



# KEY DRIVERS & EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION IN RURAL AREAS: A CASE STUDY OF JOZINI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

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# Declaration-Plagiarism

I, Zakhele Bongani Shongwe, submit this dissertation in fulfillment of the academic requirements for the degree of Master of Development Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, Republic of South Africa, and declare that;

1. The work contained in this dissertation is my original work.
2. All sources used have been properly acknowledged and referenced.
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.....

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Mr Zakhele Shongwe

.....

Date

# Preface

The work contained in this dissertation was carried out at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Howard College Campus) in South Africa from 2017 to 2018 under the academic supervision of Doctor Mvuselelo Ngcoya.

# Acronyms

ANC	African National Congress
EPWP	Extended Public Works Programme
JLM	Jozini Local Municipality
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
MMSE	Mandla Mthethwa School of Excellence
PP	Public Procurement
PSC	Public Sector Corruption
PW	Public Works
RSA	Republic of South Africa

## Acknowledgement

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# Abstract

Corruption in post-apartheid South Africa continues to remain a critical challenge and obstacle to rural development. Each and every day in rural South Africa, myriad public officials are reported to have been implicated in corruption scandals through demanding and accepting bribes from the ordinary people who are in dire need of government services, like job opportunities. About millions of state funds allocated for rural development are embezzled by corrupt public officials in execution of public duties and the benefits of democracy being enjoyed by the so-called politically connected and economically empowered individuals who are always prioritized by the corrupt public officials, thus pauperizing the vast majority of the rural population who are economically disadvantaged who find it very difficult to survive in a corrupt system characterized by bribery and the so-called issues of political connectedness.

The aim of this study is to explore the local's perceptions of corruption focusing on its key drivers and effects in Jozini Local Municipality area of South Africa with specific reference to the Public Works sector. To explore local perceptions of corruption with a focus on its key drivers and effects, this study makes use of a qualitative research approach. Research data was collected through in-depth individual interviews in Jozini area using a sample of 20 research respondents, which included municipal officers and local youth respondents as key research informants on a subject under investigation. Findings of this study show that corruption in Jozini rural areas is caused by myriad factors, ranging from issues of human greed and lack of ethics, lack of commitment by public officials, low salary levels being paid to public officials, weak legal system and the scarcity of resources in the rural world. Factors such as poverty, enrichment of the few, impoverishing of the vast majority of the unemployed population, creation of inequality, undermining of democracy and the prevalence of service delivery protests are among the critical effects resulting from corruption in Jozini area. Therefore, my findings confirm that corruption and development are interconnected and that corruption is a zero-sum game whereby some people within a particular geographic area benefit from the corrupt system while others get pauperized by such a corrupt system and practice, thus making corruption a major culprit to rural underdevelopment and fair distribution of government services.

**Key words:** Public sector corruption, public works, municipal officer, youth, development, political economy, rural development, ethics, public officials and rural poverty.



## **CHAPTER 1:**

### **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

#### **1.1. Introduction**

This chapter deals with the importance of the research problem studied and it contextualises the research project. Here, I also discuss the problem statement, the purpose of the research, research objectives, research questions, my assumptions, values and significance of the study. The final part gives an overview of the dissertation.

#### **1.2. Background of the study**

Corruption represents a major obstacle to development and effective rule of law (Soreid, 2014). After more than two decades of the democratic dispensation in South Africa, corruption continues to cause retrogressions and rural underdevelopment. This is manifested by service delivery protests, escalating rates of youth unemployment and bureaucratic corruption that have all become characteristics of the rural world in post-1994 South Africa. One of the biggest problems obstructing speedy rural development is that many rural people have closed their eyes and accepted corruption as part of the system and that nothing can be done to get rid of it. The menace called corruption is an impediment to fair and impartial service delivery to the vast majority of rural people in need of government services. After remarkable strides have been made to rebuild and transform South Africa, corruption has acted to threaten the consolidation of democracy. Since the year 2012, research shows that “over 20, 000 reports of corruption have been received and reporting volumes have spiked this year with 2 744 reports received in the first 6 months of the year 2017” (Corruption Watch, 2017). However, it is significant to state that while there is much focus on grand corruption, there is urban bias in the studies about corruption and not much has been written about rural development and its impacts.

#### **1.3. Context of the Study**

The research project took place at the Jozini area, one of the rural settlements in Umkhanyakude District Municipality in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa, bordered by Mozambique to the North, Swaziland to the West and Umhlabuyalingana to the East. The Jozini Municipality comprises 20 wards and 7 Traditional Councils, including the six towns of

Ingwavuma, Jozini, Ubombo, Bhambanana, Mkuze and Ndumo. The large area of Jozini falls under the traditional ownership of Ingonyama Trust and some areas are privately owned by individuals and some are state owned. Figure 1 below is a map of the province of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa showing the geographic location of Jozini area.

**Figure 1: Map of KwaZulu-Natal showing the location of Jozini area**



Source: <https://www.tripadvisor.co.za/LocalMaps-g1747054-Jozini Area.html>

#### **1.4. Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to explore the local's perceptions and views on the key drivers and effects of corruption in rural areas with specific reference to Jozini Local Municipality area in the province of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa.

#### **1.5. Rationale for the Study**

Corruption is among the very dangerous challenges that threaten the wellbeing of the citizens and the mostly affected people are the youth population living in rural areas (Klasen and Woolard, 2009:2). Little research has been done and conducted about corruption in the rural world, I have considered it critical and significant to conduct a research in a rural setting in order to understand the drivers and effects of corruption in rural areas of South Africa. Rural areas are mostly characterized by high levels of illiteracy, exclusive access to information, marginalisation of the vast majority of the youth population in the municipal development

processes. Such issues of social exclusions have acted to create a corrupt and less accountable environment. Hence, the rationale behind conducting this research was to explore drivers and effects of corruption in the rural world as well as to understand some of the critical challenges to rural development from the perspectives of the rural population.

I was also motivated by the fact that from an urban bias perspective, development processes are systematically biased against the countryside and this bias is deeply embedded in the political and economic structures. Unlike the urban world, the countryside and its population is economically poor because it is politically powerless and socially excluded in the municipal processes. Lastly, I also wanted to find out the relationship between corruption and development by exploring the drivers and effects of corruption in rural areas surrounding Jozini from the perspective of both municipal officers and local youth. Therefore, the main research objective are:

1. To investigate the local perceptions on the drivers of corruption in Jozini Local Municipality
2. Explore the local perceptions on the effects that corruption has on development in Jozini Local Municipality
3. Understand various forms of corruption existing in Jozini Local Municipality

## **1.6. Research Questions**

Therefore, in order to achieve the above objectives, these three questions will be answered:

1. What are the local perceptions on the drivers of corruption in Jozini Local Municipality?
2. What effects does corruption have on development in Jozini Local Municipality?
3. What are the various forms of corruption existing in Jozini Local Municipality?

## **1.7. Researcher Assumptions**

My approach to the study was also influenced by some assumptions, including the following:

- ❖ Bureaucratic autonomy allows exclusive access to information.

- ❖ Corruption obstructs fair provision of opportunities.
- ❖ Lack of transparency and accountability contribute to corruption.

### **1.8. Research design, data sources and method of data collection**

To address the research objectives, this study uses qualitative research designs (both an exploratory and a case study method). Research data for this study was collected from both municipal officers and local youth in Jozini Local Municipality area in the province of KwaZulu-Natal of South Africa. The data sources or research respondents were selected using the purposive method of sampling since the study was qualitative in nature and it sought to recruit people who would give the relevant information to the research questions. Individual interviews were used to collect research data with the targeted research respondents. I discuss this in more detail in chapter three.

### **1.9. Research significance**

This study makes several contribution to the field of development studies as it complements the literature that tries to understand local perceptions on the key drivers and effects of corruption in rural South Africa. Few studies have been conducted about rural corruption in South Africa, therefore interested researchers will gain a theoretical knowledge from this study, which will help conduct further research based on the findings of this study, particularly when studying corruption in the context of rural settings of South Africa. This study also highlights critical factors obstructing rural development in post-apartheid South Africa. Lastly, the study also provides an insight into the complexity of the major and key drivers of corruption in the context of rural areas of South Africa with specific reference to Jozini municipality surrounding areas in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

### **1.10. Limitations of the research**

The research project had myriad limitations. Since the research title was about local perceptions on the key drivers and effects of corruption, in some cases, some targeted research respondents refused to speak against their organizations about issues pertaining to corruption due to fear of exposing themselves to public scrutiny and further media follow up and police investigations. The size of the sample was relatively small (20 participants). But since the purpose of the study was not to be representative but to seek understanding, I remain confident that the findings are reliable. Taking field notes was a time-consuming exercise itself but there were no other

options because the primary goal of the research was to gather as much information pertaining to the local perceptions on the key drivers and effects of corruption as possible. Lastly, when the targeted research participants were not available or on leave, like the municipal officers, this caused a little bit of a delay to the timeous completion of research project.

## **1.11. Dissertation outline**

### **Chapter 1: Introduction and background**

This section will introduce the topic of study and the different subsections to be covered in this chapter. This will include the problem statement of this study, research objectives and questions, researcher assumptions, significance of the research, scope of the study and the limitations of this study.

### **Chapter 2: Literature review and theoretical framework**

This chapter will focus on the literature review on corruption and provide a theoretical framework or concept used to understanding corruption.

### **Chapter 3: Research methodology**

This chapter will focus on the research methodology, detailing research approach, research design, sampling method, study population, method of data analysis as well as the data collection methods.

### **Chapter 4: Data presentation, analysis and interpretation**

The focus of this chapter will be on analysis of the results and findings from the collected data.

### **Chapter 5: Summary, conclusion and study significance**

This section will be used to make research summary, conclusions and the significance of the study.

## CHAPTER 2:

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

The section below discusses the literature review that pertains to corruption as a subject matter under investigation. Babbie and Mouton (2001) argued that the purpose of a literature review is to determine the extent to which the topic under study is in the existing body of knowledge. Therefore, this literature review provided a theoretical background to my investigation and has helped established the links between what I am proposing to examine and what has already been studied. Given the varied and voluminous published material on corruption, I have sought to limit my review to a few approaches that pertain to the relationship between corruption and development. As I intimated in the introductory chapter, while much research has been conducted on corruption, there is urban bias in this research area. That is why I sought to investigate the performativity of corruption in rural South Africa with specific reference to the Jozini surrounding areas in the province of KwaZulu-Natal of South Africa.

This chapter is divided into three sections; the first of which specifically deals with an exploration of the political economy of corruption and definition of corruption as a subject matter. This is followed by a discussion of the relationship between corruption and development. The penultimate section deals with three dominant theoretical approaches to corruption. Having reviewed their strengths and weaknesses, the final section lays out the conceptual framework of performativity that grounded this study.

#### **2.2. The definition and political economy of corruption in South Africa**

Corruption is one of the controversial issues in the South African politics and public administration. In order to understand the evolution of corruption and why corruption has such detrimental effects to rural development in South Africa, it is necessary to understand the politics of the state in which the menace called corruption is embedded in the context of political economy. Corruption needs to be understood as an outcome of the fundamental political and socio-economic structural factors (Szeftel, 2007). The problem, however, is that there are a myriad intriguing and contradictory definitions attached to corruption. It is important to bear in mind that there is no universal definition of what specifically constitutes

corrupt behavior. Obasanjo (2001:13) defines corruption as “putrefaction, tainting, debasement, pervasion or venality, destruction of purity or falling away from standards of integrity or rectitude defined by law, upheld by social norms”. Drawing from the above, it can be argued that the idea of corruption in the public sector simply implies a breakdown of ethical and societal traditions, moral values of systems and institutions of governance as well as the pursuit of selfish behavior towards self-aggrandizement and individual utility maximization by state officials bestowed with state powers at the expense of the general public.

Furthermore, other scholars point out that for corruption to take root in the public sector requires mutual and illegal agreements between community members and government officials who all willingly take part in a corrupt practice. In short, corruption does not happen in a vacuum or isolation. Khan (2004) argued that corruption needs to be understood in the context of a state-society relation where distinctions are made between political and bureaucratic corruption. Most significantly, corruption can take many forms. The practice of corruption in the public sector takes many forms and can be perpetuated by one person or group of people who deviate from the formal duties appointed to them to act on behalf of the state. Bribery, nepotism, embezzlement, cronyism and favoritism are some of the forms of corruption likely to enable the existence and emergence of corruption as postulated by Heidenheimer (1970; Nye; 1967:419).

Definitions of the above listed forms of corruption are provided and critically defined below:

- Bribery: Also known as kickbacks. This includes the act of offering someone money in order to persuade him to do something in return.
- Nepotism: Bestowal of patronage because of ascriptive relationships rather than merit.
- Embezzlement: Also known as misappropriation. This implies illegal appropriation of speedy money and public resources for private-regarding uses. It is commonly known as theft of state assets.
- Cronyism: Refers to the favorable treatment of friends and associates in the distribution of resources and positions.
- Favoritism: Refers to the normal inclination to prefer acquaintances, friends and family over strangers (Heidenheimer 1970; Nye 1967:419).

A study done by Rose-Ackerman (1998) identified two types of corruption and revealed that corruption arises in both political and bureaucratic offices. These types of corruption include the following: petty corruption and grand corruption. Petty corruption, also known as bureaucratic corruption, usually involves smaller amounts of money, but the damage may be significant (Rose-Ackerman, 1998). Petty corruption therefore implies bribes or the so-called small tips given to public officials in return for a particular public service. Petty corruption can be said to mean the corrupt act by the state officials and appointed bureaucrats entrusted with state power in their dealings with the public. Grand corruption, unlike petty corruption, involves large sums of money and involvement of senior officials in the corrupt activity and huge kickbacks (Uslaner, 2008). It is pertinent for this study because it is associated with large public works programmes. Kruger (1993) added that grand corruption generally refers to the acts of the official elites and selected state officials by which they exploit power to make economic gains. Grand corruption therefore is usually directed to senior public officials and politicians when demanding bribes in awarding contracts and this may involve a situation whereby public spending is sometimes diverted to sectors where gains from corruption may be greatest.

### **2.3. Relationship between Corruption and Development**

The literature that I have reviewed generally shows that there is a link between corruption and development and that corruption and corrupt leaders both deepen poverty and make it very difficult for ordinary people to get ahead (World Bank Report, 2010). Thus, a higher level of corruption is associated with a higher rate of poverty (Gupta et al, 2002). From a rural development perspective, some of the effects associated with corruption is that most of the corrupt government systems have tended to divert their budget from social valuable goods, like poverty alleviation and job creation (World Bank 2001:201). Recently, scholars have revealed that corruption contradicts the common desire of many countries to achieve the highest levels of development and people-centered development (Malinda, 2014). In addition to the above, Sir Hlophe (1991:24) also contended that corruption is an impediment to sustainable development, which he considered “development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs.”

A large number of factors play different roles in enabling corruption in modern political systems and democracies. These range from socio-economic and cultural factors, psychological factors and ethical factors, institutional or bureaucratic factors, political factors



as well as legal factors. A more detailed discussion and exploration of these factors is discussed below.

From a cultural point of view, Harris and Merwe (2011) in their research study on corruption have revealed that corruption and corrupt behavior are influenced by a range of variables which may include culture, masculinity, power issues as well as the values and norms of a particular society towards corruption. The above viewpoint is supported by Barr and Serra (2006) who similarly asserted that corruption is influenced by attitudes and values deeply rooted in the culture of certain population. In addition to the above, Uslander (2008) wrote extensively about corruption and argued that rather than being caused by bad leaders and weak institutions, corruption is said to be caused by a society's culture and the distribution of resources. Drawing from the above, it can be argued that the prevalence and re-emergence of corruption may be caused by how society considers corruption within a geographic location.

Another intriguing perspective on what contributes to corruption was raised by Emerhana (2005:52) who stated that, in most cases, "an average public official is fond of looting because nobody cares to ask about the sources of their income". Other scholars cite psychological and ethical factors. For example, Caiden (2013) argues that some human beings are by nature obedient and selfless while others are mean, egotistical and selfish. Otusanya (2011) once stated that one's own defective character might be a cause of corruption. The above points to the fact that people possess different traits and characteristics which may be a cause why others do certain things while others do not do so. Furthermore, symptoms of distorted values have all been identified as major drivers of corruption and crime (Rauch, 2005). Soreid (2014) argued that an individual is likely to be involved in a corrupt act and practice if the benefits associated with the acts of corruption are expected to outweigh the costs.

Another body of work targets bureaucratic failure to explain the causes and effects of corruption. Thus, Douglas and Jones (1996) demonstrate that greater management autonomy for public servants leads to excessive discretion and create opportunities for corruption as public managers are freed from traditional budgetary control measures. Drawing from the above, it can be asserted that autonomy in the public sector may allow exclusive access to information, as a result, this may make it easier for state officials to steal and embezzle state funds. Indeed, there is much empirical evidence to argue that where power is concentrated in the hands of the few state elites, corruption may be rife. Leaderman et al (2005) differently argued that where checks and balance mechanisms across different levels of power are absent, corruption is likely to be a problem in public administration.

## **2.4. Prominent Theoretical Approaches in Corruption Research**

In this section, I outline the broad conceptual strokes that inform the literature pertinent to this study on corruption and rural development. They are neopatrimonialism, public administration approaches, and governance models, to which I now turn.

### **2.4.1 Neopatrimonialism: The Politics of the Belly**

One of the dominant approaches in corruption research in Africa uses culinary metaphors to describe patron-client relations. Drawing from the work of Jean Francois Bayart (1989) who used the Cameroonian term of the ‘politics of the belly’, this approach focuses on how politicians divvy up public goods (among clients and patrons) in exchange for loyalty and resources. Bayart (1989) made use of Foucault’s term of governmentality to argue that the issue of power is a factor contributing to poor governance and corruption whereby power rests in hands of the few individuals who are likely to shape the behavior of others within a particular state.

Since Bayart, the idea of the ‘politics of the belly’ has been used extensively in analyzing corruption, especially in Africa (Mkandawire 2015; Beresford 2015; Nduku and Tenemwenye 2014; Hutchcroft 1997; among many others). The key point of departure in these studies is the view that corruption arises out of the assumption that family connections have always been an aspect of African politics (Nduku and Tenemwenye, 2014). The above argument points to the fact that such a practice may involve aspect of nepotism in administration of public duties and distribution of services. Similarly, Hutchcroft (1997:4) also argued that “corruption is the end result of the politics of the privileges”. Furthermore, the politics of the belly simply attempts to bring into focus the various influences which shape African political landscapes and societies. It is also worth noting to state that states in Africa do not follow the prescribed norms and forms of the western Westphalian state systems.

Therefore, the idea of neopatrimonialism as a social practice is related to the idea of that officials hold positions in bureaucratic organizations with powers bestowed upon them, but fail to act with integrity and towards the promotion of public goods, but rather exercise those powers bestowed upon them as a form of self-aggrandizement in order to maximize their own individual utility at the expense of the public. This blurring of the lines between private and public interests is done purposely and, according to Bratton and van de Walle (1994: 458-9) forms “the foundation and superstructure of political institutions. The interaction between the

‘big man’ and his extended retinue defines African politics, from the highest reaches of the presidential palace to the humblest village assembly.”

The notion of neopatrimonialism has been perceived by its proponents to have value for explaining Africa’s state of weaknesses, democratic deficiencies and economic crisis (von Soest, 2006). Clapham (1985:134) further asserted that ‘neopatrimonialism’ denotes the simultaneous operation of the two Weberian ideal types of patrimonial and rational-legal domination. In light of the above, “the idea of patrimonialism connotes that a patron in a certain social & political order bestows gifts from own resources on followers in order to secure their loyalty and support” (Weber, 1980: 134). Therefore, the practice of neopatrimonialism, particularly by many African states implies the abuse of public powers by the political office holders for both political reasons.

Zambia in Africa constitutes an interesting case study for analyzing neopatrimonialism (von Soest, 2006). Other studies also revealed that in year 1999, the government of Zambia created what was termed ‘Presidential Discretionary Fund’, unofficially called ‘slush’ to distribute favours to clients or political party supporters and that the fund’s reserved budgetary allocations of around 12 billion Kwacha per annum were at the disposal of the president alone, who apparently deployed it for partisan purposes (Burnell, 2001: 251).

The above theoretical postulation points to the issue of discretionary powers being granted to certain state leaders (presidents) who fail to act with integrity, but rather choose to act in self-aggrandizing ways that contradict selfless leadership and service delivery, thus leading to moral corruption. Furthermore, Young (1994) raised an important point with regards to the notion of the so-called ‘big man politics’ and further asserted that it is one of the critical features of neopatrimonialism in Africa whereby the president or ‘patron’ stays in power for a very long period of time. This has been the case in African states like Zambia and Zimbabwe, for example, whereby the Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda served for 27 years and Robert Gabriel Mugabe in Zimbabwe serving for 37 years as the Zimbabwean president since the year 1980. Such long-serving presidents have been implicated in corruption scandals and abuse of state power which have impacted negatively on human development. Furthermore, the practice of neopatrimonialism and corruption are closely interconnected in such a way that Zambia’s presidents including Kenneth Kaunda, Frederick Chilubu and Levy Mwanawasa have been implicated in corruption scandals of awarding favours to their voters in order to secure their

rule (van de Walle, 2001:33). The above indicates that the idea of neopatrimonialism has become a culture of the African politics and leadership which most state leaders live by for political survival.

Furthermore, the basic proposition of the heuristic concept is that informal, particularistic politics of the rulers pervade formal state institutions and that in countries where neopatrimonialism prevails, the so-called 'patrons' are generally office-holders who misuse public funds for purposes of staying in power (von Soest, 2006). However, von Soest (2006) also raised an important point with regards to the practice of neopatrimonialism and corruption in Africa, arguing that corruption in Africa can't only be attributed to Africa's low socio-economic status and the practice of neopatrimonialism, but also to political interference with the process of collecting state revenues. The above, in my view, points to the fact that corruption is a multi-dimensional issue caused by both internal and external factors.

While it has many strengths, the problem with this approach is that it is rooted in classical economics and diagnoses corruption as a species of rent-seeking (Bracking 2009). In other words, the problem of corruption in rural areas is simplistically attributed to the moral failures of particular individuals in government, who prevent the market from running its just course. Secondly, it limits corruption to the public sphere. The role of the private sector in initiating and sustaining corruption is left unexplored. The logical solution arising out of this neopatrimonialism approach is to reduce the role and size of government in development in order to facilitate the smooth functioning of markets. But as the recent corrupt accounting scandals of the South African furniture and clothing giant Steinhoff show, corruption is endemic in the private sector as well.

#### **2.4.2. Public Administration Approaches**

In public administration approaches to corruption, the two dominant conceptual frames are the principal-agent theory and the public interest institutional approach. The former theory is based on the assumption that both clients and officials are motivated by self-interest, which is based on what Jevons (1871) called calculations of potential personal gains. It seeks to elucidate why and how people engage in corrupt practices. Therefore, the principal agent theory, in my view, is mainly based on the analysis of benefits people often make before taking part into different actions. The interests of both the agent and the principal may contradict each other, thus causing

someone to engage in self-enriching activity, thus failing to consider the interests and needs of the other party. Writing from this perspective, Myint (2000:47) argues that corruption leads to uneven consumption so that “most of the goods and services are beyond the reach of ordinary citizens in the countryside, while those economically and politically privileged enjoy conspicuous consumption with expensive cars cruising along dirt roads, with luxury apartment buildings rising amidst poverty.”

The public interest-institutional perspective on the other hand seeks to explain how institutions shape individual officials (Lane, 1996). According to this perspective, the scope for corruption by the individual official is limited by the norms, structure and capacity of the institutions he belongs to, and therefore he acts corruptly mainly because of the organizational structure. However, this perspective is sometimes criticized for only focusing on organizational corruption and structural problems rather than individual greed.

### **2.4.3. Governance Models**

From this perspective, it is stated that corruption affects development by influencing governance factors. This model assumes that the increased corruption reduces governance capacity, which in turn increases poverty. Dominion (1999) said that corruption tends to reduce the quality of government services. This model explains the way governance practices are ruined by corruption, which consequently impair the provision of government services. In addition, it shows how social capital and trust have been reduced because of corruption and as a result reduces government capacity to help innocent citizens who are extremely in dire need of government services as argued by Chetwynd et al (2003).

Following this governance model, Osakwe (2011) similarly contends that it is problematic to have political systems that are not accountable and transparent. For him, accountability refers to “an individual answering to a constituency”. Therefore, it can be argued that accountability implies justifications of reasons for actions by the state representatives to the general public being represented. Lack of accountable and transparent systems may lead to poor governance whereby civil servants may feel less obligated to be accountable to those they represent and thus feel less pressure to justify their actions.

The above argument is supported by Jeppesen (2010) who contends that without transparent and accountable political systems, the vast resources channeled through the public procurement may turn the danger of being entwined with increased corruption and misuse of state funds.

Furthermore, lack of accountability mechanisms in the public sector may therefore lead to a situation whereby a large number of political leaders may pervert perceptions of power they have been entrusted with and that a good number of politicians don't even know the limits of their power, they forget that the public is the owner of what they are superintending over and that the public is watching as argued by Osakwe (2011).

The governance literature also argues that in cases where civil society is weak, especially whereby the general public is uninformed and lack knowledge on how the state operates, public officials may be likely to take advantage in such societies and fail to account, thus creating an enabling environment for corruption. It follows, therefore, that from this perspective, to stem the deleterious effects of graft on rural development, we need only to worry about developing appropriate robust governance reforms and bolster institutions such as a judiciary, a free media, civil society watchdogs and anti-corruption agencies (Marquette, 2003).

While the approaches I have reviewed so far have contributed greatly to our understanding of corruption, because of their roots in neo-classical economics and public administration, they tend to ignore the social constructions of power. From the perspective of this dissertation, corrupt behaviour is socially constructed and requires intelligent analysis and response (Bracking 2009). Indeed, it varies across time and space so that, as Bracking aptly puts it, "one person's corrupt behaviour is another's rightful patronage (meritocracy)".

Finally, and more worryingly, in much of the literature on corruption there is a racialized and pathologizing depiction of Africa (and the global South in general) as inherently corrupt, thereby ignoring the corrupt behaviour of global private sector players and their supporting agencies. This is why I have adopted the theoretical framework of performativity to explore historical and contextual issues of corruption in public works programmes in rural areas.

## **2.5. Performativity as a Theoretical Framework**

In this research project, I have used the concept of performativity as a theoretical framework to conceptualize corruption and understand the link between political economy, society and corruption and to go beyond notions of Homo Economicus, rationality and optimization, particularly in situations and environments characterized by scarcity and competition over of economic resources. The concept of performativity as a theory draws from what Callon (2006) calls an 'actor-network theory'. Therefore, unlike the approaches I reviewed above, the performativity approach takes a more sociological approach to corruption. Santos and

Rodrigues (2009) added that the concept of performativity simply “endorses an understanding of human action that is largely dependent upon the structural configurations of the socio-technical institutions and the networks in which human action takes place”. This calls for a different definition of corruption than the legalistic ones I cited earlier.

Following other scholars who have examined corruption as an everyday practice, I see corruption as a productive or performative practice (in the Foucauldian sense). To say corruption is performative is to suggest with MacKenzie (2006:29), that it does or accomplishes things rather than describing an external reality that is not affected by corruption. Furthermore, the academic discipline of economics does not always stand outside the economy, analyzing it as an external thing; but it is an intrinsic part of the economic processes (MacKenzie 2006, 16). Neither are those who criticize corruption (anti-corruption agencies, civil society organizations, and even supposed victims of corruption itself).

As argued by Callon (2006), the performative nature of economics is what has led to the creation of the so-called rationally acting individuals in socio-material networks and that ‘self-interested agents have tended to behave rationally and opportunistically’ in socio-material networks people engage in. The performativity of economics essentially is a political process through which ‘homo economicus’ is produced by economics and economic constraints (Callon, 1998: 51). With regards to the idea of performativity, Orlikowski (2007) also similarly stated as follows: “it is an actant rather an instrument in the hands of human beings that possess natural traits such as individual rationality and opportunism shaped by mediating socio-materialities”. Santos and Rodrigues (2009) support this claim that economics, rather than being performative in the shaping of calculative agencies, is performative in market building, thereby contributing to the commodification of social life.

More specifically, the significant part of Callon’s perspective of performativity was that economic theory performs reality driven by economic and market forces. Callon (2006) argued that “performing involves changing rather than describing the world and that a discourse is likely to act on its object”. This performativity theoretical framework is useful because of its focus on subjection and actor-network approaches. This is a significant shift from neoclassical studies of corruption because instead of studying corruption (as if it was an essentialist category) we now move to how it is performed. Here, the emphasis is on the web of relationships between people, their positions, technologies and practices, all combining to shape reality. Even those who appear to be patently outside of it (many unemployed youth, in

the case of my study) participate in the construction of this reality in some way (as I will show in my findings chapters).

Also, while inescapably institutional, corrupt practices from this perspective are also discursive. Subjects are discursively constituted as both more and less than essentially rational' (Hey, 2006) and may occupy multiple 'subject positions' (government official/parent/sister/citizen/daughter). But as Davies (2006) puts it these positions always occupied simultaneously, therefore muddying the easy distinctions made in neoclassical economic studies of corruption. For the purpose of this project, each position is undoubtedly normative in multiple and sometimes contradictory ways (self-aggrandizing; caring; intelligent/cunning). These positions shift and shape understanding of corruption, its performance and ultimately the subject's perception of its causes and effects (Butler, 1997).

## **2.6. Conclusion**

As discussed above, the above theory of performativity specifically remains a well-grounded concept for understanding of the relationship between society, economics and corruption and in terms of elucidating how economics and corruption are related to the creation of supposedly self-interested individuals and parasites in human relationships in modern days. The significance of the chosen theory discussed above is that it has acted to create a link between research findings by revealing the performative nature of economics in creating and enabling corruption.



## CHAPTER 3:

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

The study was about exploring local's perceptions of corruption focusing on its key drivers and effects of corruption in Jozini Local Municipality area. The main focus of this chapter is research methodology and paradigms used in this study. Burns and Groove (2003) defined 'methodology' as "the total strategy from identification of the problem to the final plans for data gathering and analysis". Guba (1990:17) stated that "paradigm is a basic set of beliefs that guides actions and this also acts to guide and influence the research". In this chapter, I outline the research approach, research design, sampling and recruitment strategy used, methods of data collection, data collection method, tools and techniques, type of data analysis used as well as ethical considerations which formed the crucial part to the success of this study.

#### **3.2. Research approach**

In order to satisfy the objectives of this dissertation, I used a qualitative research approach. This research approach was selected on the basis of the nature of the study which sought to explore and understand local perceptions and views on the key drivers and effects of corruption in Jozini Local Municipality area from the perspectives of the targeted research respondents, which included both municipal officers and local youth. **In investigating and exploring the drivers and effects of corruption in Jozini rural area, this study raised the following research questions in the introductory chapter:**

- **What are the youth perceptions on the drivers of corruption in Jozini Local Municipality?**
- **What are the local views on the effects of corruption in Jozini Local Municipality area?**
- **What are the existing various forms of corruption in Jozini?**

The above questions brought my study into the domain of qualitative research which required qualitative research methods for its conduction. Sanghera (2003) defines a qualitative research as "an exploration of what is assumed to be a dynamic reality". In this study, the exploration of what were the perceptions and views of local people on the key drivers and effects of

corruption as social realities is what this study was about. According to Holloway and Wheeler (2002:30), a qualitative research approach is “a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their own lived experiences within their own geographic context”.

Furthermore, a qualitative research relies on an emic-insider perspective and a qualitative methodologist is described as one who captures what people say in their world (Kumar, 2011). Therefore, the use of qualitative research approach in this study was crucial to the validity of research findings whereby the sources of data collection were local municipal officers and youth. A quantitative research approach would not be appropriate in this study because I was not interested in measuring the scope and frequency, but rather to find out what and how rural people themselves consider the key drivers and effects of corruption within their geographic context.

Through the use of a qualitative research method in this study, I was able to gain an understanding of how and why corruption happens through the use of open-ended questions that were not restrictive to research subjects. Secondly, “qualitative research approach is a method that mostly uses interviews and observations to ensure that views of interviewees are not restricted” (Bless et al., 2013: 162). Using Qualitative research, I was also able to generate theoretically richer observations that could not be easily reduced to numbers as argued by Yegidis and Weinbach (1991:155). Therefore, the significance of qualitative research approach in this study was its flexibility. In addition, the use of open-ended questions in this study helped to find well-grounded answers pertinent to research questions.

### **3.3. Research design**

An exploratory research design (non-probability) was used to carry out the research project. A research design is the framework for a study that is used as a guide in collecting and analyzing the research data (Creswell, 1998). As argued by Burns and Groove (2003), exploratory research is useful to gain new insights, discover new ideas and for increasing knowledge of the phenomenon under investigation. Therefore, exploratory research design acted to investigate the full nature of the subject under investigation.

This research design (exploratory) was crucial to generating a better understanding of what were the local perceptions on the key drivers and effects of corruption in Jozini Local Municipality. Through the use of the exploratory research design, I was able to deeply engage

and interact with the targeted research respondents which were the municipal officers and local youth in sharing information on what they considered key drivers and effects of corruption within their geographic location.

### **3.4. Sampling and recruitment strategy**

#### **3.4.1. Sampling Method**

A sampling is a process of selecting a suitable sample for a particular study (Parahoo, 1997). In this study, I used a purposive sampling method (non-probability) in recruiting the study participants who would give the most relevant and factual data about the study focus. According to Parahoo (1997:232), a ‘purposive sampling’ “is whereby the researcher deliberately chooses who to include in the study based on their ability to provide necessary data”.

Yegidis and Weinbach (1991:155) argued that “a qualitative research requires the researcher to identify a specific group of people who can provide information about a given problem unlike the quantitative research method which is mainly based on computational and statistical data analysis”. In this study, research respondents were selected on the basis of their likelihood to provide factual and reliable research data as well as their knowledge regarding a research subject. Therefore, the use of purposive sampling method in this study was fundamental to the quality of data collected and in terms of avoiding potential researcher’s bias because research findings were collected from the research subjects.

#### **3.4.2. Sample size and study population**

A non-probability purposive sample of 20 interviewees was randomly selected and formed part of this study. The targeted respondents in this study were municipal officers and local youth of the Jozini Local Municipality area. The respondent’s age range was between 18 and 40 years of age. Altogether, there were 12 male respondents and 8 female respondents in this study.

#### **3.4.3. Recruitment strategy of both municipal officials and youth segment**

##### **3.4.3.1. Municipal officers:**

A total number of 10 municipal officers formed part of this study. There were three (3) female municipal officers and also seven (7) male municipal officers. The recruited municipal officers were employees of the Jozini Local Municipality- see chapter 4 for details.

### **3.4.3.2. Youth participants:**

A total number of 10 youth respondents also formed part of this study. There were five (5) male respondents and five (5) female respondents. All youth respondents were 18 years of age and above. Respondents were selected mainly from ward 3 and 16 of the Jozini Local Municipality area.

### **3.5. Data collection methods, tools and techniques**

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:35), “the data collection phase is of cardinal importance as all conclusions reached may be influenced by the type and quality of data collected”. In this study, a semi-structured interview guide, whose aim was to explore participant’s perspectives, feelings, and opinions regarding the local perceptions on the key drivers and effects of corruption in the Jozini area was used. The study used myriad data collection techniques which included in-depth individual interviews and observations of conversations about corrupt behavior.

The use of unstructured interviews in this study offered flexibility in terms of the flow of the interview, thereby leaving room for the generation of conclusions that were not initially meant to be derived regarding corruption as a research subject. The use of interviews was also crucial to giving research respondents complete freedom to speak without restrictions about the subject under investigation so as to get deeper understanding and insights of local perceptions on the key drivers and effects of corruption in Jozini area.

Prior to conducting this study in the area of Jozini, a gate keeper’s letter was issued and granted to me by the Jozini Local Municipality as permission for conducting the study in the area. During the data collection phase, research respondents were notified about the entire study and its purpose, which was crucial to establishing rapport. Taking of field notes, tape-recording, coding and transcriptions were all key data collection techniques I used throughout this study.

Grand tour questions were broad questions asked to introduce the topics such as “What are the local perceptions on the drivers of corruption in Jozini rural area? I also used phrases such as “Could you elaborate more on that point?” and maintained eye contact as techniques in encouraging research respondents to continue speaking during the interview sessions. The interview techniques of probing (verbal and non-verbal) were also used. These included probing and exploring silences, prompting as well as summarizing which was significant to gaining perspectives of corruption from the respondents.

Certain ground rules were established, for example, no use of mobile phones was allowed during the interview. The interview lasted between 30 minutes and one hour. This gave research respondents adequate time to talk and take a break if they wanted to. After data collection, I coded the data and conducted content analysis by looking for specific words for which themes could be identified. After the interview, I took all the data collected, which included field notes, tape recorder from participants and interview transcripts and compiled a research report, which was then submitted to the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

### **3.6. Data analysis**

A thematic content analysis was used to analyze the data which was gathered from personal interviews. Babbie and Mouton (2001) argued that thematic content analysis is whereby data gathered is categorized in themes and sub-themes so as to be able to be comparable. “A thematic content analysis is particularly well suited to the study of communication and to answering the classical questions of communication research such as what, why, and to whom the phenomenon being studied has serious effects” (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Therefore, the usefulness of thematic content analysis in this study is that it helped in data collected being reduced and simplified. Moreover, thematic content analysis gave me the ability to structure the qualitative data collected in a way that satisfied the accomplishment of research objectives.

Data in this study was analyzed using the qualitative method which involved the use of inferences to reach a conclusion based on evidence and findings. Qualitative research data was in the form of words and therefore data was analyzed by going through the materials to identify similar phrases, themes and relationships. In analyzing the research data, I constructed an interpretive narrative from the data which included the voices and direct quotes of respondents (anonymously interpreted), coding field notes, observations or interview transcripts. Data was analyzed through the verbatim transcription of the responses from the interview in order to ensure reliability of research findings.

As a researcher, I practiced reflexivity as well as bracketing to overcome bias. Parahoo (1997:292) defines ‘reflexivity’ as “a process whereby the researcher reflects on their preconceived values and those of the research participants, such as reflecting on how data collected would be influenced by how research participants perceived the researcher”. ‘Bracketing’, on the other hand, implies “suspension of the researcher’s preconceptions, prejudices and beliefs so that they do not interfere with or influence the participant’s experience” (Parahoo, 1997:45). Therefore, in overcoming bias, I laid aside what was known

about the drivers and effects of corruption as a subject matter under investigation and remained open to data as it was revealed by research respondents. After the research was completed, I sifted data, then put the pieces together, systematically sorted out data, and then compiled a report that would be submitted to the University of KwaZulu-Natal, School of Built Environment and Development Studies.

### **3.7. Ethical considerations**

This study was subject to certain ethical issues and conflict of interests and ethical dilemmas did arise throughout the research process. As a researcher, I was very much aware of my responsibility to be always respectful and sensitive to research participants, respect their human rights and fully endorse the ethical code of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. In order for the research project to be successful, permission to conduct the research project was sought and granted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The research was conducted after the University of KwaZulu-Natal approved my research topic. Participation in this study was voluntary and research participants were assured of confidentiality. Research participants were also informed that they were free to decline their participation from the study whenever they felt to. In short, anonymity, protection from harm, privacy and confidentiality were all the key principles that guided this study to ensure that no one would be in danger as argued by Babbie and Mouton (2001).

There was no harmful threat to research participants because the research project focus was not on disclosing the names of people who were corrupt, but rather the study was investigating and exploring what rural people of Jozini themselves consider the key drivers and effects of corruption within their geographic context. At the beginning of the research interview, research participants were asked to sign a consent form as part of ensuring voluntary participation in the study. The research participants were also asked to grant permission for notes to be taken during the interview and it was also ensured that no identifying particulars were recorded during the interview to minimize harm to research participants. Lastly, I also made it clear to all the research participants that by participating in the research project did not mean that their circumstances would change.

### **3.8. Conclusion**

The chapter has described and discussed the research methodology used for the study, including relevance and suitability of the qualitative research approach, its strengths and

applicability in this study. Myriad data collection methods, tools and techniques used in this study have also been described in this chapter. The research designs, key research respondents, sampling method, rationale for the selection of the targeted and recruited respondents and method of data analysis were also described in this chapter. Finally, the chapter discussed a range of ethical considerations and challenges pertaining to this study and the manner in which I conducted the study as a whole.

## CHAPTER 4:

### **UNDERSTANDINGS OF PERCEPTIONS OF CORRUPTION IN JOZINI: ITS DRIVERS AND EFFECTS**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, I present the results of my research including demographic profiles of the interviewees. I use tables, descriptions and field notes to make the data analysis and interpretation more meaningful. Specifically, this chapter mainly discusses the research findings and results in relation to the research questions and objectives, which were to investigate and explore local perceptions on the key drivers and effects of corruption in the Jozini Local Municipality, with specific reference to public works. Analysis and interpretation of the research data are supported by making reference to sources in the literature section discussed in chapter two.

#### **4.2. Demographic Profile of Respondents**

The research respondents recruited in this study comprised of both municipal officers and youth participants in Jozini Local Municipality. The participants' age range was between 18 and 40 years. Table 1 below presents the demographic profile of respondents.

		Number of respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	12	60
	Female	8	40
Age	18-35	15	75
	36-40	5	25
Race	Blacks	19	95
	Indian	1	5
Education	Did not finish high school	4	20
	Grade 12	13	65
	Tertiary qualification	3	15



As shown in table 1 above, 20 research respondents who formed part of this research project, 12 were male (60%) and eight were female (40%). Most of the respondents (75%) comprised of young people between the ages of 18 and 35 and the rest were no older than 40 years old. The latter group comprised municipal officers. In terms of race, the majority of respondents in this study were from the black community, having scored 95% of participation rate in the research project. There was also another five percentages (5%) from one Indian participant in this research study.

In this study, 65% of the research respondents indicated that they only had grade 12 certificates, particularly the majority of the youth respondents as indicated in the table above. About fifteen percentages (15%) of the respondents indicated that they were in possession of university degrees or diploma (which included one youth participant and two municipal officials). However, 20% of respondents did not have any high school qualification at all. Therefore, this study involved various sectors of the community, which played a pivotal role in ensuring representation of various local people in sharing their perspectives on the drivers and of corruption within their area.

### **4.3. The C-Word in Jozini**

During my interviews, it was difficult to talk about corruption in isiZulu, not only because of the translatability of the concept but also because of the cultural practices that make the idea of corruption hard to pin down. Discussing corruption as inkohlakalo/ukukhohlakala (immorality), or ukweba (theft) does not quite equate to corruption as graft, bribery, embezzlement, and favouritism. In fact, translating all these terms into isiZulu proved to be a challenge. Ukwenzelela does not have the same sting as its near English equivalent, nepotism. However, ukugwazela (literally 'to stab') expresses a stronger sentiment than bribery. Therefore, teasing out the fine textures in the meanings of corruption, near corruption, suspected corruption proved challenging. As a result, especially among young people we often interspersed our discussions of corruption with English words. For example, here is one of my exchanges with an interviewee:

Me: Ngokubona kwakho, yini inkohlakalo, yini i-corruption la eJozini? (In your view, what are the results of corruption here in Jozini?)

Respondent 13: Mina? Ngokubona kwami? (Me? My view?)

Me: Impela, wena. Yini inkohlakalo, yini i-corruption? (Indeed, your view. What is immorality, what is corruption?)

Respondent 13: I corruption into ebhedayo. According to my perception is whereby abantu be utilize ama funds ka hulumeni ngendlela ebhedayo. Uma for instance yenziwa i government official ophathisiwe ukuthi a rend i service. Lo muntu uma esedla leyo mali obekufanele isize umphakathi sizothi i-corruption leyo. Angazi. We are unemployed and you find yourself paying a bribe in order to get a job. You are desperate. (Corruption is a wrong thing. According to my perception it is whereby people misuse government funds. Say for instance it is done by a government official who has been tasked with rendering a service. When this person spends that money on himself (literally: 'eats it'), money that was supposed to help the community, we will call that corruption. I don't know. We are unemployed and you find yourself paying a bribe in order to get a job. You are desperate).

At face value, the definitions of corruption offered by my respondents mirrored those offered by the media and anti-corruption campaigns. That is, definitions that view corruption as pertaining to the behavior of people who are in the public service. Their public interest definitions therefore seemed to absolve the actions of private citizens who, in the words of one of my respondents, "are left with the only option" of paying a bribe to get a job, for example. Therefore, there was not an unequivocal rejection of corruption in Jozini. Respondents frowned upon illicit acts only when they are committed by those in power such as councillors, izinduna, and civil servants. But even then, that condemnation was qualified, as I will discuss further below. But generally, while most of my respondents claimed that corruption was indeed morally reprehensible, like Respondent 13 quoted above, they also provided many good reasons why it is sometimes the only option. But this view was undercut by another cultural norm which emphasizes strong family ties. This became clear when I pressed one of my respondents about what he would do if he was in higher office, whether his condemnation of corruption would still be strong:

Me: Here is a thought experiment, suppose you are a Mayor of Jozini, would you find yourself also picking (ukucaphuna) from the coffers? We are now speaking about you directly.

Respondent 15: Impela. Nami ngingacaphuna. (Yes, I would also pick).

Me: How about your salary, because the public coffer is for the public, no?

Respondent 15: All the money that comes in, is way bigger than what you earn. A little bit here and a little bit there. I agree that I would also be tempted. Yes. I'll tell the truth. This could happen. It's a lot of money. You get tempted because you have your family, and extended families to take care of. What would people say if I am a Mayor and I have a poor cousin running around? I have an unemployed brother? In the meantime, there are vacancies that I have power to decide on? Who can respect such a Mayor?

From a performativity perspective then, because corruption takes place in wide contexts, we have to take into account the cultural milieu in Jozini. From Respondent 15's answer above, it becomes clear that in his perspective bureaucratic state and office rules about corruption are meaningless if they mean as a Mayor you cannot help out a struggling family member. Strong adherence to bureaucratic definitions of propriety would cost you the respect of your community.

#### **4.4. Local perceptions on the key drivers of corruption in Jozini Local Municipality**

The first research question of this study was aimed at identifying and exploring the respondent's perceptions and views on the key drivers of corruption in Public Works in Jozini Local Municipality. Table 2 below shows that most of the respondents (45%) identified greed or lack of ethics to be the major factor that drives and causes corruption among public officials in the public works sector in the Jozini area. The least driver of corruption was indicated to be the weak legal system and the scarcity of resources rated at 5% respectively.

Table 2: Drivers of corruption in Public Works in Jozini Local Municipality

Driver	No of Respondents	Percentage %	Rank
Greed/ lack of ethics	9	45%	1
Appointment based on patronage	4	20%	2
Lack of commitment	3	15%	3
Low salary levels	2	10%	4
Weak legal system	1	5%	5

Scarcity of resources	1	5%	5
Total	20	100	

When ranked according to percentages as detailed in table 2 above, the results showed that study respondents perceived the issue of human greed and lack of ethics to be the key driver and leading factor to the evolution of corruption in the Jozini area. It ranked first (45%), followed by appointment based on patronage (20%), whilst lack of commitment by public officials ranked third at 15%. Low salary levels ranked as the fourth driver of corruption (10% of respondents). The weak legal system and the issue of scarcity of resources in the rural world of Jozini, ranked least as drivers of corruption (at 5% respectively). However, the identification and exploration of the drivers of corruption in the Public Works sector in Jozini Local Municipality as described above required a qualitative analysis and discussion as detailed in the following section.

#### **4.5. Key Drivers of Corruption in Jozini**

An analysis of the findings of this study on the drivers of corruption in the public works sector in Jozini Local Municipality, as discussed above, revealed that there is a necessity for the evaluation of the drivers of corruption in the rural world. From my interviews, it was clear that the respondents considered greed, appointment based on patronage, lack of commitment, low salary levels, weak legal system and scarcity of resources were critical factors driving corruption in Jozini Local Municipality. They indicated that the political and economic situation in South Africa has acted to promote greedy and unethical behavioral practices among public officials, which have consequently disadvantaged the vast majority of the rural population. The results of this study are therefore consistent with the past findings on earlier corruption studies such as Olowu (1999) who asserted that greed is a critical cause of the evolution of corruption.

Firstly, the issue of human greed was considered a critical factor to corruption in Jozini Local Municipality area. Out of the 20 respondents interviewed, about 45% of them were of the view that the issue of human greed has acted to create corrupt public officials in the public works sector. They reported that corruption is caused by human greed which has led to the creation of public officials who are selfish and who often use politics for their own selfish interests instead of working towards public good.

Respondent 8 confirmed that public officials in the public works sector are by nature greedy and morally corrupt, saying:

“What we see here in Jozini is that instead of seeing public officials working for us as the general public, such public officials tend to abuse powers bestowed upon them by engaging in self-enriching activities rather than working towards the betterment of our conditions and poverty alleviation”.

From a performativity perspective, this sentiment illustrates the dominance of classical economic and liberal theories of corruption. As I discussed in chapter two, this framing of corruption tends to reduce it to individual pathologies mostly in the public sector. Indeed, prevailing anti-corruption discourses have little to say regarding corruption in the business sector.<sup>1</sup> Little attention is given to the prevailing structural conditions that impoverish rural residents. In other words, the the structural configurations of the socio-technical institutions and the networks in which the human action takes place (Santos and Rodrigues 2009) are not taken into account in this sentiment. Thus, while the respondents considered money as the critical scapegoat to human greed, they simply focused on the selfish desire and obsession with materialistic things leading individual public officials to engage in morally and ethically corrupt behaviour, rather than the whole political economy of rural areas that structurally impoverishes rural areas.

The above view supports the argument by Callon (1998), arguing that myriad spaces and socio-material networks comprised of various humans with different interests have acted to produce what has been termed ‘rationally acting individuals’. Callon (1998:51) calls this the ‘performative nature of corruption’ whereby ‘homo economicus’ (rationally acting individuals) are produced by economics through economic processes. Respondents also indicated that the issue of human greed is a factor obstructing what public works and its officials are expected to do, including poverty alleviation and rural development through fair distribution of services like jobs and government tenders to the rural people. They further stated that instead of seeing public officials working towards rural development, such development actors (including both the public and private individuals) tend to act in opposition to rural development by performing unethical tasks like bribery.

The above points to the critical point of the ‘performative nature of corruption’ in that greed has a corrupting influence on many public officials, which has been reported by field respondents to have consequently acted to pauperize the rural population, particularly the unemployed youth population who lack economic means to pay bribes. This also supports MacKenzie’s (2006) theoretical view who wrote extensively on ‘corruption as performative’ as a way of focusing on what corruption itself does. An understanding and analysis of corruption therefore relates to the existing economic systems, as MacKenzie (2006:16) puts, “it is an intrinsic part of the economic processes”.

It therefore remains important to argue that as a result of corruption in the rural world, it is likely that programmes designed to alleviate rural poverty such as the Public Works and its Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP) are susceptible to fail when it comes to policy and programme implementation to real issues such as rural poverty and youth unemployment because of the role corruption plays in shaping human behaviour that contradicts ethical and moral behaviour. This is fundamentally because of such government programmes are susceptible to corruption as public officials tend to act to in opposition to the aims and objectives of such programmes towards rural and youth development, but rather choose to engage in greedy and self-enriching ways at the expense of the public.

The second driver of corruption identified and considered by respondents in this study was the issue of appointment of people based on patronage. This was ranked second at twenty percentages (20%). Respondents in this study spoke of unfair and unjust procedures when it comes to the distribution of public services and opportunities within the area such as job and tenders. Furthermore, respondents reported that there is always bewilderment with regards to how the local municipality operates and in the manner in which public opportunities are distributed among the local people. For example, respondent 2 saw such a practice as a critical factor and source to the evolution of patronage corruption, arguing:

“Those who are related by surname to some public officials and the politically connected individuals are likely to get first preferences to opportunities like jobs and tenders than those not known either by ward councilors and senior comrades working as municipal officers and tender distributors”.

The above was however consistent with earliest corruption studies by Nduku and Tenemwenye (2014) who reiterated that family connections and patronage appointments have always been an aspect of African politics, which Bayart (1989) referred to as the ‘Politics of the Belly’.

Research results on the issue of appointment on the basis of patronage were also in agreement with Hutchcroft (1997:4) who found out that “corruption is the end result of the politics of the privileges”.

Furthermore, what Bracking (2013) termed ‘political connectivity’ is critical here and seems to play a role in understanding how the issue of patronage has led to poor governance and a selfless service delivery crisis to the impoverished rural population. The issue of politics therefore seems to have become incorporated in the process of facilitating rural development in rural areas. This acts to exclude others to benefit from the development as a process supposed to benefit all despite one’s political affiliations.

Respondents criticized the local government’s failure to meet the needs of the impoverished youth population in the area because of corrupt political structures and officials that favor only those who are politically known to be the politically active members of a particular political group. They were frustrated by the noticeable unfair appointment procedures and lack of accountability from the local development committees in justifying their decisions. Respondent 18 raised a critical question pertaining to appointment procedures of people to public positions with regards to a newly-opened school in Ndumo area (ward 16), asking:

“How come that people who are not even the ordinary people of Jozini surroundings have been appointed to local jobs while there are unemployed and qualifying young graduates within the area to occupy such positions?”

They were referring to the appointment of teachers and clerks to a newly-opened school, called Mandla Mthethwa School of Excellence (MMSE). The school, as revealed by respondents, was named after the death of a local political freedom fighter (Mandla Mthethwa) who was a member of the African National Congress (ANC) for years and died in the late 1990s. Some of the respondents showed deep feelings of anger and animosity towards local leaders (izinduna), mayors and the ward councilor, revealing that there were many unemployed and qualified teachers and clerks within the Ndumo area, but none of them have been employed in this school, but rather, most of the employees alleged to had been employed to work in the school were from urban areas like Durban.

The issue of appointment based on patronage is undoubtedly likely to cause what I term ‘a state of inescapable poverty’ to the poorest of the poor segments of rural and impoverished societies. Patronage appointment may act as a ‘poverty trap’ to those who are discriminated against by the corrupt nature of appointment procedures. For example, when preferences are given to the

politically connected and undeserving individuals who are related to public officials either by affiliation to the same political party or family relationships, this may tend to disadvantage others, thus causing exclusion of others to benefit from the development process.

Thirdly, a lack of commitment by public officials was considered the third critical factor driving corruption in Jozini area by field respondents, rated at (15%). The respondents revealed that the people assigned with the responsibility of facilitating, improving and changing the lives of the impoverished rural population (including youth population) in the case of my study, seemed not to care and worry about development of others. A critical body of work by Osakwe (2011) supports the above research findings, arguing that a good number of politicians come to political limelight with the aim of what they want from the system, not what they will contribute to improve the system.

The respondents in my study reported that while the officials are expected to deliver services, they rather choose to act in 'self-aggrandizing ways' in order to improve their own lives and not addressing critical community issues. An interesting point with regards to the issue of a lack of commitment was raised by respondent 20, who was a female municipal officer at Jozini Local Municipality, saying that in South Africa, both rural and urban areas, the whole country is experiencing a shortage of committed cadres and civil servants, and she further elaborated saying that:

“There is a lack of political commitment to many public officials, some of us as representatives of the general public, we tend to be very much concerned about ourselves rather than being concerned about the people we serve, as a result of this moral degeneration and selfish disregard for others, we start behaving in corrupt ways by engaging in illegal and corrupt things with the public like bribery”

In addition to the above, respondent 1 asked rhetorically, “public officials know the miserable conditions of rural poverty and unemployment issues characterizing our rural communities, so if they are truly committed to change and rural development, why do they accept bribes from ordinary grassroots people whom they know are also struggling in life (the unemployed)? Why must not they atleast take bribes from the people who are rich, rather than the poor and unemployed youth?”

Drawing from the above, it is evident that rather than blaming all the actors to corrupt acts, corruption is blamed on public officials for being corrupt, lacking commitment to serve with integrity and engaging in corrupt practice with the general public. However, this poses



questions about those who pay bribes to public officials (ordinary people). Are they not supposed to be blamed too for facilitating corruption through paying bribes? When asking these questions to field respondents, they stated that the major scapegoats are public officials in the evolution of corruption, not the ordinary people. This was further elucidated that the reason why not blaming the community people for paying bribes relates to the assumption that ordinary people sometimes pay bribes because of the corrupt system that compels them to do so, and due to rural and inescapable poverty, they find themselves doing it against their will.

Previous findings by Sarah Bracking (2013) suggest that this is common. She concluded that that ordinary people blame public sector officials and political leaders for not doing their jobs unless they receive bribes and grease money, which acted to support the above. Therefore, the language of corruption involves a blame game whereby blame is shifted to public officials while excluding those who pay bribes to the public officials. This ignores the critical point that corruption is a voluntary and collaborative partnership between public officials and the ordinary citizens. When I asked respondents to reflect on what they would do if they themselves got into positions of power (such as mayors and community leaders) in the future with powers bestowed upon them to appoint people to public positions and one of their family members or child was unemployed? One of the field respondents, respondent 14, who was an unemployed matric holder, answered in the following way:

“It’s a difficult question, but truly speaking, other public officials here have been doing it for years, I can give my family member a job too, although I may be lambasted for doing that, but this is how things happen here. My siblings are my responsibility. If I don’t do it to them, who will do it to them?”

From a performativity perspective then, instead of seeing corruption as an external threat, this sentiment shows that even those who appear to be patent victims of corruption sometimes participate in the construction of this reality, even without their full awareness. Secondly, Respondent 14’s views highlight another important axis of the performativity framework, namely the focus on multiple ‘subject positions’ (Davis 2006). As I discussed in the theoretical framework (chapter 2) while they are institutional, corrupt practices are also enduringly discursive. Respondent 14 here highlights that in the discourses on corruption, subjects may occupy simultaneous contradictory positions, thereby muddying the easy distinctions made in neoclassical economic studies of corruption. As respondent 14 demonstrates, these positions shape and shift understandings of corruption, its performance, and ultimately the subject’s

perception of its causes and effects. This point was also poignantly illustrated by a municipal employee when she said:

“Not that all of us here are satisfied by what we earn, maybe some are satisfied, maybe some are not. Some of us here are fathers and mothers of households with various responsibilities to take, if the salary we get is less than our expenses, some of us may consider other illegal means in order to survive and meet their family needs, including accepting bribes”.

Respondent 12 (a female municipal officer) concurred with this view. When I asked her to give her perspective on how low salaries and corruption are interconnected to each other? She confidently said corruption and low salaries are closely related to each other and further elaborated saying:

“Just imagine you earn R10 000 per month and one of your children is at the university studying, she always asks for money from you as a mother or father to buy food there, and on the other hand, you also have to look after the wellbeing of other children who still attend primary and high schools, how life can be?”

In other words, the gray lines of corruption become thicker when you occupy a subject position of, in the words of Respondent 12, “a responsible mother or father.” You are no longer simply an unemployed youth who views corruption negatively, but a caring parent who would do anything for her children. Her response challenges the somewhat simplistic neo-classical and neopatrimonial interpretations of corruption that read corruption only in terms of material gain. As Mkandawire (2015: 599) perspicaciously argues, when you marry public choice theory to neopatrimonialism, “there are no ethnic bonds, no sentiments of place and past, no loyalty, no passion, and no belonging-except perhaps as smokescreens to conceal crass material interests” (Mkandawire, 2015:599).

Finally, the issue of weak legal system and scarcity of resources were considered the least drivers of corruption in Jozini Local Municipality rated at 5% respectively. Respondents stated that the weak, lenient and offender-friendly criminal justice system in South Africa has failed to deter and punish corrupt practices in the area. It was further elaborated that such failure to punish perpetrators of corruption has acted to encourage others to engage in corruption, knowing that being found guilty of corruption does not carry any heavy criminal punishment.

Respondent 5, who called himself ‘a victim of corruption’ as a result of rural poverty, confirmed that the issue of weak criminal justice system is indeed a factor to the evolution of corruption in Jozini area, saying that:

“Even if you are reporting a case of corruption to the police station, it is a waste of time because even if you report such corrupt acts, alleging that some government officials demand bribes from the impoverished and struggling local people in development projects that are currently underway, police will tell you that you do not have tangible proof and evidence to prove that and therefore a case cannot be opened.”

The above findings concur with Freille’s (2007) observation that weak institutions such as the corrupt police force and the judicial system may act to encourage corruption. Research findings suggest that as a result of the failure to effectively deal with corruption cases in South Africa, particularly in rural areas, has acted to enable various actors to corruption enjoy immunity from prosecution.

#### **4.6. Local’s perceptions and views on the effects of corruption on development in Jozini Local Municipality**

Another component of this study pertained to the respondent’s views on the effects of corruption on development in Jozini? Below is a summary of their responses as presented in table 3 below.

Table 3: Research results on the local’s perceptions and views of the effects of corruption in Jozini Local Municipality

Effect	No of respondents	Percentage%	Rank
Exacerbating poverty	8	40	1
Enriching a few	5	25	2
Inequality	4	20	3
Undermining democracy	2	10	4
Social protests	1	5	5
Total	20	100	

The above research findings showed that some of the local's perceptions on the effects associated with corruption in Jozini area include the following: exacerbation of poverty (40%), ranked number one effect of corruption, the enrichment of the few individuals and impoverishment of the majority being the second effect of corruption at 25%.

Creation of inequality within Jozini surrounding areas was considered the third effect of corruption rated at 20%. While the undermining of democracy and state institutions was considered the fourth effect associated with corruption in the area rated at 10%. Lastly, the issue of service delivery protests in the area was also considered the least effect of corruption rated at 5%. However, the above research findings required a qualitative analysis as detailed below.

An analysis of the findings of this study revealed that corruption is associated with various effects. Firstly, the exacerbation of poverty was considered the serious effect associated with corruption in the area. About 40% of field respondents considered this a critical effect associated with corruption in the area. It was indicated that corruption has acted to exacerbate poverty in the area. Some of the field respondents considered corruption 'a zero-sum game', saying that some people advance themselves at the expense of others. Respondent 7, 10, 14 and 19 confirmed this, saying that:

"Corruption in Jozini is what determines who are likely to enjoy fruits of development, those who are economically advantaged enough to pay bribes, they are likely to see their lives advancing, while some of us who cannot afford paying bribes; we continue to remain poor in the long run"

A critical point here is that of 'performativity' which helps us focus on corruption as performative in understanding what it does as argued by MacKenzie (2006). Therefore, unlike the capitalist system known as 'exploitative by nature' from Marxist perspective, corruption, on the other hand, seems to be associated with pauperization of others, especially the grassroots population who lack economic means to pay bribes to corrupt officials (in the case of my study).

Other scholars such as Madonsela (2010:3) similarly state that "we cannot deny that corruption is behind a lot of the underdevelopment in our countries and that it causes poor quality goods and services and is negatively affecting the effectiveness of public programmes to addressing problems of poverty". So, using the performativity framework, leads us to ask, what does corruption perform (Callon 2007)? In this case, fascination with corruption obscures some of

the structural factors that produce poverty. Indeed, it must be noted that respondents in this study attributed lack of development (their pauperization) to the corrupt system and public officials, while ignoring other critical development issues that have long characterized the area. For example, reports indicate that education levels are gloomy in Jozini and that “about 33 490 people in the area have no schooling which remains a critical cause of poverty” (Jozini IDP, 2016/2017). This highlights the existence of other critical factors to poverty rather than looking on corruption alone as an issue contributing to poverty in the area.

The second critical effect associated with corruption in Jozini area was that of the enrichment of the few minorities and impoverishment of the vast majority of rural population. About 25% of field respondents revealed that corruption acts to create a situation whereby the few individuals are able to advance themselves through corrupt means while the vast majority, particularly the economically disempowered rural population, continues to remain impoverished and pauperized by the corrupt system. Respondent 1 confirmed that corruption enriches certain individuals at the expense of the general public, saying that:

“When you compare the life of a corrupt person and an unemployed young person who is struggling to get ahead with life itself, they are totally different in terms of their social and economic status, corrupt people are rich because, in most cases, they embezzle millions of state money supposed to help the poor get out of poverty, they demand bribes to enrich themselves, it is a bad thing, but it is difficult to deal with it”

The above supports the assertion by MacKenzie (2006:16) who refers to ‘corruption as performative’ to focus on what corruption itself does. Corruption therefore acts to create what I term ‘parasitism’ and ‘underdevelopment of others’. As stated by respondents, corruption was considered to have created an environment whereby some people advance themselves while the majority of rural and unemployed youth population lacking economic means to pay bribes remains pauperized.

Thirdly, corruption was considered to have caused inequality in terms of social and economic status between different segments of people within the area. This was ranked third effect of corruption in the area at 20%. Respondents in this study revealed that corruption has widened the gap between the rich and the poor in such a way that the economically advantaged people are able to pay bribes to corrupt officials and get jobs and other opportunities that are key to human development while the economically disadvantaged sectors of society remain disadvantaged.

Field respondents further reported that corruption is a major scapegoat to the existing high inequality levels in the area, revealing that there is huge and noticeable difference between those who are corrupt than those who are not. It was also revealed by research respondents that the economically disempowered segments are always disadvantaged compared to the economically empowered individuals when it comes to the issue of bribery which was considered to have become a key determinant in the distribution of social services and opportunities.

The fourth effect was that corruption has compromised and undermined democracy as well as tarnishing public institutions. This was rated at 10%. Field respondents stated that after remarkable strides have been made by notable freedom fighters (including former president Nelson Mandela) to reform this country, hopes for change have faded away as a result of corrupt public officials who lack commitment to change and upliftment of human lives living in miserable conditions (abject and absolute poverty). Respondent 5 and 14 confirmed that corruption has acted to compromise our young democracy and tarnish public institutions in the whole country of South Africa, and particularly in rural areas where the issue seems to be prevalent, saying that:

“Many of us as poor people here, have no faith at all in public officials because they need to be bribed before they deliver, we can’t afford bribing them”

The above seems to be in agreement with Staphenurst and Langseth (1997) who reiterated that corruption threatens the hopes of the poor and that the construction of democracy becomes threatened in a corrupt system. Corruption thus has acted to take away hopes of the people about the hopes of democracy towards transforming the country (rural development and fair distribution of opportunities to all). Consequently, this has undermined good governance and state legitimacy.

Fifth, the least effect of corruption in Jozini area was considered to be the emergence of service delivery protests as a result of corruption. This was rated at 5%. This was according to the perspective of one field respondent, respondent 17 who vehemently stated that: “the prevalence of social protests a couple of years ago up to date are a result of corruption in the area, local people have been tolerating this for years, now they are retaliating back through various illegal means including vandalism of municipal property”.

A respondent further revealed that social protests are a way in which the angry local people express their anger and retaliate against suspected corrupt government officials. A respondent also indicated that, as a result of corruption, the community, especially the unemployed youth segments of society, have developed feelings of hatred and animosity against those who perpetrate corruption in the area.

#### **4.6.1. Youth as victims of corruption, youth unemployment and corruption in Jozini**

Respondents in this study revealed that youth are the noticeable victims of corruption due to their state of unemployment and lack of economic power to pay bribes to corrupt officials. It was further indicated that the corrupt officials start by prioritizing those who bribe them before a job opportunity may be given to a person. This in line with Brown (1999) who argued that it is no wonder that despite significant strides since the advent of democracy in 1994, the majority of young South Africans remain doubtful of opportunities for social and economic progress due to the prevailing scourge of corruption.

In light of how rural youth in Jozini have become victims of corruption, respondents in this study revealed that due to the high percentage of youth unemployment in the area, the youth segment of rural Jozini society has become victims of so many scourges like poverty, crime, psychological problems and drug abuse. Moniza (2008) supported this view, postulating that as a result of myriad problems such as corruption and youth unemployment, youth are easy prey for criminals, drug dealers and extremists. Therefore, one may argue that corruption and youth unemployment in rural areas are closely interconnected and that corruption, particularly in the form of bribery, acts to exclude the unemployed and economically disadvantaged youth segments from benefiting from the development process, thus making the unemployed youth in rural settings the victims of corruption.

The above is also in agreement with Brown (1999) who reiterated that youth unemployment and corruption are among the critical challenges obstructing youth development in most rural settings of the world. Therefore, drawing from the above, it can be argued that due to the inescapable state of youth unemployment characterizing rural areas in the context of South Africa, the unemployed youth segment of rural society has become the hardest hit by corruption whereby resource distribution and availability of youth development opportunities are distributed on the basis of who has paid bribes to the corrupt development officials. Corruption, in my view, has become an obstacle to youth development in the rural world.

#### **4.7. Conclusions**

This chapter set out to explain demographic profiles of the research respondents. In this study, I outlined, discussed and evaluated the findings of the study on local's perceptions and views of corruption focusing on its drivers and effects in Jozini Local Municipality area. Research findings were analyzed in line with previous findings of other researchers in the field of corruption so as to evaluate any agreements or disagreements of research results with what has previously been found. This chapter has discussed and presented data analysis, study results and discussion of findings. I found research findings from this study to be consistent with the findings of several related previous studies on perceptions of corruption focusing on its drivers and effects of corruption. The next section, which is chapter 5, details the study summary and conclusions.



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

This study set out to investigate and explore the local perceptions of corruption focusing on its drivers and effects in Jozini. The study explored pertinent literature in corruption to locate the study in theoretically and practically relevant conceptual frames. I interviewed 20 research respondents, who comprised 10 municipal officers and 10 youth in Jozini. In this study, I used both the exploratory and case study approach because of its qualitative nature. The objective was mainly to explore understandings of the key drivers and effects of corruption in the Jozini Local Municipality area. The study also explored various forms of corruption in Jozini in order to help understand how corruption in the Public Works sector in Jozini Local Municipality area manifested itself. In this final chapter of the study, I summarise the key findings and discuss the significance of my research.

To reiterate, in order to investigate the problems identified in the study, three research questions were used to gather, discuss and analyse findings about corruption in the study area (this is covered more broadly in chapter four):

- ❖ What are the local's perceptions on the drivers of corruption in public works in Jozini Local Municipality?
- ❖ What are the local's views on effects that corruption have on development in the area?
- ❖ What are the various forms of corruption existing in Jozini?

Section 5.1 below presents some conclusions of this study, taking into consideration some of the research findings and results on the drivers, effects and existing forms of corruption in Jozini Local Municipality.

#### **5.1. Summary of key findings**

This section summarizes the main research findings presented in Chapter four of this study. The first research question of this study focused on the exploration and identification of the local perceptions and views on the drivers of corruption in the public works sector in Jozini Local Municipality area. The research questions detailed in the opening section above, guided this study in coming up with useful research conclusions.

In relation to the first question, myriad factors, including the following were noted and perceived by research participants to be the key drivers of corruption: greed or lack of ethics, appointment based on patronage, lack of commitment by public officials, low salary levels being paid to public officials, weak legal system and the scarcity of resources in rural areas of Jozini (as outlined in section 4.4. of the previous chapter).

In this study, the second research question focused on the local's perceptions and views on the effects of corruption in the Jozini Local Municipality area. The interviewees identified the following as critical factors resulting from corruption in the Jozini Local Municipality area: exacerbation of poverty, enrichment of the few and impoverishment of the majority, inequality, undermining of democracy in post-apartheid South Africa as well as the prevalence of service delivery protests in the area. They also indicated that as a result of corruption, the vast majority of the rural population, particularly youth, has been subjected to unemployment and poverty caused by the corrupt system in the distribution of opportunities.

The third research question of this study focused on local's views and perceptions on the existing forms and manifestations of corruption in the public works in the area. The study revealed the following to be prevalent and existing forms of corruption in the Jozini Local Municipality: bribery, appointment based on patronage, favouritism and embezzlement of state funds at a municipal level. Public officials were indicated to be abusing the publicly entrusted state power and accept bribes from ordinary people before opportunities such as jobs and tenders could be offered.

While at face value, the people I interviewed in Jozini seem to affirm the neoclassical view of corruption as a pathology of individual public officials and their selfish desires and obsession with material things, when I dug deeper, the picture that emerged was a little more complicated. As I indicated in chapter four, discussions of corruption in this rural setting revealed the interviewees' strong views about the undesirability of corruption, yet that condemnation was qualified, as most of my respondents claimed that corruption was sometimes the only option. This is why the performativity framework was useful because it takes into account the wider socio-economic and cultural milieu in which corruption takes place and the tasks that it performs in a rural setting like Jozini. Even as they strongly condemned corrupt practices, they also highlighted how those in power are caught in the web of bureaucratic definitions of corruption that contradict cultural norms of helping your facility members and close relatives.

This point leads to another important finding of this study that different actors in the webs of corruption occupy multiple sometimes contradictory subject positions. When I asked unemployed young people (who claimed that they were victims of corruption as they were overlooked for jobs in favor of connected people), their condemnation of corruption was strong, but when I asked them to imagine themselves in the shoes of powerful politicians, they admitted that they would also take care of their family, friends and allies. Therefore, these positions shape and shift understandings of corruption, its performance, and ultimately the subject's perception of its causes and effects.

## **5.2. Significance of the study**

There has been a shortage of studies on corruption in rural areas and my study seeks to shine light on this topic and how it manifests itself in the countryside. Having viewed corruption from a performativity point of view which draws mainly from economics as a discipline and particularly from what has become known as the 'actor network theory', this study describes how myriad socio-material arrangements act to shape social realities in modern day Jozini. In short, this study highlights the link between economics, society and corruption and how these influence each other in social practice.

Drawing from performativity studies and the influential work of Ferraro et al (2005:10), this study shows how economics has won "the battle for theoretical hegemony in society as a whole". Therefore, the study elucidates how economics has societal impacts and to give insights to how 'economics shapes and performs the economy rather than observing how it functions' as argued by Callon (1998). In Callon's (1998) phrasing economic theory performs reality and that homo economicus (rationally acting individual) is produced by economics; my study therefore further highlights that 'individual rationality and opportunism are shaped by socio-materialities' and that 'a web of relationships between people all combine and shape reality' as argued by Orliwoski (2007).

Furthermore, having viewed corruption from a performativity perspective, this study takes a significant shift from neoclassical studies of corruption to how it is performed and what it does. This is why my research stresses the role of myriad factors (human greed, family ties and political connectedness) that have a corrupting influence on public officials, which have consequently acted to exclude, impoverish and pauperize some of the rural population from benefiting in the development projects, the economically disempowered and those who are not politically connected, in the case of my study. This study also provides an insight into the

complexity of the major and key drivers of corruption in the context of rural areas of South Africa with specific reference to Jozini areas in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

Lastly, this study has shed light on some of the similarities and differences between rural and urban corruption. For example, respondents interviewed in Jozini revealed that rural corruption is sometimes influenced by youth apathy due to a lack of political awareness and knowledge as well as high illiteracy levels characterizing the rural world, as a result, knowledgeable municipal officials are reported to take that advantage and abuse state powers bestowed upon them by the public, and thus they start betraying their communities through stealing from the community resources and money supposed to be used towards the promotion of rural development. From an urban corruption perspective, this study highlights that corruption is sometimes well-organized involving many superior public officials and it mainly emanates from the top management to the civil servants. More importantly, this study also highlights some of the similarities between rural and urban corruption in that both urban and rural corruption are driven and motivated by human greed and selfish disregard of others.

### **5.3. Limitation of the study**

This study was limited only to ward 3 and 16 of the Jozini Municipality. Thus, the study results may not be generalized to communities in other wards in the Jozini Municipality, nor to rural areas in general. A case study method selects a specific geographic area and uses a limited number of research respondents, therefore it is likely that same research results may not be replicated if studying corruption in other wards of Jozini area with a larger number of respondents in the future. Subjective and sometimes biased views of respondents could lead to a development of a biased interpretation of research data, which as a result, might be a threat to the validity of research findings as argued by Tellis (1997). Using a case study approach, research results, were however limited to describing the phenomenon under investigation. However, although the case study method has limitations, there were some great benefits for using it. A case study method remained “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (corruption in the case of my study) within its real life-context” (Yin, 1984:23). Therefore, using a case study method, research data was examined within a specific context which was key to the reliability and validity of research findings.

Lastly, studying rural perceptions of corruption, its drivers and effects, within a specific geographic area with the targeted research respondents, I was able to get a holistic and in-

depth understanding of the what were the perceptions and views on key drivers and effects of corruption in Jozini area from the points of views of local people (municipal officials and youth respondents in the case of my study). Finally, although representativity and generalization could not be accomplished, I discovered theoretical insights that can be used by other scholars elsewhere (i.e. studying corruption from a performativity perspective, instead of a neopatrimonial one, for example).

#### **5.4. Further research study**

This study was limited to two specific wards, ward 3 and ward 16 of the Jozini Local Municipality area and it was conducted with a small sample of 20 research respondents in a small rural geographic area. Further study in all other wards of the Jozini Local Municipality is recommended to understand and explore the key drivers and effects of corruption. I therefore also suggest that a new research be undertaken to investigate and explore the key drivers and effects of corruption in the public works sector nationwide.

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## **APPENDIXES**

### **INFORMED CONSENT**

RESEACH TITTLE: Drivers and Effects of Corruption in Rural Areas: A Case Study of Jozini Local Municipality.

Dear Madam/Sir

Thank you for considering participating in the above-mentioned study. This interview is part of my research project conducted as a student studying Master of Development Studies Dissertation in the School of Build Environment and Development Studies at the University of KwaZulu Natal, Howard Collage Campus.

My intention is to explore the key drivers and effects of corruption in rural areas using the case study of Jozini Local Municipality. You are selected on the basis of providing experiential and rich information on this project. You would be required to participate in a personal audio-recorded interview of about one hour maximum in which you would be responding to questions that I have prepared. The transcript and the information will be stored on my personal computer. It will be destroyed within a year upon completion of my study. Your participation in this study will be strictly confidential. To ensure this confidentiality, you will be assigned pseudonym when discussing findings in the research report. Your participation will take place at a time and place that is convenient to you and in the language you are comfortable and best expressive in.

Please note that your participation is voluntary; it is not mandatory as you are free to choose not to participate. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage you want without giving reasons for withdrawal. There will be no rewards for participation, nor would there be any negative consequences should you decide to withdraw. If you choose to refuse to participate, you will not be at any disadvantage. Similarly, choosing to withdraw at any point during the research will not leave you disadvantaged in any way. However, the information you have provided before withdrawal will be used for the purposes of the study.

For any queries before, during and after the interview, you can contact me on 0764141943/0714800818. Email: zak.shongwe10@gmail.com. Alternatively, you can contact the research project supervisor, Dr. Mvuselelo Ngcoya Office: Shepston Building, Email:

[Ngcoyam2@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:Ngcoyam2@ukzn.ac.za), Tel: 031-260 2917. If you are interested in participating, please kindly complete the attached consent form.

Sincerely

Zakhele Shongwe (0714800818/0764141943)

### CONSENT FORM

I.....(full-names) on this date .....hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I will be required to participate in a personal interview of about one hour. The interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. I also understand that:

- ✓ My participation is voluntary.
- ✓ I have the right to withdraw from the research at any stage I want.
- ✓ There will be no rewards for participation, nor will there be any negative consequences should I decide to withdraw.
- ✓ Strict confidentiality will be maintained.

Select by ticking the applicable

1. I also hereby consent to have this interview audio recorded [  ].

(Or) Do not consent to have this interview audio recorded [  ].

2. Assign me a pseudonym in the research report [  ].

My signature below indicates my willingness and permission to participate.

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_ (Place) on the day of \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Print name)

## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

### Section 1: Municipal officers Questions

Hello, I'm Zakhele Shongwe

- 1) How old are you?
- 2) What is your gender?
- 3) Where were you born?
- 4) What level of formal education do you have?
- 5) What position do you occupy in this local municipality?
- 6) How long have you been a municipal officer here?
- 7) Are you the only person working in your family?
- 8) Can you briefly describe the development situation of Jozini area?
- 9) If any, what are some of the impediments to rural development?
- 10) What is your understanding of corruption?
- 11) Is corruption a development issue in Jozini rural areas?
- 12) If yes, what are the key drivers of corruption in Jozini rural area from your perspective?
- 13) What various forms of corruption do you think exist in Jozini rural areas?
- 14) If any, can you elaborate on how and why they exist and prevail in Jozini rural settings?
- 15) What effects does corruption have on rural development? (if any)

### Section 2: Youth Segments Questions

- 1) How old are you?
- 2) What is your gender?
- 3) Where were you born?
- 4) What level of formal education do you have?
- 5) Are you employed?
- 6) If yes, what is your occupation?
- 7) Have you ever heard of corruption in your life?
- 8) If yes, what is your understanding of corruption?
- 9) Is corruption a good or bad thing in your perspective?
- 10) If bad or good, can you elaborate on that point?
- 11) Do you consider corruption a scapegoat to rural underdevelopment and development issues faced by local youth in Jozini rural areas?
- 12) If yes, how corruption and development are interconnected to each other?
- 13) What do you think causes and drives corruption in Jozini rural areas?

- 14) What various forms of corruption are you familiar with?
- 15) Which forms of corruption do you think mostly prevail in your community (if any)?
- 16) What effects does corruption have on rural development in Jozini areas, particularly youth development?

## GATEKEEPER'S LETTER



### **JOZINI MUNICIPALITY (KZ 272)**

Private Bag X028, Jozini, 3969      Circle Street, Bottom Town, Jozini  
Tel: (035) 572 1292      Email: [municipalmanager@jozini.gov.za](mailto:municipalmanager@jozini.gov.za)  
Fax: (035) 5721266

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04 May 2017

University of KwaZulu - Natal  
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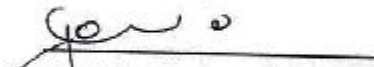
Dear Sir

#### **RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

This letter serves to respond to the letter from Mr. Z.B. Shongwe (Student Number: 210519138), requesting the permission to conduct Research based on the topic "Drivers & Effects of Corruption in Rural Areas".

The Jozini Municipality grants you permission to conduct your research however, you will still require consent from the relevant participants of your study.

Yours Sincerely,

  
Municipal Manager  
Mr. J.F.K. KHUMALO