exposed the latest epitome of maladministration, self-enrichment and corruption in the public service and administration. The Great Bank Heist Report revealed a flagrant disregard of the relevant mutualisation rules by the bank management and several officials from specific municipalities that are fingered in involvement in corrupt practices. According to the report, an amount of almost R2bn was looted from the VBS Mutual Bank, and an “amount of R1.894m was gratuitously received from VBS by some 53 persons of interest, both natural and juristic, over the period 1 March 2015 to 17 June 2018” (Motau, 2018).

Interestingly, South Africa is one of the countries in Africa with numerous institutional, legal and regulatory frameworks designed to eliminate corruption or to allow for mechanisms to combat corruption (O'Brien, 2013:3–6; Kututwa, 2005:5; Majila, Taylor & Raga, 2017:88-89; Mosselini, 2013:3–4; Naidoo, 2012:10; Adetiba, 2016:27). The following are examples of structures/institutions with anti-corruption or corruption investigation mandates in the South African milieu: the Office of the Public Protector, as it discharges its functions and obligations as mandated by sections 182–183 of the Constitution; the Auditor-General as mandated by sections 188–189 of the Constitution; the South African Police Service's (SAPS) Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (Hawks); the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) established in terms of the Special Investigating Units and Special Tribunal Act, Act No. 74 of 1996 (SIU Act); the Asset Forfeiture Unit (AFU) established in the Office of the National Director of Public Prosecution to focus on the implementation of chapters 5 and 6 of the Prevention of Organised Crime Act, No. 12 of 1998; the Special Anti-Corruption Unit (SACU) launched in 2011 as part of the Department of Public Service and Administration with a mandate to assist the SIU; the National Treasury; and the Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC), established in terms of sections 2–45 of the Financial Intelligence Centre Act No. 38 of 2001. However, it would seem that the current approach to combatting corruption occurs within a legislative framework supported by institutions is not bearing fruit.

2. DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

2.1 Ethics

Thonzhe and Vyas-Doorgapersad (2017:138) define *ethics* “as a system of moral principles relating to that branch of philosophy dealing with values on human conduct, with respect to rightness or wrongness of certain actions”. Explicit in this definition is that ethics “constitutes the basic principles of correct action undertaken based on rules of conduct” (Thonzhe & Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2017:38). The relational connection between ethics and corruption is viewed as important towards achieving good public service and administration (see Whitton, 2001; Pillay, 2016; Vigoda-Gadot, 2000; Cheteni & Shindika, 2017; Gildenhuis, 2004; Naidoo, 2012; Okagbue, 2012; Agbim, 2018; Mendonca, 2001; Van Aswegen and Engelbrecht, 2009).

2.2 Integrity

Definitions of the word or phenomenon “integrity” are varied across the globe. And they are also dependent on the circumstances and the environment under consideration (Hoekstra & Zweegers, 2016). In the Netherlands, for example, integrity is taken to be more than anti-corruption principles and values, and broadly refers to “promoting an ethical climate marked by features including openness, safety, respect, trust, leadership, and justice” Hoekstra and Zweegers (2016:54).

According to Huberts *et al.* (2016:13) visions of integrity or what the operational definition of integrity include referring to ‘integrity’ as: as wholeness; integration into the environment; professional responsibility; conscious and open action based on moral reflection; a (number of) value(s) or virtue(s), including incorruptibility Integrity as compliance with laws and codes; compliance with relevant moral standards and values; and as exemplary moral behaviour. The public service integrity policy must therefore “ideally be a combination of ‘software’ (ethical culture), ‘hardware’ (rules and procedures), and an ‘operating system’ (organisation and coordination of integrity policies)”, said Hubert *et al.* (2016:15, quoting Van Tankeren and Montfort 2012).

There is clearly a very close and overlapping relationship between ethical and moral conduct on the one hand and the requirements to act with integrity on the other.

2.3 Servant leadership

Okagbue (2012:43–47) points to the concept of servant leadership presented by Greenleaf in 1977 as a leadership approach that regards leaders first as servants of the people they lead. In particular, servant leaders prioritise service for the common good of all members of the organisation, instead of self-enrichment. As Okagbue (2012) correctly posits, the concept of servant leadership with its ethical considerations is well-suited in the public sector because public office holders are placed in the position of trust. The number of corruption and self-enrichment scandals that have swamped the South African public service and government makes one ask whether individuals who are entrusted with public offices and public service in South Africa do have the ethical and moral fortitude to serve the needs of the people by putting the people’s interests first.

Greenleaf’s concept of leadership draws a distinction between two leaders, namely the leader first and the servant first. Greenleaf asserts that leader-first people are “into leadership because of their hunger for power or for other material and personal gain... Servant-leaders are committed to serving the needs and well-being of their followers, so that the latter come first before the leaders; the servant-leader is more concerned about public interest than self-interest” (Okagbue, 2012:44. See also UN Report, 1997).

In South Africa the late struggle icon and Nobel Peace Prize winner, former President Nelson Mandela, was highly regarded as a servant leader because of the humility and “people first” posture that he embodied. Unfortunately, his ethical and moralistic public service qualities have not been replicated in the public service today. The public space is replete with cases

of leaders and public servants at all levels of government embroiled in corruption and related practices. There is a serious lack of public service ethics articulation.

2.4 Ethical Leadership

Ethical leadership is a part of the broader field of leadership that touches upon several theoretical bases of leadership (Okagbue, 2012). A study conducted on ethical leadership in the context of corporate governance identified certain attributes of ethical leadership, which included accountability – including ethical decision-making and responsiveness – by acting immediately to solve dilemmas; integrity – entailing honesty in disclosure of information to board members and shareholders; fairness; transparency and disclosure; and responsibility (Othman & Rahman, 2014).

Mendonca (2001:267) notes the urgent need for ethical leadership “in organizations and in society if we truly want to achieve the common good of human welfare at personal, organizational, and societal levels”. Though the sustenance of ethical leadership has been questioned, the argument is that for any organisation to succeed it must espouse ethical leadership (Mendonca, 2012:63–64). Ethical leaders will not hesitate to condemn acts of corruption, such as the Great Bank Heist in South Africa, for the sake of good governance (Mendonca, 2012:112). According to Naidoo (2012), you need good governance to eradicate corruption, and you need effective leadership to have good governance. Naidoo further observed that “[e]thical leadership is needed to resist the abuse of entrusted power for private gain, as well as potential interference and to protect the anti-corruption agencies’ operational independence, thus enabling good governance” (Naidoo, 2012:26):

South Africans have become nostalgic and are now longing for the days of ‘*Mandela democracy*’. Booyesen (2013:31) wrote, “[t]he contrast between the Mandela era and the current leadership feeds dissatisfaction with the current government”. Former president Nelson Mandela was known to be ethical, and promoted the eradication of corruption in the public service. Cheteni and Shindika (2017) attribute the longing for the *Mandela democracy* to State capture in South Africa, which implicated former President Jacob Zuma, the national executive and directors and deputy directors of SOEs. Brown *et al.* (2005), cited by Cheteni and Shindika (2017:5), say in order for leaders to be perceived as ethical and be able to influence ethics-related outcomes, their subordinates must perceive them as attractive, credible and legitimate. Gildenhuis (2004:6) postulates that as a public servant, serving the people requires complete and careful attention and dedicated loyalty to the democratic principles and fundamental human rights as enshrined in the Constitution. Othman and Rahman (2014:367) on the other hand opine that ethical leadership attributes aligns to and/or requires a “servant leader” type of leadership style because servant leaders, as perceived by their study subjects, “are leaders that are perceived as supporting ethical leadership in guiding a corporation towards corporate governance practices.”

Ethical leadership is demonstrated by integrity, competence, responsibility, accountability, fairness and transparency. It therefore includes anticipating and preventing, or at least avoiding, the negative consequences of corruption and corrupt practices in the public sector and government in general. Also, it includes being both a moral person and a moral manager. Acting always with integrity to increase awareness of what is right, good and important, and raise up followers up into leaders who go beyond their self-interest for the good of the organisation to (Heres, Lasthuizen & Six, 2009). Van Aswegen and Engelbrecht (2009 referring to Palanski & Yammarino, 2007), classify the various meanings of integrity into five general categories, namely: integrity as wholeness; integrity as consistency between words and actions; integrity as consistency in adversity; integrity as being true to oneself; and integrity as moral or ethical behaviour.

Naidoo (2012:28) notes that it is “crucial that management creates an organisational culture of openness and transparency in which unethical conduct will become visible and in which employees and managers call one another to account”. This can be achieved by, amongst

other things, a comprehensive programme governing and effectively implementing an ethical climate and acting as the foundation of an institutional or organisational culture that anchored in ethical behaviour (Naidoo, 2012). These causes of action are depicted and demanded in the various provisions of both the AU Charter for Public Administration, and the Charter on Local Government.

3. AFRICA'S OBLIGATION FOR CLEAN, ETHICAL AND EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION

Within the African continent, under the stewardship of the AU, a number of instruments are in place and institutional frameworks established to foster good governance and accountability in public service and administration. For the purposes of this paper, the African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration (AU Charter of Public Administration), which was adopted by the African Union in 2011 and received in last signature in 2018. The Charter seeks, amongst others, to promote moral values as inherent attributes of public service agents; and also calls on State parties to combat corruption. Important for the purposes of this paper is that the Charter calls for ethical behaviour of public service agents and prohibit them from acting corruptly. Professionalism, integrity and ethical behaviour is dealt with under Chapter III, articles 9 to 12 of the AU Charter of Public Administration. It is important in the context of this study to restate hereunder the provisions of the relevant Articles of the Charter.

Article 10 of the AU Charter of Public Service provides as follows:

Ethical Behaviour

1. Public Service Agents shall demonstrate **integrity** and respect all rules, values and established codes of conduct in the performance of their duties.
2. Public Service Agents shall not solicit, accept, or receive directly or indirectly any payment, gift, donation, or reward in kind or cash, for services rendered.
3. Public Service Agents shall on no account use their positions for political or personal gains. In all circumstances, they shall **act with impartiality and loyalty**.

Articles 11 goes further to address issues of conflict of interest by stating that:

Incompatibilities and conflict of Interest

1. Public Service Agents shall not participate in making decisions or intervene in situations in which they have vested interests in order not to compromise their impartiality or cast doubt over the **image of the administration**.
2. ...
3. Public Service Agents shall not occupy any position, engage in transactions or hold financial, commercial or material interest incompatible with their duties or responsibilities.
4. ...
5. Public Service Agents shall refrain from unduly profiting from offices they previously occupied.

Public service exemplary leadership and the need to establish integrity systems in the public service in address in Article 12 of the AU Charter of Public Administration. The relevant provision provides:

Preventing and Combating Corruption

1. ...
2. ...
3. State Parties shall institute national accountability and integrity systems to promote **value-based societal behaviour** and attitude as a means of preventing corruption.
4. State Parties shall promote and recognize **exemplary leadership** in creating value-based and corruption-free societies.

Furthermore, the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralization, Local Governance and Local Development (AU Charter of Local Governance) adopted on 27 June 2014 makes reference to the AU Charter of Public Administration, and in its Article 14 addresses issues of accountability, transparency and ethical behaviour in local government administration. Article 14(5) obliges local government officials to act with integrity and in an ethical manner when discharging their official duties. This in our view is a very important mandate given the centrality of local government in ensuring service to the public in decentralised government systems. Unfortunately, this very indictment was not observed by some South African municipalities in the VBS Mutual Bank corruption and maladministration scandal (Great Bank Heist Report, 2018).

The above instruments complement the AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption of 2003 (AU Anti-Corruption Convention), which is the key continental instrument providing a normative framework for member states to address corruption in the national jurisdictions (Sibanda 2007). Also, the AU has had a number of programmes and initiatives aimed at fighting corruption. For instance, on 22 January 2018 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia AU during its 30th Assembly of Heads of State and Government launched 2018 as the African Anti-Corruption Year, under the theme: *Winning the Fight against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation* (Louw-Vaudran, 2017). Also, 11 July was henceforth celebrated as African Anti-Corruption Day. There are also institutions within the AU that are to serve as vanguards of corruption free Africa nations. Notable is the African Union Advisory Board on Corruption (AUABC). AUABC's mission is stated clearly in Article 25(5) of the AU Anti-Corruption Convention. The vision of the AUABC to ensure that by 202 the Board is transformed into an efficient and effective organisation with the required ability and expertise to support the AU Member States in implementing the AU Anti-Corruption Convention.

4. ETHICS AND ETHICAL LEADERSHIP AS ANTIDOTE FOR CORRUPTION

4.1 Relationship between ethics and corruption

What is the relationship between corruption and ethics? Whitton (2001:3) interestingly observes that "[e]thical conduct and corruption in the public sector are the two sides of the one coin." Enhanced internal ethical climate of an organisation beget reduced prevalence of corruption and corrupt practices. Once corruption is controlled more room is made for "ethical practices to become established" in the organisation (Whitton, 2001:3). In an eloquently written article entitled *Ethics and accountability in South African municipalities: The struggle against corruption*, Pillay (2016) addressed the relationships between ethics, accountability and corruption. Interestingly, Whitton uses as his case study corruption in municipalities in South Africa, a lack of ethics and accountability amongst municipal

leaders are behind their corruption prone weak management. In the final submission, Pillay (2016:125) contends the “success or failure of ethics and accountability as the foundation of the perpetual struggle against corruption”. Kekae (2017:111) wrote extensively on the role of corruption in combating fraud and corruption, quoting several notable scholars in public administration including Brytting, Monogue and Morino (2012) Manyaka and Sebola (2013). He acknowledged that “a high standard of professional ethics has become an integral matter for governments globally because they are highly concerned about the high levels of corruption in their public service.” (Kekae, 2017:111). Kekae (2017:111) further proposed the formulation of a *Statement of Ethics* to “provide guidelines for expected behaviour and should include inputs from all employees”. Kekae made reference to such a need to promote ethical behaviour and professionalism in terms of section 195 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

5. CULTIVATING NEW ETHICAL CULTURE IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION

In her research paper *Creating a new ethical culture in the South African local government*, in conceptualising ethics, as derived from the Greek term “*ethos*”, Matsiliza (2013:109) defines ethics as a moral system of a particular school of thought that is characterised by a spirit of culture, inner disposition or morality. Along with ethics comes appropriate and socially acceptable behaviour and conduct, responds Sebola (2014:297). Ethical leadership, as observed by Cheteni and Shindika (2017:3), has proved to have considerable benefits for both organisations and businesses. This is so because particularly in countries where relatively higher cases of corruption have been recorded, ethical leadership has proven to be an important pillar of successful organisational operations. However, it should be noted, according to the authors most studies on ethics in the African context focus mainly on the private sector and neglect to give attention to the public sector as well.

The King IV Code is important as it also calls for ethical leadership. Not only does the code seek to promote corporate governance as integral to running an organisation (governing body). It also seeks to deliver governance outcomes such as ethical culture, good performance, effective control and legitimacy. Ethical leadership as encapsulated in the King IV report is characterised by the principles of integrity, competence, responsibility, accountability, fairness and transparency, taking into account the consequences of an organisation’s activities and outputs on the economy, society, the environment and the capital that it uses and affects (King, 2016:20).

These values espoused in the King IV Code resonate well with section 195 of the Constitution, which makes provision for the public administration to be governed by democratic principles and values. South Africa, given its history, is in dire need of incorruptible ethical and thought leaders. In particular, section 195(1)(a) of the Constitution states that “a high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained” in public administration generally. Furthermore, section 20(t) of the Public Service Act of 1994 implores employees appointed in terms of the Public Service Act to be accountable and to comply with the prescribed code of conduct by promoting exemplary conduct. And institutions that support democracy, ethics and governance measures particularly in the public sector, namely the Public Service Commission (PSC), is mandated to promote a high standard of professional ethics in the public service (Cheteni & Shindika, 2017).

6. STAKEHOLDER INTERESTS TO UNDERGIRD PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION

The findings of a damning report into the failure of VBS Mutual Bank and the acts of corruption by those who had a fiduciary obligation towards the ordinary stakeholders in

the bank better demonstrate what, according to the Stakeholder Theory (ST) proposed by R. E. Freeman in 1984, should not have happened if the leaders had observed responsible governance and business ethics against corruption. According to the ST, those having the governance and oversight responsibility for an organisation have a duty to always act in the best interest of the stakeholders (Agbim, 2018:24). Likewise, their actions directly and indirectly affecting the organisation must not affect the interests of stakeholders in any form or shape.

Did the officials and the board of governors at VBS Mutual Bank act in the best interest of its stakeholders? According to the findings published in *VBS Mutual Bank – The Great Bank Heist* report, they did not. Sometimes called “a theory of organizational management and ethics” the ST advances the argument that ethical leaders are selfless and they will always put the interest of those they serve, or rather those they lead, instead of their own (Caldwell, Karri & Vollmar, 2006:213). An ethical leader will be conscious of the debilitating consequences of corruption and related practices, will avoid involvement in corrupt conduct at all costs and will not harm the interest of stakeholders.

7. CONCLUSION

South Africa has another opportunity to seriously introspect and to consider the unavoidable paradigm shift of integrating ethical leadership and trust in governance and in the appointment of public office bearers. Ethical leadership and a governance and corporate culture that appreciates ethics will go a long way towards curbing corrupt practices in South Africa. As noted by Naidoo (2012:26), there still exists a gap “between ethical leadership, corruption and governance” despite the existence of some research on corruption and leadership and how the two affect governance. According to Cheteni and Shindika (2017:3), a great deal of research has particularly focused on ethics and neglected to pay attention to ethical leadership. It is for this reason that a number of African countries have witnessed severe maladministration of funds and corruption. There is thus a need for studies on corruption and corrupt practices to also address ethical leadership.

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Author Contributions

The total responsibility of authorship of this article was divided between the authors, with Dr. Lekubu completing 60% and Prof Sibanda 40%.