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**A Critical Exploration of the Ethical Dilemmas Surrounding the
State Capture phenomenon in South Africa**

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of Master of Arts in Ethics, in the School of Religion, Philosophy
and Classics. College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-
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November 2025

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my mother and grandmother, whose love, strength, and endless encouragement have guided me throughout this journey. Your faith in me has been my greatest source of inspiration.

Acknowledgement

To my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, thank you for granting me strength, wisdom, and perseverance throughout this journey. Your grace has carried me through moments of doubt and difficulty, and without your guidance, none of this would have been possible.

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Abstract

This dissertation offers a critical exploration of the ethical dilemmas surrounding state capture phenomenon in South Africa. This paper argues that state capture has been an ongoing threat under every leadership of the African National Congress since the country transitioned to democracy in 1994. State capture in South Africa mostly became prominent under the governance of former president Jacob Zuma, when former public protector Thuli Madonsela released a report in 2016 into several allegations of state capture, fraud and corruption. This included key prominent figures of the African National Congress. This dissertation interrogates and the ethical dilemmas that arose from this ongoing state capture phenomenon in South Africa. State capture refers to a systematic political corruption that substantially occurs when private interests sway a state's decision-making procedures to their own benefit rather than the good of the public. This study is guided by the ethical theory of Consequentialism, which judges whether an act is ethical by what its consequences are. Using the desktop research approach, the study analysed existing reports, scholarly literature, and public documents to understand how state capture has affected the country's social, economic and political systems.

The findings of the study reveal that state capture phenomena have greatly undermined the ethical foundation of governance in the country. State capture has resulted to a great deterioration of public trust, as citizens have lost faith in state institutions that are meant to serve them. In addition, ethical leadership has also declined as several governmental officials prioritized personal and political gain over the collective well-being of its citizens. Moreover, the culture of self-enrichment has become widespread, consequently leading to the mismanagement of public funds and deep-rooted inequality. These outcomes have weakened the rule of law, democratic accountability and have further delayed the socio-economic progress in the country. Ultimately, having provided academic insights that may inform strategies to address state capture from future abuses in South Africa, the study concludes that addressing these ethical dilemmas requires the strengthening of transparency, accountability and moral integrity within government structures. Restoring these values is crucial for rebuilding public confidence, promoting morality and advancing the common good of the public in South Africa.

Key Words: State Capture, Corruption, South Africa, Consequentialism, ANC, Ethical Dilemmas

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

This chapter presents the general introduction to the study. This dissertation is a critical exploration of the ethical dilemmas surrounding the state capture phenomenon in South Africa. The current chapter encompasses the background of the study and the research problem. In addition, this chapter will present the researcher's personal and academic motivations for exploring the ethical dilemmas arising from ongoing state capture in South Africa under the leadership of the African National Congress. Furthermore, the chapter will present the main and sub-research aims and objectives. Moreover, both a preview of the theoretical framework and methodology will be presented. Finally, the chapter will present a breakdown of all the chapters. This chapter's objectives are to provide a brief overview of the research and to introduce and summarize the dissertation's main ideas.

State capture events in South Africa under the leadership of the African National Congress, particularly from 1994 onwards, raised ethical dilemmas that extended beyond the boundaries of ordinary corruption. According to David-Barrett (2023: 1), "State capture is a type of systematic corruption whereby narrow interest groups take control of the institutions and processes through which public policy is made, directing public policy away from the public interest and instead shaping it to serve their own interests." This means that state capture occurs when a small group manipulates government institutions and policymaking to benefit itself rather than serving the public. Considering this, the actions of state capture raise intense ethical questions about accountability, justice, fairness, and the role of ethical leadership in a democratic, transparent South Africa.

The African National Congress is a political party that led the anti-apartheid movement, fought for democracy, and brought about democracy in the country (Freund, 2021: 1099). The political party strives to elevate and inspire most South Africans. However, the involvement of some of its leaders in the state capture phenomenon has significantly eroded this (Alence and Pitcher, 2019: 18). State capture has diminished citizens' trust in its government, fostered a culture of

self-enrichment, and menaced the ethical legitimacy of the South African Government. Exploring these ethical dilemmas that arise from the state capture phenomenon in South Africa is important not only for grasping the ethical crisis in the African National Congress but also for reviewing the comprehensive, wide-ranging moral challenges that come to light when these democratic institutions are weakened by this deep-rooted corruption, when government officials prioritize themselves over the well-being of the public.

The implications of these dilemmas are severe. When government officials prioritize their own interests and those of their political parties over the needs of citizens, the rule of law and democratic institutions are undermined, resulting in public mistrust. Modise and Modise (2023: 2573–2574) claim that "the promotion of integrity and accountability" is the preserve of government elites; however, this assertion is problematic, as integrity and accountability are not the responsibility of elites alone but must be upheld across all sectors of society. Building on this background, this dissertation situates the analysis of state capture within the framework of ethical theory, focusing specifically on consequentialist ethics. Consequentialism is an ethical approach that evaluates the morality of actions based on their outcomes, assuming that the ethical value of any decision lies primarily in its consequences. This study critically examines how consequentialist ethics can be applied to understand and evaluate the ethical dilemmas arising from state capture in South Africa, offering insights into the broader social, political, and economic implications of these actions.

1.1 Background and Context

Corruption and the undue influence of private interests over public institutions are not unique to South Africa but are global challenges that affect governance and ethical standards worldwide. Across various countries, states have faced dilemmas when political leaders or private actors manipulate public institutions for personal or group gain, undermining accountability, transparency, and public trust (David-Barrett, 2021). Globally, such governance failures have prompted debates about ethical leadership, the rule of law, and the social consequences of corruption, highlighting the need for frameworks to analyse and address these complex issues.

At the continental level, African nations have also faced similar challenges, with historical legacies, socio-economic inequalities, and fragile institutional frameworks making many states vulnerable to the capture of public institutions by political elites or private actors (Renwick,

2018). This has often resulted in ethical dilemmas regarding equitable resource distribution, public accountability, and the moral responsibilities of leaders, particularly in societies marked by high levels of poverty, inequality, and limited access to basic services.

Within this African context, South Africa presents a unique and instructive case of state capture. The phenomenon gained prominence following the 2016 report by the Public Protector, Thuli Madonsela, which implicated key figures within the African National Congress (ANC) in systemic corruption (Skweyiya, 2025). Renwick (2018) argues that corruption has been an ongoing threat to every ANC administration since the advent of democracy in 1994. Following the report, the Zondo Commission was established in August 2018 to investigate allegations of state capture, mismanagement, and corruption within State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and government agencies (Pillay, 2022; Khon, 2024).

The Zondo Commission, operating from January 2018 to June 2022 under Chief Justice Raymond Zondo, held 429 public hearings, involving over three hundred witnesses, with proceedings live-streamed and transcripts publicly accessible (Holden, 2023; Pillay, 2022). Its primary focus was the conduct of state executives and their interactions with private individuals, particularly the Gupta enterprise, in manipulating governance and procurement processes (Pillay, 2022). Key State-Owned Enterprises investigated included Eskom, Transnet, and South African Airways (Skweyiya, 2025).

State capture in South Africa presents complex ethical dilemmas with far-reaching political, economic, and social consequences. The manipulation of state institutions for private gain undermines principles of fairness, transparency, and accountability that have guided the country since the end of apartheid (Saka, 2024). Ethical questions arise regarding the responsibilities of leaders to act morally, the equitable distribution of scarce resources, and the governance of a society characterized by high unemployment, poverty, and inequality. Mismanagement of public funds, weakened rule of law, and political unrest further compound these dilemmas, highlighting the ongoing struggle to align governance with moral values such as justice, equality, respect, and accountability (David-Barrett, 2021).

1.2. Research Problem

In South Africa, despite several investigations and public reports exposing the extent of state capture, which included the findings of the Zondo Commission, there remains limited academic investigation into the ethical dilemmas it poses for the public, private actors, and public officials. David-Barrett (2023) and Swanepoel (2022) contend that state capture, in its nature, blurs the line between the legal and illegal framework, which fashions the ethical tensions around justice, loyalty, accountability, transparency, and governance. Considering this, the problem that the study seeks to explore and interrogate is the ethical dilemmas surrounding the state capture phenomenon in South Africa under the leadership of the African National Congress. This process will be guided by the following questions: 1. What is the nature of state capture in South Africa? 2. What are the conundrums surrounding state capture in South Africa? 3. What are the effects of state capture in South Africa? 4. How can Consequentialism as an ethical theory inform the response to the dilemma surrounding the South African state capture?

1.3. Motivation of the study

Personal motivation:

My inquisitiveness in exploring the ethical dilemmas surrounding state capture arises from a concern about how corruption directly affects the daily lives of South African citizens. My motivation to examine the ethical dilemmas and institutional failures that enabled state capture stems from witnessing, and continually reading about, how poor government decisions have eroded opportunities, undermined public trust, and generated widespread disappointment among South Africans who rely on these institutions for development and progress.

Academic motivation:

This study is motivated by the need to examine state capture not only as a political, economic, and social conundrum, but also as an intensive ethical issue. Considering this, the study aims to explore the ethical dilemmas surrounding the state capture phenomenon in South Africa and to present scholarly literature on governance on the nature of state capture in South Africa. To prevent similar abuses in the future, the study aims to analyse and understand the mechanisms of state capture, offering academic insights that may help guide strategies to address it. The scholars whose work motivated me to take on this research topic are Borat et al. (2017) in the book "Betrayal of the promise"; Chipkin et al. (2018) in the book "Shadow State: The Politics

of State Capture", and finally, Holden (2023) in the book "Zondo at your fingertips". These scholars collectively helped bring state capture in South Africa to light by exposing how government officials and business leaders had influenced and manipulated state institutions for their own personal gain.

1.4. Key Question of the Study

What are the ethical dilemmas surrounding state capture phenomenon in South Africa?

1.5. Research sub questions

1. What is the nature of state capture in South Africa?
2. What are the conundrums surrounding state capture in South Africa?
3. What are the effects of state capture in South Africa?
4. How can Consequentialism inform the responses to the ethical dilemma surrounding the South African state capture?

1.6. Key Objective of the study

To explore the ethical dilemma's surrounding state capture phenomenon in South Africa.

1.7. Objectives

1. To explore the nature of state capture in South Africa.
2. To examine the conundrums surrounding state capture in South Africa.
3. To investigate the effects of state capture in South Africa.
4. To examine how Consequentialism as an ethical theory could inform the responses to the dilemma surrounding the South African state capture.

1.8. Preview Theoretical Framework

According to Oyewobi et al. (2024: 140), a theoretical framework is a fundamental examination of existing theories that serves as a roadmap for developing the arguments the researcher would provide in their own study. This study will adopt the ethical theory of Consequentialism to explore the ethical dilemmas surrounding the state capture phenomenon in South Africa under the leadership of the African National Congress. This ethical theory judges an action's morality by its consequences, which will assist the study in assessing the social, economic, and political

implications of the state capture in South Africa. Consequentialism as an ethical theory has been around for a while; however, Anscombe (1958) was the first to use the term "Consequentialism" in her paper "Modern Moral Philosophy." The most well-known type of Consequentialism is utilitarianism, which is associated with Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. This theory promotes behaviour that benefits the most significant number of individuals. The consequentialist theory is appropriate for this study, as its core principle focuses on outcomes, which aligns with one of the study's objectives: investigating the effects and implications of state capture in South Africa. The remaining aspects of the theoretical framework will be presented in more detail in Chapter four of the study.

1.9. Preview Research Methodology

In a research study, the research methodology discusses and explains the methods used for data collection and analysis (McCombes and George, 2022). The methodology chapter, which is an essential component of any research paper, describes what the researcher did and how they did it so that readers may assess the reliability and validity of the study and the research topic (Daravath, 2025: 10). This study will adopt the qualitative research technique to explore the ethical dilemmas surrounding the state capture phenomenon in South Africa. According to Sam (2024: 7-8), qualitative research aims to gather and analyse non-numerical data to understand people's attitudes, beliefs, and motives, thereby gaining a deeper understanding of their social reality. Moreover, the study will employ an exploratory research design, which is a methodological approach that examines subject areas that have never previously been adequately investigated (Olawale et al., 2023: 1386-1387).

Also, this study is desktop-based, meaning it will primarily rely on secondary data from published materials such as books, journal articles, theses, and dissertations. These secondary sources will be sourced from various online resources, including the UKZN library, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar. The study will thoroughly examine its data using thematic analysis to find recurring themes and patterns. Additionally, the study will adopt the descriptive ethics approach, which, according to Kretzschmar and Bentley (2013), aims to precisely define and explain moral standards, ethical worldviews, and the acts that follow. Essentially, it is a way of clarifying values. The objective is often to avoid making a judgment of the phenomenon under discussion. Finally, the study will also employ a critical literature review approach for its analysis.

1.10. Conceptual Perspectives

This section presents the study's conceptual framework. The section supports the research topic of exploring the ethical dilemmas surrounding the ongoing state capture events in South Africa under the leadership of the African National Congress. This section presents and defines the key concepts that guide the study's reasoning. It is important to clarify these concepts to understand state capture in South Africa better, thereby allowing the study to remain focused and coherent.

1.10.1. Corruption

According to Yusoff et al. (2023; 1026), corruption is a widespread problem that affects all levels of society, from ordinary people to the highest levels of authority. Yusoff et al. (2023; 1026) define corruption as dishonest or fraudulent behaviour by persons in authority, often involving bribes. Additionally, Basabose (2019: 14–15) defines corruption as a crime or a form of deception in which a person or organization in a position of authority commits an act to obtain unlawful benefits or abuses power for their own gain. Similarly, Slamkov (2024: 36) defines corruption as the abuse of power for one's own gain. According to Slamkov (2023: 36), corruption hinders economic progress, damages democracy, and erodes public confidence. In the book "Abuse of power for private gain; meaning, nature and theoretical evolution", Pozgai-Alvares (2020) defines corruption as "the abuse of entrusted power or resources, by anyone, for private gain". Finally, Ntshangase (2024: 263) defines corruption in South Africa as the improper use of public funds for private gain, including excessive favouritism and bribery. The state capture era was the height of corruption under Jacob Zuma's rule, and it has continued ever since. State capture has undermined the country's criminal justice system, service delivery, economic opportunities, social cohesion, and political integrity (Riar, 2024).

1.10.2. Ethical Dilemma

According to Dewey and Tufts (2022), ethics is the study of moral principles that guide human behaviour and decision-making. It focuses on what is right and wrong, what is fair and unfair, and the responsibilities individuals have toward others. In government, ethics is important because public officials are trusted to use power and resources for the benefit of citizens. Ethical governance, therefore, requires honesty, accountability, fairness, and respect for the rule of law.

An ethical dilemma arises when a person must choose between two or more competing moral obligations. Korner and Deutsch (2023: 1512) explain that an ethical dilemma occurs when a decision must be made between options that both involve breaking a moral principle. Similarly, Cherre and Lemieux (2024: 77) describe it as a situation in which a person faces opposing moral duties, neither of which clearly outweighs the other. Haahr et al. (2020: 259) add that ethical dilemmas can also arise when two morally acceptable options are not both practically possible. In all these definitions, the key idea is moral conflict.

In this study, ethical dilemmas refer to the moral conflicts arising from state capture in South Africa. Public officials are expected to act in the public interest, yet state capture shows situations where leaders faced a conflict between serving citizens and advancing personal, political, or private interests. For example, decisions about public appointments, procurement, and the management of state-owned enterprises reflect a tension between fairness and self-interest.

This study therefore understands state capture not only as corruption but also as a series of ethical failures and moral conflicts that weakened accountability, justice, and public trust. This understanding forms the foundation for analysing the issue through consequentialist ethics.

1.10.3. Ethical Leadership

According to Ciulla (2020: 508), ethical leadership entails managers and leaders making choices based on what is best for the group, not only what is best for themselves or the bottom line. The values of respect, service, justice, honesty, and community provide a foundation for morally good leadership. Moreover, according to Brigue and Orlu (2023: 246), an ethical leader is a role model who considers morality in all their decisions. They work closely with their teams to cultivate an organizational culture that prioritizes trust, accountability, and openness. Furthermore, Halbusi et al. (2020: 515) define ethical leadership as "leadership demonstrating and promoting normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relations". This means that the goal of ethical leadership is to place people in management and leadership positions who will support and model appropriate, ethical conduct in their interactions and activities at work (Halbusi et al., 2020: 515).

1.10.4. Public Interest

According to Collins Dictionary (2024), public interest is defined as the general welfare of the populace that merits acknowledgment and defence, as well as something in which the broader public has an interest, particularly one that calls for government control. Quayla (2021: 6) defines the term public interest, stating that it refers to factors that impact the well-being of citizens and the smooth operation of the community and government. It also uses the phrase 'for the general good'. Bundy (2025: 23) defines public interest as "the welfare or well-being of the general public and society". The public interest fosters a sense of legitimacy and ownership in democratic processes by encouraging accountability, openness, and citizen involvement. To avoid power abuse and advance social justice, the public interest serves as a check on vested interests and concentrated authority (Bundy: 2025).

1.11. Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore and analyse the ethical dilemmas surrounding state capture in South Africa. While state capture has been widely discussed in political and economic terms, this study situates the phenomenon within an explicit ethical framework. It seeks to understand state capture as a moral failure in governance and to interrogate the ethical dimensions that enabled its development and persistence.

Investigating these ethical dilemmas is crucial because systematic corruption of this nature undermines public trust in government, weakens democratic institutions, erodes ethical leadership, and compromises justice. When public officials prioritise personal or factional interests over the well-being of citizens, the consequences extend beyond individual misconduct and affect society as a whole. From a consequentialist perspective, such actions must be evaluated in terms of their outcomes including increased inequality, institutional decay, economic decline, and social instability.

The study further highlights that state capture is not merely an instance of corruption, but a governance crisis with far-reaching social and economic implications. It contributes to rising unemployment, diverts public resources intended for national development to a narrow elite, and results in deteriorating service delivery. By analysing these consequences ethically, the study examines how alternative moral choices and leadership approaches could have produced different outcomes.

Ultimately, this research contributes to a more profound ethical understanding of state capture and creates space for interrogating more morally grounded approaches to governance. In doing so, it provides an academic foundation for thinking about more responsible, accountable, and ethically informed ways to address and prevent similar abuses in the future.

1.12. Structure of the study

This study consists of six chapters. These are described as follows:

Chapter one is the introductory chapter. The introduction aims to present the topic to the reader by providing an overview of the study's purpose, scope, and significance. The chapter begins by introducing the topic to the reader and providing background information. The chapter then presents the problem statement, the study's motivation, the main and sub-research questions, and the main and sub-research objectives. In addition, the chapter presents the preliminary theoretical framework and research methodology, and finally, the study's significance.

Chapter two is the literature review. A literature review is a critical evaluation and synthesis of previous studies on a particular subject. It provides a summary of what is currently known, identifies knowledge gaps, and highlights key discoveries in the literature. Placing one's own study within the framework of previous research serves the dual purposes of showcasing one's knowledge of the subject and highlighting how one's work advances the current discourse in the area. The literature review chapter of this study will present different definitions of the term state capture. It will also examine the nature of state capture in South Africa. The chapter will then present the views of various scholars on the causes and effects of state capture in South Africa. In addition, it will examine the ethical dilemmas arising from the state capture phenomenon in South Africa. Finally, the chapter will present the research gap.

Chapter three is the methodology. This study's research methodology section will explain the methodological decisions made, including the methods for data gathering and analysis, and the justification for these choices. The explanations aim to clarify why the chosen approaches are the most appropriate for addressing the research topic.

Chapter four is the theoretical framework. A theoretical framework is a foundational review of existing theories that serves as a roadmap for developing the arguments the researcher will use in their own work. In a theoretical framework, the researcher explains the existing theories that support their research, showing that their paper or dissertation topic is relevant and

grounded in established ideas. This chapter was guided by the ethical theory of Consequentialism, which, at its core, holds that the morality of an action is to be judged solely by its consequences. The chapter begins by defining Consequentialism according to different scholars. The chapter then presented the theoretical background and the different types of consequentialist theories. Finally, the chapter presented arguments for and against the consequentialist theory.

Chapter five is the discussion and analysis. The discussion section is one of the final parts of a research paper before the recommendations and conclusions, in which the researcher describes, analyses, and interprets their findings. This chapter of the study analysed the ethical implications of state capture in South Africa using the ethical theory of Consequentialism. In the analysis, the researcher examined patterns, trends, and relationships within the findings that were not immediately obvious.

Chapter six is the conclusion, recommendations, and summary. This chapter offers an overview of the entire research project. Additionally, the chapter provides a synopsis of each chapter's contents and the main findings that emerged from them. Finally, the study's recommendations, which it considers crucial for the parties involved, follow.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Introduction

This chapter presents the literature review. According to Mauer and Veneck (2022: 1), a literature review is an overview of published research in a field. The literature review includes a coherent overview of existing research on the subject, including what is known, what is unknown, and what is challenged. This chapter examines literature produced by academics across a variety of fields, including the social sciences, anthropology, philosophy, the human sciences, and social work. This chapter aims to provide the reader with a thorough understanding of state capture in South Africa under the African National Congress leadership by helping them reconcile their thoughts with those of other scholars and offering deep insight into the phenomenon. This chapter is helpful to both the researcher and the reader as a guide to what has been presented or argued, as well as what has been omitted or missed by other academic scholars.

There are numerous types of literature reviews in research. Namely, the narrative literature review (Argarwal et al., 2023: 1162), the systematic literature review (Lame, 2019: 1633-1635), the meta-analysis literature review (Paul and Bariri, 2022: 1099-1100), the thematic literature review (Maur and Veneck, 2022: 6) and the scoping literature review (Mak and Thomas, 2022: 562). According to Argarwal et al. (2023: 1162), a narrative literature review offers a thorough synopsis of the literature on a particular subject. It is descriptive and is frequently used to summarize, interpret, and critically assess the current state of knowledge in a given topic (Agarwal et al., 2023: 1162). A narrative literature review serves an essential part in the research process. By analysing and critiquing the current literature, this type of literature review enables researchers to characterize what is known about a particular issue (Agarwal et al., 2023: 1162). Additionally, according to Lame (2019: 1633- 1635), a systematic literature review is a type of literature review that gathers secondary data using methodical techniques. It critically evaluates research papers and qualitatively or statistically synthesizes results. Systematic reviews identify and combine studies that directly address the research topic, which might be broad or specific in scope (Xio and Watson, 2019, 94). It is intended to offer a

thorough, rigorous, transparent, and repeatable summary of all available information, both published and unpublished (Lame, 2019: 1633-1635).

Moreover, according to Paul and Barari (2022: 1099-1100), a meta-analysis literature review is a statistical method employed within systematic reviews to numerically synthesize information obtained from various studies to arrive at a more reliable and accurate estimation of the effect size or result of the study of interest (Paul and Barari, 2022: 1099-1100). The goal of meta-analysis is to present a numerical overview of the combined findings from the included research, with a sole focus on quantitative data. It uses statistical methods to compute confidence ranges, pooled effect estimates, and tests for study heterogeneity (Paul and Barari, 2022: 1099-1100). In addition, according to Mak and Thomas (2022: 562), the purpose of a scoping literature review is to map the current literature on a given subject or field of study. It aims to provide a summary of the current scientific data, identify key traits, and highlight knowledge gaps. The scoping review process aids in understanding the scope of knowledge on a novel or ill-defined issue and in developing evidence (Mak and Thomas, 2022: 562).

This study will adopt the thematic literature review. According to Mauer and Veneck (2022: 6), a thematic literature review is an essential tool for summarizing research results in a particular discipline. This approach provides an organized way to find and examine similarities and trends across research by grouping existing data into themes. The main objective is to provide a clear, succinct summary that helps academics and professionals understand the primary debates and advancements in a given topic. A thematic literature review identifies, analyses, and reports' themes found in texts such as journal articles, conference proceedings, dissertations, and other types of academic writing to methodically organise and analyse a body of literature. The key scholars whose work informed the study's literature review include Pregala Solosh Pillay, Elizabeth David-Barrett, Mcebisi Jonas, and Victor H. Mlambo. Together, these scholars have contributed to and written extensively on the South African state capture phenomenon.

2.1. Defining State Capture

State capture is a polysemous and contested concept. Various scholars, including Chipkin et al. (2018: 77), David-Barrett (2021: 4), Mulenga and Mulenga (2018: 133), Dassah (2018: 3), and Pillay et al. (2023: 154), have provided different definitions of the term. The use of polysemy highlights that state capture can be understood in multiple ways, depending on the perspective

taken, contributing to ongoing debate and differing interpretations in the academic literature. David-Barrett (2021: 224), Mulenga and Mulenga (2018: 133), and Dassah (2018: 3) all similarly define state capture as an instance in which private interests significantly influence a state's decision-making processes for their own gain. According to these scholars, this is an example of institutionalized political corruption (David-Barrett, 2021: 224; Mulenga and Mulenga, 2018: 133; Dassah, 2018: 3). In the book "Shadow state: The politics of state capture" Chipkin et al. (2018: 77) defines state capture as the "repurposing of state institutions for private interests". Additionally, according to Trantidis and Tsagkroni (2017: 271), state capture is a form of institutionalized corruption in which a small group of people takes over the processes and institutions that shape public policy, changing it to suit their personal interests rather than the public's.

Dassah (2018: 3) posits that state capture refers to the practice of government officials, state-backed companies, private companies, or private individuals taking advantage of formal processes, such as laws, social norms, and government bureaucracy, to influence laws and policies to their own benefit. Similarly, Pillay et al. (2023; 154) define state capture as a phenomenon that aims to sway legislative decisions in defense of and advancement of the interests of powerful individuals. Furthermore, Hellman et al. (2000: 1) define state capture as the practice of companies providing illegal private advantages to public officials to influence laws, rules, and regulations in a way that serves their own interests. Rapanyane and Ngoepe (2019: 3) reveal that the unethical and self-serving relationship between Jacob Zuma and the Gupta brothers, who influenced cabinet reshuffles and nominations, led to the state capture phenomenon in South Africa. Concisely, based on the above-mentioned scholars' definitions, state capture can be understood as a form of systematic political corruption in which private interests heavily sway a state's political decision-making for their own benefit.

Drawing from this section of the various scholarly definitions of state capture presented above, the term "state capture" is contested in scholarly literature. Different authors offer varying definitions; the boundary between corruption and state capture is unclear, and there is debate over whether the term is appropriate at all. This chapter, therefore, concludes that even at the definitional level, state capture is complex and lacks a single, agreed-upon meaning.

2.2. The Contested Nature of ‘State Capture’

The term "state capture" has become increasingly prominent in the political realm. However, regardless of its widespread use, state capture remains a contested term. This is because its definition, scope, and application differ across the scholarly literature, policy circles, and public debates. This contestation arises from differences in how actors understand power, influence, and legitimacy within a state. The study ought to present scholarly literature on state capture as a contested term. The literature presented in this section will be grouped into subthemes. Firstly, state capture is a contested term because there is no universal definition. Secondly, it is contested because the line between corruption and state capture is blurred. Finally, state capture is a contested term because it is inaccurate. These will be presented below:

2.2.1. No Universal Definition of State Capture

Scholars argue that the term 'state capture' is a contested term because there is no universally accepted definition. According to the literature, this is because different scholars, institutions, and countries have defined and interpreted the term based on different aspects. For instance, some scholars and institutions have contextualized the term within the political context, some by examining legal systems, whilst others have examined the actors involved. This is evident in the definitions of state capture presented above in this chapter, which draw on the work of various scholars. Scholars such as Chipkin et al. (2018: 77), David-Barrett (2021: 4), Mulenga and Mulenga (2018: 133), Dassah (2018: 3), Pillay et al. (2023: 154) have given different definitions of the term state capture by looking at different factors in which they deem state capture as. For instance, some of these scholars broadly defined the term, highlighting that it involves taking over public institutions entirely for one's personal benefit (David-Barrett, 2021: 224, Mulenga and Mulenga, 2018: 133; Dassah, 2018: 3).

On the other hand, some of these scholars looked at the actors involved demonstrating that even when looking at state capture in South Africa, it involved the unethical and self-serving relationship, which involved former president Jacob Zuma and the Gupta brothers, where they manipulated, influenced and reshuffled the cabinet for their own benefit (Rapanyana and Ngoepe, 2019: 3). Whilst other scholars like Renwick (2018) argued that state capture has been present since the beginning of democracy in South Africa under every leadership of the African National Congress. This suggests that state capture has been a persistent phenomenon from the

leadership of Nelson Mandela in 1994 to the present. Considering this, the literature shows that there is no universal definition of the term, thus demonstrating that it is contested.

Transparency International (2014: 1) reveals that one of the most pervasive forms of corruption is state capture. According to Transparency International (2014: 1), state capture occurs when corporations or influential individuals use corruption to sway and mould a country's laws, policies, and economy to fit their own agendas. Examples of state capture include purchasing legislation, amending legislation, issuing decrees, or imposing punishments, as well as illegally contributing to political parties and their candidates. Transparency International (2024) argues that governmental institutions no longer serve the common good of the people in this situation. However, it advances the interests of particular people or groups.

Additionally, in the book "Zondo at Your Fingertips: State Capture in the Words of the Zondo Commission", Holden (2023) summarised the work of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry, better known as the Zondo Commission. In its reports and findings, the Judicial Commission of Inquiry did not formally define state capture. Instead, it employed and detailed existing definitions, such as those from the World Bank and South African scholars who wrote on state capture in South Africa, to fit it to the South African context. This evidence, found in Holden (2023), shows that there is no formal definition of state capture in the South African legal framework. The various definitions of state capture put forward by these scholars and institutions are in line with the study's findings that the concept is not fixed and lacks a universal definition, making the term difficult to use consistently.

Additionally, David-Barett (2021: 4) substantiates that state capture is a contested term because state capture is recognizably different in each country, as it does not occur the same way for every country. This demonstrates that there is no universally accepted definition of state capture, because it does not happen or look the same in every country, so it will be hard to define the term and have a universal definition of what it is. For instance, according to Bester and Dovosek (2021: 74), state capture in South Africa developed as a scheme whereby a comparatively small number of actors, along with their network of associates both inside and outside the state, planned in a methodical, illegal, and constitutionally unconstitutional manner to divert state funds for their personal benefit. Bester and Dovosek (2021) maintain that this was made possible by a concerted effort to undermine or exploit key governmental institutions and public organizations, including the intelligence services and law enforcement. This was

mainly accomplished via reorganizing procurement procedures and making selective hires and firings at government agencies.

In other countries state capture does not look like what it looks like in South Africa (Bester and Dovosek (2021: 74). David- Barrett (2021: 74) reveals that state capture occurred in Central Asian nations during the shift from Soviet communism, when small, corrupt organizations exploited their sway over public servants to sway government decisions in favour of their own financial interests. However, in states that emerged from the dissolution of the Soviet Union, state capture involved wealthy oligarchs seizing control of courts and parliaments (David-Barrett, 2021; 74). This supports the studies' finding that state capture takes different forms, which is why scholars and experts deem it hard to agree on a universal definition.

Additionally, David Barrett (2021: 4) posits that the concept of state capture is often used for one's own political goals. Political parties and government officials often at times disagree on whether a situation should be called state capture, more particularly when it could impact that individual's reputation, legitimate eminence or the results of the elections (David-Barrett, 2021: 4). Consequently, since government officials and political parties use the term for their own personal agendas at time it becomes challenging to concur to one neutral definition of the term. Moreover, David-Barrett (2023) and Hertel-Fernandez (2019) argue that the way state capture occurs changes over time as the world evolves. The way state capture occurs now will not replicate how it will occur in the future. At present, the influence over the state may derive from foreign enterprises, international institutions, and even online platforms (David-Barrett, 2023; Hertel-Fernandez, 2019). For instance, state capture in South Africa involved the influence of the media, political patronage, nepotism, cadre deployments, and private meetings. However, since these types of controls keep changing, it is difficult to come up with a definition that aligns with each situation, in the present and the times ahead, thus making the term state capture contested (David-Barrett, 2023; Hertel-Fernandez, 2019).

Drawing on this section, it is evident that state capture lacks a universal definition. Scholars differ in their interpretations of what it entails, where it begins and ends, and whether the term is appropriate. This demonstrates that the concept is highly contested, reflecting the complexity of understanding state capture in the South African context.

2.2.2. Blurred Line Between Corruption and State Capture

Scholars such as Canen and Wantchekon (2022) and David-Barrett (2023) allude to a blurred line between state capture and corruption. These scholars argue that state capture resembles ordinary corruption (Canen and Wantchekon, 2022; David-Barrett, 2023). Literature revealed that both corruption and state capture involve the misuse of public power, private benefit, and undermining public good (Canen and Wantchekon, 2022: 102: 1-3; David-Barrett, 2023: 2). Scholarly literature demonstrates that the two terms are utilized interchangeably and at times can be confusing to use since they have so many similar characteristics. Since both terms involve the misuse of power, actions that resemble personal gain, and undermining the public to varying degrees, it creates a blurred line for differentiating the two terms.

As already defined in the conceptual framework in chapter one of the study, corruption usually involves dishonest or fraudulent conduct by those in power, typically involving bribery. However, state capture is a form of systematic political corruption in which corporate interests heavily sway a state's decisions for their own benefit. (Yusof et al., 2023: 1026; Basebose, 2019: 14-15; Slamkov, 2024: 36; Pozgai-Alvares, 2020; Ntshangase, 2024: 263). When defining corruption and state capture, corruption could be a situation in which someone takes a bribe to approve a contract. However, state capture looks at how private actors like the Gupta family manipulated and influenced who gets appointments and how state-owned businesses run, entirely to advantage and benefit their own businesses (David-Barrett, 2021: 4; Mulenga and Mulenga, 2018: 133; Dassah, 2018: 3; Pillay et al., 2023: 154; Chipkin et al., 2018: 77). The similar features found in both state capture and corruption results to them looking similar and being hard to differentiate. This scholarly evidence supports the study finding in portraying that there is a blurred line between the two concepts (Canen and Wantchekon, 2022: 102-103; David-Barret, 2023: 2).

Moreover, David Barrett (2023: 15) maintains that when both state capture and corruption occur, they usually happen together, arguing that corruption is the instrument for carrying out state capture. Evidently, Holden (2023) reveals that acts of corruption, such as bribery, fraud, and the mismanagement of public funds, were used as an extensive strategy to manipulate and administer state institutions. This makes it difficult to measure the extent to which corruption stops and where state capture starts. Additionally, state capture has traditionally been treated as a subset of corruption, defined as systemic corruption in which the institutions and procedures that shape public policy are controlled by special interest groups, leaving out

segments of the population whose interests such institutions are meant to represent (David-Barrett, 2023).

Drawing from this section, it is evident that the distinction between corruption and state capture is often blurred. Scholars disagree on where ordinary corruption ends, and state capture begins, as well as on the appropriateness of the term itself. This highlights that the concept is highly contested, reflecting the complexity of understanding state capture in the South African context.

2.2.3. Interrogating the Appropriateness of the Term “state capture” in South Africa/ The Flipside of the Term State Capture.

Klug (2019: 702) states that the constitution assigns distinct responsibilities to the three branches of government. Whilst some branches are entrusted with monitoring and law enforcement, other branches oversee policy and legislation. The three branches of government are the legislative, executive, and judicial branches (Klug, 2019: 702). Establishing a system of checks and balances among the three branches of government preserves institutional autonomy and prevents power from becoming dangerously concentrated (Klug, 2019: 702). To begin with, as the state's watchdog, the parliament in the legislative branch keeps an eye on the executive branch and holds it responsible by maintaining oversight (Maganoe, 2023: 2). Legislators examine government budgets, quarterly and yearly performance reports, and strategic and annual performance goals. Legislatures have the authority to ask direct questions to ministers and members of executive councils in both written and official sessions (Makanya, 2023: 2). Legislators have the authority to call anyone to appear before them. Moreover, legislatures evaluate, approve, alter, draft, and reject laws. The legislature serves as a platform for public discussion and enables public involvement in the decision-making process (Klug, 2019: 702).

Subsequently, the executive branch comprises the cabinet, led by the president. According to Parliament (2016), the National Assembly elects the president. The deputy president, together with the president, appoints a maximum of two ministers from outside the National Assembly and any number of ministers within the National Assembly (Parliament, 2016). The Executive branch oversees the coordination of governmental operations and the creation and implementation of national policies. Additionally, the executive branch can propose amendments to current laws and establish new policies (Parliament, 2016). Ultimately,

according to Thabo and Odeku (2016; 548-549), the Judicial branch is tasked with interpreting and applying the laws of the country. Although the Executive and Legislative branches of government in South Africa are partially combined, the Judicial branch maintains its independence. The Chief Justice leads the judicial branch, which consists of all the courts (Thabo and Odeku, 2016: 548-549). The constitutional court is the highest court in the judicial branch. The enforcement of the constitution is the responsibility of the constitutional court, which also has the last word on how its legislation should be applied (Thabo and Odeku, 2016: 548-549).

Considering the three branches of government mentioned above and their responsibilities, when one says the state was captured, it suggests that the whole system was captured. The whole system comprises all branches of government, or most of these branches. Supporting that state capture is a contested term, different scholars have given different arguments as to whether it was the whole state that was captured, and whether, because of this, it is appropriate for the term to be called the "state capture", suggesting that it was the whole system captured. A study by Kati (2023) shows that the executive branch was the most captured. Kati (2023: 33) reveals that key appointments were controlled and given based on loyalty, nepotism, cronyism, and cadre deployment rather than on meritocracy. In addition, tenders were fraudulently manipulated, and state-owned businesses such as Eskom, PRASA, DENAL, and Transnet were captured to advantage private interests (Kati, 2023: 33).

Moreover, De Klerk and Solomon (2019: 81) maintain that the judicial branch of government remained largely independent during the events of state capture. De Klerk and Solomon (2019: 81) contend that the courts played an important role in ensuring that the South African institution was not violated and that illegitimate decisions were overturned. David-Barrett (2023: 12) reveals that the judicial branch of government is also the branch that conducted investigations into state capture. On the other hand, Klug (2019) holds a different view, arguing that it was not the entire legislative branch of government that was captured, especially because opposition parties and some members of the ruling party resisted the actions and events of state capture. Even citizens, whistleblowers, and civil society organizations repudiated their involvement in this corruption and struggled to protect South African democracy and the rule of law (Klug, 2019).

Some scholars, such as Kat (2023), David-Barrett (2021), Solomon (2019), and Klug (2019), suggested that calling state capture the "state capture" gives the perception that the whole

system of government was atrocious. The literature provided by the above-mentioned scholars revealed and suggested that it is not the whole system that was captured, and that parts of the system persisted in defending constitutional values (Kat, 2023; David-Barrett, 2021; Solomon, 2019; Klug, 2019) and in overseeing "state capture" results in recanting complications. For instance, not all branches and institutions were captured, as some were merely weakened, pressured, and misguided.

Drawing from this section, it is evident that there is an ongoing debate about the appropriateness of the term "state capture." Scholars question whether the term accurately captures the dynamics it is meant to describe or if it is used too broadly in the South African context. This underscores that, conceptually, state capture remains a contested term, highlighting the challenges of defining and understanding it within scholarly discourse.

2.2.4. The Nature of State Capture: Insights from the Literature

Drawing from the literature reviewed in this chapter, it is evident that the nature of state capture in South Africa is complex and contested. Scholars disagree on its definition, the boundaries between corruption and state capture are often blurred, and there is debate over whether the term accurately describes the phenomenon. Taken together, these findings suggest that state capture cannot be understood as a single, fixed concept but must be approached as a multifaceted and context-dependent phenomenon. While the literature offers valuable insights into how state capture is conceptualized, it largely overlooks the ethical dimension, particularly the ways these practices undermine public trust, accountability, and the common good. This study identifies this as a critical gap, emphasizing the need to examine state capture not only as a political or economic issue but also through an ethical lens to understand its implications in South Africa fully.

2.3. Causes of State Capture in South Africa

The state capture phenomenon has been a pressing political issue in post-apartheid South Africa. Understanding the root causes of state capture in South Africa is crucial because it highlights the relatively small group of individuals who captured state institutions and processes used to formulate public policy, changing it to suit their personal interests rather than the public's. By examining the root causes of state capture, we can better understand how this systemized political corruption occurred and the conditions that allowed private interests to

repurpose these state institutions for their own personal gain. This section examines four crucial root causes of state capture in South Africa. Namely, bad governance and weak institutions, political patronage, rent-seeking, and the public procurement process. Scholarly literature on these root causes of state capture will be presented below:

2.3.1. Bad Governance and Weak Institutions

Several scholars such as David- Barrett (2023: 8-12); Gumede (2019: 19); Jonas (2019); Ndikumana et al. (2020: 42, 74) and Mlambo (2019: 210, 212, 219) posit that state capture phenomena in South Africa have been significantly worsened by the relationship between weak institutions and bad governance. One of the biggest obstacles South Africa faces in its efforts to improve the lives of all its citizens is state capture, one of the worst forms of corruption the nation has ever experienced. Studies by Madonsela (2019: 115-117); Mlambo (2019: 211); Alence and Pitcher (2019) highlighted that the state capture commission report exposed and revealed that state capture was made easier by a conscious attempt of private interests trying to weaken or exploit significant governmental institutions, especially the intelligence and law enforcement. Additionally, Meyer and Luiz (2018) and Khambula, (2021: 174) concurs with Madonsela (2019: 115-117); Mlambo (2019: 211); Alence and Pitcher (2019) in providing evidence that state capture commission reports reveals that there was a conscious attempt to undermine law enforcement, intelligence, and revenue collection agencies at the highest levels of state institutions to marginalize opponents, cover and support illegal activity, and bypass responsibility.

According to Masuku and Jili (2019: 1-2), bad governance has been a persistent problem in South Africa across all levels of government. The government is the primary actor in governing and advancing its citizens' rights. However, in South Africa, the public sector's subpar performance at the national, provincial, and municipal levels has long been a source of concern. It has negatively portrayed the country's governance problems and played a significant role in the events of state capture (Masuku and Jili, 2019:1-2). The absence of suitable frameworks and procedures that encourage and uphold efficient governance has, to date, had a detrimental impact on its progress. Masuku and Jili (2019: 1-2) maintain that ineffective governance has intensified state capture in South Africa, resulting in wasted public funds, weakened institutions, and a decline in investment and development.

Additionally, Cosset et al. (2016) concur with the above-mentioned scholars, revealing that the South African government has been criticized for years for its inefficiency, and that the absence of an efficient government has contributed to several issues and difficulties, including state capture and corruption. Despite South Africa's democratic status and supposedly stable administration, the African National Congress, which has been South Africa's ruling party since 1994, has been unable to address most of the country's social and economic issues for decades. According to Cosset et al. (2016), this accurately represents how governance can only have detrimental effects when inefficient systems are in place. The nation is still unable to address its current social and economic issues, as well as the challenges of governance, despite the implementation of several progressive laws and policies (Cosset et al., 2016).

Scholars such as Biljohn and Lues (2019), Leck and Simon (2018), and Cosset et al. (2016) echo the arguments of the aforementioned scholars, arguing that the lack of efficient mechanisms to support and encourage competent governance in South Africa is the reason for state capture in the country. These scholars argue that governmental issues, including unethical leadership, misallocation of public sector resources and funds, and the exploitation of state institutions for private benefit, cannot be resolved by current methods and systems (Biljohn and Lues 2019; Leck and Simon 2018; Cosset et al. 2016). Additionally, South Africa has faced several challenges due to inadequate systems and procedures, which have eclipsed the progress and constructive steps made since the beginning of democracy (Biljohn and Lues, 2019; Cosset et al., 2016).

Furthermore, according to Budhram (2019: 157), South Africa is seen as one of the African countries with poor governance, with the public no longer trusting its public sector. The public and other pertinent stakeholders, including investors, have strongly criticized the country's poor governance, including the decline in public trust in the government. However, the South African government continues to struggle to improve its performance in the public sector, and transparency and accountability have further deteriorated, a development that has played a significant role in state capture (Johnsen et al., 2019). According to Johnsen et al. (2019), the reason for this is the lack of appropriate structures and effective processes that allow progressive laws and policies to be applied correctly.

Moreover, Masuku (2019: 98-99), Booysen (2020), and Mokole (2022) also contend that one of the reasons South Africa is not progressing is the inefficiency of its governmental institutions. According to Mokola (2022: 27, 30), weak institutions are characterized by a high

degree of informality and a poor legal system, which render it difficult to monitor and enforce contractual agreements. Makole (2022) claims that South Africa's weak institutions have served as a curse for the country, especially as they have prevented governments from having the political will to tackle and supply the necessities for their citizens, such as clean water, housing, medical care, economic potential as well as the absence of accountability on the part of those affected by poor governance.

According to Royce (2022), South Africa's markets have collapsed due to the normalization of corruption, such as state capture. People in positions of authority have made poor decisions, worsening the country's poverty and accountability problems. Those in positions of authority enjoy an unfair share of wealth because corruption arises when they are not held accountable. According to Royce (2022), this is exemplified by inequalities in housing quality, access to potable water, hunger, poor public infrastructure, and a persistent cycle of poverty across the country. Heywood (2019) argues that society always assumes that those in the public sector are driven by social justice, while those in the private sector are driven by self-interest.

However, according to Heywood (2019), in weaker institutions such as South Africa, this is not the case at all. Self-interest has been prominent among public leaders for several reasons. Heywood (2019) holds that the characteristics of state capture are to preserve political power, to embezzle public funds for private benefit, and to establish monopolies with their close associates. According to Heywood (2019), economies are now in a worse state than they were before due to political reforms or policies that followed. Given the inherent conflict of interest among people in positions of power, the never-ending cycle of poverty will only worsen (Heywood, 2019).

Numerous studies by David- Barrett (2023: 8-12); Gumede (2019: 19); Jonas (2019); Ndikumana et al. (2020: 42, 74); Mlambo (2019: 210, 212, 219); Heywood (2019), Masuku (2019: 98-99), Booysen (2020); Mokole (2022), Budhram (2019: 157), have demonstrated that South Africa lacks efficient governance and frameworks and procedures to enable the proper application of its progressive laws and policies. Poor public resource management has prevented the South African government from establishing the prerequisites for efficient governance. Strong institutions and effective governance depend on a management culture that supports diversity in management, but this culture has yet to emerge due to ineffective leadership.

Ultimately, one of the most significant problems facing the world today is weak institutions and ineffective governance, where it is necessary to appropriately carry out the duty to report, justify, and take responsibility for the results of actions taken on behalf of communities. Due to a lack of transparency and disregard for the rule of law, citizens are unable to follow or understand the choices made. It is difficult to establish an efficient government under these circumstances. As a result, the public sector in South Africa needs procedures and processes that improve governance efficiency, thereby promoting sustainable development that is sensitive to societal demands.

2.3.2. Political Patronage

According to Mlambo (2023: 326), Friedman (2019: 12), and Petersen (2020: 31–32), political patronage in South Africa has been a significant concern since the African National Congress (ANC) came into power in 1994. While patronage as a practice existed prior to 1994, its visibility and influence within democratic governance increased after the ANC's rise to power, particularly through mechanisms such as cadre deployment and politically motivated appointments. Scholars link this post-1994 patronage to governance challenges, corruption, and the entrenchment of self-serving networks within state institutions. These scholars argue that political patronage has emerged as a constraining and controversial attribute of the African National Congress leadership (Mlambo, 2023: 326; Friedman, 2019: 12; Petersen, 2020: 31–32). In transitioning from an apartheid South Africa to a democratic South Africa, there was hope that the ruling party would lead with effectiveness and efficiency, transparency and openness, accountability, and responsiveness, and that they would act within the rule of law and promote inclusiveness and fairness (Nirmala, 2024; Malapane, 2024). However, according to Mlambo (2023: 326), Friedman (2019: 12), and Petersen (2020: 31–32), that has not been the case, as political patronage has become the focal point of the African National Congress's approach to government.

According to Fukuyama (2018), political patronage is a practice in which a political party, upon winning an election, bestows government jobs on its friends and relatives as a token of appreciation for their efforts towards victory and as a motivator to continue working for the party. Additionally, Shopola and Juta (2024) and Mlambo and Zubane (2022) assert that political patronage is employed to ensure that a candidate's or a political party's plans are approved and carried out quickly, granting authority, money, material items, and political posts to individuals or groups in return for their political support during an election.

Moreover, Bottkjaer and Justesen (2021) and Nzo (2020) similarly define political patronage as the appointment or hiring of a government position based solely on partisan loyalty. Elected leaders use these appointments at the federal, state, and municipal levels of government to recognize those who assist them in gaining and retaining office. Similarly, Aspinall and Berenschot (2019) posit that the patronage system gives major functional posts in the executive branch and federal agencies to party loyalists and, principally, campaign personnel, as a reward. According to Nzo (2020), in South Africa, this occurs through the African National Congress's deployment systems. The African National Congress rewards cadres with appointments to important functional sectors of the administration (Nzo, 2020).

According to Corrigan (2024), the term 'cadre deployment' has been part of the South African vocabulary since at least 1997. It is the concept that lies at the intersection of the country governed by the African National Congress and the African National Congress as the country's ruling party. Corrigan (2024) reveals that it was considered a procedure by which the African National Congress aimed to place its members in positions of power within the country and in other spheres of influence. Corrigan (2024) maintains that the African National Congress had two reasons for doing this. Firstly, the African National Congress sought to increase its authority and sway in both the public and private spheres. They anticipated being able to impact ever-wider fields of activity across society by doing this (Corrigan, 2024). Secondly, cadre deployment has evolved into a patronage tactic at a higher level to reward party loyalists and those who follow the party line (Corrigan, 2024).

According to Adanlawa and Chaka (2024), the African National Congress continues to maintain that the problem is with the way this strategy is being implemented rather than the policy itself, even though it is now abundantly evident to all citizens of the nation that cadre deployment has failed and was bound to fail from the beginning. However, its implementation difficulties only serve to highlight how impractical and unethical its concept was. Without a doubt, cadre deployment has harmed South Africa's public service and prolonged its development (Adanlawa and Chaka, 2024). It has occasionally eroded important democratic institutions (Adanlawa and Chaka, 2024). Kaizer (2022) argues that the cadre employment policy is a more realistic description of the cadre deployment policy. It undermines the calibre of our civil service while maintaining the employment of African National Congress cadres. The African National Congress benefits from this as it keeps its activists in sync. Kazier (2022) argues that it is costing the rest of the country more, as evidenced by deteriorating

infrastructure, poor service delivery, and the health of South African democracy itself. Mlambo and Zubane (2022) support this argument, showing that the African National Congress's cadre deployment plan is at the heart of all these tendencies. Mlambo and Zubane (2022) posit that institutional degradation was inevitable when completely inappropriate individuals were appointed to important organizations, tasked with providing and maintaining infrastructure. Putting these appointees in a serious and unlawful conflict of interest exacerbates their incapacity issues.

The country's seeming incapacity to fight corruption, which permeated former president Jacob Zuma's government, is a significant threat to the future (Mlambo and Zubane, 2022). State capture corruption distorts economic activities, increases transaction costs, and discourages investment by eroding hope for a brighter future. According to Mlambo and Zubane (2022), the high crime rates in South Africa are particularly concerning due to the rise of new criminal groups, such as construction and procurement syndicates, whose activities directly affect the economy's capacity to attract investment. It becomes more challenging to present a convincing argument for the economy's long-term prospects when you combine it with the obvious feeling that the events of July 2021 may be replayed at some time.

2.3.3. Rent Seeking

Scholars such as Bookbinder (2021) and Olver (2021) argue that South Africa is rapidly becoming a rent-seeking society in which those with political power can obtain money without effort. These individuals have access to beneficial policies, mining rights, and contracts in both the public and commercial sectors due to their ties to the African National Congress leadership (Bookbinder, 2021; Olver, 2021). According to Choi and Storr (2019), the ingrained rent-seeking mentality undermines the economy's potential for success and stifles new investment and innovation. Additionally, it inhibits efforts to promote job growth and fight poverty and injustice (Choi and Storr, 2019).

Choi and Storr (2019) define rent-seeking as the practice of increasing one's current wealth through social or political influence without generating new wealth. Choi and Storr (2019) contend that rent-seeking behaviour has a detrimental effect on the rest of society and reduces economic efficiency by leading to resource misallocation, reduced wealth creation, lost government revenue, increased income disparity, increased risk of political bribery, and potential national collapse. Furthermore, according to Adi (2018), rent seeking is the practice

of a government official continuously choosing projects that benefit the official who requested the bids. Moreover, Laband (2019) defines rent seeking as the pursuit of personal enrichment at the expense of the community rather than improving its well-being. Choi and Storr (2019) posit that rent-seeking aims to influence the distribution of economic resources to get financial advantages and benefits. Similarly, according to Zywick (2016), rent seeking occurs when people use the political system to advance their personal interests.

Olver (2016, 2018, 2021) posits that the appropriation of rents in South African cities has been centralized under the new governance structures, while patronage-based economic models and rent-seeking alliances have become more popular within the ruling African National Congress party. Olver (2016, 2018) and Southall (2016) contend that, partly due to the political economy of the South African transition and partly to the underlying problems affecting the public sector, rent-seeking and patronage-based political party structures have taken centre stage in municipal government. Consequently, perceptions of state capture have grown significantly nationwide. When regulatory agencies are successfully captured to create a coercive monopoly in a market, rent seekers may profit while their unaffected competitors may suffer (Von Holdt, 2023; Von Holdt et al., 2023).

According to Madonsela (2019), state capture is the term used to describe the collusion between President Zuma, high-ranking government officials, and his shadow network of dishonest intermediaries. State agencies allegedly distribute beneficial rents to help a group of individuals overcome historical disadvantages (Madonsela, 2019). In other words, rents are essential for growth. They are meant to help the impoverished racial minorities who have suffered because of the economy and discriminatory policies of the apartheid government. However, Madonsela (2019) asserts that competition for access to beneficial rents is the outcome of such rents. According to von Holdt (2023), this can occur in a morally and legally acceptable way, such as when individuals develop legal interventions or campaign for the benefit of certain worthy groups.

Von Holdt (2023) reveals that corrupt rent-seeking in South Africa occurs during state capture, when state institutions are repurposed, and rents are transferred to the ruling class through dishonest and unscrupulous means. State capture is distinguished from simple corruption by the systematic, well-planned transactions carried out by individuals with established relationships with the African National Congress (Von Holdt, 2023). According to Von Holdt (2023), there is more to South Africa's governance than corruption alone. High-level political

protection is involved, including the elimination of rivals and law enforcement's allegiance to the shadow state and a culture of terror (Von Holdt, 2023).

To do this, the shadow state repurposes state institutions or alters their management and organizational structures to fulfil a function distinct from their official mission (Von Holdt, 2023). Von Holdt (2023) asserts that this is carried out not just to steal money but also to consolidate political control. The shadow state's goal is to alter the systems' rules, confer legitimacy, and select players who will divert rents from their intended recipients and place them in private hands (Von Holdt, 2023). According to Bookbinder (2021), Foley (2021), and Von Holdt (2023), Zuma coined the term "radical economic transformation" to conceal the dishonest, rent-seeking practices of the ruling class from the general population. Scholars such as Bookbinder (2021), Foley (2021), and Von Holdt (2023) argue that, although the African National Congress supported this economic strategy, the term "radical economic transformation" is poorly defined and lacks a conceptual foundation.

The African National Congress's stated economic objectives are essential for progress and fairness. However, Zuma's corrupt political project was being concealed behind radical economic transformation, which has the exact opposite effect of what it aims to do. It strengthens state institutions, undermines democracy and the rule of law, and benefits a small elite (Mathonsi and Sithole, 2020). As a result, this economic strategy is ineffective in establishing a just economy (Mathonsi and Sithole, 2020). Mathonsi and Sithole (2020) posit that the ruling class is committed to a drastic economic revolution but disregards the constitution and the law, viewing them as barriers. According to Levy et al. (2021), the Zuma-centred power elite's "political project" is the deliberate use of power to further their interests and is justified by the ideology of radical economic transformation, which is frequently expressed by a coalition of political interests. Levy et al. (2021) claim that this was the misuse of Zuma's power that permitted unscrupulous rent-seeking tactics and elite power consolidation. However, the pretence and hollow promises of drastic economic change justify such misuse of authority. According to Levy et al. (2021), the African National Congress must reclaim the ideology from the ruling class, which has appropriated it for its own avaricious political project.

According to Jonas (2019), Jacob Zuma's hiring of Malusi Gigaba initiated the practice of repurposing state-owned enterprises for theft. This crucial event raised the prospect of seizing control of the National Treasury, thereby concentrating rent-seeking and strengthening the

alliance between the shadow state and the constitutional state. According to Jonas (2019), before exploiting a clause in the Public Finance Management Act that allows the use of State-Owned Enterprise procurement procedures to favour specific contractors approved by the Gupta network, Malusi Gigaba systematically reorganized the State-Owned Enterprises boards. The first Cabinet reorganization to occur without the complete backing of the ruling party happened in March 2017 (Jonas, 2019). It confirmed the stealthy coup and allowed for ultimate control of the National Treasury (Jonas, 2019). This type of governance is counter-developmental and unable to propel real development initiatives. Senior management and State-Owned Enterprises boards now have more faith in the Gupta network's competence following the Cabinet upheaval. The constitutional state is weakened by the shadow state, which prevents state institutions from carrying out their official duties (Jonas, 2019).

According to Foley (2021) and Gouws (2020), the repurposing of state institutions has enabled Zuma to operate through several kitchen cabinets, collections of people selected from different networks, but all connected to the shadow network. These are informal, small groups that meet only when necessary. They have been pulled from Cabinet ministers, Gupta networks, state security organizations, and State-Owned Enterprises, among others, whenever Zuma feels it is essential. In conclusion, it is a de facto quiet coup when the wealthy elite prioritize their own interests over South African democracy, with the poor bearing the brunt of this. Scholars assert that Zuma poses a serious threat to South Africans' economic security and constitutional democracy, given indications of institutional deterioration. There are blatant conflicts of interest within the ruling class, and laws, including the Executive Ethics Act, are disregarded.

2.3.4. Public Procurement System

According to Fourie and Malan (2020), in the last twenty years, the majority of the nation's products and services were purchased by the South African government (Fourie and Malan, 2020). Aikins (2023) reveals that the capture of state-owned companies by these criminal actors has been enabled by the institutional weakness of procurement institutions and the lack of substantive integrity among public procurement employees. The involvement of private enterprises competing for these services has expanded in tandem with the fall in government organizations providing products and services (Manyathi et al., 2021).

David-Barett (2021) posits that this shift has made the threat of corporate dominance and clientelism even more serious. State capture fundamentally impairs the state's effectiveness and

capacity to fulfill its primary objective of serving the public (David-Barett, 2021; David-Barett, 2023). This occurs when financial resources are diverted towards private interests and away from value-adding economic endowments and the delivery of public goods and services intended for the impoverished (Martin & Solomon, 2016). According to Alence and Pitcher (2019), the repurposing of State-Owned Enterprises led to this outcome. Due to the state enterprise's poor management, there is a perpetual shortage of production capacity, which has had a detrimental effect on households, enterprises, and economic recovery initiatives by requiring frequent public fund bailouts (Alence & Pitcher, 2019).

Additionally, public bodies must enter into contracts for goods and services in a just, equitable, open, lucrative, and economical manner as required by the constitution (Siphiri, 2023; O'Brien and Martin-Ortega, 2020). A public organization loses its independence to act in the public's interest when private interests take it over. This is demonstrated by businesses' inability to enter into competitive contracts that result in low prices and high quality (Aikins, 2023). Public procurement employees in South Africa lack the institutional power to identify and thwart corrupt practices that lead to state capture, as well as the integrity and personal drive to oppose collusive activity (Aikins, 2023). Aikins (2023) reveals that the idea has gained significant political traction since the public protector of South Africa's state capture report was released in 2016.

According to Thai (2017) and Obwegeser and Muller (2018), public procurement, the method used by government agencies, local governments, and other public bodies to acquire products, services, or labour from companies, is also a root cause of state capture in South Africa. In addition, Thai (2017) argues that the process by which the government purchases products and services with taxpayers' money is known as procurement. The Zondo Commission revealed and concluded that the majority of state resource fraud and misuse occurred via the public procurement system (Hellman, 2018; Madonsela, 2019; Gray, 2021). The commission discovered that state-owned businesses, which have substantial budgets, are the sites of significant corruption (Hellman, 2018; Madonsela, 2019; Gray, 2021). Supporting this argument, Abel (2022) and Cowan (2022) reveal that one of the ways state capture flourished, according to the commission led by Chief Justice Raymond Zondo in 2018, was because the executive branch members meddled in the government's procurement process

According to literature by Mbeki et al. (2019), President Ramaphosa acknowledged in his 2019 State of the Nation address that unless South Africa addresses state capture and corruption in

all its manifestations and in all facets of public life, South Africa's most significant efforts to eradicate poverty, unemployment, and inequality will not yield significant results. Additionally, Ramaphosa pledged on behalf of the government to increase the state's capacity to uphold its democratic mandate and meet the demands of the populace by collaborating with South African society to combat these dangers (Mbeki et al., 2019).

These significant commitments are part of a broader campaign in government and society to reaffirm the objectives and tenets of the anti-apartheid struggle and to stop the deterioration of state institutions (Mbeki et al., 2019). The government and state-owned enterprises must purchase goods and services to meet their responsibilities. This public procurement process must be effective and devoid of corruption to support economic growth and development (Mbeki et al., 2019; Magakwe, 2022; Rappo, 2023). The government is working to improve procurement transparency so that taxpayers can see how their money is being spent. According to Mbeki et al. (2019), Magakwe (2022), and Rappo (2023), identifying unlawful procurement activities and taking decisive action against those implicated are additional goals.

Fourie and Malan (2020), Fazeka and Blum (2021), and Nkwanyana and Agbenyegah (2024) describe procurement as the process by which the government uses appropriated public monies to buy goods and services. The government buys goods and services to achieve its goals. All public procurement in South Africa must adhere to the guiding principles of fairness, equity, transparency, competitiveness, and cost-effectiveness, as mandated by the Constitution (Fourie and Malan, 2020; Fazeka and Blum, 2021; Nkwanyana and Agbenyegah, 2024). The constitution mandates that state agencies enter into contracts for products and services in a way that is fair, equitable, transparent, competitive, and economical.

A public organization loses its independence to act in the public interest when private interests capture it. This is demonstrated by the organization's inability to enter into competitive contracts that result in low prices and high quality (Aikins, 2023). Phahlane (2021) and Aikins (2023) argue that public procurement employees lack the institutional strength to identify and withstand corrupt practices that lead to state capture, as well as the integrity and personal drive to oppose collusive activity.

Nevertheless, scholarly study on the phenomenon has been conspicuously lacking, especially in relation to its relationship to public procurement (Bleda and Chicot, 2020). According to Rubin et al. (2023), the nation's procurement system is now beset by issues of professional

capability, fragmentation, and operational flexibility, as well as the misuse of procurement for state capture. Some have manipulated procurement results by adding complexity through the adoption of preferential procurement goals, which are an economic and societal necessity (Rubin et al., 2023).

2.3.5. Causes of State Capture in South Africa: Insights from the Literature

Drawing from the literature reviewed in this chapter, it is evident that the causes of state capture in South Africa are multifaceted and interconnected. Scholars highlight a combination of political, economic, and institutional factors, including weak oversight mechanisms, the concentration of power within the ruling elite, and opportunities for personal gain that incentivize unethical behaviour. These causes demonstrate how systemic vulnerabilities enable state capture to take root and persist. While the literature provides insight into structural and political drivers, it often overlooks the ethical dimension, particularly the way the pursuit of self-interest over the public good reflects a failure of moral leadership. This study identifies this gap as critical, emphasizing the need to explore the causes of state capture not only in institutional terms but also through an ethical lens.

2.4. Effects of State Capture in South Africa

State capture in South Africa has had an extensive and pernicious impact on the country's political, economic, and social spheres. According to David Barrett (2021); David-Barrett (2023) and Ndofirepi (2023) state capture not only undermines the social contract by interfering with the states mission to serve the public interest but according to Martin et al. (2016) and Jonas (2019), it also worsened the economy by reducing the Gross Domestic Product growth by an estimated four percent a year since 2016. In addition to impeding attempts to lower poverty (Koelble, 2024; Aikins, 2023; Pillay and Zondi, 2023), unemployment (David-Barrett, 2021; Chipkin et al., 2018; Jonas, 2019), and inequality (David-Barrett, 2021; Chipkin et al., 2018; Jonas, 2019; Ndikumana et al., 2020), state capture significantly led to a sharp decline in popular support for democracy (Madonsela, 2019; Levy et al., 2021). Understanding the effects of state capture is crucial for recognizing the harm it has done to the country's democracy and the compelling need for reforms to restore honesty and accountability in governance.

This chapter seeks to answer the third research question by examining the effects of state capture in South Africa. Drawing on scholarly literature, it focuses on four key consequences: the July 2021 unrest following Jacob Zuma's imprisonment, the decline in public service delivery, the absence of economic development, and the worsening of social and economic inequality. The chapter aims to critically analyse how these effects undermine governance, societal stability, and citizens' well-being. Furthermore, it considers the ethical dimension, highlighting how these outcomes reflect failures in moral leadership and the prioritisation of personal or political gain over the common good, both of which are central to understanding the broader implications of state capture. These will be presented below:

2.4.1. Absent of Economic Development

Zandile and Phiri (2022), Vhutali and Saba (2024), and Pillay et al. (2023) argue that state capture-related corruption has made it more difficult for the South African government to serve its people effectively. According to these scholars, this has hampered efforts to increase economic growth, address unemployment, reduce poverty and inequality, and attract foreign investment in the country (Zandile and Phiri, 2022; Vhutali and Saba, 2024; Pillay et al., 2023). State capture exacerbates an already troubled economy, and the average citizen typically feels the effects of corruption on economic development more than those involved in the wrongdoing of this systematic corruption (Abdulai, 2023; Jonas, 2019; Ivanyana et al., 2021).

The state's ability to effectively serve its citizens has been undermined by the corruption exposed by state capture. This has a detrimental impact on the advancement of development objectives like economic growth, unemployment management, poverty and inequality reduction, investment attraction, and institutional quality enhancement (Jonas, 2019; David-Barrett, 2021; Khambule, 2021). Sutherland (2020) argues that the advancement made in South Africa's growth thus far is seriously threatened by the acts of state capture (Sutherland, 2020). The fact that state capture corruption has made South Africans more susceptible to shocks like the COVID-19 outbreak and the KwaZulu-Natal floods is equally worrisome. Hausmann et al. (2023) demonstrate that resources were unavailable during these crises as they had been reallocated to underperforming organizations.

According to Africa (2023: 8), the International Monetary Fund cautioned that South Africa's economy would grow by 0.6% in 2023 and that, in the absence of urgent changes, things would worsen. According to Jonas (2019), Blumenfeld (2022), Hausmann et al. (2023), and Du Toit

(2020), the South African economy's dismal performance during the past 15 years is primarily due to bad policy choices, a catastrophic breakdown in governance, state capture, and a woeful lack of leadership. Mullar (2020) and Raskin (2019) contend that South Africa keeps repeating the same mistakes across many areas, and that there is no indication that political leadership can change policies or enhance governance. Even while each case of poor governance or bad policy has a unique negative impact on the economy, the terrible toll they take on future trust is a significant way that they all contribute to macroeconomic outcomes (Walter and Redeker, 2023).

This trend is mainly responsible for the underwhelming economic development over the previous 15 years. The primary cause of the growth slowdown is the collapse of future confidence, driven by poor governance and policy, which has led to a lack of infrastructure investment and a loss of our human capital stock due to the emigration of highly qualified professionals (Kofler et al., 2020). Therefore, South Africa's poor development is due to a decline in its ability to generate goods and services rather than a lack of aggregate demand (Nersisyan, 2022). Gans (2020) contends that South Africa's civilization has become poorer and less capable of producing value and developing.

According to Chipkin et al. (2018) and Mlambo (2019), state capture, among other ways, prevents foreign direct investment by obstructing economic growth. The tendency for economic activity to concentrate in areas where the elite can manage best is a feature of state capture, which restricts opportunities in other sectors of the economy and inhibits the kind of economic diversity believed essential for long-term prosperity (Jonas, 2019; Renwick, 2018). According to Jonas (2019) and Renwick (2018), the economy could eventually become too dependent on commodities as they are easier to manage and capture. Muhanji et al. (2019) state that when institutions are vulnerable to state capture, an increase in the rents from natural resources reduces aggregate income.

Additionally, Lindsey and Teles (2017) state that, in addition to wasting public funds on suppliers who deliver subpar goods, works, or services or completely default on contracts, the capture of the public procurement process also has indirect effects on the growth of the economy by stifling competition. Over time, businesses without political connections are likely to go bankrupt, while those with connections are discouraged from entering the market, as suppliers with the right connections are given preference and those without connections to these robust networks receive fewer or no contracts (Lindsey and Teles, 2017). Overall, the result is

a larger concentration of wealth in the hands of the politically connected elite and even less competition in some industries (Jonas, 2019; Renwick, 2018).

2.4.2. Exacerbates Inequality

Scholarly literature demonstrates that inequality is exacerbated by state capture in several ways. David-Barrett (2021, 2023); Pillay et al. (2023); Mathebula and Masiya (2022) posit that state capture violates the social contract by undermining the government's mission to serve the public interest. According to Webster (2019), Szarzec et al. (2022), and David-Barrett (2021), state capture is a political-economic strategy in which both public and private parties collaborate to form secret networks that gather around state institutions to accumulate unrestrained authority. By operating outside the scope of public accountability, these networks undermine the constitutional state and social contract. This intensifies the disparities in socioeconomic outcomes and political power (Webster, 2019; Szarzec et al., 2022; David-Barrett, 2021).

Supporting the arguments of the above scholars, David-Barrett (2023) and Rothchild and Chazan (2019) also reveal that state capture leads to inequality by radically shifting the distribution of power in society. Regarding national and personal security, the misuse of the police and military to maintain the political elite's hold on power results in their inability to defend society at large and, often, the minority and disadvantaged groups (David-Barrett, 2021). State capture can turn violent and allow for harsh population repression when kleptocrats employ the military or threaten to use it as a tool of corruption (David-Barrett, 2021). According to David-Barrett (2021), tight ties between the military and the political leadership have returned, even in nations like South Africa that were previously far down the path toward democratization.

Furthermore, according to Jonas (2019) and Royce (2022), the distribution of economic power is further unequalled by the provision of governmental resources to select groups. As a result, prospects for businesses in other areas are diminished as economic development is biased toward industries that these elites can control. The economy could eventually become overly reliant on unstable commodities (David-Barrett, 2021). Naqvi (2023) argues that when banks experience negligent lending due to banking-sector capture, the financial system will inevitably collapse. Furthermore, the public is unable to access funding to start businesses or invest in education, which would help them escape poverty (Ozili, 2020).

In addition, opposition organizations struggle to raise funds and to match the administration in political strength. Even if elections are held, the opposition will be at a disadvantage since political competition is being undermined. Recruiting talented individuals into opposition politics may grow increasingly challenging over time due to the low likelihood of success. In the end, those who enter politics are more likely to do so out of personal avarice than out of a desire to further the common good. Furthermore, many of the most educated and youthful individuals lose hope and "vote with their feet," leaving the nation in search of better opportunities elsewhere, because the population's life opportunities are heavily dependent on connections rather than talent. These diaspora communities frequently encounter obstacles when voting in elections, further reducing the likelihood of opposition parties winning.

Jonas (2019) aligns with the above scholars, arguing that economic growth and potential are hampered by the state's influence over the implementation of public policies, which leads to inequality. Suppliers with the appropriate connections are given preference when the public procurement procedure is recorded, whereas those without access to the captor network are not awarded contracts (Fazakas and Blum, 2021). Some unrelated businesses eventually fail, further reducing competition in some industries and concentrating wealth in the hands of the group that secures shady contracts (David-Barrett, 2021). The public may receive subpar value for the money spent through public procurement if there is little competition, since the surviving businesses may be even less motivated to offer high-quality goods and services (Baranek and Titl, 2024). Contracts are frequently broken, or the products and services offered are subpar, harmful, or defective (Baranak and Titl, 2024).

Furthermore, when government jobs are awarded based on cronyistic connections, the appointed clients begin to formulate and implement policies that favour themselves and their patrons at the expense of others (Panya and Morange, 2023; Khasoane, 2019; David-Barrett, 2021, 2023). The widespread use of patronage power produces a sizable population reliant on the government and the ruling class, thereby motivating them to maintain their positions of authority (Lemarchand, 2019). Therefore, according to Ganty (2023) and David-Barrett (2021; 2023), working in the public sector can become a means of buying votes, resulting in an overly bloated public sector. Meanwhile, the lack of meritocracy in recruiting will discourage many intelligent people without political connections from joining the public sector, thus diminishing its potential.

More qualified people may even depart the nation in pursuit of merit-based opportunities, which would cause brain drain, harm economic growth, and further erode political opposition (Ganty, 2023; David-Barrett, 2021; 2023). The bulk of society, and particularly existing underprivileged ethnic, religious, or indigenous communities, suffer when governmental assistance and services are primarily given to select interest groups (David-Barrett, 2021). There may be extra incentives to show allegiance to the leadership and abstain from undermining its authority if some areas of the nation succeed. In contrast, others suffer because of backing the opposition party. According to Hellmann (2000), sequencing affects how state capture influences economic growth. Hellmann (2000) contends that countries with concentrated political markets before universal suffrage had fewer harmful types of corruption than those with more scattered and chaotic political competition and widespread voting rights. Indeed, whether from colonialism or communism, capture often occurs in nations undergoing twin (i.e., political and economic) transformations.

Furthermore, according to David-Barrett (2021; 2023), the most vulnerable people are often disempowered, and minority groups' voices are eliminated when accountability systems are disabled, which is another way that state capture leads to inequality. State capture erodes the rule of law by politicizing court rulings and the application of the law (Dent, 2024). Underrepresented minorities are disproportionately affected by the ruling elites' exploitation of judicial systems as political weapons, which denies regular people access to justice or redress (Dent, 2024). By reducing the ability of the media, civil society, and the top audit agency to highlight irregularities and demand reforms, state capture tends to impair public administration performance and jeopardize the provision of public services (Dent, 2024).

Due to their greater reliance on public services, existing underprivileged populations are more negatively impacted by this. Higher education is weakened by crackdowns on university autonomy and critical thinking, leading to a workforce with lower skill levels and less funding for key fields. Inequality and state capture feed off one another. Preexisting inequality increases the likelihood of capture, as specialized interest groups are more likely to gain, maintain, and extend their sphere of influence in societies with unequal power distributions (Andrias and Sachs, 2020). Fairer competition among interest groups compels them to form coalitions in areas where power is more evenly distributed. Better policies that benefit a larger segment of society are likely to result from this (Rothchild and Foley, 2019; David-Barrett, 2021).

Furthermore, David-Barrett (2021, 2023) asserts that societies typified by state capture are likely to exhibit three significant sociological outcomes over time. These societies will likely worsen inequality, limit individuals' opportunities to live their lives, and make it more challenging to escape state capture. Markovits (2019) argues that the idea that a person may rise in society through skill, hard work, or merit is entirely undermined by state capture. Resources are allocated based on political connections in governments that have been taken, leaving little room for people to rise in society by diligence or education (Levy et al., 2021). According to David-Barrett (2021), this type of corruption typically results in brain drain, which stifles domestic innovation as the most talented and intelligent people depart the nation in search of merit-based promotions. State capture may result in a social resource curse, in which people see little value in education and seek status only by forming alliances with those in power. Much like the resource curse damages economies by fostering the idea that investing in oil is the only feasible endeavour. Additionally, money may become less important than traditional non-monetary status signals, making them appealing objectives.

State capture exacerbates social stratification, as captor groups favour distinct groupings of supporters, often based on kin, tribe, ethnicity, or regional identity. Since these identities are mostly imposed and are hard to alter, people in stratified societies find it challenging to be socially mobile (David-Barrett, 2021). Furthermore, people become increasingly dependent on their social networks as a coping mechanism because societies become more divided due to their inability to trust the government to provide for them. Efforts to increase the state's legitimacy and capacity are thereby undermined. In captive states, the elites frequently grow quite distinct from the general populace. They may have a completely different lived experience than the average person, which makes them increasingly disconnected and unable to predict how public policy would affect them. Additionally, there is very little social mobility, as outsiders find it extremely difficult to join the elite unless they are born into it or are welcomed in as trusted allies in exceptional circumstances (Pott et al., 2022).

Scholars such as Wang et al. (2021), Bookbinder (2021), and Khambule (2012) argue that nations under a rent-seeking administration often face negative consequences for political affairs, civil rights, and state economic welfare. A government that prioritizes rent-seeking usually destroys chances for foreign investment and severely impairs both the local market and cross-border commerce (Choi and Storr, 2019; Fon et al., 2021). According to Ismail and Richard (2023), rent seekers significantly lower residents' standard of living by frequently

stealing from them through tax funds or through money laundering. Furthermore, the money that rent seekers steal is taken from funds intended for public facilities like the construction of roads, schools, hospitals, and parks, which further negatively impacts the citizens' quality of life in South Africa (Kimenya and Tollison, 2019; Choi and Storr, 2019; Budhram, 2019).

According to Birkmann et al. (2022) and Bullock and Jenkins (2022), when limited interest groups receive most governmental resources and support, already marginalized ethnic, religious, or indigenous communities typically experience increased poverty and hardship. Certain regions that remain loyal to the ruling elite may profit under specific regimes, while other regions suffer financial penalties for supporting the opposition, such as the denial of central budget transfers (David-Barrett, 2023). This generates additional motivation to engage in favouritism, show allegiance to the leadership, or abstain from questioning its authority (Abel, 2022; David-Barrett, 2023). State capture weakens the rule of law and impedes its beneficial impact on decreasing inequality by politicizing court rulings and the application of the law (Bennett and Nikolaev 2016). The ruling elites exploit judicial systems as political weapons, which leaves the public with limited access to justice or redress. Underrepresented minorities are disproportionately affected by this (Birkmann et al., 2022; Bullock and Jenkins, 2022). However, Aiyar and Ebeke (2020) contend that, since state capture often occurs incrementally and takes somewhat different forms across nations, it is challenging to determine its precise impact on inequality. Furthermore, there are no trustworthy cross-national indicators of income disparity (Graafland and Lous, 2019). According to Aiyer and Ebeke (2020), affluent people have several ways to conceal their assets, which is why income and wealth are typically underreported.

2.4.3. Political Instability- 2021 July Unrest

There is a broad academic consensus that state capture played a significant role in the July 2021 political upheaval in South Africa. Scholarly literature by Check (2023) and Ndlovu (2023) reveals that violent rioting and looting occurred in Johannesburg and KwaZulu-Natal in mid-July 2021 following the sentencing of former South African President Jacob Zuma. In June 2021, the South African Constitutional Court ruled in Zuma's contempt of court case and sentenced him to 15 months in jail (Check, 2023; Ndlovu, 2023). In 2021, the court ordered the former president to appear before a commission of inquiry for a second round of questioning, but he refused to appear. The court gave Jacob Zuma a five-day deadline to surrender to the police. As he had done with previous decisions, he unavoidably ignored the

verdict, calling a press conference to denounce the court's decision and portray himself as a victim (Check, 2023; Ndlovu, 2023).

Furthermore, according to research by Check (2023) and Ndlovu (2023), Zuma turned himself in to the police in July 2021 despite his prior threats. The ruling party, the African National Congress, responded by threatening to destabilize the nation and provoke unrest if the former president was not released from prison. Following this announcement, criminal groups took advantage of the situation to loot shopping centres, set cargo vehicles ablaze, and obstruct national highways to disrupt the flow of goods (Check, 2023; Ndlovu, 2023). More than three hundred individuals died because of their involvement, and more than 1,200 people were arrested (Rikhotso, 2021).

Vhumbunu (2021) and Makanye (2022) concur with Check (2023) and Ndlovu (2023) in demonstrating that in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng, South Africa saw violent demonstrations and sociopolitical strife characterized by extensive pillaging of shops and businesses, as well as the burning and damage of public buildings and private homes. The socio-political unrest and violence were sparked mainly by early, sporadic, low-intensity protests in parts of KwaZulu-Natal over the arrest and incarceration of former President Jacob Zuma. The South African Constitutional Court sentenced the former president, Zuma to 15 months imprisonment for defying its order to make an appearance before the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of state capture, corruption, and fraud in the public sector, including organs of state, and for weakening the Court's authority through his illicit and covert attacks (Vhumbunu, 2021; Makanya, 2022).

According to Vhumbunu (2021) and Mdlalose (2023), there has been extensive nationwide discussion over whether Zuma's incarceration was the cause of the "Free Zuma" protests, looting, and sociopolitical upheaval. What is noteworthy, however, is not only the fact that the events caused enormous socioeconomic harm throughout the nation at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic was severely affecting the country's economic growth as well as the lives and livelihoods of its citizens, but also the important lessons learned for the prevention, management, and settlement of conflict, violence, and sociopolitical unrest in South Africa in the future (Martin and Basistha, 2023; Vhumbunu, 2021).

Furthermore, scholarly literature by Takudzwa (2022) and Lancaster (2022) consistently show that political and social tensions, primarily in the province of KwaZulu Natal, began to escalate

when the former president Zuma began speaking before the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of state capture, corruption and fraud in the public sector including Organs of State to testify and provide evidence on issues related to state capture and corruption. Following the former public protector, Thuli Madonsela's investigation and corrective action regarding complaints and allegations of state capture, the commission was established in January 2018, with Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo as its Chairperson, in accordance with Section 84(2) of the Constitution. Zuma first requested that the public protector's report on State Capture be put on hold. However, in December 2017, the North Gauteng High Court declared that the report's corrective measures were wise, necessary, rational, and appropriate.

According to Lancaster (2022) and de Haas (2024), the commission's report concluded that the July 2021 upheaval was a planned event that required everyone to speak with one voice to succeed. These scholars reveal that several state agencies investigated incidents that stretched from KwaZulu-Natal to Gauteng, including the obstruction of the N3 and N2, as well as the planned demolition of shops, industries, and other establishments. Lancaster (2022) stated that the disturbance that killed at least 337 people in KZN and Gauteng was exacerbated by socioeconomic problems that were common in parts of the impacted areas. Additionally, the commission examined the extent to which the July unrests were influenced by the social, economic, spatial, and political factors prevalent in the various areas. The commission concluded that the incident demonstrated that the actions during the rioting and looting were, in fact, planned. In addition, the deliberate destruction of factories and warehouses, the planned disconnections of security and fire alarm systems, the attack on government communication facilities at the Durban port, the blocking of the N3 and N2, the bombing, and the removal of the anti-bribery management system cannot be seen as separate events. In addition to the deaths, the unrest caused more than R50 billion in economic losses and the loss of 150,000 jobs.

According to Jonas and Pillay (2022) and Lancaster (2022), after the Constitutional Court arrested former President Jacob Zuma for failing to appear at the Commission of Inquiry into State Capture, he was forced to turn himself in to the Estcourt Correctional Centre, raising suspicions that the unrest was a reprisal. However, de Haas (2024), Chipkin et al. (2022), and Takudzwa (2022) reported that although the July 2021 unrest and Zuma's detention occurred at the same time, the commission found no evidence linking the two incidents. It became difficult to distinguish where one stopped and where the other began because the July events

were on the same day that former President Zuma was imprisoned. Many people have concluded that the two are connected because of this junction of events. Even though the disturbance and the previous president's arrest occurred at around the same time, the panel was unable to establish any evidence connecting the two.

Furthermore, according to Van der Merwe et al. (2023) and Fisher and Naidoo (2023), the Commission filed a contempt of court case at the Constitutional Court. Zuma was given a 15-month prison sentence in June 2021 by the Constitutional Court, which ruled that his refusal to testify before the Commission was a reprehensible attack on the rule of law and that his contempt of court posed a serious risk of inciting others to undermine the administration of justice (Fisher and Naidoo, 2023; Van der Merwe, 2023). According to the Court's ruling, Zuma would be arrested if he did not turn himself in to the South African Police Service at Nkandla or at the Johannesburg Central Police Station within five days (de Haas, 2024; Brickhille et al., 2022). To prevent Zuma's arrest, demonstrators gathered outside his farm in Nkandla. Zuma unsuccessfully appealed against the execution of his arrest's execution twice, first to the Constitutional Court and again to the Pietermaritzburg High Court. In July 2021, Zuma turned himself in at the Estcourt Correctional Service Centre in KwaZulu-Natal, sparking violent protests, riots, looting of stores and establishments, and the damage of private property and public facilities throughout sections of the province (de Haas, 2024; Brickhille et al., 2022). This expanded to areas of the Gauteng province. In addition to endangering the lives and livelihoods of those already struggling with the consequences of COVID-19, the "Free Zuma" protests caused significant economic harm to enterprises (de Haas, 2024; Brickhille et al., 2022).

2.4.4. Decline in Public Services

Since 1994, South Africa's public sector has faced several difficulties, chief among them being the provision of basic public services. The outcome is that most South Africans no longer believe the government can run the country effectively. A functional public sector is necessary for South Africans to benefit from the constitution and the socially and economically progressive policies in place. The ultimate objective of municipal, provincial, and national governments is to ensure that all individuals receive essential services effectively and efficiently (Ramutsheli and Jans van Rensburg, 2015).

Therefore, it is the government's responsibility to ensure the availability of resources and their appropriate use to achieve the goals of public service delivery. However, the unease surrounding the South African government's leadership and the achievement of even a modest level of service delivery is primarily due to local governments' inability to fulfill their obligations. According to research, a growing number of South Africans are dissatisfied with the country's governance and leadership (Obikili, 2019; Mattes, 2019). The increase in violent protests and demonstrations against service delivery throughout South Africa serves as evidence of this (Paret, 2015; Van Rooyen, 2018; Breakfast, 2019; Biljohn & Lues, 2019). This suggests that the government, especially local government, is struggling to carry out its duties.

Scholars such as Mlambo (2019) and Dassah (2018) contend that the South African public service has not met the standards set out in section 195 of the Constitution and has not adhered to the ideals and concepts that guide its operations. State capture is one of the issues plaguing the public sector and hindering service delivery. Although government employees are meant to be on the front lines of delivering public services, they are susceptible to corruption through state capture (Munzhedzi, 2016; Nahar et al., 2020). State capture remains one of the most pervasive and least addressed problems facing South African public-sector organizations (Nahar et al., 2020). According to Shava and Chamisa (2018) and Mlambo et al. (2022), bad workmanship, nepotism, and bad service delivery are undoubtedly the outcomes of cadre deployment and the South African tendering system. These scholars claim that South Africa has failed to uphold a code of ethics for professionals. The South African public service has failed to fulfill its moral duties to the public and to itself. (Shava and Chamisa, 2018; Mlambo et al., 2022)

According to Shava and Chamisa (2018) and Mlambo et al. (2022), this is demonstrated by the high frequency of corruption, including conflict of interest, fraud, embezzlement, and bribery. The phrase "state capture," which describes pervasive corruption in the public sector, is all too well known to the public. The 2018 judicial inquiry investigating corruption in the public sector uncovered evidence of a network of individuals, both inside and outside the government, operating unethically and unlawfully to enhance state capture. Some regular bureaucrats, like police and traffic officers, were also found to be dishonest. This exacerbated crime, unrest, and anarchy.

Furthermore, according to Szarzec et al. (2022), South Africa did not exploit its resources in an economically efficient manner. Concerns over maladministration, generally the mishandling

of public resources, have grown. According to the findings of the Zondo Commission of Inquiry, procurement has been the primary means of siphoning funds from state organizations. Abuse of public procurement was especially prevalent in state-owned businesses, including the major defence equipment maker in South Africa, Denel; the power company Eskom; and the transportation parastatal Transnet. Additionally, state funds and resources have been wasted via unauthorized, inconsistent, and extravagant spending. The causes are inadequate skills and capabilities, governance shortcomings, a lack of responsibility, poor financial management, and insufficient financial controls.

Furthermore, Hadiyantina (2021) asserts that the public service has not been able to maintain its political neutrality via fair and equal operations. Civil workers ought to operate in the public interest and be fair and unbiased. According to Section 197 of the Constitution, no public servant may be given preferential treatment or discrimination based solely on their support for a specific political party or cause. The deployment of cadres by the ruling African National Congress has introduced politics into the public sector (Mlambo, 2023). As part of the policy, party loyalists are given prominent posts in the public sector. This hinders the creation of an impartial and independent public service.

The Zondo commission found that cadre deployment violated the Public Service Act (Swanepoel, 2022; Mlambo, 2019; Zungulu, 2023). Instead of technical proficiency and merit, senior public officers have been chosen for their party loyalty (Waterman and Ouyang, 2020). Furthermore, a development-oriented vision was not adopted by South African service delivery. Providing fundamental public goods and services is essential for a state like South Africa, which aspires to be a progressive state (Matseke, 2019; Khambule, 2021). To foster equitable economic growth, access to housing, infrastructure, healthcare, and education is essential (Van Niekerk, 2020). These essential commodities and services are complex for the state to deliver. For instance, since 2007, power disruptions have impacted every South African, either directly or indirectly. A fundamental human right, access to water and sanitation infrastructure, is still lacking in many rural areas. The large number of service delivery demonstrations is indicative of growing dissatisfaction.

Finally, according to Maramura et al. (2020), Plantinga (2021), and Mamokhere (2022), the South African public service delivery system did not aim for accountability, openness, and inclusion. South Africa has worked to create an inclusive, responsible, and transparent state since the end of apartheid in the early 1990s (Tshishongo, 2019). To do this, the government

has developed strategies to involve citizens in its governance processes and hold public servants accountable (Adroniceanu, 2021). However, promoting public accountability and openness has become increasingly complex due to the politicization of the public sector (Adroniceanu, 2021; Ozga, 2020). By obfuscating the distinctions and duties between elected politicians and appointed public servants, policies such as cadre deployment have undermined the integrity of the public service (Kaizer, 2022; Sebola, 2024; Jarbanhand, 2022). Maladministration, corruption, and poor service delivery make it hard to determine who is to blame (Mamokhere, 2022).

2.4.5. Effects of State Capture in South Africa: Insights from the Literature

Drawing from the literature reviewed in this chapter, state capture in South Africa has had profound effects. Scholars point to events such as the July 2021 unrest following Jacob Zuma's imprisonment, the decline in public service delivery, the lack of economic development, and the worsening of social and economic inequality. These effects show how state capture weakens governance and harms society. However, the literature mostly overlooks the ethical side, particularly how these outcomes reflect failures in moral leadership and the prioritization of personal or political gain over the public good.

2.5. Ethical Issues Arising from State Capture in South Africa

The state capture phenomenon has raised crucial ethical issues that have undermined democracy and public trust in the government. Public support for democracy is declining because of growing discontent with the African National Congress administration. The first democratic constitution of South Africa was established to meet the aspirations of all people for a government that is moral, upright, open, equitable, and free from corruption, and that would enable the efficient use of public funds for social and economic development. However, the scholarly literature reveals that corruption has had grave, detrimental effects on South Africa, impeding growth, sustaining and escalating poverty, resulting in unequal income distribution, an economic downturn, and a dearth of investment.

This section examines the ethical dilemmas arising from the state capture phenomenon in South Africa. Drawing on the literature and the events discussed in previous chapters, three key dilemmas emerge: challenges in ethical leadership, the tension between public trust and ethical governance, and the conflict between personal enrichment and ethical responsibility. Analysing

these dilemmas is essential to understanding how state capture not only undermines governance and societal well-being but also raises fundamental moral and ethical questions that remain largely unaddressed.

2.5.1. Ethics and Public Trust

In the book "Social Policy in post-apartheid South Africa: Social Re-engineering for Inclusive Development." Noyo (2019) contends that South Africa's path to democracy was characterized by sacrifices and battles on several fronts, both domestically and internationally, to improve everyone's quality of life. Noyoo (2019) reveals that the relentless pursuit of transparency, accountability, and service delivery demonstrates how this conditioning backdrop persists to this day. In South Africa, the first democratic constitution, among the greatest in the world, was enacted in 1996 after the 1994 general elections. It created the fundamental laws for an expanding paradigm (Gloppen, 2019; Peterson, 2020). However, many significant political, ideological, social, and economic challenges have emerged throughout time (Gloppen, 2019; Peterson, 2020). Among them, increasing degrees of corruption are a daily occurrence and are believed to be directly caused by a general degradation in society's ethics, both individually and collectively (Gloppen, 2019; Peterson, 2020: 60). According to Lekubu (2019: 3), the decline in public trust in the government, the debilitating effects of corruption, and ethics or lack thereof are the main issues of public administration that need to be investigated.

Phahlane (2021), Raphasha (2019: 2-16), and Merefe (2019) all agree that political actions like corruption, unethical behaviour, state capture, and ongoing legal violations are primarily to blame for civic noncompliance with the law, public mistrust, and challenges to the legitimacy of the system. According to Singo (2023: 28) and Okere and Okoroafor (2019), the foundation of political trust is effective governance, grounded in the existence of moral principles and accountability frameworks across all facets of human life. Okere and Okoroafor (2019: 410) maintain that this implies that the public expects leaders at all societal levels to act morally and ethically. This highlights the expectations placed on public personnel and politicians to uphold the principles of integrity, responsibility, and openness (Okere and Okoroafor, 2019: 411; Singo, 2023: 28).

Anti-corruption tactics, such as detection, prevention, and deterrence, are based on these ideas. This suggests that, rather than relying on verbose, flowery party manifestos, food parcel distribution, or pre-election pledges, politicians and administrators must gain the public's trust

through their actions (Okere and Okoroaor, 2019; Singo, 2023). When individuals believe or understand that vows, programs, and manifestos are forgotten, mistrust can develop in many forms. According to Weinburg (2023) and Petrarca et al. (2022: 329-330), political mistrust can be directed at particular people, political parties, governmental organizations, or the political system. This is because the public and political elite in most cultures continuously examine decisions, actions, and policies. According to Petrarca et al. (2022), this examination begins at the lowest echelons of public administration, moves up to the local level through the municipal manager post, and culminates at the top of the government system. People everywhere have trust in these institutions because they believe that governments, state systems, political parties, and leaders always act honourably and responsibly, which are characteristic of a robust democracy (Modise and Modise, 2023).

Furthermore, according to Castelfranchi (2023), public participation in the majority, if not all, aspects of political life and processes externalizes and changes this trust. Castelfranchi (2023) suggests that public trust in a government will inevitably rise when it adopts such proactive steps. Countries like South Africa, which are deemed corrupt by their citizens, face several challenges to their existence. This includes opposition from undemocratic alternatives and social and political instability and division (Friedman, 2021; Vlamis, 2023). According to Richey (2023), people's political confidence in the government has been shown to provide a convincing, empirical basis for active political, public, and community participation in governance processes, as well as for ever-increasing political involvement in state affairs and activities. People frequently become less confident and continue to lose confidence in democracy because of public mistrust (Moosa and Hofmeyr, 2021; Hosking, 2019; Southall, 2019). When mistrust becomes a political and social reality, South Africans often express their dissatisfaction through frequent local and national protests, which can turn violent and destabilize society (Moosa and Hofmeyr, 2021; Hosking, 2019; Southall, 2019).

According to Murray (2020), a series of well-publicized and extensively documented episodes involving the rand and political and administrative corruption, such as state capture, have made mistrust a painful reality in South Africa. Other sources of mistrust include the poorer economic conditions that the middle class and the most disadvantaged groups in society confront, as well as the absence of services at all levels of the political system (Bardhan, 2022; Zuckerman, 2021; Cohen, 2019). Ndou (2022) reveals a noticeable decline in the performance of political

leadership at all levels of government, including the African National Congress, opposition parties, and administrative personnel in the government system.

Friedman (2019) posits that rising dissatisfaction with South Africa's current government is the reason for the dwindling popular support for democracy. Motaung (2021), Nyathi (2023), and Modise and Modise (2023) argue that South Africa's first democratic constitution was created to fulfil all citizens' desire for a government that is moral, upright, open, equitable, and free from corruption. As well as to facilitate the effective use of public funds for social and economic advancement. However, according to Seopetsa (2020), state capture has a profound negative impact on South Africa. This was achieved by preventing economic progress, maintaining and increasing poverty, causing unequal income distribution, triggering an economic downturn, and leading to a lack of investment. Effective governance, which is the antithesis of unethical and corrupt government, operates at both the administrative and political levels and is crucial to building public trust in government. Nicolaidis and Manyama (2020) and Kgobe and Mamokhere (2021) maintain that dishonest and unscrupulous behaviour negatively affects public confidence, a sad reality in South Africa.

Ultimately, according to Afrika (2021), a strong, concrete belief that the entire South African government is dishonest, unaccountable, and influenced by several contentious economic issues is the reason for the country's declining public confidence and trust. Stupak et al. (2021) state that confidence and faith in the government and its agencies are crucial, even in the presence of a comprehensive legal and regulatory framework. Only by actively engaging in many aspects of South Africa's political life will all citizens be able to solve this great ethical dilemma (Lodge, 2022).

Citizens expect leaders to act fairly, transparently, and responsibly, yet state capture repeatedly demonstrates the opposite. The literature highlights that institutions sometimes prioritise appearances or political stability over moral obligations, eroding confidence in governance. From my perspective, this dilemma shows that ethics cannot be treated as optional or secondary; without it, public trust collapses, leaving society vulnerable to both corruption and cynicism. This makes it clear that institutional ethical failures directly weaken the relationship between the state and its citizens, with lasting consequences for democracy.

2.5.2. Ethical Leadership

Bashir and Hassan (2020: 674) and Yazdanshenas and Mirzaei (2023: 762-763) posit that honesty, accountability, fairness, openness and disclosure, and responsibility are characteristics of ethical leadership. According to Moore et al. (2019: 3, 7), Sharma et al. (2019), and Kuenzi et al. (2020: 48), to really achieve the common good of human pleasure at the individual, group, and societal levels, moral leadership is crucial in organizations, government, and society. Shakeel et al. (2019) and Sharma et al. (2019) maintain that any company that wants to succeed must encourage moral leadership. Furthermore, scholars argue that moral leaders would not hesitate to condemn corrupt acts in a decent governance environment (Shakeel et al., 2019; Sharma et al., 2019: 613-614).

The findings of Shakeel et al. (2019) and Sharma et al. (2019) are consistent with Rotberg's (2019) finding that moral leadership is a necessary condition for both good governance and the elimination of corruption, such as state capture. In addition, in the book "Anti-corruption," Rotberg (2020) argued that moral leadership is required to protect the operational independence of anti-corruption institutions, avoid potential intervention, and prevent the misuse of power for personal gain, all of which promote good governance. According to Chandhoke (2021), nostalgia is causing South Africans to yearn for the days of Mandela democracy. The difference between the Mandela governance and the present governance is a crucial cause of frustration with the current government. Chandhoke (2021) reveals that former President Nelson Mandela was renowned for his moral rectitude and his advocacy of eradicating corruption in the public sector.

According to Cheteni and Shindika (2017: 3), state capture in South Africa is a prominent phenomenon that involved former President Jacob Zuma, the national executive branch, and directors and deputy directors of State-Owned Enterprises. To be perceived as ethical and have an impact on ethics-related outcomes, leaders are to be regarded by their followers as likeable, respectable, and credible (Wang et al., 2021: 450). According to Bozeman and Crow (2021), to serve the public, a public servant must be meticulous and committed to preserving the fundamental rights of all individuals and the democratic principles outlined in the Constitution. Supporting this argument, Shakeel (2021: 21) argues that, since servant leaders are perceived as supporting ethical leadership in guiding a business toward corporate governance norms, ethical leadership traits are compatible with and require a servant-leader style of leadership. Yazadanshenas and Mirzaei (2023), Bashir and Hassan (2020: 674) claim that integrity,

competence, accountability, responsibility, fairness, and openness are characteristics of ethical leadership.

Bashir and Hassan (2020: 674-675) argue that this means anticipating and preventing, or at least reducing, the negative consequences of corruption and related practices in the public sector and government. It also means being a boss and a person with moral values who always acts with integrity to enhance understanding of what is right, important, and moral, thereby cultivating followers into leaders who prioritize the requirements of the company over their own (Bashir and Hassan, 2020: 674-675). Zarghamifard and Dangeefard (2020) suggest that, depending on the person, integrity may signify several things. Zarghamifard and Dangeefard (2020) divided the definitions of integrity into five major areas. Wholeness; consistency in words and actions; consistency in the face of difficulty; being loyal to oneself; and moral or ethical behaviour. Ei-Adaway and Jennings (2022) maintain that establishing an open and transparent corporate culture in which unethical behaviour is revealed, and senior leaders hold each other accountable, is crucial.

Rontos et al. (2019: 2) claim that government corruption and moral behaviour are two sides of the same coin. An organization's enhanced internal ethical climate leads to a lower prevalence of corruption and unethical behaviour. The organization has more room to create moral behaviour when corruption is decreased (Rontos et al., 2019). Rontos et al. (2019: 2) argue that a lack of ethics and accountability among municipal officials is the cause of the bad administration and corruption tendency. Pillay (2016) maintains that ethics and accountability, which are the basis of the ongoing battle against corruption, will either succeed or fail. Pillay (2016: 116) suggests that, since governments worldwide are so concerned about the severe levels of corruption in their public sectors, upholding an exceptionally high level of professional conduct has become essential.

State capture exposes a deep failure in ethical leadership. Those entrusted to lead and set moral standards often act in self-interest or enable corrupt networks, leaving others in the system caught between doing what is right and surviving within a compromised hierarchy. From the literature, this failure is not just about bad decisions; it reflects a breakdown in the very moral fabric of leadership. In my view, ethical leadership is central to preventing abuses of power. However, the South African experience shows how easily it can be undermined when personal and political ambitions overshadow moral duty. This demonstrates that without strong moral

guidance at the top, the entire governance system becomes vulnerable to corruption and ethical decay.

2.5.3. Personal Enrichment and Ethics

Poesen et al. (2019) assert that public officials have an obligation to prioritize the well-being of the entire community over their own interests. Okagbue (2012: 15) argues that the idea of servant leadership, with its ethical considerations, is most appropriate in the public sector since public office holders are in a position of trust. The individuals trusted with positions of authority and public service may be questioned if they possess the moral and ethical fortitude to prioritize the necessities of the citizens over their own, given the numerous corruption and personal gain allegations that have overtaken South Africa's government and public service (Shava and Mazenda, 2021: 7-8; Mbandlwa et al., 2020: 1644-1647).

Similarly, according to Meuser and Smallfield (2023: 252-253), servant leaders should prioritize the needs, desires, and well-being of the people they serve before their own. However, Meuser and Smallfield (2023: 252-253) reveal that those motivated to become leaders do so because they seek power, resources, and personal advantages. They put their own needs before the public's well-being (Meuser and Smallfield, 2023: 252-253). The late struggle hero and Nobel Peace Prize winner, former President Nelson Mandela, was revered as a servant leader in South Africa due to his humility and people-first philosophy (Mascerenhes, 2019). Unfortunately, according to Mascerenhes (2019), the public sector now lacks these moral and ethical qualities in public service. King (2023) argues that there are many examples of public officials and leaders at all levels of government engaging in corruption and related actions in the public domain today. King (2023) argues that public service ethics are terribly underdeveloped.

State capture brings the conflict between personal enrichment and ethical responsibility into sharp relief. Opportunities for personal gain tempt individuals to compromise their moral duties, often with long-term consequences for society. The literature documents numerous instances where personal or political benefit was pursued at the expense of the public good. In my analysis, this dilemma is at the heart of state capture: when ethical responsibility is sidelined for personal gain, not only are institutions weakened, but the moral standards of society itself are eroded. This shows that when personal interests take priority over ethical obligations, the damage extends beyond individuals to the values and stability of society as a whole.

2.6. The Research Gap

To date, there is extensive literature on the phenomenon of state capture in South Africa. Various Scholars have already covered literature on the economic consequences by looking at the impact it has on development (Canen and Wantchekon, 2022; Jonas, 2019), fiscal management (Meyer and Luiz, 2018) and economic growth (Madonsela, 2019; Bester and Dobovsek, 2021; Canen and Wantchekon, 2022) and its contribution to economic inequality (David-Barret, 2021; Chipkin et al., 2018), Moreover, a large body of literature has covered how state capture undermines institutions (Martin and Solomon, 2016; Bester and Dobovsek, 2021) or how it contributes to political fragmentation (Sebake, 2017; Verhoef, 2022) and how it undermines the South African democracy (Bester and Dobovsek, 2021; Budhram, 2019; Martin and Solomon, 2016). A wide literature has also examined the social effects (Bester and Dobovsek, 2021; Martin and Solomon, 2016) and state capture under former president Jacob Zuma (Sebake, 2017). However, in this study, the researcher intends to explore and identify the ethical dilemmas surrounding the state capture phenomenon in South Africa under the leadership of the African National Congress, guided by the ethical theory of Consequentialism.

2.7. Conclusion

This chapter examined the scholarly literature to understand state capture in South Africa under the African National Congress. Weak institutions, poor governance, political patronage, rent seeking, and a flawed public procurement system created conditions for leaders to exploit public resources for personal and political gain. These causes show that state capture is not simply a matter of isolated corruption but a deeply systemic problem that manipulates institutions and undermines the state's functioning.

The effects of state capture are far-reaching and damaging. Economic development has been stalled as opportunities become concentrated in areas controlled by elites. At the same time, inequality has worsened due to the diversion of public resources from those who need them most. Service delivery has slowed, and political instability has intensified, as seen in the targeted unrest in July 2021 following Jacob Zuma's imprisonment. These consequences demonstrate how state capture destabilises both governance and society.

State capture also presents serious ethical dilemmas. Failures in ethical leadership, the prioritisation of personal enrichment over public responsibility, and the erosion of public trust

reveal the moral crisis at the heart of the phenomenon. Leaders who act for personal gain instead of the common good weaken societal confidence in governance and erode the ethical foundations that should guide public service.

Overall, this chapter shows that state capture in South Africa is a deeply systemic problem with political, economic, and ethical dimensions, highlighting the need for both structural reforms and a renewed focus on ethical leadership and accountability.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3. Introduction

The current chapter focuses on the research methodology. A research methodology is a methodical, scientific approach to collecting, evaluating, and interpreting quantitative or qualitative data to answer research questions or test hypotheses (Dharavath, 2025:10). By restricting the scope of work, a research methodology helps researchers stay on course, a strategy for conducting research. The research methodology chapter of a study describes the many methodological choices taken, such as the methods for gathering and analysing data, along with the reasoning behind these choices (Dharavath, 2025: 10). According to Dharavath (2025: 10), the reasoning should be clear as to why the chosen approaches are the most appropriate for dealing with the research question. An efficient research methodology ensures the validity and reliability of the study findings.

The study aims to explore the ethical dilemmas arising from the ongoing state capture in South Africa. Considering this, the study aims to investigate the ethical challenges posed by state capture to the public, institutions, and South African democracy. Considering the nature of the research questions, 1. What is the nature of state capture in South Africa? 2. What are the conundrums surrounding state capture in South Africa? 3. What are the effects of state capture in South Africa? 4. How can Consequentialism respond to the ethical dilemma surrounding the South African state capture? The study will adopt a desktop-based, non-empirical, qualitative approach.

3.1. Research Paradigms

According to Ugwu et al. (2021: 117), a research paradigm comprises a philosophical framework or worldview that directs the research process, encompassing ideas, beliefs, and prejudices. The research paradigm in which a study is situated influences its methodology. According to Muzari et al. (2022: 16), the research paradigm is the framework within which the concepts and practices of the researcher's profession are applied in developing the study plan. Every element of the study's plan, including the study's goal, research questions,

instruments or measurements, and analytical methods, is guided by this foundation (Muzari et al., 2022: 16).

There are many types of research paradigms. Constructivism is a research paradigm that maintains that people create their own understanding of the world by reflecting on their experiences. Constructivist research aims to comprehend the interpretations people make of such encounters. As a result, qualitative techniques such as interviews and case studies are frequently used. Constructivists search for the "why" behind events (Paudel, 2024: 49). Furthermore, by shifting from the notion that reality is an absolute certainty to a more probabilistic perspective, post-positivists adopt a more subjective stance. They contend that a researcher's perspective and prejudices can never be entirely eliminated from the study findings, and that research conclusions can never be altogether impartial (Paudel, 2024: 48).

Moreover, the pragmatic research paradigm holds that conditions and reality are constantly changing. As a result, the researcher uses the framework most relevant to the research topic, rather than a single research paradigm. When positivist and interpretivist methods are combined, both qualitative and quantitative methods are frequently employed. According to pragmatism, the best research method is the one that best answers the research question. Furthermore, according to Paudel (2024: 50), the positivist paradigm holds that there is a single reality that can be quantified and comprehended. As a result, researchers will likely employ quantitative methods. In the positivist research paradigm, an empirical hypothesis is often formulated during the research process and is either confirmed or disproved through the gathering and examination of data. Instead of seeking a qualitative explanation for the quantitative relationships between variables, positivists take an objective approach to research and statistically examine their existence. Advocates of this paradigm also believe that results from one study may be generalized to similar situations. Most positivist paradigms are used by natural scientists (Paudel, 2024: 48).

Finally, Interpretivists maintain that several realities exist, not just one. This research paradigm is used in most qualitative investigations conducted in the social sciences. Interpretivism holds that statistical models, such as those used in positivist paradigms, cannot fully capture the complexity of human action. Knowledge can only be created by examining how individuals understand events and behaviours. As a result, studies that employ this paradigm are inherently subjective and heavily influenced by the researcher's viewpoint. Instead of conducting research in a lab or other artificial environment, interpretivist paradigm research is conducted in the

real-world context of the subjects. Since interpretivist research is inherently limited to the study's context, its conclusions are usually not generalizable (Paudel, 2024: 49).

The qualitative paradigm of this study is based on interpretivism and constructivism. Research in the social sciences relies heavily on the interpretivist and constructivist frameworks (Omadan, 2024). These paradigms emphasize the creation of novel theoretical and social notions as well as the use of subjective interpretation to understand human behaviour and social processes (Omadan, 2024). They also emphasize the importance of considering the many and ever-evolving realities across various social and cultural contexts (Omadan, 2024). Both these paradigms portrayed how the ethical dilemmas of state capture in South Africa are socially constructed and understood through the meanings people attach to them. They highlight that different groups interpret these dilemmas in diverse ways, shaped by context, values, and experiences. This combined lens allowed the study to capture the complexity of how state capture is ethically perceived and evaluated.

3.2 Research Designs

Research design refers to the overall strategy that guides the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data in a study. It ensures that research objectives are systematically addressed and that the study remains coherent and structured. The three commonly recognised research designs are exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory.

An exploratory research design is employed to investigate topics that have not been thoroughly examined or are not yet well understood. Its main purpose is to gain insight, clarify concepts, and identify patterns without providing definitive answers (Olawale et al., 2023: 1384-1385). This design is flexible, allowing the researcher to adjust focus as new information emerges. Descriptive research design aims to provide an accurate account of characteristics, behaviours, or phenomena, primarily describing trends or patterns without establishing causal relationships. Explanatory research design seeks to identify the causes of a phenomenon, establish connections between variables, and answer "why" and "how" questions.

For this study, an exploratory research design was adopted. This design is appropriate because the research focuses on examining the ethical dilemmas surrounding state capture in South Africa. This topic has not been comprehensively analysed from an ethical perspective. The exploratory approach enables a detailed investigation of the literature, the identification of

emerging themes and patterns, and a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon within its social, political and economic context. Furthermore, this design complements the use of a critical literature review approach, allowing the study to interrogate, evaluate, and synthesise existing scholarship while highlighting gaps in knowledge and underexplored ethical considerations.

3.3 Research Approaches

Research approaches define the strategies used to collect and analyse data. The three primary approaches are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. Qualitative research is an exploratory approach focused on understanding meanings, experiences, and interpretations. It relies on non-numerical data such as literature, observations, interviews, and open-ended surveys to examine complex human behaviour and social phenomena (Sam, 2024: 7-10). This approach allows flexibility and in-depth exploration, uncovering subtleties and insights that quantitative methods may overlook. Quantitative research focuses on gathering and analysing numerical data to identify trends, correlations, and patterns. It uses structured methods such as surveys, experiments, and statistical analysis (Dehalwar & Sharma, 2024: 8; Schutt, 2019: 1; Mohajan, 2020: 3). Quantitative research emphasises objectivity and allows findings to be generalised to larger populations (Schutt, 2019: 57; Mohajan, 2020: 3).

Mixed-methods research combines qualitative and quantitative strategies to provide a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon (Taherdoost, 2022: 5, 55; Dawadi et al., 2021: 27). This approach integrates the depth of qualitative analysis with the breadth of quantitative data, thereby strengthening the robustness of the study. This study employed a qualitative desktop research approach, specifically using a critical literature review as its analytical strategy. Secondary sources, including scholarly articles, books, and reports, were analysed to explore the ethical dilemmas of state capture. The critical literature review approach was chosen because it allows for more than a descriptive summary of the literature; it enables rigorous evaluation, comparison, and synthesis of existing scholarship while interrogating underlying assumptions, biases, and ethical dimensions. This approach is particularly suited to understanding state capture, as it allows the research to uncover patterns, contradictions, and knowledge gaps, and to situate the phenomenon within its broader social, political, and ethical context. By applying this analytical method, the study ensures that interpretations are grounded in the literature while offering a critical and ethically informed perspective on the topic.

3.4. Data Sources

According to Topolewski et al. (2023: 280), desktop research is the act of obtaining information and concepts about a subject of interest by utilizing pre-existing sources. It is also known as secondary research. This type of research relies on information that has already been collected and shared by others, such as government reports, market research studies, academic articles, and project documents (Topolewski et al., 2023: 1). It is frequently employed to supplement primary research, acquire background data, or assist in decision-making. Desktop research is a crucial first step to ensure that the researcher is not duplicating work that has previously been done and is making effective use of their time and resources (Topolewski et al., 2023: 283). Given that the study adopted desktop research using secondary sources, this provides a basis for identifying and analysing the ethical dilemmas arising from the state capture phenomenon in South Africa.

3.5. Data Collection Procedure

All data were collected from publicly available online sources. The study's main objective guided this: to explore the ethical dilemmas arising from the state capture phenomenon in South Africa. The study used various sources from online platforms such as the UKZN library, ResearchGate, JSTOR, Google Scholar, and government websites. The study used multiple sources, including journals, books, articles, reviews, theses, Zondo Commission Inquiry reports, parliamentary reports, and analyses from organisations such as Corruption Watch and Transparency International. Finally, when collecting data, the researcher searched for keywords like 'South Africa and state capture,' 'ANC state capture,' 'Corruption and ethical dilemmas,' and 'bad governance and weak institutions in South Africa.'

3.6. Data Analysis

Qualitative research relies on analysing non-numerical data to understand meanings, experiences, and social phenomena. Common data analysis methods include thematic analysis, which identifies patterns and themes within the data; content analysis, which systematically examines text for recurring ideas; and critical discourse analysis, which explores the power, assumptions, and ethical dimensions behind language and texts. These methods allow

researchers to interpret complex information, uncover subtleties, and provide insights into human behaviour and societal issues that cannot be captured through numerical data alone.

This study adopted the thematic analysis. The thematic analysis breaks down complex data into easily understood themes and sub-themes to give an orderly approach (Ahmed et al., 2025: 1). Thematic analysis is one of the most widely used methods for analysing qualitative data because it offers a systematic yet flexible framework for identifying, analysing, and interpreting significant patterns in datasets (Ahmed et al., 2025: 1). This paper utilized Braun and Clarke' (2024) six-phase thematic analysis framework, which includes "(1) familiarization with data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) writing the report." The paper also utilized the ethical theory of Consequentialism to analyse the ethical significance of each theme. This ensured that the study's analysis was grounded in evidence and guided by transparent moral reasoning.

This study utilized the DECA (Describe, Evaluate, Act, Consult) method. This approach is used to solve problems in decision-making processes (Kretzschmar and Bentley 2013:5). To begin, the study **defined** state capture. Moreover, it described the causes and effects of state capture, as well as the ethical issues arising from the phenomenon in South Africa. Additionally, the study **evaluated** the implications of the South African state capture utilizing the ethical theory of Consequentialism. Moreover, the study **consulted** diverse literature from various scholars on South African state capture to ensure impartiality. Finally, the study **acted**. This is the point at which the researcher decided on the evaluation and consultation procedures. The researcher took a stand and presented scholarly recommendations to lessen the implications of state capture in South Africa.

3.7. Validity, Reliability, and Trustworthiness

The two most crucial elements of research quality in qualitative research are validity and reliability. When applied correctly, validity and reliability criteria help differentiate high-quality from low-quality research. They help reassure readers that the study's conclusions are reliable and credible. Since the study adopted qualitative, desktop research to ensure validity and reliability, it used sound, reliable sources. Additionally, the study compared various sources to validate data consistency. Furthermore, the study did not just summarize the findings but explained them, backing them up with multiple sources to convey an understanding of the research topic. Finally, the study was neutral and avoided any assumptions and bias.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

Even though this study did not involve human participants, ethical issues still needed attention. One crucial issue is accuracy, ensuring that information from secondary sources is reliable and correctly presented (Buchanan, 2020: 5; Saunders et al., 2019: 142). This was addressed by using trustworthy articles, books, and reports. Another concern is proper referencing and avoiding plagiarism (Resnik, 2023: 112). All sources were cited correctly in Harvard style to give proper credit to the authors.

A third issue is bias and fairness, especially with sensitive topics like state capture (Oliver, 2021: 88). This was managed by checking multiple sources and presenting information fairly, without making unverified claims about individuals involved. The study also received permission from the University of KwaZulu-Natal's research office. These steps ensured the research was conducted responsibly, fairly, and with academic integrity.

3.9. Limitations

The study noted several limitations. Outdated information was one of the study's limitations. The fact that data may not be current, reliable, or pertinent to the study topic or aim is one of the biggest problems with desk research. Desk research uses data gathered for a different purpose or context, which may not align with the researcher's current requirements and objectives. To overcome this limitation, the study triangulated with other available sources to strengthen credibility and then analysed the information in the context of the study. Another limitation the study noted is that most data were biased. The agenda or viewpoint of the source, information gathered from already-existing sources, may be biased or inadequate. The researcher overcame this limitation by remaining neutral, consulting multiple sources to avoid bias, and not taking one side. Finally, another limitation of the study is that desktop research does not allow for personal accounts, and the study's findings rely on the accessibility and quality of existing scholarly literature. The researcher overcame this limitation by ensuring rigorous source selection and prioritizing credible, peer-reviewed literature.

3.10. Conclusion

This is the methodology section. The study adopted a qualitative, desktop research approach to explore the ethical dilemmas surrounding the state capture phenomenon in South Africa. Moreover, the study utilized the exploratory research design. Exploratory research is a methodological approach that examines research issues that have not previously been adequately investigated. Additionally, the research paradigm of this study was based on both interpretivism and constructivism, which emphasize understanding human behaviour and social phenomena. This study was conducted based on desktop research, meaning that the sources were primarily published materials such as books, journal articles, theses, and dissertations. These secondary sources were sourced from various online resources, including the UKZN library, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar. The study employed thematic analysis to evaluate the data and identify recurring themes and patterns thoroughly. Finally, this study used the DECA (Describe, Evaluate, Act, Consult) method, a problem-solving approach commonly used in decision-making. The chapter also highlighted the study's validity and reliability, ethical considerations, and limitations.

The following chapter is chapter three. Chapter three is the theoretical framework chapter. The chapter will introduce the theory that will guide this study to explore the ethical dilemmas surrounding state capture phenomena in South Africa. Therefore, the chapter will use the ethical theory of Consequentialism to explore the ethical dilemmas surrounding state capture events under the African National Congress. This theory guides the study by showing that consequentialist theories deem state capture unethical because these actions do not produce significant benefit to the larger public. Instead, a small group of individuals, such as government elites and business leaders, is benefiting from state capture, leaving the broader public to bear the consequences of their actions.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4. Introduction

The current chapter is the theoretical framework. The chapter examines the ethical theory of Consequentialism, which will guide this study. According to Oyewobi et al. (2024: 140), a theoretical framework is a fundamental examination of existing theories that serve as a roadmap for developing the claims the researcher will make in their own study. Varpio et al. (2020) state that scholars develop theories to explain observations, establish connections, and anticipate future events. A theoretical framework demonstrates that the topic of a research paper is significant and grounded in accepted concepts by outlining the theories currently underpinning the study (Elliott and Higgins, 2023). Elliott and Higgins (2023) state that the theoretical framework, which contextualizes and justifies future investigation, is a crucial first step in every research paper. A thorough theoretical foundation sets the researcher up for success in later phases of their study and writing (Elliott and Higgins, 2023).

According to Varpio et al. (2020), a theoretical framework provides a basis for understanding and analysing a subject and guides a study. It is essential since a strong theoretical framework forms the basis for data analysis and interpretation. Additionally, it ensures that the study aligns with existing theories and literature (Lim, 2024). Moreover, it guides the selection of research methodologies and data-gathering strategies (Lim, 2024). Finally, it also makes the researchers' study more rigorous and credible. A good theoretical framework provides a researcher with a firm foundation on which to build as they continue their research and make contributions to their field of study (Lim, 2024). Passay (2020) states that an established theoretical framework helps identify knowledge gaps and advance the discipline. A theoretical framework also helps in defining the background of the researcher's study. Elliott and Higgins (2023) assert that the researcher must show that their work is grounded in an existing body of knowledge by basing their study on well-established ideas and concepts.

This chapter will begin by giving an overview of the major theories in ethics. Additionally, the chapter will contextualize Consequentialism by defining it according to different scholars and presenting the relevant background information. The chapter will then give the different types of consequentialist theories. The chapter will then evaluate the theory from different

perspectives, highlighting both arguments supporting and criticizing it. Finally, this chapter will present the relevancy of Consequentialism to this study.

4.1. Overview of Ethical Theories

Ethical theories provide structured ways of evaluating what is morally right or wrong. Among the major schools of thought, deontology emphasizes duty and adherence to moral rules, while virtue ethics focuses on the character of the moral agent. Consequentialism, by contrast, evaluates actions based on their outcomes, aiming to maximize overall good. Other approaches, such as care ethics or rights-based ethics, offer alternative perspectives that highlight different priorities in moral reasoning.

Within Consequentialism, several strands exist, including utilitarianism, which seeks the greatest good for the greatest number, and Altruism, which prioritizes others' welfare. Its focus on outcomes makes Consequentialism particularly relevant for examining state capture, as it allows a structured evaluation of the social, economic, and political consequences of corruption. At the same time, Consequentialism involves ongoing debates about how to balance competing interests and weigh short-term against long-term outcomes. Recognizing these tensions situates this study within broader ethical discourse and demonstrates why Consequentialism provides a valuable lens for analysing the implications of state capture in South Africa.

4.2. Defining Consequentialism

According to Slote (2020), Consequentialism is an ethical philosophy that determines the morality of an action based on its outcome. For instance, according to Brecht (2023), most people would agree that lying is wrong. Consequentialism, on the other hand, maintains that lying is ethically acceptable if it saves someone's life and brings about greater good (Brecht, 2023). Furthermore, Slote (2020) shows that Consequentialism is founded on two principles. First, that the only factor that determines the morality of an act is its consequences. Second, an action is more moral or better if it produces more favourable outcomes. It provides guidance when one faces a moral conundrum (Slote, 2020). Building on Slote (2020) argument, Anderson (2022) further argues that the best course of action is the one that maximizes positive outcomes.

Additionally, it provides broad guidelines for living. From this lens, people ought to spend their lives to maximize positive outcomes (Anderson, 2022). According to Anderson (2022), consequentialist theories differ in what they consider to be maximizable.

According to Wolbert (2022), Consequentialism is a type of normative, teleological ethical theory in moral philosophy that maintains that the ultimate ground for determining whether a person's actions were right or wrong is the consequences of those actions. Similarly, Schmidt (2024) explains that Consequentialism is the simple belief that normative characteristics depend solely on outcomes. This widely held and historically significant notion reflects the fundamental sense that what is best or just is whatever makes the world better in the future, because we cannot alter the past, and fretting about it is pointless (Schmidt, 2024). Horta et al. (2020) and Slote (2020) argue that consequentialists hold that the overall quality of outcomes is the most important moral consideration. For instance, if acts are the focus of moral assessment, then the outcomes of actions will determine their morality (Malle, 2021; Emelin, 2020). When analysing social institutions or rules, the evaluation will be based on their outcomes. Regardless of what is being evaluated, the value of the outcome will serve as the basis for reasoning (Cara and Smith, 2020; Miller, 2021).

4.3. Theoretical Background

In moral philosophy, Consequentialism is a type of normative, teleological ethical theory that holds that the outcome of an individual's acts serves as the ultimate standard for judging whether those actions were right or wrong (Horta et al., 2022; Lungisa and Nzewi, 2023). According to Slote (2020), in consequentialist ethics, a morally correct action results in a favourable outcome. Together with eudaimonism, Consequentialism is a subset of teleological ethics, which holds that an action's moral worth is determined by its tendency to produce outcomes that have inherent worth (Darr, 2023). Budolfson (2019) reveals that Consequentialism holds that a course of action is only permissible if it will provide a greater balance of good over evil than any alternative. Different consequentialist theories have different definitions of moral goods. Among the most prominent characteristics are generic notions of pleasure, the absence of pain, the fulfilment of individual choices, and the general good. (Berger,2023).

Anscombe (1958) coined the term Consequentialism in her essay "Modern Moral Philosophy". However, according to Philips (2022) and Wood (2019), the term's meaning has evolved since

Anscombe (1958) first used it. In the context in which Anscombe (1958) coined it, the scholar clearly categorized William David Ross as a consequentialist and John Stuart Mill as a non-consequentialist. However, in the modern sense of the world, they would be categorized in the opposite order. The reason for this, according to Wood (2019) and Philips (2022), is not a shift in opinions about William David Ross and John Stuart Mill, but rather a change in the definition of the word.

4.4. Types of Consequentialist theories

Over the years, various forms of consequentialist theories have been established. This section will look at seven types of consequentialist theories. Namely, utilitarianism, egoism, Altruism, negative Consequentialism, rule Consequentialism, and motive Consequentialism. These will be discussed below:

4.4.1. Utilitarianism

According to Wen (2023), in utilitarianism, Jeremy Bentham holds that while both fears and interests drive human behaviour, humans behave in a manner that reflects their perception of the possible consequences of their choices (Wen, 2023). This idea states that increasing pleasure and reducing pain are the keys to happiness. LaGuardia-LoBianco and Bloomfield (2023) contend that phenomenal awareness and qualia are necessary for the experience of pleasure or pain to have ethical significance. The classic example of the consequentialist ethical theory is hedonistic utilitarianism. This type of utilitarianism maintains that the happiness of all people, not just a select few, should be prioritized (Sola, 2023). In the explanation of hedonistic utilitarianism, John Stuart Mill put up a hierarchy of pleasures, according to which pursuing some types of pleasure is more important than pursuing others (Bereste, 2021). Preference utilitarianism, on the other hand, is the focus of inevitable modern utilitarians, such as Peter Singer, who seeks to maximize preference satisfaction (Singer, 2019).

4.4.2. Hedonism

Hedonism is the belief that pleasure, or the absence of pain, is the most important consideration when determining the morality of a potential course of action (de Lazari-Radok, 2024). According to de Lazari-Radok (2024), pleasure may also refer to any experience that has inherent value, such as reading a good book. Hedonism comes in various forms and is a subset of Consequentialism. For instance, normative hedonism holds that individuals should be

motivated primarily by pleasure. Motivational hedonism, on the other hand, holds that people only act in specific ways because of pleasure and suffering (Carruthers, 2024).

4.4.3 Ethical Egoism

The consequentialist theory of ethical egoism holds that the implications for the individual agent are more important than any other outcome (Saida, 2023). Egoism would therefore advocate for acts that might be neutral, harmful, or advantageous to other people's well-being (Mangone, 2020; Crisp, 2019). Sidgwick (2022) contends that a certain amount of egoism is beneficial because people know how to satisfy themselves best. If everyone were a strict altruist, then overall well-being would unavoidably decline.

4.4.4. Ethical Altruism

As a consequentialist theory, ethical Altruism suggests that people should act in ways that benefit everyone, not just themselves (Berkey, 2021). This is comparable to selflessness. According to Steiner (2015) and Mangone (2020, 2022, 2023), Auguste Comte first used the term altruism, and this moral philosophy can be summarized in the words "Live for others,".

4.4.5. Negative Consequentialism

Most consequentialist theories concentrate on encouraging positive outcomes. On the other hand, negative Consequentialism is a consequentialist theory entirely concerned with minimizing negative outcomes (Saaida, 2023). The agent's accountability is one of the main distinctions between these two theories. While negative Consequentialism calls for us to avoid unfavourable conditions, positive Consequentialism urges us to create favourable ones. To avoid harm and lessen current harm, stronger forms of negative Consequentialism will need active involvement. Zhou (2022) maintains that it is sufficient to refrain from actions that may harm others.

According to Cummings and Cummings (2020), the slippery slope argument, which advises people to refrain from a specific action because it could eventually have an unfavourable effect, is an illustration of this. Negative consequentialist ideas frequently claim that lessening suffering is more significant than enhancing pleasure (Budolfson, 2019). According to Krstic (2020), Oyekan (2021), and Reamer (2022), Karl Popper maintained that pleasure cannot surpass pain from a moral perspective. This is regarded as a typical expression of negative Consequentialism (Reamer, 2022).

4.4.6. Rule Consequentialism

Rule Consequentialism is frequently criticized, but at times it is viewed as an attempt to reconcile Consequentialism, Deontology, and Rule-based ethics. Rule utilitarianism and rule egoism are two manifestations of rule Consequentialism (Nilekani, 2022). There is disagreement among philosophers over whether moral behaviour is solely determined by the rules (Wallace, 2019; Anscombe, 2020). For instance, Robert Nozick maintained that to guarantee acceptable behaviours, a certain set of minimum rules, which Nozick refers to as side-constraints, is required.

Although rule-Consequentialism is based on the consequentialist notion that maximizing the good should be a top priority, it directs us to obey rules even when we know that acting otherwise may yield better results, which is why it is sometimes criticised for being inconsistent (Faggion, 2024; Saaida, 2023). The most vigorous defence of rule-Consequentialism is that it helps us navigate our moral ambiguities and conflicts while also outperforming its competitors at matching and connecting our moral convictions (Faggion, 2024; Suikkanen, 2022).

4.4.7. Motive Consequentialism

Motive Consequentialism is another consequentialist approach that examines whether the state of affairs that emerges from the motivation to take a particular course of action is superior to, or at least as good as, each alternative situation that might have emerged from other courses of action (Shihadeh, 2021). According to this theory, an action's motivation is relevant and connected to its outcomes. Therefore, if a decision is made with proper motivation, the action is justified (Shihadeh, 2021). Shihadeh (2021) posits that if the purpose was to do good, then one cannot be held accountable for making poor decisions.

4.5. Arguments for Consequentialism

Various scholars have advanced arguments in support of the ethical theory of Consequentialism. According to Sinnott-Armstrong (2003), Consequentialism is a valuable ethical approach because it provides clear and practical guidance, at least in situations where outcomes are easy to predict. Moreover, Jollimore (2002) and Jones (2011) contend that the theory is unbiased. Philosophers like Peter Singer and other preference utilitarians put aside their own preconceptions and self-interest to maximize benefit for the greatest number of

people. The theory is further supported by the fact that Consequentialism may be applied methodically. Quantitative assessment can be used to reach an ethical conclusion if we assign repercussions numerical values (Sen, 2000; Card and Smith, 2020). According to Slott and Pettit (1984) and Ord (2005), one of Consequentialism's significant advantages is its practical applicability and relative simplicity of universal application. Another argument for the theory is that it eliminates mystery from the ethical domain and encourages generosity as a lifestyle, thus enhancing the lives of others (Kupperman, 2007). Additionally, the theory provides a straightforward, universally applicable single framework that serves as a guiding principle for all ethical dilemmas (Ord, 2005; Louise, 2006). Another argument for the theory is that morality is created for people, alleviating suffering and enhancing life (Gomberg, 1989; Guiho, 2023; Pollo and Vitale, 2020).

According to Suikkanen (2024), Consequentialism has a flexible framework. Act Consequentialism is adaptable and can consider any situation, no matter how extraordinary. Additionally, since the rules have already been derived, rule Consequentialism avoids the practical issues of act Consequentialism. People often do not need to conduct challenging studies before acting. Additionally, people are far more inclined to make quick, efficient judgments, often by shortcutting their moral decision-making. According to Slote (2020), Miller (2021), and Woodard (2022), since every choice has quantifiable effects, Consequentialism may be applied everywhere. Not every decision has a rule or responsibility attached to it. Ultimately, there is a consensus among scholars that Consequentialism's greatest advantages are its practical applicability and relative simplicity of universal application.

4.6. Critics of Consequentialism

Scholarly perspectives on this theory are divided. Some scholars support the theory, while others critically challenge it. According to Suikkanen (2021), although Consequentialism may seem appealing in theory, it is a highly challenging philosophy to apply to moral judgments in real life, as each moral choice is a unique situation that needs to be thoroughly considered (Suikkanen, 2021). Before making an ethically sound decision, people must consider the consequences of their actions (Trevino and Nelson, 2021; Kuenzi et al., 2020; Savulescu et al., 2020). However, conducting such research is frequently impractical and expensive, and the time required results in a slow decision-making process, which can have adverse effects of its own. In situations where a grave moral decision needs to be made, or in unusual circumstances,

people may consider the consequences of specific moral choices in this manner (Trevino and Nelson, 2021; Kuenzi et al., 2020; Savulescu et al., 2020).

Furthermore, Bazargan (2024) and Begaric (2024) assert that Consequentialism is detrimental to the community. Bazargan (2024) and Begaric (2024) contend that there would be adverse effects for society if everyone accepted act Consequentialism (Slote, 2020; Budolfson, 2019). This is because there would be a lot of ambiguity about how others would behave, as it would be hard to foresee their moral choices (Slote, 2020; Budolfson, 2019). Since many people would worry that bias or prejudice towards family or other groups would have a stronger effect on moral judgments than if individuals applied broad moral principles based on Consequentialism, some philosophers also believe that it would cause a breakdown of mutual trust in society (Slote, 2020; Budolfson, 2019).

Another critique of Consequentialism advanced by Slote (2020) and Schmidt (2014) is that the theory is less flexible, as rule Consequentialism employs generic principles that do not necessarily yield the optimal outcome in particular situations. On the other hand, proponents contend that it outperforms act Consequentialism in terms of long-term positive outcomes (Card and Smith, 2020). Applying fundamental principles, along with several variants that address a variety of circumstances, is one method to address this issue, and it is one that individuals frequently use in their daily lives. The main guidelines are the same method used to produce these variants (Card and Smith, 2020).

The consequentialist theory is also criticized by Ombando and K'Obonyo (2019), who argue that it is difficult to predict the future. Ombando and K'Obonvo (2019) argue that it is challenging to predict how an action will turn out. In addition, Slote (2020) and Bennett (2023) also criticize the difficulty of evaluating and contrasting the goodness of consequences. Slote (2020) and Bennett (2023) argue that there is disagreement on what should be considered when determining positive outcomes. Furthermore, the theory is criticized by Slote (2020) and Card and Smith (2020), who claim that it is simple to be biased in favour of specific groups. Various outcomes might result from selecting various groups of people. The same action that benefits group X could also have negative effects on group Y or society at large. Therefore, the moral decisions people make are likely to vary depending on which group they use.

Saaida (2023) and Slote (2020) argue against consequentialist theories, claiming that they overlook issues we believe are morally significant. Only the effects of an action are of relevance

to results-based ethics. It does not matter what the person conducting the act intends to do. Therefore, an action with positive outcomes carried out by someone with bad intentions is just as good as one carried out by someone with excellent intentions. It does not matter what the individual performing the act has done in the past.

Additionally, it does not matter who did it. The fairness of the consequences is not directly related. Scholars such as Slote (2020) and Saaida (2023) believe that these factors are important while making ethical decisions. Nonetheless, many of the aforementioned factors do affect the outcomes of an action, especially when creating ethical guidelines. As a result, they are incorporated into consequentialist ethical thinking, albeit indirectly rather than directly.

According to Bagaric (2024) and Hedden (2020), the consequentialist theory does not consider the fairness of the outcome. It is hard to foresee every possible conclusion. According to Consequentialism, the best path of action is the one that maximizes overall pleasure. This supports actions that make most people happy while making a small number extremely miserable, or that make a small number of people extremely happy while leaving the majority at best neutral, since it overlooks how that pleasure is distributed. Additionally, the theory diminishes the worth of people and their personal pursuits, unless they align with the group's objectives (Sola, 2023; Baker, 2021). The theory is also criticized by Birchall (2019), Finley (2021), and Chan (2019) for potentially violating human rights. One argument for Consequentialism is that everyone acts in ways that lead to a positive outcome (Andersen, 2022). According to Andersen (2022), this may include avoiding some damage. However, a person always acts in a way that benefits them. Their motivation for doing so is the hope that it would result in or encourage that favourable outcome (Andersen, 2022). Andersen (2022) argues that nowadays, different types of rewards lead to diverse types of motivations.

4.7. Relevance of Consequentialism to this Study

Consequentialism is particularly suited to this study because it provides a framework for evaluating the real-world outcomes of state capture. By focusing on the social, economic, and political consequences of corruption, this framework enables a structured assessment of the harm, inefficiency, and injustice it causes. Unlike deontology, which prioritizes duties, or virtue ethics, which emphasizes character, Consequentialism directly addresses the impact of decisions and actions, which is central to understanding the implications of state capture in South Africa. This focus on outcomes enables the study to analyse not only the immediate

effects of corruption but also its broader societal repercussions, demonstrating why Consequentialism offers a practical and theoretically grounded lens for this research.

4.8. Conclusion

To conclude, the study's theoretical framework was presented in this chapter. The ethical theory of Consequentialism guided this. The chapter began by defining Consequentialism according to different scholars. These scholars collectively emphasize and define Consequentialism as a theory that bases an action's morality on its consequences and results in the most positive outcome. The chapter noted that there are various types of consequentialist theories and also examined seven of them. To start, utilitarianism holds that happiness is achieved by maximizing pleasure for the greatest number and minimizing pain. Additionally, hedonism prioritizes pleasure, holding that all and only pleasure is intrinsically valuable, and all pain is intrinsically not valuable. Moreover, according to ethical egoism, the ethically correct course of action is the one that results in the most advantageous ratio of good to evil for the individual.

Ethical Altruism posits that we must act in the best interests of others rather than in one's self-interest. Moreover, negative Consequentialism places more emphasis on reducing harm or unfavourable results than on increasing positive ones. Furthermore, rule Consequentialism argues that a behaviour is only ethically correct if it does not contravene the set of rules whose widespread adoption in the community will result in the best outcomes, that is, at least as good as any competing set of rules or no laws. Finally, motive Consequentialism maintains that actions are correct to the extent that the motives on which they are performed tend to promote positive consequences.

Scholars have evaluated the ethical theory of Consequentialism from multiple perspectives, presenting arguments both supporting and critiquing it. Scholars supporting the theory state that Consequentialism provides clear and practical guidelines for application. Additionally, other scholars argued that consequentialist theory is unbiased, easy to apply universally, and helpful in real-world situations. Moreover, scholars support the theory because it promotes Altruism as a way of life, thereby improving others' lives. Scholars who support consequentialist theories also contend that morality is created to reduce suffering and enrich lives, and that it provides a straightforward action-guiding principle for all ethical dilemmas.

On the other hand, some scholars critique consequentialist theory, arguing that it is difficult to apply in practice, as every situation is unique and should be considered thoroughly. Moreover, the theory has been criticized for being biased towards specific groups and sometimes violating human rights. Finally, the theory has been criticised for overlooking issues we believe are morally significant, and it is challenging to predict how that action will turn out in the future.

The following chapter is chapter five. Chapter five is the findings and analysis chapter. Using the above-discussed ethical theory of Consequentialism, the next chapter will analyse the ethical dilemmas surrounding state capture in South Africa under the leadership of the African National Congress. The study will analyse the implications of state capture in South Africa using the consequentialist theory.

CHAPTER FIVE

An Analysis of the Ethical Implications of State Capture in South Africa Using the Ethical Theory of Consequentialism

5. Introduction

The current chapter presents the findings and analysis. According to Weaver et al. (2020), the purpose of the findings and analysis section in a research paper is to present the study's findings in a clear, concise, and systematic manner without interpretation. The findings in this chapter constitute the study's ethical dilemma. Considering this, the study will analyse the implications of state capture in South Africa using the consequentialist theory. This section is critical as it provides the non-empirical evidence needed to support the study's conclusions. According to Weaver et al. (2020), it is crucial to present the study's findings before discussing and analysing its interpretations. This helps the reader understand precisely what they discovered and preserves the results independent of the subjective analysis. Silyew (2019) notes that the research questions serve as a guide to the presentation of the study's findings, highlighting pertinent themes and sub-themes.

Thus far, the study has shown that state capture has a broad and long-lasting impact on economies, politics, and societies. Since state capture affects institutions and laws, it changes the system's rules for the rest of society. In political-economic terms, this cooperation between constrained political and economic factions results in an unequal allocation of economic power. It puts the few people with economic power in a powerful position to shape the future political elites, consolidating their dominance in a self-perpetuating dynamic. However, there has been little theoretical or empirical research to map out the implications of state capture on economies, politics, and societies. This paper elaborates on the mechanisms through which state capture impacts societies, particularly its effect on social, political, and economic inequality.

5.1. Evaluating the Ethical Implications Through a Consequentialist Lens

According to Cambridge (2020), an implication is what might happen because of something or what could be inferred from something, even if it is not explicitly stated. In this instance, it is

what has happened or might happen, or what could be concluded, because of state capture in South Africa. A variety of academic scholars such as Dassah (2018); Pillay et al., (2023) Bester and Dobovsek (2021); David-Barrat (2021) Madonsela (2018) have covered both the financial and legal implications in their work whilst neglecting the ethical implications that arise from state capture in South Africa, which concerns fairness, equality, responsibility and how the public is treated. The ethical implications, as with the financial and legal implications, require serious reflection, which will be discussed below. These ethical implications will be grouped into three key areas. Namely, Social, Economic, and Political. The ethical theory of Consequentialism will be used to analyse these ethical implications, which, at its core, holds that an action's morality is determined by its consequences.

5.2. Social Ethical Implications

The social and ethical implications of state capture in South Africa characterize the extreme and damaging effects of poor governance. The events of state capture have not only damaged institutions, but they have also severely affected the lives of South African citizens, more especially people in need and those who are marginalized (Pillay et al., 2023; Jonas, 2019). According to Saaida (2023), Consequentialism, at its core, judges the morality of an action based on its consequences, specifically whether it increases or reduces the welfare of the individuals affected. Drawing on consequentialist theory, these implications are ethically important because they have clearly led to greater harm than good. The study found four social ethical implications of state capture in South Africa. Study findings reveal that state capture resulted in increased poverty, poor access to health care, a rise in crime and social instability, and loss of public trust. These social implications were drawn from the scholarly literature presented in chapter two of the study, on the effects of state capture. These will be analysed below:

5.2.1. Increased Poverty

The study finds that one of the social-ethical implications of state capture in South Africa is the rise in poverty levels. Study findings in the literature review of this study revealed that funds intended to be endowed in basic services such as education, health, clean water, and electricity, and social welfare were instead looted through corrupt contracts and fraudulent deals (Jonas, 2019). The acts of state capture diverted funds and resources intended to assist the public, who were mostly in need of them, to benefit a small minority of corrupt government elites (Chipkin

et al., 2018; David-Barratt, 2021, 2023). Ethically, this characterizes an unpleasant injustice. According to David-Barrett (2021) and Renwick (2018), this is because those in power are meant to reduce the public's suffering and uplift them, not to enrich themselves at the expense of the helpless. The unethical acts of state capture consequently increased the gap between the rich and the poor in South Africa, which is a nation already suffering from the relics of apartheid (Meyer and Luiz, 2018; David-Barratt, 2021; 2023).

In support of the study's findings, Mudua (2022) and Olabiyi (2022) found that state capture corruption also exacerbated hunger and food instability, which are both characteristics of poverty. State capture corruption worsened food poverty by undermining the state's ability to deliver basic services to its people. Consequently, this led to land grabs in specific neighbourhoods and the theft of food aid. The Sustainable Development Goals expressly include corruption, poverty, and food insecurity as goals and targets (Mudua, 2022; Olabiyi, 2022). Specifically, they seek to eliminate all types of poverty, hunger, and food insecurity, promote sustainable agriculture, and significantly reduce corruption and bribery. State capture corruption inhibits long-term growth by diverting resources away from the public interest through embezzlement, misappropriation, and other means. Thus, it is a cross-cutting issue in advancing sustainable development and the Sustainable Development Goals, which are closely related to the objectives of eradicating world hunger and South African poverty (Mudua, 2022; Olabiyi, 2022).

This finding aligns with consequentialist ethical theory, which holds that any action that results in significant suffering, particularly to those in need, is immoral (McElwee, 2020; Sola, 2023). According to Marutlulle (2021), diverting public funds from basic services aggravated the situation in squatter camps. Additionally, it increased child malnutrition and lowered educational standards. These implications have harmed most people in South Africa and have also impaired vulnerable communities, infringing on the principle of promoting the greatest good for the greatest number. Additionally, the acts of state capture in South Africa are not just short-term, but they are enduring. Poverty has a lasting impact on health, education, and future employment, especially across generations (Ridley et al., 2020; Rahman, 2019; Macdonald et al., 2020). The constant negative impact of state capture underscores its ethical immorality from a consequentialist perspective.

5.2.2. Poor Access to Health Care

Another social ethical implication the study found is that state capture led to poor access to healthcare. The health sector in South Africa is currently affected by resource constraints and high rates of illness and disease. As a result of state capture, the health sector endured further decline due to the misappropriation of funds, the deterioration of state institutions, and the dishonesty and manipulation of the procurement process (Aikins, 2023; David-Barrett, 2021; 2023). According to Hull (2020), this consequently led to government hospitals and healthcare centres experiencing a scarcity of essential resources, medicine running out, disheartened and unenthusiastic employees, and a slowdown in infrastructure development. These circumstances worsened the standard and accessibility of healthcare services to a significant number of South African citizens, particularly those residing in rural and poor communities (Hull, 2020).

Additionally, the study found that, under South Africa's democratic constitution, the right to health care is a necessity. However, due to the acts of state capture and corruption, this resulted in poor access to healthcare. According to Jarbandhan et al. (2023) and Van den Heever et al. (2021), corrupt leaders awarded tenders for medical supplies and hospital infrastructure to businesses that were politically connected, incompetent, inexperienced, or that demanded unreasonable pricing. Consequently, this led to treatment delays, inadequate equipment, and preventable deaths (Jarbandhan, 2023; van den Heever et al., 2021).

A prominent example of this is the Life Esidimini inquest. In October 2015, former Gauteng Health Minister Qedani Mahlangu declared that the Gauteng Department of Health and Life Esidimemi were terminating their contract. Life Esidimemi is a long-term psychiatric care facility that offered highly specialized chronic care to about 2000 mental health care patients. (Thani and Louw,2021; Oukouomi, 2024; Ferreira, 2025; Kabagambe, 2019). The Gauteng Department of Health planned to move these mental health care users to unlicensed Non-Governmental Organizations and other psychiatric hospitals to deinstitutionalise mental healthcare and to save costs. Unfortunately, around 140 mentally unwell patients passed away during this process (Thani and Louw,2021; Oukouomi, 2024; Ferreira, 2025; Kabagambe, 2019). From an ethical point of view, such acts signify an unfathomable neglect of human worth, the sacredness of life, and the principle of equality for the vulnerable.

According to Stevenson (2024) and Bazargan (2024), Consequentialism favours actions that promote human welfare, including health. Unfortunately, the acts of the state capture

phenomenon did not promote this. The effects of state capture, as presented in chapter two of the study, revealed that these actions diminished human welfare whilst prioritizing political patronage and rent-seeking (Masuku, 2023; David-Barrett, 2021, 2023). The consequentialist theory finds these acts unethical because of the unsuccessful attempt to ensure satisfactory access to healthcare, especially given that this occurred due to the intentional manipulation and influence of state decision-making for their own benefit. According to Sanders (2023), this then resulted in an increase in death rates, increased illnesses, and a diminished living standard, particularly in children, elders, pregnant women, and those living with chronic illness.

Additionally, according to Card and Smith (2020), Consequentialism considers the extent and duration of the harm. The negative implications of state capture on access to healthcare are systematic, ongoing, and long-term (Tzenios, 2019; David-Barrett, 2021;2023). Hence, from a consequentialist perspective, the decline and worsening of healthcare services due to state capture are unethical because they erode the welfare of individuals who need this protection most.

5.2.3. Higher Crime Rates

As already revealed in the study's literature review, one of the factors ailing public service delivery in South Africa is state capture. The study found that a decline in the delivery of public services results in job losses and an increased wealth gap in the country. Additionally, according to Thusi et al. (2023), Masuku and Mlambo (2022), and Xolani et al. (2022), this further contributes to increased crime rates. Distressed individuals, particularly youth without opportunities, are likely to resort to crime for survival (Thusi et al., 2023; Masuku and Mlambo, 2022; Xolani et al., 2022). From a consequentialist ethical perspective, crime is immoral, especially given the weak institutions and poor governance found in the country (Bagaric, 2025; Megias et al., 2023; Meyers, 2022). Nyathi (2023) argues that the government is meant to protect its citizens through moral decision-making, but it is responsible for contributing to lawlessness and social instability in the country.

Take for instance the 2021 social unrest highlighted in the literature review chapter of this study, where violent rioting and looting broke out in KwaZulu-Natal and Johannesburg, as the former president Jacob Zuma was sentenced to jail as he refused to follow court orders and answer in the judicial commission of inquiry regarding his alleged involvement in state capture corruption (Makonye, 2022; Lancoste, 2022; Ndlovu, 2023). This resulted in violent rioting,

looting, and killing, which are all features of crime (Makonye, 2022; Lancoste, 2022; Ndlovu, 2023). The consequentialist theory holds that actions that result in extensive harm and distress are unethical (Bagaric, 2025). The incompetence of our government to provide protection and stability during state capture mirrors its failure to meet the public's necessities, further escalating public distress.

In Consequentialism, one of the state's clear moral responsibilities is to encourage and advance protection and reduce suffering. According to Bagaric (2025), a community where there are excessive crimes and its people feel unsafe, and there is bias or injustice, creates long-term and continuous negative outcomes. This leads to mental suffering, misery, and an economic decline due to crime and devastation (Bagaric, 2025). From a consequentialist lens, if crime becomes habitual and part of our day-to-day lives, as has been evident in some South African societies, this indicates the ineffectiveness of maximizing public well-being and happiness. More particularly, it led to weak state institutions and bad governance (Ezeji and Uwizeyimana, 2025). The consequentialist theory holds that pain and suffering should be reduced. Many reasons for crime, like job losses, poor governance, and the absence of youth initiatives, are unavoidable but were intensified by the intentional manipulation of state-making decisions for personal gain rather than the public's needs. Therefore, making the acts of state capture unethical as they deliberately contributed to additional pain and suffering.

5.2.4. Loss of Public Trust

Another social implication of state capture corruption, the study finds, is the erosion of public trust. Trust is important for any operating democracy. Scholarly literature showed that the unethical actions of state capture have mainly contributed to public mistrust, which is the confidence that the public places in its government and its representatives (Thusi et al., 2023; Pillay et al., 2023). Good governance, predicated on moral standards and accountability, is the cornerstone of political trust (Modise and Modise, 2023; Lalmuansanga and Lalremruate, 2024). This suggests that the public expects moral and ethical leadership at all societal levels (Modise and Modise, 2023; Lalmuansanga and Lalremruate, 2024). This highlights the responsibility and expectations placed on politicians and public officials to uphold the values of accountability, openness, and integrity (Modise and Modise, 2023; Lalmuansanga and Lalremruate, 2024). However, due to acts of state capture, the public began to lose trust in the government's ability to serve its interests. (Modise and Modise, 2023; Lalmuansanga and Lalremruate, 2024).

According to Ndofirepi (2023) and Cwaile (2023), when citizens see the rule of law undermined and that acts of state capture go unpunished, they tend to feel disheartened and disengaged from the democratic process. This is ethically concerning because trust is the basis of good governance. According to Motadi (2025), the decline in public trust in South Africa is a consequence of a firmly held, tangible view that the nation's entire government is corrupt, unaccountable, and controlled by several hotly contested economic factors. When analysing this social implication from a consequentialist ethical perspective, the collapse of public trust is detrimental because it undermines the success and efficacy of upcoming policies and makes it difficult for the public to unite to resolve collective issues (Bhutto, 2024).

Consequentialism looks at the implications of the loss of public trust in real life. These include a decline in citizen participation and a detachment from governmental talk, and a feeble social contract (Nyathi, 2023; Ndinga-Kanga et al., 2020). When the public does not see the importance of voting or of trusting the institution to ensure equality, no one is above the law; they will not see the need to participate in democracy and are likely to lose trust in the state and become hostile towards it (Nyathi, 2023; Ndinga-Kanga et al., 2020). Hosking (2019) contends that the trust citizens have in their government is difficult to regain once eroded. Even if state capture events were to end, the impact would remain long-term, and mistrust would continue.

5.3. Economic Ethical Implications

The economic and ethical implications of state capture are significant, as they go beyond corruption and the ineptitude that impact the day-to-day lives of South African citizens, their opportunities, and their future. According to Saaida (20203), Consequentialism assesses the outcomes of state capture on the well-being of South Africans, specifically economic well-being (Saaida, 2023). The study found four economic ethical implications of state capture in South Africa. Study findings reveal that state capture resulted in job losses, wasted public money, unemployment, a decline in domestic and foreign investment, and an increased burden on taxpayers. These ethical implications were drawn from the literature presented in chapter two of the effects of state capture. These will be presented and analysed below:

5.3.1. Job Losses and Unemployment

Drawing on the literature review of this study, due to weak institutions and the downfall of businesses caused by state capture corruption and embezzlement, the study found that one of the economic ethical implications of state capture in South Africa is job losses and unemployment. According to Jonas (2019), Alence and Pitcher (2019), and David-Barrett (2021), even before state capture became prominent in South Africa, the country was already facing high levels of unemployment.

Many individuals lost their jobs as state-owned enterprises went insolvent or underwent restructuring. For instance, Eskom faced a massive energy calamity, Transnet experienced a decline, and the public service delivery diminished. This all resulted in some businesses closing, mainly affecting small- to medium-sized enterprises, which are major employers (Notununu, 2024; Wall, 2024; Hartley et al., 2023). As a result, unemployment rose, especially among youth and breadwinners in vulnerable communities (Notununu, 2024; Wall, 2024; Hartley et al., 2023). Being unemployed usually entails having no access to basic needs like housing, healthcare, education, and food (Notununu, 2024; Wall, 2024; Hartley et al., 2023). From an ethical perspective, the government has the responsibility to protect its citizens and create jobs, not do away with them for its own personal benefits.

In this instance, Consequentialism assesses whether an action is ethically grounded on whether it improves or diminishes the welfare of the public. According to David-Barrett (2021) and Bowman (2020), unemployment resulting from state capture is not only a reflection of economic statistics but also a clear indication of the intense social damage it has caused. Among other factors, unemployment results in financial hardships, mental health issues, poverty, inequality, crime, social instability, and a decline in economic growth (Mathiu et al., 2022; Sinyor et al., 2024). Considering this, the consequentialist theory holds that policies and resolutions that result in extensive unemployment are immoral because they cause prolonged distress and diminish public happiness and stability (Ikeke, 2020). According to Jonas (2019), Khambule (2021), and Madonsela (2019), the acts of state capture, instead of creating jobs, which would contribute to economic growth and would benefit the greater public, are now contributing to the unemployment rate, whilst creating short-term enrichment for a few political elites and others involved. Study findings showed that the people most affected by job losses from state capture were usually those least able to recover, such as youth, unskilled workers, and residents of rural areas (Janoski, 2024; Sumberg et al., 2021). These effects intensified the

existing inequality in the country and significantly diminished public trust in its government (Hosking, 2019; Blanchard and Rodrik, 2023). From the lens of Consequentialism, when a system is assessed by the outcomes it delivers for its people, the outcome that results in a significant number of individuals losing their jobs is considered. At the same time, elites accruing wealth is an immoral act, because good governance should work for the benefit and welfare of the public. However, the actions of state capture portrayed the opposite.

5.3.2. Wasted Public Money

Another economic ethical implication of state capture, established by the study, is that funds intended to benefit the public were mismanaged. Significant sums of money were looted and embezzled through corrupt tenders, bogus contracts, and unreasonable service prices (Mashamba, 2024; Malgas and Zondi, 2021). Most of these budgets were associated with state-owned companies, including contracts with Eskom, PRASA, Denal, South African Airways, and Transnet (Mashamba, 2024; Malgas and Zondi, 2021). These state-owned companies exhausted their resources through immoral procurement processes, as revealed in chapter two of the study. (Mashamba, 2024; Malgas and Zondi, 2021). These mismanaged funds were meant to benefit all the citizens of South Africa, more especially people in need, but that was not the case (Mashamba, 2024; Malgas and Zondi, 2021). This mismanagement of public money is not just a financial issue in the country but also demonstrates unethical practices that undermine the trust the public has in its government and the use of resources to the public's benefit (Mashamba, 2024; Malgas and Zondi, 2021). This is immoral because the damage to the majority of the public from no longer having these conveniences outweighs any benefit obtained by the small minority of corrupt officials. The lasting harm to infrastructure and services continues to affect the majority, particularly those in rural areas (Mashamba, 2024; Malgas and Zondi, 2021).

The consequentialist theory holds that the squandering of public funds is not just an indication of bad governance (Sithomola, 2024; Friedman, 2025). According to Sithomola (2024) and Friedman (2025), funds assigned to the state by those who pay tax were meant to generate economic opportunities and build infrastructure. When money is embezzled or misappropriated, the anticipated positive outcome does not occur, leading to backwardness, recession, and depression (Sithomola, 2024; Friedman, 2025). The acts of state capture redirected public funds to serve the minority while the greater public suffered the effects. From the consequentialist lens, this act is unethical.

5.3.3. Discouraging Investment and Economic Development

Another economic ethical implication the study established is that state capture impaired investor confidence. Enterprises, both globally and locally, were concerned that investments would be impaired by political interference, state capture, corruption, and legal unpredictability (Nwokolo et al., 2023; Canen and Wantcheken, 2022; Madzivanyika and Zhanje, 2024). Consequently, investments and economic development declined (Nwokolo et al., 2023; Canen and Wantcheken, 2022; Madzivanyika and Zhanje, 2024). From a consequentialist perspective, this is an issue because our government is unable to establish a just and well-grounded economic environment. State capture creates a wealth gap in which those with political connections thrive. This impairs the moral value of equality and transparency. Consequentialism holds that actions that cause lasting, extensive hurdles to national success are unethical. By discouraging investment, the events of state capture restricted prospects for shared development and harmed the public at large (Nwokolo et al., 2023; Canen and Wantcheken, 2022; Madzivanyika and Zhanje, 2024).

The act of discouraging investment is unethical because it prevents the country from creating wealth and distributing it fairly (Fourie, 2020). It resulted in gradual employment creation, delayed important infrastructure and creativity, and left people without income. (Fourie, 2020) For many South Africans, the lack of investment means future scarcity. Fourie (2020) holds that these acts were preventable, but that political elites deliberately manipulated state decision-making for personal gain. Instead of working for the public good and raising capital to resolve developmental issues, the state, however, acted for its own personal gain and contributed to political uncertainty.

5.3.4. Increased Burden on Taxpayers

The final economic and ethical implication the study established is that the acts and events of state capture eventually increased the burden on taxpayers. According to Lodge (2019) and Jonas (2019), due to the mismanagement of funds and the weakening of state institutions, the public had to bear the effects of state capture corruption (Lodge, 2019; Jonas, 2019; Bester and Dobovsek, 2021). For instance, state capture corruption led to load shedding, which severely impacted businesses and disrupted day-to-day life for South African citizens (Lodge, 2019; Joans, 2019; Bester and Dobovsek, 2021). From an ethical perspective, it would be immoral

for the public to pay for and bear the consequences of crimes they did not commit. From a consequentialist perspective, increasing the burden on taxpayers is immoral because it transfers harm to individuals who are minimally responsible for the dilemma. Increasing the financial weight on struggling families diminishes national welfare and intensifies inequality (Francis and Webster, 2019).

According to Megias et al. (2023), the act of shifting the burden from the corrupt minority to the innocent majority is unethical from a consequentialist perspective because the middle and lower classes are meant to bear the cost of maladministration while receiving poor services, poor infrastructure, and an incompetent government. This, according to Thusi et al. (2023) and Morisse (2023), results in dual injustice because the citizens of South Africa are now victims of state capture, corruption, unemployment, and poor service delivery. This then encapsulates the lawfulness of the state's tax authority. The citizens are not pleased to fulfill their tax obligations because they do not trust that funds are used ethically and efficiently (Thusi et al., 2023). In the long term, this erodes tax confidence, decreases revenue collection, and results in a weak government.

5.4. Political Ethical Implications

The political ethical implications of state capture in South Africa signify an important area of distress. As already presented and analysed above, the social and economic ethical implications of state capture were evident: increased poverty and inequality; poor access to healthcare; increased crime rates, resulting in job losses and unemployment; wasted public money; increased the burden on taxpayers; and discouraged investment. However, the political ethical implications examine the main principles of South African constitutional democracy, such as the principle that no one is above the law, transparency, moral leadership, and accountability. When these principles are debilitated, the democracy itself loses its value, and public trust deteriorates (Hosking, 2019). From a consequentialist perspective, ethical acts are judged by the consequences they produce, whether they foster public trust, equality, and justice, or create better living conditions for South Africa's citizens (Saaida, 2023). The study found four political ethical implications of state capture in South Africa. Study findings reveal that state capture weakened democratic institutions, led to a lack of accountability, undermined the rule of law, and led to a decline in ethical leadership. These political ethical implications were drawn

from the literature presented in chapter two of the effects of state capture. These will be presented and analysed below:

5.4.1. Weakening of Democratic Institutions

In a democracy, the leading actors are the citizens. Citizens are empowered when they are actively involved in democratic processes and when their rights are upheld (Nyathi, 2023; Bvuma and Joseph, 2019). Institutions such as the South African Revenue Service and the Hawks were systematically weakened and influenced. The literature review chapter of the study, which presented scholarly literature on the effects of state capture, revealed that appointments were made based on loyalty rather than meritocracy or proficiency (Soko, 2021; Levy et al., 2021). Amid the state capture phenomenon, many state institutions were not only weakened but also manipulated and influenced to benefit the personal interests of political and economic leaders in the country (Soko, 2021; Levy et al., 2021). Appointments were made based on party loyalty rather than meritocracy, and important decisions were shielded from public scrutiny (Soko, 2021; Levy et al., 2021).

From an ethical perspective, this illustrates the undermining of democracy in South Africa. Government officials are meant to protect institutions and not weaken them for their own political benefit (Matadi, 2025; Fagbadebo and Ile, 2022). According to Kisten and Maharaj (2022), the weakening of democratic institutions resulted in injustice and weakened the systems meant to protect the public from state capture corruption. Therefore, this crippled good governance and permitted harmful acts to go unpunished, expanding the risk of future abuse (Kisten and Maharaj, 2022). From a consequentialist perspective, an act that undermines the democratic balance of power is not morally acceptable because it causes long-term harm to the public. Consequentialism holds that the weakening of institutional uprightness is ethically concerning as it decreases the standard of government outcome. According to Levy et al. (2021), weak institutions create unclear and inconsistent policies, thereby creating space for maladministration to thrive. In addition, weak institutions fail to hinder harm. Thus, resulting in long-term effects. Citizens start losing faith in their government and have no confidence in democratic participation. Additionally, political detachment is on the rise, and there is an increase in political and social unrest and protests in the country (Ragolane and Malatji, 2024).

5.4.2. Lack of Accountability

According to Simmons (2020), an important characteristic of any moral political system is that individuals in power are held accountable for how they use their power. The acts of state capture in South Africa have deeply compromised this principle on all levels. Despite countless reports and investigations, such as the Judicial Commission of Inquiry and the Mokgoro Commission, several leaders implicated in the state capture phenomenon have, to date, not been arrested or punished (Bruce et al., 2021; Koelbl, 2024; Wiener, 2023; Chipkin, 2023). Parliamentary oversight was compromised, and whistleblowers were at times intimidated, disempowered, and some were murdered. The absence of responsibility and accountability shows that those in government can take measures with immunity and, in some instances, others were rewarded (Wiener, 2023; Uys and Rudulovic, 2025; Naidoo, 2024).

Ethically, this act violated the principle of fairness. If the rule of law is not fairly applicable to all, then the establishment of an equal society is at risk (Mbaku, 2019; Smith, 2019; Klug, 2019; Gloppen, 2019). Additionally, the ethical criterion is weakened as youth may come to believe that corruption, such as state capture, is ordinary and an acceptable, justifiable way to succeed (Besley and Peters, 2019). The consequentialist theory finds any actions that encourage exemption from punishment for the harmful consequences of state capture immoral. Consequently, this harmed justice, intensified indignation, and promoted additional immoral behaviour. A system that shields corrupt officials produces lasting harm that exceeds any short-term political gain.

5.4.3. Undermining of the Rule of Law

The rule of law is a fundamental concept in all democracies, especially in South Africa (Ackerman, 2019). According to Stein (2019), it ensures that everyone and all institutions adhere to the law and that justice is distributed equally and consistently. Due to the events of state capture, the rule of law principle was greatly impeded. The legal system was usually influenced and impeded in its efforts to safeguard the key figures involved in state capture corruption (Budhram, 2019; David-Barrett, 2021, 2023). Laws were disregarded or applied arbitrarily, corruption was concealed, and whistleblowers were coerced (Budhram, 2019; David-Barrett, 2021, 2023). According to Waldron (2023) and Postema (2022), the defying of the rule of law is a critical ethical contravention, as it gives rise to the notion that some individuals are above the law and that not everyone is equal before the law. It nurtures a lifestyle

in which untruthful, corrupt actions are permitted and unquestionably commended (Waldron, 2023; Postema, 2022). This results in long-term harm to the country's ethical and legitimate framework (Waldron, 2023; Postema, 2022)

According to Palombella (2020), from a consequentialist perspective, undermining the rule of law has adverse consequences. It allows state capture, corruption, and criminality to occur. Additionally, it discourages investment, and the public experiences vulnerability. A society that has no confidence in the law is unable to encourage justice, development, or order (David-Barrett, 2021; David-Barrett, 2023; Sing, 2019). When laws are disregarded or implemented selectively, individuals with resources and political connections will escape the consequences. However, individuals who are impoverished and marginalized will continuously experience stern imposition and punishment (Sing, 2019). This results in heightened injustice, dissatisfaction, and social inequality (Sing, 2019). From a consequentialist perspective, these outcomes are unethical because they cause more harm than good.

5.4.4. Erosion of Ethical Leadership

The final political ethical implication the study found is the erosion of ethical leadership. In South Africa, during this ongoing state capture corruption, there is a dilemma of moral leadership. Mbandlwa (2020) and Phahlane (2021) reported a significant decline in moral leadership across all branches of government. Government officials were unsuccessful in acting in their citizens' interests. Leaders who were meant to protect the interests of the South African institution, rather enabled, overlooked, and disregarded state capture corruption (Klug, 2019; Budhram, 2019). These leaders portrayed actions of avarice. In addition, these leaders stayed loyal to private networks and feared becoming powerless. Good leadership calls for ethical bravery, honesty, and courtesy to everyone (Ciulla, 2020; Aditama et al., 2025). However, Bowman and West (2021), Phahlane (2021), and Mbandlwa (2020) argued that the moral negligence of government officials eroded citizens' faith and confidence in the notion of ethical leadership, making it difficult for moral officials to come forward and motivate change thereafter. This harmed public virtue and dissuaded the future generation of moral leaders from arising. Consequently, the lasting impact is a leadership void and a weakened political culture (Phahlane, 2021; Bowman and West, 2021). Consequentialism holds that these negative implications render such acts highly immoral.

From a consequentialist perspective, a system that enables leaders to take measures without punishment lacks the motive to act in the public interest. According to Gloppen (2019) and Von Holdt (2019), in the long term, this would result in a political environment in which immoral conduct becomes the norm. In this setting, even political elites with good intentions are unable to foster change, as the rules, policies, and the way things are done are already working against them. Lack of accountability by those in power has a lasting impact, including ongoing resource exploitation, a deep-rooted issue of corruption, and the weakening of civil society (Mophethe, 2023; Ntoyepi, 2020). For the public, the fact that those in power go unpunished breeds dissatisfaction and anger, leading them to see no need to participate in the country's politics, since they already see that democracy is failing them (Mophethe, 2023; Ntoyepi, 2020). In Consequentialism, these outcomes are morally wrong as they result in agony, state inefficiencies, and create public mistrust.

5.5. Conclusion

This is the discussion and analysis chapter. The study findings revealed the extensive implications of state capture in South Africa. Drawing on the Judicial Commission of Inquiry report, articles, and scholarly literature presented in chapter two of the study, it is evident that state capture is not merely a form of corruption but an unlawful way in which public officials control the state for their own private benefit (Swanepoel, 2022). When looking at the social and ethical implications, the study's findings revealed that state capture has significantly increased poverty and inequality; contributed widely to the collapse of the health care system; led to increased social unrest and crime; and eroded public trust in the government.

The study's economic implications revealed that the state's decision-making process has led to South African citizens losing their jobs, increasing the unemployment rate, and hindering investor confidence. Additionally, it has led to misappropriation of public funds and increased the burden on taxpayers. Politically, state capture has weakened democratic institutions and further resulted in the lack of accountability and impunity by those who committed the acts of state capture. Additionally, state capture undermined the rule of law, creating a society in which fairness is absent, and some individuals are above the law. Finally, state capture events led to unethical leadership, as government officials pursued personal gain rather than serving the public good. Government officials did not uphold justice, resulting in a weakened political culture in the country.

When analysing the implications of state capture in South Africa from a consequentialist perspective, the acts of state capture are unethical. These actions stemming from state capture have harmed the public at large, benefiting a small group of government officials. The next chapter is the study's summary, recommendations, and conclusion. The chapter will give an overall summary of the study, recommendations for future research, and will conclude the study.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

6. Introduction

The current chapter is the summary, recommendations, and conclusions. This chapter presents the study's conclusions and recommendations. This chapter will begin by presenting the summary of the study chapter by chapter. Additionally, the chapter will present the general conclusion of the study, summarizing the entire research. Finally, several recommendations for possible actions to inhibit state capture in South Africa will be presented.

6.1. Summary of Dissertation

In summary of this dissertation project, titled "Exploring the ethical dilemmas that surround the ongoing state capture phenomenon in South Africa", it is evident that state capture has diminished the trust citizens have in their government and has menaced the ethical legitimacy of the South African Government. Exploring these ethical dilemmas that arise from the state capture phenomenon in South Africa was important not only for grasping the ethical crisis in the African National Congress but also for reviewing the comprehensive, wide-ranging moral challenges that come to light when these democratic institutions are weakened by this deep-rooted corruption, when government officials prioritize themselves over the well-being of the public. The implications of these dilemmas were severe. When government officials prioritize their own interests and those of their political parties over the interests of citizens, this undermines the rule of law and democratic institutions and leads to public mistrust. Government elites are meant to promote integrity and accountability, but, because of state capture, they were implicated in acts of dishonesty and exploitation.

6.1.1. Summary of Chapters

This section presents a summary of the study chapter by chapter:

Chapter one was the introductory chapter. The introduction presented the topic to the reader by providing an overview of the study's purpose, scope, and significance. The chapter began by introducing the topic to the reader and providing background information. The study

explored the ethical dilemmas surrounding the ongoing state capture in South Africa under the leadership of the African National Congress. South Africa is facing complex ethical dilemmas arising from state capture, which impact its political, economic, and social life. Since the end of apartheid, South Africa has aimed to create a democratic life rooted in fairness, transparency, accountability, and justice (Saka, 2024). However, the unchanging and ongoing issues of state capture persist and continue to challenge these values, resulting in ethical dilemmas.

Exploring these ethical dilemmas that arise from the state capture phenomenon in South Africa was important not only for grasping the ethical crisis in the African National Congress but also for reviewing the comprehensive, wide-ranging moral challenges that come to light when these democratic institutions are weakened by this deep-rooted corruption, when government officials prioritize themselves over the well-being of the public. This then resulted in severe negative ethical implications, which were presented and analysed in chapter four of the study. Based on this, the chapter then presented the problem statement, the study's motivation, the main and sub-research questions, and the main and sub-research objectives. In addition, the chapter presented a preview of the research methodology and theoretical framework, and, finally, the study's significance.

Chapter two was the Literature Review. This study adopted the Thematic Literature Review. The Literature Review chapter began by presenting different definitions of the term state capture, showing that it is a polysemous and contested concept. The chapter also examined the nature of state capture, presenting scholarly literature that challenges the term. The chapter showed that the term 'state capture' is contested because there is no universal definition.

Additionally, because there is a blurred line between corruption and state capture, it finally interrogated the appropriateness of the term "state capture". The chapter then presented the different views of scholars on the causes of state capture in South Africa. Scholarly literature presented highlighted bad governance and weak institutions, political patronage, rent seeking, and the public procurement process as the root causes of state capture in South Africa.

The chapter then looked at four crucial effects of state capture, specifically the absence of economic development, how state capture exacerbates inequality, political instability with reference to the 2021 July unrest, and the decline in public services. In addition, the literature review chapter also examined the ethical dilemmas arising from state capture in South Africa. This section examined three crucial ethical dilemmas: loss of public trust, unethical leadership,

and personal enrichment at the expense of the public's needs. Finally, the chapter identified a research gap to explore and identify the ethical dilemmas surrounding the state capture phenomenon in South Africa, guided by the ethical theory of Consequentialism.

Chapter three was the Methodology. The research methodology section of this study described the many methodological choices made, including the methods for gathering and analysing data, along with the rationale for these choices. The study adopted a qualitative research method to explore the ethical dilemma surrounding the state capture phenomenon in South Africa. Moreover, the study utilized the exploratory research design. This study was conducted based on desktop research, meaning it relied primarily on published materials such as books, journal articles, theses, and dissertations. These secondary sources were sourced from various online resources, including the UKZN library, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar. The study employed thematic analysis to thoroughly evaluate the data and identify recurring themes and patterns. Additionally, the study adopted a descriptive ethics approach and, finally, utilized the DECA (Describe, Evaluate, Act, Consult) method, which is commonly used to solve problems in decision-making processes.

Chapter four was the theoretical framework. This chapter was guided by the ethical theory of Consequentialism, which, at its core, holds that the morality of an action is to be judged solely by its consequences. The chapter began by defining Consequentialism according to different scholars. The chapter then presented the theoretical background. Moreover, the chapter looked at seven types of consequentialist theories. Namely, utilitarianism, egoism, altruism, negative Consequentialism, rule Consequentialism, and motive Consequentialism. Finally, the chapter presented arguments for and against the consequentialist theory.

Chapter five was the discussion and analysis. The chapter analysed the ethical implications of state capture in South Africa using the ethical theory of Consequentialism. In the analysis, the researcher examined patterns, trends, and relationships within the findings that were not immediately obvious. In this instance, an implication was what might have happened, what has happened, or what could be concluded because of state capture in South Africa. These ethical implications were grouped into three key areas. Namely, Social, Economic, and Political.

The social and ethical implications of state capture in South Africa resulted in extreme and damaging consequences. The study found four social ethical implications of state capture in South Africa. These include increased poverty, poor access to health care, a rise in crime and

social instability, and loss of public trust. These social implications were drawn from the scholarly literature presented in chapter two of the effects of state capture. Additionally, the economic and ethical implications of state capture are significant, as they look past corruption and ineptitude that impact the day-to-day lives of South African citizens, their opportunities, and their future. The study found four economic ethical implications of state capture in South Africa. It revealed that state capture resulted in wasted public money, job losses, and unemployment, discouraging domestic and foreign investment, and increasing the burden on taxpayers.

Finally, the political ethical implications examined the main principles of South African constitutional democracy, including the principle that no one is above the law, transparency, moral leadership, and accountability. When these principles were weakened, democracy itself lost its value, and public trust deteriorated. The study found four political ethical implications of state capture in South Africa. Study findings reveal that state capture weakened democratic institutions, led to a lack of accountability, undermined the rule of law, and contributed to a decline in ethical leadership.

Chapter six includes the summary, recommendations, and conclusions. The entire study is summarized in this chapter. Each chapter's contents and the primary issues it raises are briefly discussed. Additionally, the chapter presents the study's general conclusion, summarizing the entire research. This is followed by recommendations that the study provides significant information to the parties in question.

6.2. Conclusion

This study has explored and interrogated the ethical dilemmas surrounding the ongoing state capture phenomenon in South Africa under the leadership of the African National Congress. The study conducted a literature review and identified a gap that it intends to explore, examining the ethical dilemmas surrounding the state capture phenomenon in South Africa under the leadership of the African National Congress. This study applied the DECA analytical framework to explore and examine both the ethical dilemmas and the broader ethical implications of state capture through a consequentialist lens. By systematically identifying and evaluating the social, economic, and political consequences of state capture, the framework provided a structured method for analysing situations in which competing interests and moral tensions arise. The DECA approach enabled the study to move beyond description by critically

assessing how these dilemmas and their outcomes affect collective well-being, justice, and ethical governance. The conclusions presented in this chapter, therefore, emerge directly from this analytical process, demonstrating how consequentialist reasoning, operationalised through the DECA framework, clarifies the ethical significance of state capture in South Africa. In doing so, the study posed four main questions, all of which were analysed.

The first question the study posed was "What is the nature of state capture in South Africa?" The researcher aimed to answer this question by conceptualizing the term 'state capture' across different scholars. Drawing on this, the study then examined the nature of state capture by presenting scholarly literature in chapter two on the contested term. These findings make it clear that the term 'state capture' is indeed contested. This is because there is no universal definition of the term. Different scholars, institutions, and countries have defined and interpreted the term from different perspectives. For instance, some scholars had contextualized the term within the political context, some by examining legal systems, whilst others had examined the actors involved.

Additionally, the study found that state capture is a contested term because the line between corruption and state capture is blurred. Scholars argued that state capture resembled ordinary corruption, revealing that both corruption and state capture involved the misuse of public power, the benefitting of private actors, and the undermining of the public good. The study finds that the two terms are often used interchangeably and, at times, can be confusing because they share many characteristics.

Finally, the study found that the term state capture is contested because some scholars deemed it inappropriate to call it "state capture". The literature presented showed that when one says the state was captured, it suggests the whole system was captured. It is all the branches of government, or at most, most of them. Considering this, different scholars advanced arguments about whether the entire state was captured and, if so, whether it is appropriate to call this 'state capture'. Further supporting the study's finding of the term being contested.

The second question the study posed was "What are the conundrums surrounding state capture in South Africa?" The researcher aimed to answer this question by evaluating and exploring the ethical dilemmas arising from state capture in South Africa under the leadership of the African National Congress. The study presented a review of scholarly literature on three crucial ethical dilemmas arising from state capture in South Africa. These findings showed that, due

to state capture corruption, South African citizens became less confident in their government and democracy. This then raised the dilemma of the South African leaders acting for their own personal gain or upholding the values of the South African democracy. The cornerstone of public trust is an effective government grounded in moral values and accountability frameworks. This suggests that the public expects moral and ethical leadership from leaders at all levels of society, and that politicians must uphold the principles of integrity, responsibility, and openness.

Additionally, the study's findings indicated that South African leaders did not act with accountability, honesty, fairness, and transparency, all characteristics of ethical leadership. This then raised the ethical dilemma of leaders acting unethically whilst maintaining a high standard of professional ethics, whilst ethically serving their citizens and not taking anything away from them. To serve the public, business, and political leaders must be meticulous and committed to preserving the fundamental rights of all individuals and the democratic principles outlined in the constitution, but, due to state capture, this was not the case in South Africa. Instead of having ethical leaders, South Africa experienced poor governance. Bad governance has been a persistent problem across all levels of government in South Africa. The government is the primary player in governing and advancing citizens' rights. The poor performance of the public sector in South Africa at the national, provincial, and local levels has continuously been a cause for concern.

Finally, drawing from the study findings, it is evident that South African leaders acted for their own personal enrichment. Leaders are meant to prioritize their citizens' well-being over their own benefits. Scholarly literature shows that those who want to become leaders do so for power or personal gain. This then raised the ethical dilemma of how South African leaders should not act for their own personal gain, but rather serve and prioritize their citizens' needs before their own. Public officials have an obligation to prioritize the well-being of the entire community over their own interests. Since public office holders are in a position of trust, the concept of servant leadership, with its ethical concerns, is best suited in the public sector. Servant leaders should prioritize the needs, desires, and well-being of their followers before their own.

The third question was "What are the effects of state capture in South Africa?" The researcher aimed to answer this question by examining the extensive consequences of state capture across the country's political, economic, and social spheres. Drawing on the literature presented in chapter two of the study, it is evident that state capture has made it difficult for the South

African government to effectively serve its people, hampering efforts to increase economic growth and resulting in the absence of economic development in the country. State capture-related corruption has made it more difficult for the South African government to effectively serve its people, hampering efforts to increase economic growth, address unemployment, reduce poverty and inequality, and attract foreign investment. State capture exacerbated an already troubled economy, and the average citizen typically feels the effects of corruption on economic development more than those involved in the wrongdoing.

Additionally, the study found that state capture also exacerbated inequality in several ways. State capture violates the social contract by undermining the government's mission to serve the public interest. State capture led to inequality by radically shifting the distribution of power in society. Additionally, the distribution of economic power became more unequal through the provision of government resources to select favoured groups. The state's control over the implementation of public policy impedes economic development and potential, thereby leading to inequality. Moreover, suppliers with the appropriate connections were given preference during the public procurement process, whereas those without access to the captor network were not awarded contracts. Some of the unrelated businesses eventually failed, further reducing competition in some industries and concentrating wealth in the hands of the group that secured shady contracts.

Drawing on the study's findings, it is evident that after the Constitutional Court arrested former President Jacob Zuma for failing to appear at the Commission of Inquiry into State Capture, he was forced to turn himself in to the Estcourt Correctional Centre, raising suspicions that the unrest was a reprisal. Although the July 2021 political unrest and Zuma's detention occurred at the same time, the Commission found no evidence linking the two incidents. It became difficult to distinguish where one stopped and where the other began because the July events were on the same day that former President Zuma was imprisoned. The scholarly literature presented in the study concludes that the two are connected through this junction of events.

Finally, drawing on the study, it is evident that state capture led to a decline in public services in South Africa. Despite significant public spending, South Africa's government has struggled to provide high-quality services to all its people. The government has a responsibility to ensure that resources are available and used appropriately to achieve the goals of public service delivery. However, the unease surrounding the South African government's leadership and the

achievement of even a modest level of service delivery stems mainly from local governments' incapacity to fulfil their obligations.

State capture is one of the issues plaguing the public sector and hindering service delivery. Bad workmanship, nepotism, and bad service delivery are undoubtedly the outcomes of cadre deployment and the South African tendering system. The study findings indicate that South Africa has not upheld a code of ethics for professionals. The South African public service has not carried out its public duties and internal affairs in an ethical way. This is demonstrated by the high frequency of corruption, including conflict of interest, fraud, embezzlement, and bribery.

The Fourth and final question the study posed was "How can Consequentialism inform the responses to the ethical dilemmas surrounding the South African state capture?" The researcher answered this question by presenting the ethical theory of Consequentialism in chapter four, which the study adopted. This theory primarily holds that an action's morality should be assessed solely by its outcomes. Using this theory, the study conducted an analysis in chapter five that evaluated the ethical implications of state capture in South Africa. These were drawn from the effects of state capture in chapter two of the literature review.

Drawing on the study's findings, it was evident that state capture led to a rise in poverty levels. Funds intended to be invested in basic services such as education, health, clean water, electricity, and social welfare were looted through corrupt contracts and fraudulent deals. Funds and resources intended to assist the public benefited only a small minority of leaders in South Africa. The study also found that state capture led to limited access to health care. The health sector in South Africa, which is impacted by resource limitations and high rates of illness and disease due to state capture, endured further decline because of the misappropriation of funds, the deterioration of state institutions, and the dishonesty and manipulation of the procurement process. In addition, the study also found that another social ethical implication of state capture in South Africa is higher crime rates. The study found that a decline in the delivery of public services results in job losses and widens the country's wealth gap, which further contributed to increased crime rates. The final social-ethical implication of state capture corruption, the study found, is the erosion of public trust. Trust is important for any operating democracy. Scholarly literature showed that unethical actions of state capture have mainly contributed to public mistrust, which is the confidence that the public places in its government and its representatives.

Additionally, the study looked at the economic and ethical implications. The study found that, even before state capture became prominent in South Africa, the country was already facing high unemployment, which was further exacerbated by state capture. Many individuals lost their jobs as state-owned businesses went insolvent or underwent restructuring. Another economic ethical implication of state capture, established by the study, is that funds intended to benefit the public were mismanaged. A large amount of money was looted and embezzled through corrupt tenders, exorbitant service prices, and bogus contracts.

Furthermore, another economic ethical implication the study established is that state capture impaired investor confidence. Enterprises, globally and locally, were concerned that investments would be hampered by political interference, state capture, corruption, and legal uncertainty. The final economic and ethical implication the study established is that the acts and events of state capture eventually increased the burden on taxpayers. Due to mismanagement of funds and the weakening of state institutions, the public had to bear the costs of corruption stemming from state capture. The government then had to intervene. For instance, state capture corruption significantly contributed to load shedding, which severely impacted businesses and disturbed day-to-day life.

Lastly, the study analysed the political ethical implications. Institutions like SARS and the Hawks were systematically weakened and influenced. Amid the state capture phenomenon, many state institutions were not only weakened but also manipulated and influenced to benefit the personal interests of political and business leaders. Appointments were made based on party loyalty rather than merit, and crucial decisions were shielded from public scrutiny. Additionally, the study found that an important characteristic of any moral political system is that individuals in power are held accountable for how they use their power. The acts of state capture in South Africa have deeply compromised this principle on all levels. Despite countless reports and investigations, including the Judicial Commission of Inquiry and the Mokgoro Commission, several leaders implicated in the state capture phenomenon have, to date, not been arrested or punished. Moreover, due to state capture, the rule of law principle was severely undermined. The legal system was usually influenced and impeded from protecting the key figures involved in state capture. Laws were either disregarded or applied arbitrarily, and whistle-blowers were coerced and suppressed to curb corruption. The final political ethical implication the study found is the erosion of ethical leadership. In South Africa, during state capture, there was a moral leadership dilemma. There was a significant decline in moral

leadership across all branches of government. Government officials were unsuccessful in acting in their citizens' interests. Leaders who were meant to safeguard the interests of the South African institution instead enabled, overlooked, and disregarded state capture corruption.

When analysing the implications of state capture in South Africa from the perspective of consequentialist ethics, the acts of state capture are unethical. These actions stemming from state capture have harmed the public at large, benefiting a small group of government officials. Ultimately, exposing the ethical dilemmas that arise from state capture in South Africa was not only a political prerequisite but also of moral importance in building a fair and sustainable South African Society.

6.3. Key Recommendations

Undoubtedly, President Ramaphosa has taken measures to expel individuals responsible for state capture, but whether these measures are adequate and what else may be done to reverse the scourge remain uncertain (Rier, 2024: 84; Pillay et al., 2023: 165). State capture resulted in various government institutions compromising their functions and duties, and consequently undermining accountability, enforcement agencies, and institutional checks and balances (David-Barrett, 2021: 12). Therefore, much more work must be done to prevent state capture in the future. Those involved in state capture frequently hold onto their positions of authority and oppose changes that might increase or decrease that control. It is clear from the previous chapters of this study that state capture has had disastrous implications. This next section discusses several suggestions for preventing state capture in South Africa based on the study's findings. When making recommendations, it is important to note that not all of these are universally applicable since state capture does not look the same in every country. These recommendations can be tailored to the countries where they are being implemented.

6.3.1. Impunity

In chapter five, the study found that state capture not only forces governments to stop fulfilling their constitutional obligations but also significantly increases the impunity of criminal officials (Mbaku, 2019: 94). Impunity is a significant issue in South Africa, especially in the context of corruption. In addition to making recommendations for criminal investigations and prosecutions, scholarly literature presented in chapter two of the study has shown the involvement of high-ranking authorities in state capture, including government officials,

political figures, and business sector actors (David-Barrett, 2021; Thacker and Pillay, 2023; Mamokhere, 2021). Corruption has long existed in the nation and has been worsened by state capture and the misuse of authority by business and political leaders, as well as corporations (Renwick, 2018).

Additionally, Mbaku (2019: 186) noted that the judicial and prosecution systems have come under fire for their delayed and inefficient handling of corruption cases, and legal issues and political meddling have marred several high-profile cases. Increased corruption and a decline in public confidence in institutions and the government are the outcomes of impunity. Therefore, people who broke fiduciary duties and committed crimes must be held accountable. Furthermore, to prevent the cycle of scrouge and impunity from continuing, policymakers must comprehend the systems and patterns of corruption. Holding criminals accountable can help the nation accomplish its goals of social justice and democracy.

6.3.2. Political Party Appointments and Funding

South Africa's major parties must give the struggle against state capture top priority. Political parties must ensure that all prospective national office candidates undertake a comprehensive background examination to uphold the integrity of public authorities. For instance, take the case of former President Jacob Zuma. Due to allegations of rape, fraud, corruption, and extortion, he would not have been able to serve as president (Bracking 2018). Scholarly literature by Huberts and Van Mantfort (2021); Huberts et al. (2022); Rosetto (2021) highlighted the beneficial effects of integrity in mitigating corrupt influence among lawmakers, policymakers, and decision-makers, thereby ensuring that officials uphold the principles of public integrity. It is crucial to focus on networks driven by ethics.

Furthermore, anonymous contributions to political parties and the use of public funding for election campaigns should be prohibited, as they foster party patronage. Balt (2021; 24) argues that because party patronage involves the misuse of public resources for party organization and survival, it encourages political parties to seek rents. Loyalists now have the chance to get rewards in return for preferential treatment. Additionally, to maintain electoral support, parties use patronage to build clientelist networks (Balt, 2021: 2024). In general, the battle against state capture depends critically on accountability in political party finance and appointments. It promotes an honest and moral culture among officials, ensures openness in government decision-making, and ultimately boosts public confidence in government agencies.

6.3.3. Public Procurement Reform

In chapter two of the literature review, the study found that the primary avenue for money theft, particularly regarding state-owned enterprises, was the public procurement system. Due to their high capital, operating, and procurement costs, state-owned businesses are particularly vulnerable to state capture. Considering this, South Africa must create a thorough public procurement policy to ensure proper oversight and scrutiny. Additionally, this would guarantee that the tendering process is based on merit rather than connections. Therefore, enhancing the public procurement system's openness and transparency is essential to the battle against state capture. Establishing a code of conduct and a professional association for public procurement authorities is relevant. In addition to outlining the requirements for openness, adherence to transition mandates, and standardization of public procurement laws, this also explains the principles that must be followed when purchasing goods and services.

6.3.4. Ethical Conduct

The study found that in South Africa, state capture resulted from coercion, abuse of government resources, and politically compromised businesses (Bester and Dobovšek, 2021). In addition to undermining political institutions, this highlighted the necessity of government accountability and openness. The State Capture Commission's proposals centre on institutional and legal strategies to prevent corruption, but it is crucial that we give equal weight to people's moral behaviour. Ethics is crucial in the battle against state capture, as it is the primary mechanism that prevents corrupt individuals from influencing lawmakers and other decision-makers. Executive, public, and private sector authorities should be staffed with trustworthy individuals who will carry out their duties in South Africa's best interests while adhering to the Constitution.

6.3.5. Protection and Incentives for Whistle-Blowers

Chapter four of the study revealed that whistle-blowers played a significant role in exposing occurrences of state capture within the South African institutions. The significance of their witness to the Commission's efforts to investigate and expose corruption cannot be underscored. Whistleblowing, according to Charlout et al. (2019: 6), is the exposure of wrongdoing in the public or private sector, such as fraud, danger, or other illegal or unethical activity. Due to the potential consequences of their disclosures, whistle-blowers face serious dangers. Mateus (2021) claims that whistle-blowers have faced difficulties and have not always

been given sufficient protection. Some have experienced immense pressure, affecting them physically, emotionally, and professionally.

South African law protects whistle-blowers, particularly under the Protection of Disclosures Act. However, the Protection Disclosure Act's criteria for whistleblowing are quite limited, which limits its ability to safeguard a broad range of people and organizations. According to Hajn (2021: 40-41), the term whistle-blowers refer to the connection between an employer and its workers; it does not protect other parties, which discourages disclosures. Therefore, the government must establish specialized courts for these cases and examine and expand the protections for whistleblowers. Additionally, since the given information was crucial to the recovery of state funds, offering whistle-blowers the possibility of receiving a portion of the recovered funds may inspire them to step forward with information.

6.3.6. Role Of Media as a Watch Dog

In South Africa, the corrupt system that had taken control of the government and its institutions was closely monitored by the media. State capture was revealed and covered by the media, which also provided people with a forum to discuss and debate the matter (Budhram, 2019:158; Schauseli, 2022). The public's knowledge of state capture was raised by the media, which also forced the government to implement reforms. Given the importance of the media, accountability, and strong governance systems, they need to be given top priority (Schauseli, 2022). To promote freedom of expression, journalists and whistle-blowers must be safeguarded at all costs. Furthermore, it is crucial to have investigative journalism that emphasizes the media's importance and offers in-depth accounts by comparing state capture to a failed state. The consequences of state capture and ongoing oversight of the state capture Commission's recommendations' implementation must also be covered by the media.

6.3.7. Creating Structures Outside the State to Reverse State Capture

Kahler and Bowra (2020: 4) state that the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have been instrumental in helping nations build organizations and mechanisms outside of the state to fight corruption like state capture. Such structures are intended to provide administrative autonomy for the purposes of investigating crimes, prosecuting offenders, reviewing the legal system, and charging judges and courts of justice without violating the penal code (Kahler and Bowra, 2020: 4). These boundaries must be approached cautiously, and the effects on the ground must be closely monitored. For instance, Corruption Watch, an

independent non-governmental organization, was founded in South Africa in 2012 to combat corruption with public support (Peiffer et al., 2019: 589).

Since the study has clearly shown that the government is not a trustworthy institution to combat corruption, such apparatuses are vital in South Africa. Vigorous enforcement and anti-corruption legislation are crucial for discouraging and eradicating corruption. In the South African society, there is undoubtedly a need for such policies and mechanisms to organize and combat state capture. Chapter four of the study showed that law enforcement's secrecy and the capture of state institutions by influential individuals initially made it easier to commit financial crimes. These institutions have the right to demand transparency and inclusive governance at all levels of the state. Since these actors also facilitate financial crimes, independent organizations fighting corruption should not only focus on promoting transparency within government institutions, but also on private-sector intermediaries such as law and accounting firms and cooperative service providers that work directly with government institutions.

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List Of Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethical Clearance



Miss Lusanda Mngadi (220042029)
School Of Rel Phil & Classics
Pietermaritzburg



Dear Miss Lusanda Mngadi,

Original application number: 00028045

Project title: A critical exploration of the ethical dilemmas surrounding the state capture phenomena in South Africa

Exemption from Ethics Review

In response to your application received on [redacted], your school has indicated that the protocol has been granted **EXEMPTION FROM ETHICS REVIEW**.

Any alteration/s to the exempted research protocol, e.g., Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through an amendment/modification prior to its implementation. The original exemption number must be cited.

For any changes that could result in potential risk, an ethics application including the proposed amendments must be submitted to the relevant UKZN Research Ethics Committee. The original exemption number must be cited.

In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE:

Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours sincerely,



Prof Herbert Moyo
Academic Leader Research
School Of Rel Phil & Classics

UKZN Research Ethics Office
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

Appendix 2: Proof Of Editing Letter

Dr Khulekani Luthuli

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

14/11 /2025

To whom it may concern,

This letter serves to confirm that I completed the language editing of the Master of Arts (MA) in Applied Ethics dissertation submitted by Ms Lusanda Mngadi, STUDENT NUMBER: 220042029, titled **A Critical Exploration of the Ethical Dilemmas Surrounding state capture phenomenon In South Africa.**

This dissertation was edited for grammar, spelling punctuation and overall writing style. Microsoft Word's "track changes" feature was used through-out the process thus providing the student with the opportunity to review and reject and accept the changes made on a chapter-by-chapter basis.

Kindly note that while I made every effort to ensure consistency in the formatting of in-text citations and those appearing in the list of references, I did not verify the accuracy or authenticity of the cited sources.

Sincerely,

Dr Khulekani Luthuli

[REDACTED]

Appendix 3: Turnitin Report

FIRST DRAFT DISSERTATION- Lusanda Mngadi
(220042029).docx

ORIGINALITY REPORT

13% SIMILARITY INDEX	7% INTERNET SOURCES	4% PUBLICATIONS	8% STUDENT PAPERS
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PRIMARY SOURCES

1	Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal Student Paper	2%
2	researchspace.ukzn.ac.za Internet Source	1%
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