Beyond watchdog journalism: Media and Social Accountability

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following report is an exploratory case study analysis of social accountability monitoring of the Eastern Cape Department of Education by the Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM) and mainstream media in the Eastern Cape. It provides in-depth analysis of the education programme's work within PSAM and a study of newspaper coverage of education in the Eastern Cape.

The argument made herein, is that for either civil society or the media to be effective in holding duty bearers to account, and to equip citizens to hold public officials to account, they have to work collaboratively in their efforts. What is required is a shift in the assumption that simply reporting on or highlighting events of maladministration or mismanagement of public resources is sufficient. Highlighting poor resource management is necessary but not sufficient to equate to social accountability. The current media coverage, while extensive and voluminous, does not provide citizens with the contextual knowledge they need to effectively hold duty bearers to account for poor service delivery. Rather, as a result of the formulaic reporting style, corruption and maladministration are further normalised. Fostering a more strategic, conscious and direct relationship between civil society and the media, will ensure a symbiotic relationship of effective society accountability resulting in better public resource management.

The research makes a number of conclusions which have implications for both the mainstream media in their coverage of public resources and service delivery, as well as for civil society organisations undertaking social accountability work. It points to a large gap in the potential for these institutions to work together to ensure better informed citizens which are equipped to hold duty bearers to account. The report identifies the following in relation to the media:

1. Media coverage of education is extensive – BUT the assumption made by journalists is that by simply reporting on scandals, corrupt officials or maladministration is enough to justify their role as watchdogs.
2. The 'balanced' and episodic reporting that proliferates the mainstream press is inadequate in providing citizens with the information they require to become active participations in holding duty bearers to account.

3. Media reporting on service delivery and public resource management normalises corruption in the public sector because it reports on these in the same way as it reports other events. This normalisation of corruption and public service failure means that, while the mainstream press are reporting in volumes about corruption and other public resource management weaknesses, their coverage fails to result in actual accountability.

The media, however, are not solely responsible for the failures in media coverage of service delivery. Civil society organisations that work in social accountability contribute to the information gap. The report identifies the following in relation to CSOs:

1. The data shows that the education programme within PSAM produces a large amount of information and research. This information makes explicit links between the public resource management processes and is valuable in understanding service delivery failures – BUT this is not reaching ordinary citizens and fails to connect to the lived experiences of most South Africans. Without adequate information beyond coverage of corruption, crisis and scandal, citizens are left information-poor, and the problems of structural weaknesses in the PRM will continue at all levels.
2. Social accountability requires visibility and it requires CSO-media collaboration. This is not being done in a conscious enough way. The data shows that PSAM was underutilised as a source for education coverage and was not using its expertise to set the agenda on service delivery failures. It is not enough to respond to requests for comments on events or release statements in reaction to a crisis, but to use their expertise to set the agenda about how to better hold duty bearers to account.
3. While CSOs and citizens may expect the media to act as watchdogs for society, they cannot do this without being adequately capacitated. This requires building relationships and fostering collaboration between the media and CSOs. These relationships can ensure a shared vision between CSOs and the media in their power, together, to hold public officials to account.

Finally, the report makes recommendations about the way forward for both media and civil society organisations which can ensure a more accountable public service.

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Photograph on the front cover sourced from the M&G online: https://mg.co.za/article/2013-03-08-00-forgotten-schools-of-the-eastern-cape-left-to-rot

2 INTRODUCTION

The education sector in South Africa faces a myriad of challenges and problems which plague service delivery and result in a "high-cost, low-performance education system that does not compare favourably with education systems in other African countries."[1] The Eastern Cape education landscape is a strongly distilled example of all the challenges faced by South African education, often producing worse results than those at national level. In terms of infrastructure, 53% of all schools without water are found in the Eastern Cape, along with 73% of those with no ablution facilities. Despite huge infrastructure demands, the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDOE) underspent its 2015/16 budget of R29, 691 billion by around R431 million[2]. Deprivation rates amongst Eastern Cape learners are extremely high with two in ten learners considered to be deprived[3]. The Eastern Cape has the lowest matric pass rate in the country with only just over half of the matriculants passing (56.8%)[4]. In addition, the Eastern Cape has the second highest rate of female non-attendance in the country (54.7%) (Sipungu 2016).

It is within this context of poor delivery, a lack of regulatory and legislative implementation, the influence of trade unions, and failing infrastructure that the Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM) carries out research, analysis and commentary on the work of the Eastern Cape Department of Education. This research is done as part of the PSAM Monitoring and Advocacy Programme (MAP). The long term goal of the PSAM is to ensure effective service delivery due to the improved interaction between citizens and the state. The organisation has a particular focus on strengthening governance and public resource management (PRM) systems in order to see improved accountability and better service delivery (PSAM 2015). The PSAM theory of change (TOC) is summarized as follows: "Through research, monitoring and training (that seeks to strengthen PRM) which is supported by learning and impact evaluation, the PSAM and its partners ***will improve their engagement with government in order to enable more accountable service delivery"*** (PSAM 2015: 12).

The MAP's aim is to ensure that "demand and supply side actors make use of MAP outputs to inform their decision-making and actions which results in more accountable service delivery and improved governance and public resource management" (PSAM 2015: 14). A key focus of the education programme within MAP is on monitoring public resource management processes of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (which focuses on basic education at the primary and high school levels). It does this through the production of empirical research and public resource management (PRM) monitoring using the social accountability system

[1] http://www.cepd.org.za/files/pictures/The%20Challenges%20Facing%20Education%20Interview%20Nov%2009.pdf

[2] http://www.treasury.gov.za/documents/provincial%20budget/2016/4.%20Estimates%20of%20Prov%20Rev%20and%20Exp/EC/2.%20Estimates%20of%20Prov%20Rev%20and%20Exp/EC%20-%20Vote%2006%20-%20Education.pdf

[3] The deprivation index was constructed by use of variables such as access to facilities and basic services critical for effective teaching and learning, learner–classroom ratios as a measure of overcrowding and learner-teacher ratio. See Statssa.gov.za

[4] https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/eastern-cape-is-a-failed-state-education-expert-20160106

(SAS) developed by the PSAM. The landscape in which the education programme operates is not only beset by infrastructural problems, but also administrative weaknesses, and political dynamics which make the work of the education programme not only challenging, but vital. The quantity of outputs[5] produced by the education desk has been vast, but more importantly, the scope of the monitoring and research is essential to fulfilling PSAMs aim to improve service delivery and a more accountable public service.

This study is an exploration of the education landscape in the Eastern Cape across two interrelated fields – social accountability and journalism. The research examines the work of the education programme within MAP between 2005 and 2016 in an effort to understand the type of work being carried out by the programme, and the challenges and opportunities that it faces in monitoring the ECDOE. In order to relate this work to the power of the media, the study considers the role of journalism and the media in social accountability through an examination of the way in which education reporting is covered in the province between 2005 and 2016. The aim is to map areas of overlap and identify gaps in the social accountability ecosystem which can be addressed through a more comprehensive relationship between social accountability practitioners and the media. Ultimately, this study will provide a framework through which more effective social accountability can be exercised by citizens, civil society and the media.

3 SITUATING THE CURRENT STUDY

3.1 UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

> *Social accountability operates neither through the electoral aggregation of votes nor as part of an intrastate system of checks and balances. Rather, social accountability relies on interested, organized sectors of civil society and media institutions that are able to exert influence on the political system and public bureaucracies (Peruzzotti & Smulovitz 2006: 10)*

Accountability is the process of holding those who have the power to make decisions about how society works to account for their decisions and actions. The value of living in a democracy is that citizens 'should be' the most powerful decision makers in society. However, the reality of democratic living is that very often citizens lack the power to change their lived situations, this power is held by politicians, governments and state structures. While citizens may not have direct power to change the economic and social challenges they face, they are equipped with mechanisms that allow them to collectively impact on decisions that are made for them. These mechanisms include voting at local and national elections, being represented by a Member of

[5] See Appendix One for a detailed list of outputs

Parliament, participating in public meetings, and visiting their local councillor's office. "A fundamental principle of democracy is that citizens have the right to demand accountability and public actors have an obligation to account" (Malena et al. 2004: 2).

Accountability thus refers to "the obligation of power-holders to account for or take responsibility for their actions" (Malena et al. 2004: 2). Whilst processes, such as voting, are accessible to all citizens in a democracy like South Africa, they are often not effective in holding power holders to account for their actions. "Most authors seem to agree that the democratic regimes established in the last democratizing wave present serious institutional deficits, particularly in relation to the development of adequate and effective mechanisms of accountability. Most administrations, they argue, can effectively avoid the usual constraints posed by the various mechanism of control of governmental decisions" (Peruzzotti & Smulvotz 2006: 3). As a result of the fact that accountability mechanisms are poor or manipulated by power holders, it became necessary to have alternative mechanisms for accountability and monitoring duty bearers. Joshi & Houtzager argue that a key condition of a functional representative democracy is not only parties that compete for votes, but "public debate has to be unfettered and inclusive. These conditions, however, are not met in many countries of the South" (2012: 148). Authors and social commentators are increasingly questioning the applicability of traditional representative democratic structures in the South as states struggle to effectively deliver on services and goods without adequate mechanisms for public debate and engagement with citizens. "The vertiginous growth of public bureaucracy has not been accompanied by a similar growth in democratic control and the standard model appears increasingly inadequate" (Joshi & Houtzager 2012: 148).

Social accountability then is about finding tools and mechanisms beyond voting that are effective in holding power holders to account. One way of understanding social accountability is "an approach towards building accountability that relies on civic engagement, i.e., in which it is ordinary citizens and civil society organisations who participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability" (Malena et al. 2004: 3). Joshi argues that voting is often called the 'long route' to accountability (because of the length of time between elections and the processes that are employed to hold duty bearers to account through elections), social accountability is regarded at the 'short route' of accountability because of the direct engagement between citizens and duty bearers (Joshi 2008: 12).

Social accountability moves beyond the formal, political processes which have been established to provide some measure of accountability, but are often compromised and, thus, often fail to ensure real power lies with citizens. Peruzzotti & Smulovitz argue that mechanisms such as social accountability "address some of the intrinsic limitations of elections as tools of political accountability, and they are crucial in activating an often reluctant network of intrastate agencies of control" (2006: 4). Social accountability is an approach which depends on the power of citizens and civil society to proactively play a role in the accountability process. There

are a number of benefits of the social accountability approach. The first is that governments are held accountable, which should improve service delivery because there is an ongoing monitoring of decisions and implementation. This allows for the monitoring of public spending and "methods of social accountability, such as participatory budget evaluation or performance monitoring, [to] ensure that public budgeting and spending is transparent and socially responsive" (Gopalkrishnan 2014: 95). Secondly, being part of social accountability initiatives will empower citizens to be active and engaged in their communities, taking some responsibility for being the change required in their lives. The process of empowering citizens starts with informing citizens about their rights and responsibilities, as well as capacitating them to use that information through collective action (Arroyo & Sirker 2005). "Social accountability initiatives can create the structures and processes that develop group empowerment and ensure that public services are responsive to their needs" (Gopalkrishnan 2014: 96). Gopalkrishnan cites examples in India where an organisation called Mazdoor Kisaan Shakti Sangathana (MKSS) has brought together famers and landless labourers to demand greater participation in public affairs. "Their long struggle began with demand for payment of wages to workers and went on to ensure the legislation of the Right to Information Act in India" (Gopalkrishnan 2014: 96). Finally, social accountability limits corruption and exposes failure by government. This can be done in two ways. First, by creating visibility around a problem in the public sphere. For example, in Bangladesh, Transparency International compiled information about corruption cases and brought them to the public's attention (Arroyo & Sirker 2005). Second, by ensuring that opportunities for corruption which are inherent in the public resource management and service delivery systems are eradicated. Social accountability allows the collective voice of citizens and civil society to ensure that corrupt behaviour is identified and made public (Gopalkrishnan 2014: 96).

3.2 THE HISTORY AND CONTEXT OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACCOUNTABILITY MONITOR

The Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM) is an independently funded institute, which is part of the School of Journalism & Media Studies at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa. The current focus of the organisation is to "strengthen the work of social accountability actors" (PSAM 2015: 5), such as civil society, government, social accountability practitioners, academics and citizens, through applied research, advocacy and capacity building. The long term goal of PSAM is to "ensure accountable service delivery due to improved interaction between citizens and the state that has a particular focus on strengthening governance and public resource management systems" (PSAM 2015: 10).

The organisation was founded in 1999 as a research project within the Department of Sociology at Rhodes University with the aim of monitoring misconduct, such as theft, fraud, corruption and maladministration within the Eastern Cape government. "Prior to 2007-08 PSAM's strategy was to "name and shame". The tool used was to track corruption cases through a province-wide database and draw attention to the provincial government's failure to successfully conclude many of these cases. The content of its reports and media

releases was often personalised to individuals" (Folscher & Kruger 2013: 6-7). In 2007, the PSAM was subsumed by the Centre for Social Accountability (CSA), which saw not just a name change, but in addition a change in the core mission of the organisation to the "institutionalization of the right to social accountability and the realization of social and economic rights and capabilities through the effective management of public resources" (ibid.). From this point, the CSA began to look much more like the PSAM of today, with a stronger focus on engagement amongst citizens and government in order to ensure better resource management and service delivery. Once the PSAM had moved beyond watching for poor public resource management to developing its own framework for ensuring effective public resource management, this lead to the development of a Social Accountability System (SAS). Over the years, the structure, and name of the organisation has changed, but the focus on promoting social accountability has remained key.

Currently, the organisation promotes, trains, researches and advocates for social accountability with the aim of making social accountability "universally realized"[6]. The PSAM has three key programmes: firstly, the Regional Learning Programme (RLP), which conducts training and capacity building in social accountability across Southern Africa (focussing primarily on Zimbabwe, South Africa, Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique and Malawi). The training is conducted with civil society organisations and government officials in the social accountability monitoring and practice. The RLP furthermore undertakes research and monitoring in social accountability practice in the countries mentioned above, in order to build and enhance the work of social accountability practitioners in the region. Secondly, the Monitoring and Advocacy Programme (MAP) focuses its activities in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa, where it carries out "evaluations of planning, budgeting, expenditure and performance of five major service delivery departments"[7] namely: human settlements, education, health, environment and local government. Finally, the Advocacy Impact Programme (AIP) draws on the work of the other two programmes, as well as other social accountability organisations and practitioners to examine and conceptualise social accountability within different contexts. The AIP "aims to enhance the effectiveness of social accountability initiatives through knowledge generation and management"[8].

The mission of the organisation is to "strengthen the work of social accountability actors" and by doing so, create and share "knowledge that will ultimately support citizens in effectively demanding justifications and explanations from state actors regarding the management and use of public resources"[9]. The PSAM believes in the right to social accountability and aims to ensure that all citizens are equipped with the ability to hold duty bearers to account. The work of PSAM is underpinned by the belief that social accountability entitles

[6] http://www.ru.ac.za/psam/about/
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Public Service Accountability Monitor Strategic Plan 2016-2019

citizens to demand justifications and explanations for the way in which public resources, meant to deliver services, are used.

3.3 PSAM AND SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Research has shown that "the key to making services work for poor people is to strengthen relationships of accountability between policymakers, service providers and citizens" (World Bank 2006: 7) and the key to these is effective social accountability and an understanding of the value of undertaking social accountability monitoring by citizens, civil society and other independent institutions. Peruzzotti & Smulovitz argue that:

> *the monitoring activities of many NGOs and the workings of a wide array of social movements, civic associations, and media organizations organized around demands for legality and due process expand the classic repertoire of electoral and constitutional institutions for controlling government and on many occasions might serve to improve and complement them or to compensate for many of their built-in limitations (2006: 10).*

The key aspect that some researchers argue is important to understanding social accountability is that it is not an individual pursuit, but is a social (i.e. collective) endeavour. "Individual citizens are often unable to raise their voices against the powerful in society due to fear of sanctions against them" (Gopalkrishnan 2014: 94). I would argue that this is a vital cog of social accountability, and as such the work of PSAM allows for strengthened social accountability through collective action.

There are many different approaches to undertaking social accountability. The World Bank advocates one approach which includes public budget-expenditure tracking or social audits. Other approaches practiced by other organisations or in other contexts include judicialisation, which means laying legal claims against public agencies "to force the state to intervene in political and social disputes public officials want to avoid or ignore" (Peruzzotti & Smulovitz 2006: 20). The authors also argue for mediatization[10] as an exercise in social accountability, which they believe is essential to the success of any social accountability strategy (Peruzzotti & Smulovitz 2006: 23). This research will be using the Public Service Accountability Monitor's (PSAM) approach to social accountability monitoring, the Social Accountability System (SAS). The PSAM plays a role in social accountability monitoring, training, capacity building and knowledge distribution in partnership with civil society organisations and social accountability practitioners that work with citizens and through a range of

[10] "Mediatization describes the transformation of many disparate social and cultural processes into forms or formats suitable for media representation" (Couldry 2008: 377).

platforms to hold duty bearers to account, thus amplifying the voice of citizens and those that are being disadvantaged by power holders.

As mentioned previously, PSAM's approach to social accountability has been modified significantly from its inception. Whilst initially working to 'name and shame' public officials and track corruption of particular cases, it has more recently developed a theory which places social accountability as a means to tackling systemic dysfunction rather than individual instances of corruption or mismanagement. The PSAM now focuses on "strengthening the systems necessary to ensure effective public resource management (PRM)" (PSAM 2015: 6). In doing so, it has theorized that there are five distinct processes of the public resource management framework, and that these are "indispensable prerequisites for the realization of basic human needs within any state. Irrespective of other institutional features of the state, it was maintained that responsive delivery of public services required the effective implementation of the … five public resource management processes" (PSAM 2015: 6).

The Social Accountability System is hinged on monitoring five interlinked and interconnected processes which states use to deliver services through effective public resource management in order to realise the rights of its citizens. These five processes, as understood by PSAM and the way in which it conceptualizes social accountability are:

1. ***Planning and Resource Allocation***: for public departments and processes, this should be the process of understanding needs and planning for addressing those needs. Before strategic plans are developed, public departments should conduct needs analysis because without understanding the needs of the situation there will be little to inform a plan to address those needs. This involves the establishment of strategic plans, setting of objectives and performance targets, and planning activities to achieve those objectives. Power holders and duty bearers should use the strategic plan as a road map to ensure that they are able to move from an abstract idea formulated in a policy to the implementation of concrete ideas. Having planned for activities that aim to achieve the objectives, the second part of this process is resource allocation. This is where departments undertake a process of identifying and distributing the resources necessary to achieve the objectives stated in the strategic plan.

2. ***Expenditure Management***: having allocated resources to specific activities in the first process, this next process ensures that an effective process of planning will result in effective resource allocation and with systems in place to ensure effective expenditure of those resources. This is the process of tracking spending in relation to the plans that you have in place

to achieve the objectives set in the strategic plan. Key to expenditure management is ensuring that there are systems in place to manage spending and ensure a responsible spending environment. In addition, expenditure management involves the process of explaining and justifying spending in relation to the other processes of the SAS.

3. ***Performance Management***: the third essential step in the PRM process is to ensure that service providers perform in implementing the plans that they made in the first process, using the resources they have available to them in the second process. Performance management in integrally related to the first process in that it is the stage of the SAS that sees the implementation of the strategic plans made in the first process. If your plans are poor, your expenditure will be poor, and your performance in implementing those plans will be poor.

4. ***Public Integrity Management***: Public resources, and the spending of them, are governed by clear processes and regulations which ensure that both public officials and citizens know the lines which are drawn around PRM and when those lines are crossed. This stage additionally ensures that public resources are not misused or abused by public servants by taking corrective action as soon as integrity has been compromised.

5. ***Oversight***: The PSAMs social accountability system focuses on two institutions of oversight, namely the legislature and the supreme audit institutions. These independent bodies are tasked with monitoring the decisions of the executive and ensuring that public officials are held to account for those decisions which involved public resource management. Oversight of public resource management is a key process in the SAS cycle as it ensures that decisions are accounted for and actions taken to provide the best services for citizens. Without oversight, the other processes are likely to fail or to be below optimal levels of requirement.

Figure 1: Visual representation of the Social Accountability System

3.4 Monitoring and Advocacy Programme (MAP), Education and Social Accountability

One of the key areas of research within MAP is education, a crucial sector for social accountability monitoring as a result of the fact that it is one of the biggest areas of service delivery concern across South Africa, and particularly within the Eastern Cape. The delivery of quality education services is vital for the development of South Africa, has consistently had the biggest portion of the budget (at both national and provincial level), and is a focus for corruption and maladministration because the stakes (political, social and economic) are so high. The aims of the education researcher fall within the broader aims and objectives of the MAP. The key objective of the work of MAP is to provide demand and supply side actors with outputs which will inform their decision–making and actions. The aim is to promote "more accountable service delivery and improved governance and public resource management" (PSAM 2015: 14). The work of the MAP researchers involves analysis and interventions in all five of the SAS processes. Their activities include:

> *Budget and policy analysis briefs, evaluation of departmental strategic plans, direct engagement with state decision-making and other operational processes…service delivery reviews…interventions concerned with enhancing governance and public participation processes…providing comment to parliament/legislatures and decision makers on proposed legislation, providing research and data to support public interest litigation, using and promoting access to information (PSAM 2015: 14).*

In addition to submissions on proposed laws and policies, MAP also respond to requests by CSOs for evidence-based research and other ad hoc partnerships (Sipondo 2014, 4).

Research undertaken by the MAP is grounded in a rights-based approach, where their outputs are aimed towards key basic human rights (education, housing, health, environmental welfare and service delivery at the local level). However, the MAP also goes beyond this. Their work aims to ensure rights are transformed into capabilities by "looking at people's lived realities to determine whether they truly possess the freedom to make meaningful life choices" (Van der Berg 2016). This means understanding the work the MAP researchers do in relation to capabilities rather than just rights.

3.5 THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

As discussed previously, social accountability is understood in this study as the collective effort of citizens and civil society in holding government to account for their management and use of public resources to deliver services. A key element of this is that citizens and civil society are informed about the actions of public servants, about the manner in which public resources are used and ensuring that public officials explain and justify those actions. It is simply not possible to hold duty bearers accountable without access to information and a citizenry that is equipped with information that allows them to fulfil their right to social accountability. Voltmer argues that "since the media are the main source of information and a link between the government and citizens they are an indispensable precondition for both government accountability and social accountability" (2010: 140). Waisbord reiterates this by nothing that "holding government accountable is one of the most fundamental tasks of the press in a democratic order" (2000: 209). The media are thus a necessary and essential condition for effective social accountability,

There are two strong areas through which the mainstream media are thought to play a role in social accountability. The first is through the exposure of corruption and scandal by public officials and the shaming of duty bearers in their mishandling of public resources. This is epitomized by the traditional notion of watchdog journalism as espoused by investigative reporting. The advantage of good investigative journalism is that it "exposes not just in individual, but also systemic failures. Investigative reports show how individual wrongs are part of a larger pattern of negligence or abuse and the systems that make these possible" (Coronel,

2010: 113). Brunetti & Weder (2003) argue that the media can play a key role in exerting external control against corruption by either voicing complaint against corruption, or acting as deterrents against corruption by exposing wrongdoings by public officials and their collaborators. While we often think of the media as powerful agents of change in society, Protess et al. (1991) argue that there is in fact a weak link between media exposure and policy change. They question the ability of the media to address systemic changes within public resource management processes. Their argument is that the mobilisation model suggests that exposing corruption leads to changing public opinion and mobilizing the public, with the end result of policy change. Instead, while the "media may change public attitudes, they don't necessarily mobilize the public to participate in political life" (Coronel 2010: 128).

This notion relates to the traditional idea of the media as the fourth estate, "serving as a control mechanism that holds governments accountable by revealing possible misconduct" (Voltmer & Schmitt-Beck 2006: 228). While the media may well be a voice for shouting about corruption and misconduct, the question remains whether they can ever shout loud enough to mobilise the public to act against corrupt public officials. Or whether their shouting has any influence on institutions of oversight, which are then equipped to hold public officials to account. Protess et al. (1991) argue through research on investigative reporting in 6 countries, that in fact policy changes that did occur was more often the result of interactions between journalists and officials prior to publication of expose's rather than public outrage. In South Africa, the argument is that exposure of corruption by the mainstream media is seen as oppositional to the government rather than in the interests of society, and Pointer et al.'s research notes that "activists also complained that while there was much coverage of government corruption, the media did not do enough to counter it" (2016: 35). Thus, while the exposure of corruption may be a necessary function of a neo-liberal mainstream media functioning as the fourth estate, whether it is an effective tool for social accountability is questionable.

The second area through which the media can play a role in social accountability is through its function as a bridge between governments and citizens, providing the public with the information they require to debate and participate in public discussions and processes. This notion is much more aligned to the media's role as a public sphere (or public spheres as more likely in modern society), a space for debate and engagement by citizens about public and political life.

> *Here journalism's function is educational, informing the public – the ultimate democratic authority – of what its political representatives are doing, what dangers and opportunities for society loom on the horizon, and what fellow citizens are up to, for better or worse. The educational function of journalisms puts the public in the front seat and enables the citizenry to participate in self-government (Schudson 2008: 13).*

Whether at the hyper-local, local or national level, the media are a key tool in democratic societies in keeping citizens informed about the communities they live in and their place in those communities. The link between this function and social accountability is the media's role in providing citizens with the information they need to hold their public officials to account. By providing relevant, timely and accessible information to citizens, the media is able to fulfil its role, what Hadland argues is "the media's most important function" in an emerging democracy such as South Africa of holding duty bearers to account (2015: 64).

The key to fulfilling this function, however, is that the information provided by the media should be such that it equips citizens with the knowledge they need to become active and engaged in public life. Rather, Voltmer argues, "political issues are usually presented in an 'episodic frame' that is person-centred and event-driven rather than in a 'thematic frame' that covers the broader social, economic or historical context of a problem" (2010: 395). Reinemann et al. reiterate this point, noting that thematic reporting focuses on societal level consequences of an event or issue, while episodic framing addresses the "individual-level significance" (2012: 226). The ability of the media to delve deeper than the event or the person involved in a story depends greatly on the type of media, though too often today this is left to in depth investigative or documentary journalism and disregarded by the mainstream press. In their research on media coverage of conflict, Pointer et al. note that "South African activists said coverage was episodic, focusing on actions, but not analysing or covering underlying issues" (2016: 34).

These examples point to a gap in the potential of the media for fulfilling its social accountability role. While Waisbord (2000) argues that this is a fundamental task of the media, and Coronel notes that "a free and independent press is perhaps the most important accountability instrument in democracies" (2010: 131), their ability to adequately hold officials to account through their coverage is questioned by their ability to provide citizens with information that they can use to participate in public and political life in a meaningful and active way.

4 CONTEXT

4.1 THE IMPACT OF APARTHEID ON EASTERN CAPE EDUCATION TODAY

There can be no argument that the Eastern Cape education system is currently in crisis. Lack of infrastructure, continuance of mud schools in rural areas, corruption in securing jobs, lack of resources in schools, the list of problems seems endless. Some scholars (Hendricks 2012; Westaway 2012; Wright 2012) argue that after more than 20 years since the birth of democracy the structures of apartheid continue to negatively impact schooling and education at all levels in South Africa. Indeed, an overview of the context and the history of the education sector, both nationally and provincially, highlights the continued impact of apartheid on the current structures of education governance, curriculum and infrastructure.

The Bantu Education Act of 1953 was key to legislate for the segregated socio-economic ideology of the apartheid government. Based on recommendations of the Eiselen Commission, the policy legislated that "black education was to be directed to black not white needs; it was to be centrally controlled and financed under the Native Affairs Minister; syllabuses were to be adapted to the black way of life and black languages introduced into all black schools" (Christie & Collins 1982: 59). The ultimate goal was to control all aspects of the lives of black South Africans in order to ensure white dominance within all aspects of South African society. By doing so, the apartheid government was able to ensure that education aimed at black South Africans was vastly inferior to that of white South Africans. This meant poor infrastructure and funding for resources to black schools, where spending on black school children was just 14% of that for white school children in 1953, and only 6% by 1968 (Giliomee 2009: 196). In addition, it meant the institutionalised deterioration of education curriculum and learning within black schools. As a result, a cycle of inequality pervaded the education system as teachers who were educated within the Bantu education system then taught future South Africans without adequate training and schooling to properly affect educational excellence. "Delivery systems, teacher education and motivation, the entire rationale of education suffered enormous strain" (Wright 2012: 2). Education was a tool for the apartheid government to further their ideological and political notions, as Abdi argues, "in the world of Verwoerd and his apartheid era cohorts, denying education or selectively diluting its quality and contents were important objectives to achieve the social development categorizations of apartheid" (2003: 93). It is clear that the implementation of such a profoundly systematic tampering with the education of the majority of South Africans for almost 40 years would indeed continue to impact on education equality within South Africa today. The context to this research examines some of the ways in which apartheid impacted not only on the level of equality within the education system in South Africa, but more specifically the impact it had on education in the Eastern Cape.

The Bantu Education Act not only controlled education implementation across the country, but more broadly promoted the segregationist ideology which was central to the apartheid government. The Education Act was, in fact, "used to support other state policies, and in particular the homeland or Bantustan policy" (Christie & Collins 1982: 67). The idea of the Bantustans provided the government a number of outcomes, in essence killing a number of birds with one stone. It allowed for the segregation of races, worked to divide the different ethnic tribes within South Africa thus "further fragment[ing] black consciousness" and allowing the white nationalist government control over the majority black population through their control over the fragmented Bantustan 'governments' (Christie & Collins 1982: 67). Christie & Collins argue that

> *"tied in with the National Party's stress on the extension of migrant labour, labour bureau and other extra-economic coercive methods to control labour, the homeland policy would reduce the numbers of permanently settled blacks in urban areas and provide an alternative basis for the supply and control of black labour. Both politically and economically, homelands would provide a focus for black aspirations outside of a common framework, and would thus contribute to the continued domination by whites" (1982: 67).*

The discussion above provides a brief but telling glimpse as to the impact of apartheid on today's education system. It also provides a broader understanding of the impact on the country as a whole as a result of not only the geographical boundaries established by the Bantustans, but also the ideological, economic, political and social boundaries perpetuated and legitimised at each stage of a black South African's life. The Eastern Cape is an extreme case study of the continued impact of apartheid on current South African society. For example, many of its inhabitants continue to live a life which was determined by the apartheid segregation policies: one still sees large numbers of migrant labour between the Eastern Cape and mining provinces further north, and a continuing dependency on one family member who has been able to 'make it' by leaving the largely-rural province to find work in a big city. The Eastern Cape continues to be adversely affected by the results of apartheid, and perhaps more so than some other provinces because it incorporated two Bantustans into the province after apartheid. "The Ciskei and Transkei today are characterized by pervasive chronic poverty, low levels of economic activity, a dearth of employment opportunities, and high levels of dependency on welfare" (Westaway 2012: 117). Westaway goes on to argue that today "black rural South Africans still live in extreme poverty. In the Ciskei and Transkei, they are now regarded as South African citizens with the right to vote, but there is no place for them in the South African economy: they still depend on firewood for energy and the river for water" (2012: 118). Across the Eastern Cape, the socio economic reality in the province is generally dire. For example, the Eastern Cape is the second poorest province in South Africa, with more than half (55.8%) of its household's living below the poverty line and unemployment among the youth is around 40% (StatsSA, 2014). The Eastern Cape remains largely rural, and is the province with the highest out-migration

in the country. In addition, the province is consistently below the country average in access to piped water, access to electricity, and households living in a formal dwelling (Eastern Cape Socio Economic Consultative Council 2016).

What does all of this mean for the current education crisis in the Eastern Cape? It provides a backdrop against which to assess the trajectory of education governance, curriculum change and resource management in a way that reflects the reality of not only those in positions of power, but also those who live the daily reality of being an Eastern Cape citizen.

> *Education performance in the Transkei, more than anywhere else in the country, was marked by low participation rates; high drop-out, failure and repetition rates; high out-of-age enrolment; low primary and secondary completion rates; poor throughput rates, and poor pass rates at the final exit points of the school system. Overcoming this legacy was going to pose severe challenges and posed insurmountable obstacles in the path of the new democratic administration. Few amongst those who struggled for change could have imagined precisely how impervious and abiding this bitter legacy of apartheid education would turn out to be. But for the Province of the Eastern Cape, the stage was set for along struggle to redress the massive inequalities in education. (Cole et al. in Lawrence & Moyo 2006: 32-33).*

4.2 APARTHEID ENDED, WHAT THEN?

"Prevailing opinion would have it that the New South Africa was born in an instant, without history, in 1994" (Westaway 2013: 115). And so it was that in 1994 South Africa became a constitutional democracy and the greatest effort became trying to wipe away the legacy of apartheid, and to right the wrongs that had for so long been part of the South African social, economic, political and legislative landscapes. The task of doing so was made increasingly difficult in the Eastern Cape, where the provincial education department

> *was faced with taking over the functions and staff from all the following units of apartheid government: the Cape Province (white education), the Department of Education and Training (African education outside the homelands), Ciskei and Transkei (both formerly 'independent' homelands…), the House of Representatives and the House of Delegates (coloured and Indian education respectively, responsible for 7 per cent and less than 1 per cent, respectively, of the Eastern Cape population)" (Lemon 2008: 111).*

It was never going to be a simple process, and as such the Eastern Cape is beset with ongoing problems, some of which are contributing to the current crisis of continued inequality, lack of infrastructure, poor governance,

and corruption. It is useful to provide a timeline of the legislative framework and processes established post-1994 which aimed to deal with the inequalities perpetuated by apartheid at both national and provincial level.

4.2.1 Governance

It is best to understand the policy and structural changes which occurred post-1994 as all being driven by the desire to erase the effects of the past. Jansen (in Lemon) argues that "the making of education policy in South Africa is best described as a struggle for the achievement of a broad political symbolism to mark the shift from apartheid to post-apartheid society. We search in vain for the logic in policy-making connected to any serious intention to change the practice of education "on the ground"" (2008: 270). As stated above, the first and perhaps principal change to the provincial governance of education was the amalgamation of formerly white, black, asian and coloured departments into one structure which would now oversee the management of education in the newly incorporated Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDOE). This meant incorporating public servants from the former Bantustans into the newly created ECDOE with the task of managing the needs of learners across the province. Cole et al. argue that one of the major problems encountered by the newly formed provincial department "was the inadequate allocation of management-level positions to the ECDOE to cope with the scope and complexity of the tasks at hand. Apart from the lack of expertise among incumbent managers at the time, the Department simply did not have enough hands on deck to cope with the diverse challenges" (in Lawrence & Moyo 2006: 35). These include the fact that not only were teachers not equipped to handle new curricula and new ways of teaching, but that those that should have been strategising and implementing legislation were ill-equipped to do so, creating a recipe for disaster that has persisted in the Eastern Cape today.

Another major modification in terms of governance was the division between the role of provinces in education and that of national government, which also changed after 1994. With the introduction of the 'new' integrated South Africa, policy development and coordination became the responsibility of the national government, but management and financing of schools became the responsibility of provinces. The reasons for decentralisation of governance within the education sector seem logical and include the need to promote efficiency and the power to redress the inequality of the past at the local level, and placing the power to control social services in the hands of citizens, rather than a central bureaucratic machine. In addition, decentralisation can also result in increasing community participation in governance of schools in communities, and allowing for innovation at the local level (Motala 2008: 310). Whilst intentions may have been good when the constitution mandated education delivery to the provinces, the challenges have proven too numerours not to question the logic of such reform. So, while policy development is currently held at national level, delivery of education services and governance at the school level sits with the provinces and districts. The problem, as argued by Bloch is that "decentralisation means there is a layer of politicians between national outlooks and

local implementation. It also means substantial places to hide from direct accountability and the ability to shift blame continually. It is unclear where responsibility lies" (2009: 110).

The combination of decentralisation and a lack of expertise at the provincial and district levels to deal with implementation of service delivery in education has resulted in the Eastern Cape lacking a clear strategy for undoing the injustices of the past and ensuring some equality within education across the province.

> *The changes in the number of policital heads or MECs in the Eastern Cape, and the large number of acting heads of the department there, with enormous negative consequences, only show up the most extreme example of the difficulties of the national government to intervene in a meaningful way. Even where education appears almost to take on the features of a failed state, it is difficult to invoke the constitutional provisions that would allow decisive interference by the national government. Despite poor audits, underspending, corruption that includes hundreds of millions stolen from school nutrition programmes (and few charges or convictions), the Eastern Cape continues to deny most of its rural students the possibility of a better life through meaningful education. Up to now, the national government has been able to do little but talk about standards and policy implementation.: (Bloch 2009: 111).*

4.3 WATCHDOG, GUARDOG OR LAPDOG?

The media landscape during apartheid was judiciously controlled and restricted by the apartheid government, which sought to limit freedom of expression and access to information by its citizens. During this time, mainstream media often fell into one of three categories:

1. They were either directly controlled by the state;
2. They exercised self-censorship as a result of the harsh legislation on freedom of expression; or
3. They were openly defiant of the state in their coverage of the events taking place locally and abroad.

Direct control of media, both locally and outside of South Africa, was sometimes carried out openly – as was the case with the South African Broadcasting Corporation, a state broadcaster, strongly aligned with the state's political ideology. The SABC was a propoganda tool, directly employed to perpetuate and support the separate development ideology of the apartheid government. African language radio stations were first introduced in 1962 with services in seSotho and isiZulu. This was soon expanded to other indigenous languages and while it might be seen as a positive development, their control was extremely strict. "News was patronisingly insular in that content emphasised local news…In 1960 the Bantu Programmes Control Board was created, through which all programme content was controlled by thirty-five white staff with a knowledge of black languages, in order to prevent any disparaging comments from being made on air regarding government policies" (Wigston

2007: 14). Much like other sectors of society (such as education) broadcasting was controlled for the purpose of racial segregation. The use of radio broadcasting by the SABC was not the only tool for political homogenisation by the SABC. For example, in considering the viability of television broadcasting, a commission found that television could be used "to advance the self-development of all its peoples and to foster their pride in their own identity and language" (Mersham 1993: 175). Rather than view this as a call for diversity and the promotion of culture, it was regarded by the government as an opportunity for promoting their "ideology of separate development for different races" (Wigston 2007: 14).

At times, however, the nature of media control was covert. In the case of *The Citizen* newspaper, it was revealed in 1978 that the then Minister of the Department of Information, Connie Mulder, had authorised the purchase of the newspaper through a loan to Louis Luyt who then started the newspaper in October 1976 (Paterson & Malila 2013: 4). While the newspaper made repeated claims about independence, it was clear the newspaper discreetly supported the government's policies of the day. In fact, a clause in the loan agreement stated "the paper supports the broad objectives of the present government in respect of separate political developments of the black population and the white population of RSA, as well as anti-communist policy and security laws" (Rees & Day 1980: 99). This covert interference in coverage about South Africa went beyond local media when, through an intermediary, the South African government bought a 50% stake in the second biggest international television agency, UPITN, in the mid-1970s. All of this was aimed at adjusting the perceptions about South Africa, both within and outside the country. As a result of the Sharpville Massacre in 1960, the South African government worked hard to alter the way in which it was perceived, whilst continuing it's policy of apartheid in an increasingly vicorous manner. Paterson & Malia argue:

> *"as political and economic problems continued, propoganda efforts by the South African government gained momentum, along with a far more substantial budget. While early efforts to gain public approval and counter the reporting of Western media were relatively transparent (including advertising in major US newspapers in the mid-19660s and hiring a public relations firm), as the political and economic climate in South Africa worsened in the 1970s, so the funding for the information campaign became more secretive" (2013: 3).*

Not all media in South Africa were directly controlled by the state during apartheid. Very often, the press was restricted by self censorship rather than direct control, as a result of the harsh legislation controlling freedom of expression in the country. The Afrikaans press in particular was held to standards of patriotism and privilege, "so that any attack on government policies was considered unpatriotic or even treasonable" (Wigston 2007: 45). Criticism from all types of publications became almost impossible in the 1980s when two States of Emergency were delcared, which "placed large areas of the country off-limits to the press. The purpose was to control what the government saw as incorrect or distroted images from being disseminated abroad" (Wigston

2007: 50). This meant that mainstream, commercial publications were unable to provide coverage of any events or situations which questioned, in any way, the policies of the day or questioned the pervasive apartheid ideology through open criticism of the government. So, while many were not openly supportive of the government and its policies, they were unable to criticise the government or show support for anything other than the dominant ideology.

Finally, the likes of *Vrye Weekblad*, the *New Nation*, *South*, and *Weekly Mail* (formally the *Rand Daily Mail*) are all examples of mainstream publications which pushed the boundaries of legislative restrictions to try and report on the activities of the government, the liberation movements, and alternative political movements (such as the UDM). Many "did not hestiste to criticise the shortcomings of the government of the day, despite the restrictions on the press, sometimes with dire consequences. For example, 1992 *Vrye Weekblad* had 37 criminal charges, eight libel suits and five urgent court interdicts against it" (Wigston 2007: 43-44). In addition, the Bantustans became sites of independent media as a result of a legislative loophole. Because the rules governing South African media did not apply in "these so-called independent states, which meant that the draconian laws which protected the SABC monopoly were not binding in these states. As a result, stations such as Capital Radio, Radio 702, Radio Bop and Radio Thohoyandou came on the air…they presented opportunities for hearing alternative points of view not heard on SABC stations" (Wigston 2007: 16). Other publications such as *Izwi la Bantu*, *Ilanga Lase Natal*, *Abantu-Batho* were pioneers in black journalism, as well as political beacons during a time of when political movement was restricted (Wigston 2007: 38).

This summary paints a broad picture of the media landscape in South Africa during apartheid (though is in no way comprehensive) in order to better comprehend our current media landscape. The media ecology today is a direct result of it's apartheid past and the transition it went through between 1990 and the current day. Each of the three categories of media as discussed previously, were caught in a moment of reflection with the advent of democracy. "Not unlike other new African democracies that emerged after decolonisation, the new democratic environment required of the South African media to re-position itself in relation to an open society and a legitimate government" (De Beer et al. 2016: 36). Those that were directly controlled by the apartheid government would need to consider their relationship to the new government. The SABC, for example, went through an extensive process of redesign and restructuring in order to promote the company as a public broadcaster rather than a state broadcaster. Duncan (2000) argues that whilst the SABC underwent massive transformative processes in the 1990s, which meant editorially it was no longer aligned to the government of the day, it failed to transform adequately into a public service broadcaster as a result of the commercial direction in which that transformation steered the broadcaster. In a later article, Duncan & Glenn subsequently note that "in fact, the outsourcing of content destroyed the SABC's ability to develop strong content skills in particular genres, and harmed the distinctiveness of the services. It also destroyed what might have been one

of the SABC's greatest strengths: the ability to draw on the synergies with radio and the undoubted popularity of many of its radio presenters and talk-show hosts" (2010: 6). As the financial struggles intensified, the editorial performance worsened. Allegations of bias towards the ANC government by the SABC emerged around 2003 when a new board was instituted, and the ANC was accused of "stacking it with its appointees" (Duncan & Glenn 2010: 8). Research by Arndt supports the notion that the board and SABC management are able to "manage dissent … using pressure and rewards that, in combination, appear to effectively stifle independent thinking and hence work against editorial independence, and a professional ethos integral to the SABC's public broadcasting mandate" (2007: 89). More recently, the SABC has been accused of reverting to a state broadcaster as its editorial policies stifle news and current affairs coverage.

The other media that had either towed the line in order to remain outside of the scope of legislative restrictions during apartheid, or those that were openly confrontational, were faced with a different choice. Should they support the liberation movements that were now the legitimate government or should they take up a role aligned with a liberal media where they are adversaries of government in order to protect and act as the watchdogs of society? "The broad consensus among the mainstream (mostly liberal leaning) commercial media was the latter, coupled with an increasingly commercialized orientation" (De Beer et al. 2016: 36). So, as the media's libertarian perspective saw it growing increasingly critical of the ANC government, what was also evident was an increasingly commercialized, neo-liberal media which rather than being the voice of society, has been criticized as speaking directly to (mostly white) elites (Friedman 2011). De Beer et al. argue that "the mainstream media has been criticized for supporting this economic arrangement, or at least not being as vigilant of economic power as they might have been of political power" (2016: 37).

The question then is: Where is the space in the current liberalized, neo-liberal, commercial media environment for social accountability reporting and coverage which supports active engagement of citizens in social accountability? Rather than simply criticizing the government for its failures, is there a space in the South African media (particularly print media) landscape for engaging on issues in a way which informs citizens and enables them to better hold the government to account?

5 METHODOLOGY

This study has undergone a number of iterations over a period of more than a year. Its current form is the result of largely two methods: qualitative document analysis of the MAP education programme outputs between 2005 and 2016, and quantitative and qualitative content analysis of Eastern Cape education reporting in the mainstream press between 2005 and 2016. Together, these two methods provide the basis from which to understand how a CSO distributes information into the public domain and the nature of that information, and whether the media are able to move beyond traditional notions of 'objective' journalism in their coverage of education in the Eastern Cape. The history of education in the province continues to impact on the sector in a detrimental manner, and as such it requires a greater degree of depth in understanding the current context. The media itself, has been irrevocably impacted by its history and as such play a particular role in society today. The purpose of the study, and the purpose of the methods used is to understand the relationship between these two and better understand the gaps that can be filled to ensure greater accountability in education.

The aim of the document analysis was to provide an in depth understanding of the types of outputs produced by the education programme in relation to the SAS, and the key themes or trends that emerged in those outputs. Only documents that are publically available (those that are accessible on the PSAM website) have been included in the sample of documents. Appendix 1 provides a comprehensive list of all the outputs analysed for this study, as well as details of the key themes that emerged from each output. The sample period (2005-2016) was chosen to give a comprehensive overview of the outputs from PSAM across a number of eras within the organisation. These included before its time as CSA, during its time as CSA, then the transition back to PSAM and more current outputs. The sample period also spans a diversity of political, economic and social contexts in South Africa, all of which would have impacted on the nature of the work at PSAM. Changes in the education context in the Eastern Cape would also come to the fore across a sample period this size.

The content analysis was done by identifying all stories written by mainstream South African newspapers between January 2005 and December 2016 which mentioned both keywords 'education' and 'Eastern Cape' in either the title or the body of the newspaper report. Only print media were sampled and analysed because this provides a much more manageable sample than including broadcast media. However, there are limitations inherent in only analysing the print media in South Africa, most notably the fact that most people in the country do not consume newspapers but receive their news from broadcast media (more specifically the SABC). However, it is well understood that the print media in any country are key agenda setters in society (Atwater et al. 1985), and as such this provides a strong understanding of the nature of mainstream media coverage across media in South Africa during the sample period.

The search for articles was conducted on the SABINET database which provides an archive of newspaper clippings during the sample period. The search terms returned a total sample of 13948 articles, a random sample of 416 articles were analysed for the research, with some effort to provide a representative sample of articles for each year within the sample period. Only news articles formed part of the sample, which did not include any opinion pieces, editorial comment, letters to the editor, cartoons, advertorials or other non-news items.

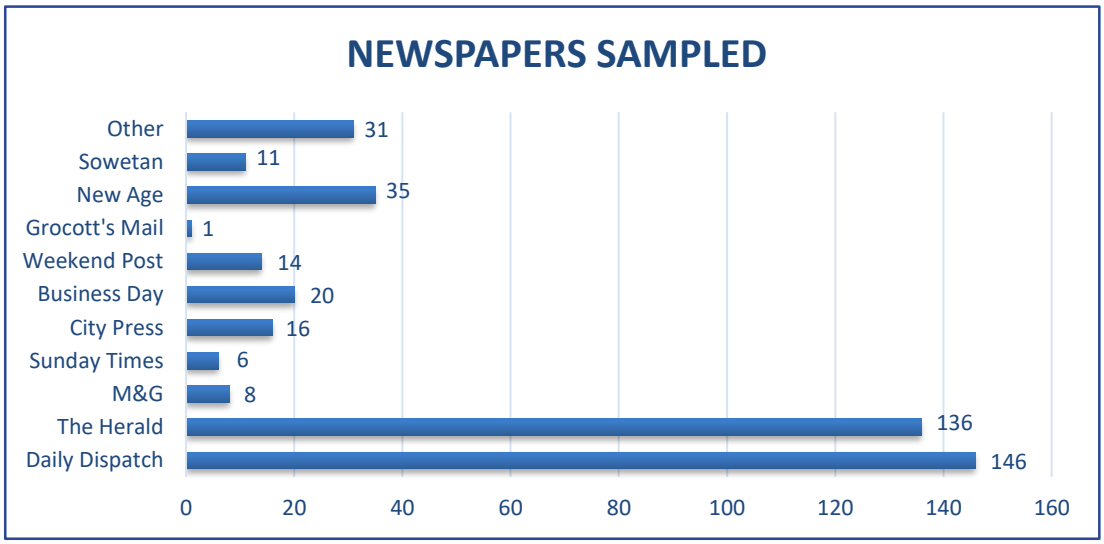


Figure 2 : Newspapers included in the sample

While this is a small sample (only 3.3%) relative to the number of articles returned by the database, because this is a qualitative content analysis, and is not attempting to be a representative sample of the entire body of newspaper article produced over a course of 11 years, it is sufficient to provide an adequate understanding of the type of coverage produced during the period. This is not generalizable to all news article produced during the period, but aims to give an understanding of some of the trends in newspaper coverage of education in the Eastern Cape in a qualitative manner.

Having established the sample for the content analysis, the reports were then analysed according to a number of article-based characteristics. The aim of the content analysis was to understand the general characteristics of reporting on education in the Eastern Cape across the sample. In order to do this, the reporting was analysed with a view to understand who the main actors were (or characters) in each story, who or what are the main sources (or voices) of information for journalists when writing about education, and how are each of these written about (what is the tone used towards the actors and sources in the stories). This provides the research with some understanding of the 'go to' people for journalists in their coverage of education and whether they are relying on the public sector, civil society, the private sector or ordinary individuals to support their coverage. At a more qualitative level, each story was also analysed as to whether it included any aspects of social

accountability or the PRM process. This provided insight into the kinds of understanding (if any) journalists have with regard to examining events that occur and whether their reporting includes any explicit mention or analysis of any of the 5 PRM processes. In addition, the stories were judged on the type of journalism or the role of the story in the public sphere. Both of these categories were an attempt to understand the coverage within the framework that Voltmer uses of the episodic versus the thematic frames.

6 FINDINGS

6.1 PSAM WORKS TO MONITOR EDUCATION IN THE EASTERN CAPE

What is clear from the analysis of outputs of the MAP education desk from 2005 until 2016 is that a number of themes emerge, which provide some insight into the work of the education desk, and also some of the challenges faced more generally in the education sector in the Eastern Cape. The following have been produced by the MAP education desk between 2005 and 2016:

- Budget Analysis (2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2016)
- Service Delivery Report (2005)
- Research report / Occasional paper (2005, 2007, 2010, 2014, 2015)
- Expenditure tracking report (2007, 2009, 2013, 2015)
- Strategic Plan Evaluation (SPE) (2007, 2008, 2010, 2013)
- Performance Monitoring Report (2007)
- Accountability to Oversight report (2008)
- Submissions to provincial legislature (2006, 2013)
- Submissions to National parliament (2005, 2006, 2015, 2016)

While the language, tone and formatting may have changed over the years, one key element that has remained a focus of the work of the education programme through its outputs is creating and highlighting the links between the five SAS processes. There is a keen awareness that each process is part of a greater whole and where there are deficiencies in one, this will mean deficiencies in the system as a whole. In order to illustrate the way in which the PSAM system of social accountability monitoring can be used, the education programme outputs will be examined in relation to the five SAS processes. Not all the reports produced will be examined here in detail, but what is provided below is a summary of the way in which the outputs produced relate to the social accountability system and their efforts in addressing systemic change.

1. Planning and Resource Allocation

In 2013, the education programme produced an ECDOE Strategic Plan Evaluation (SPE): Annual Performance Plan (APP) for 2013/2014. The SPE analyses the alignment between the ECDOE's and national DOE Annual Performance Plans[11] with that of National Development Plan 2030. It is an analysis of the ECDOE's planning documents with a focus on infrastructure, teacher distribution and the School Nutrition Programme (SNP). The SPE highlights the lack of operational plans to guide the implementation of particular objectives, as well as allowing for effective oversight. In addition, the SPE notes the lack of coherence between provincial plans and national plans: "the provincial programme performance measures and target only superficially link to the national priorities. It is unclear how these measures and targets will be met nor how the work will be allocated according to implementing agents" (p.18). The SPE notes positive developments within the department in terms of expenditure, and particularly how improved expenditure will lead to "overall improved planning and performance" (p.13). From the above, it is clear how this one report links the APP to oversight, performance management, and expenditure management.

The other side of this first process is resource allocation, and in 2013 the education programme produced an Education Budget Analysis. While the analysis examined budget allocations across the national budget, it did focus on the Eastern Cape in the second half of the report. What is perhaps most telling are remarks made in the conclusion noting the lack of information available to the researcher (and by extension to the public). Lack of information and planning has resulted in uncertainty regarding the budget and as the report notes in 2008 142 mud schools were reported and in 2012 this had decreased to 141. The possibility of the ECDOE only having eradicated one mud school during those 4 years is not ruled out, however what it might mean is that the definition of mud schools changed during that period. Either way, "it is not unlikely that this lack of coherence in infrastructure plans and statistics even in a single programme will have negative consequences on expenditure throughout the Department" (p.20).

2. Expenditure Management

The education programme produced an ECDOE expenditure Tracking Report December 2013 which provides an account of what funds are available and whether they were spent efficiently and effectively during the financial year under review. This report is somewhat different from others produced by the education programme in that it provides a summary of the PSAM SAS and explicitly

[11] The APP reflects the performance targets set by the ECDOE in relation to budget allocations.

highlights the links between the five processes and how the work of the PSAM is valuable in that it uses information outputs to monitor those processes. The report focuses primarily on the Early Childhood Development (ECD) programme within the ECDOE and notes concerns regarding the need for "an explicit budget to ensure the universalization of access to EC across South Africa" as well as provincial budget allocation and expenditure (p.16). In addition, the report also examines the SNP and links the budget allocation to an urgent need for monitoring and evaluation of performance, efficiency and efficacy of the SNP.

3. Performance Management

The education programme produced a Performance Monitoring Report in 2007 which aimed to review the performance management system of the ECDOE. Integral to this report was an analysis of the department's internal audit function, implementation of effective financial management and internal control systems, and delivery of public services. Key highlights of this report are the fact that despite staff shortages, the ECDOE continues to overspend on its personnel budget, highlighting the link to budget allocations and inadequate planning. Reporting within the ECDOE was another area of concern for the education programme, and something that was highlighted by the Audit Committee which noted that although the ECDOE did provide financial statements on time, they were not of a satisfactory quality, and were incomplete. This was echoed by the Auditor-General (AG) who noted that the department could not "justify its spending against its planned activities" and "means that the Department is in contravention of the reporting requirements prescribed by public finance legislation" (p. 7 – 8).

4. Public Integrity Management

The education programme has not produced a specific report which relates to public integrity management because this process of the SAS is integrated into the other processes, and also relates more widely to regulation and policies in place ensure that public resources are not misused by public officials. It also relates to investigating abuse of public resources by public officials. Many of the PSAM outputs highlight the importance of adhering to public finance regulations and policies, and the importance of holding public officials to account if they do not. The lack of adequate reporting and general inefficiency with which the ECDOE adheres to reporting mechanisms illustrates either a lack of capacity at the administrative level (something which is highlighted often by the education programme) or a lack of consequences for the failure to report adequately, or perhaps both. While the

education programme does not produce an output specific to this process, it shows its awareness of this process in its other outputs and as such continues to link the processes of the SAS.

5. Oversight

The education programme has continuously made calls for oversight of the ECDOE, both directly to the ECDOE, as well as to independent oversight institutions at the provincial and national levels (legislature). One of the most recent calls within the sample timeframe is the Submission on the 2015 Adjustments Appropriation Bill and the 2015 Division of Revenue Amendment Bill to the Eastern Cape Portfolio Committee on Finance and Provincial Expenditure published in November 2015. This report was a collaborative effort between the education programme at PSAM and Equal Education (EE). This report is a powerful example of the use of social accountability monitoring in highlighting deficiencies, challenges and opportunities in public resource management as it uses not only empirical data on budget allocation, expenditure, planning and policies, but also case study examples of how these impact on the lives of real scholars, teachers and principals. The report aims to "highlight areas within the selected programmes that are in need of concerted interventions in relation to budgeting, planning or policy" (p.1). It further highlights the intersections between the different processes by noting that "both EE and the PSAM are dedicated to promoting and supporting effective planning and budgeting in addressing infrastructure needs and, as such, will endeavour to play a complementary role in provincial oversight initiatives" (p.1). While the report calls on greater exercise of oversight by the Eastern Cape Portfolio Committees on Education and Provincial Finance and Expenditure in holding the ECDOE to account for failure, it also notes the positive impact of good oversight. The report notes the positive trend of the ECDOE in its annual AG findings (from adverse audit opinions and disclaimers to being awarded a qualified audit by the AG) and notes the shift could be attributed to "oversight, monitoring and evaluation performed by legislature and relevant Chapter 9 institutions" (p.6). It is highlighted however that it is "important that the momentum of such interventions is sustained in the case of regular statutory bodies or processes (e.g. portfolio committees)" (p.6). Throughout the report, the links between the five SAS processes are made clear and supplemented by data from field visits to Eastern Cape schools and interviews with stakeholders.

During the sample period, the education programme outputs convey the importance of oversight, the importance of linking the five SAS processes. They highlight the fact that efficiency and efficacy in one process will positively impact on the other processes. In addition, they illustrate the importance of linking provincial priorities to national priorities and policies. The work of the education programme has tended to focus on

infrastructure within the education sector and also on the School Nutrition Programme. What has emerged as the key message is that lack of infrastructure or poorly implemented infrastructure development is not a resource issue, in that it is not related to a lack of funds. Rather, there are a number of key factors which have negatively impacted on the ability of the ECDOE to fulfil its obligations in terms of the Norms and Standards. These include high vacancy rates amongst non-education personnel, skills shortages of current non-education personnel in terms of financial management and administrative skills, lack of administrative leadership within the ECDOE, and a failure to use funds allocated for infrastructure for that purpose (instead overspending on educator personnel salaries).

The emphasis on producing outputs which speak to the SAS has sometimes resulted in reports which, although essential in understanding and analysing the ECDOE, lack relevance to real life examples and the impacts of poor PRM on the lives of ordinary Eastern Cape youth. When these types of reports have been produced, often as stand-alone research reports or occasional papers, they are often the work of collaboration with other CSOs in the field (as illustrated with the example above in the report produced by PSAM and EE). What this illustrates is the power of multi-stakeholder partnerships in being able to draw on the strengths of different partners. So, while PSAM will bring expertise in budget and PRM analysis, the other CSOs often bring experience at the grassroots level and expertise in research amongst scholars and supply side actors.

What has been consistently highlighted throughout the years in the majority of outputs is the importance of the oversight role of the legislature, the Auditor-General, and portfolio committees in holding the ECDOE to account. More recently, the reports have included a call for access to information and the importance of public participation in budgeting processes has been highlighted. The Open Government movement has been spearheaded by a number of initiatives such as the Open Government Partnership, a multilateral initiative started in 2011. South Africa was, in fact, one of the eight founding governments (along with Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Norway, the Philippines, the United Kingdom and the United States)[12]. For example, in the 2012 Submission to the Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature's Portfolio Committee on Finance, the report noted the importance of access to information, challenges of having to use the PAIA to access information and "applaud[ed] the public participant efforts undertaken by the MECs of Finance and Education" (p.7).

What is clear from this overview of the outputs of the education programme is that a vast amount of information is produced by the education programme. More importantly, is the way in which it highlights the challenges facing the education sector in relation to public resource management failures, and always makes recommendations for addressing those failures or deficiencies. There is some indication that the work of PSAM has had some influence on the ECDOE, but this is not an impact assessment and as such will not attempt to make further inferences regarding this. More startling is that, despite the amount of information about public

[12] For more information see https://www.opengovpartnership.org/about/about-ogp

resource management of education, there remains significant weaknesses in the quality of reporting on this sector in the mainstream media. This will be discussed in more detail below.

6.2 MEDIA COVERAGE OF EDUCATION IN THE EASTERN CAPE

Understanding the way media covered education in the Eastern Cape from the sample analysed is done by examining a range of different elements of the news stories. One is examining the actors in the stories – who are the main protagonists or characters in the stories? For each story a main actor and a secondary actor were coded – the main actor for the first character mentioned and the second actor for the second character. This identifies who the story is largely about or largely focused on. In the sample of stories, the actors mostly written about (main and secondary combined) is the Provincial Government Office. This means that stories written about education in the Eastern Cape largely target the provincial department as a singular entity rather than individual members (such as the Head of Department or Chief Directorates) of that department. It is encouraging to see that the second largest count of actors (main and secondary actors combined) are learners. This shows the importance of situating the scholar or learner as a key role player in education in the Eastern Cape. It would require more in-depth analysis to examine whether learners are written about largely in a positive or a negative context, or simply as victims of their circumstances. Teachers were also listed high on the list of actors within the sample of reports. The national minister of education also featured highly in the list of actors as a result of the continued need by the national department to intervene in the administration of provincial educational affairs.

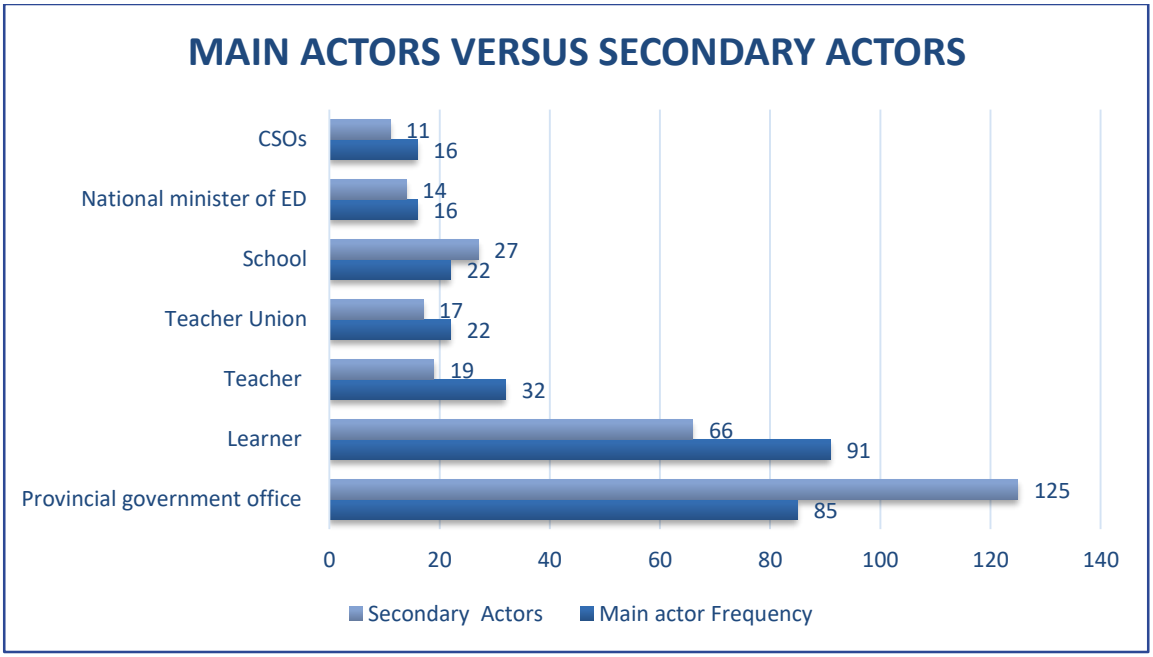


Figure 3: Main and Secondary actors in the sample reports

The influence of teachers' unions in the administration and operationalisation of education in the Eastern Cape has been a trend of significant importance since the establishment of the ECDOE and throughout the sample period. The union's influence on teacher allocations, teacher redeployment, strikes by teachers (Kota et al. 2017), and perhaps more detrimental is their influence on ECDOE structures and staff. Some would even attribute the removal of ECDOE HoD (Advocate Mannya) to pressure from SADTU (Kota et al. 2017: 21). It is also notable that CSOs are coded highly amongst the actors in the sample news reports. The analysis reveals that this is usually as a result of them calling out the ECDOE for service delivery failure, or even taking legislative action against the ECDOE for gross failure in their delivery of education services and infrastructure.

The main sources for the sample reports were officials from the provincial government department of education – this was usually the department spokesperson. As is often the case with traditional journalism, the majority of sources were figures of authority such as government officials, principals (rather than teachers which features more as actors than sources), and the Provincial MEC. Teacher unions (particularly SADTU) also feature highly as sources, this illustrates the amount of influence the unions have in the Eastern Cape education sector and that journalists regard their position in relation to stories about education in the province as important. Also notable is the inclusion of opposition party members as sources, again highlighting the need for journalists to 'balance' their stories with sources from government and then a response from the opposition.

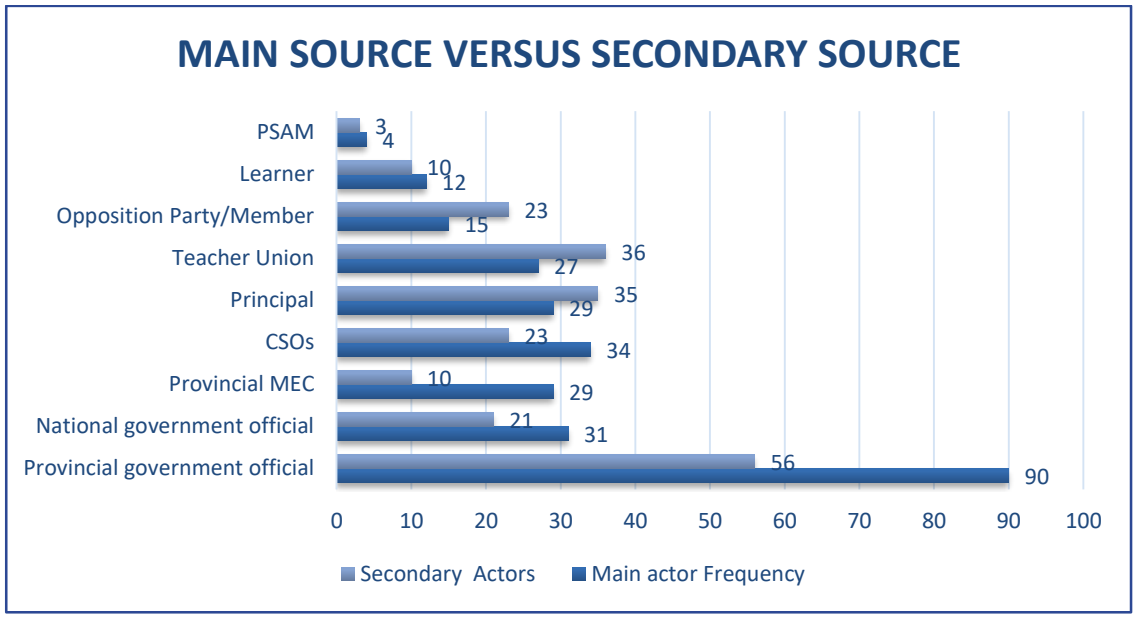


Figure 4: Sources in the stories

It is interesting to note that CSOs are featured as one of the higher sources for reports on education, but disappointing to see that PSAM was only listed in 4 stories as the main sources for the stories or reports. This

is especially disconcerting when considering the amount of information produced by the education programme during the sample period, much of which had a direct impact or relevance to the Eastern Cape Department of Education. A more in-depth analysis may provide insight into ways in which PSAM is used in stories, but the data shows that there is a disjuncture between the expertise within PSAM and the coverage of education in the Eastern Cape.

Eastern Cape facilities must be upgraded

How long it will take to "fix" the Eastern Cape education system depends on the capacity and political will to implement improvements, says Derek Luyt of the Rhodes University-based Public Service Accountability Monitor.

The province had the lowest matric pass rate last year (50.6%) and the national education department was asked to intervene.

Former education minister Naledi Pandor said no education MEC in the province had served for more than two years and the longest-serving head of department had lasted 18 months.

Luyt highlighted other problems, including:

- A shortage of skilled educators;
- Over-crowded classrooms;
- Insufficient learning materials;
- Infrastructure backlogs. More than 600 mud schools must be replaced before the end of the 2008/09 financial year; and
- Lack of adequate expenditure tracking and management.

Education expert Ken Alston, says the Eastern Cape suffers from a lack of ongoing in-service training for teachers. He said: "Children moving out of the province indicates something is seriously wrong."

He said that facilities must be upgraded and discipline restored. "Until you restore people's confidence in schools, learners will continue to migrate."

Eastern Cape education department spokesman Loyiso Pulumani was approached repeatedly for comment, but gave no response. — *Prim Gower*

Figure 5 shows an example of a news story which includes PSAM as a key source (main source) and provides some thematic discussion (though lacks analysis) of the issues surrounding poor education services in the Eastern Cape.

Figure 5: Example of newspaper story from sample (Mail & Guardian, 1 October 2009)

The main story subject was mostly around administration of the provincial department. What would require further examination is whether this relates to problems of administration (as anecdotal evidence would suggest). In addition to stories written about the administration in the province, a second subject category was included (after the initial pilot showed a need) to include administration by the national government as a separate category. This is considering the fact that during 2011 the ECDOE was placed under Section 100 administration by the National government, and both prior to and after this the ECDOE was beset with problems of leadership and administration and calls from key stakeholders for further administrative interventions by the national department. The second most frequent topic was infrastructure (again, not surprising considering the fact that the Eastern Cape has the highest number of mud schools in the country and has been the location for constant calls for infrastructure development by civil society).

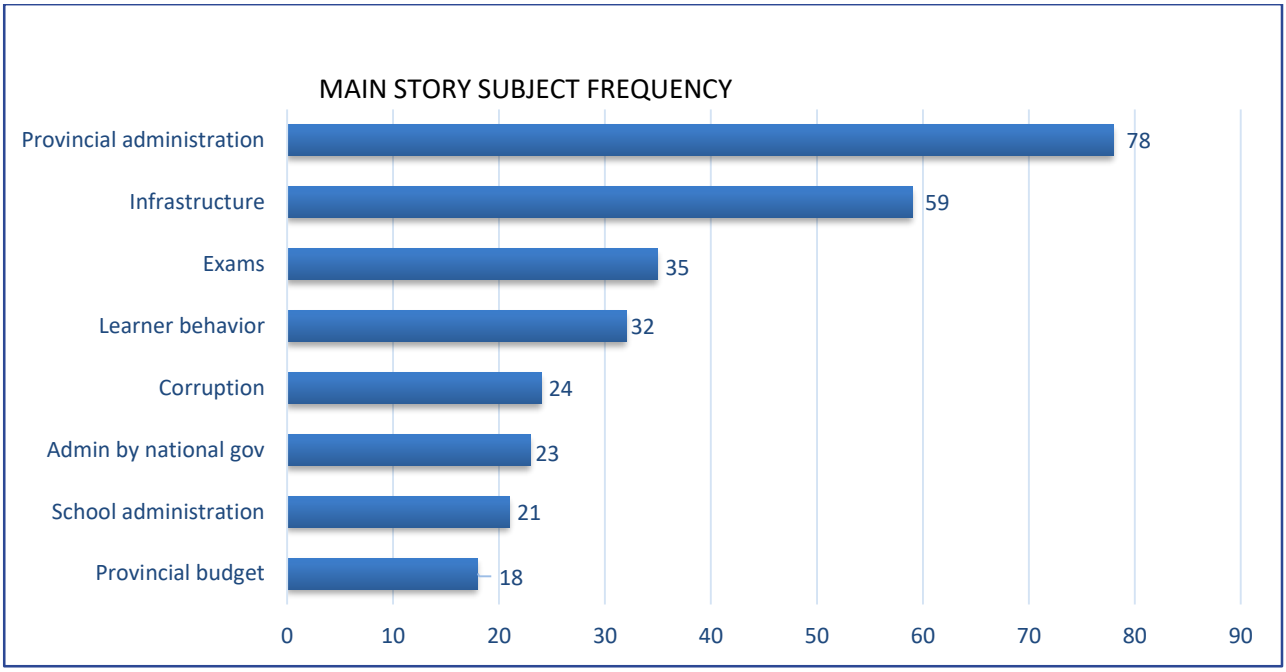


Figure 6: Main story subjects

Sadtu wants Mannya out

'He must go like Thabo Mbeki'

By SABELO SKITI
Political Reporter

TASKED to give the Eastern Cape Department of Education a clean sweep, superintendent-general Modidima Mannya is under fire for allegedly failing to prove he is "Mr Clean".

Mannya is accused of failing to present himself for vetting by the National Intelligence Agency (NIA). And those who backed him for the post want him removed in the same way that former president Thabo Mbeki was axed before his term expired.

Mannya, who controls a R24.6 billion budget, was appointed last November subject to him being screened and vetted.

Former Education MEC Mahlubandile Qwase announced Mannya's appointment with much fanfare after pressure from the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (Sadtu).

But Sadtu has since turned against him and

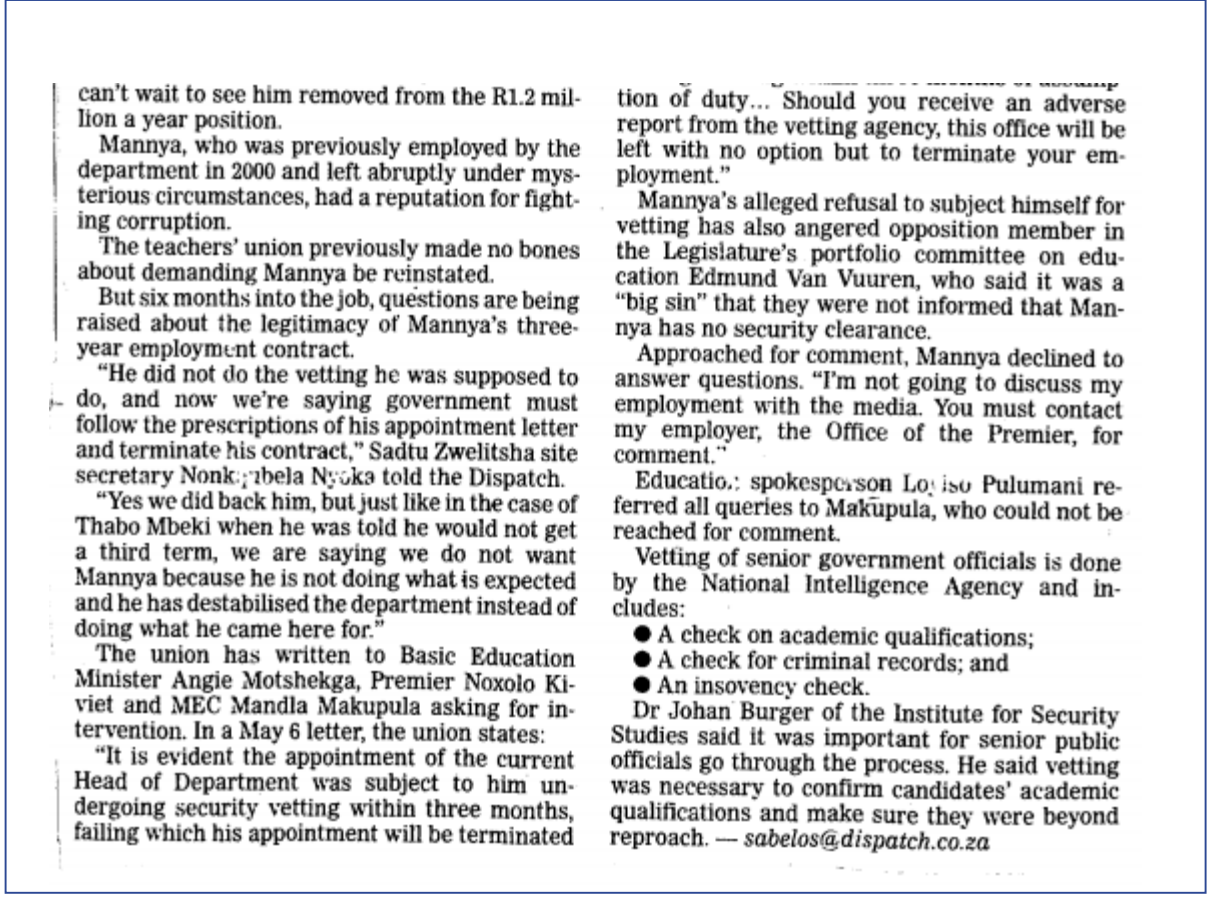
by February 8, 2011. Up until this day the required security vetting has not been done and he is now more than six months in that post."

Mbulelo Sogoni, director-general in the office of the Premier, confirmed his office had not received any proof of Mannya's security clearance. However, he said Education MEC Mandla Makupula's office was responsible for following up on the vetting process.

"The Premier approves such appointments, but career incidents are managed at the level of the office of the MEC. Ours is to support that process," said Sogoni.

According to Mannya's appointment letter, seen by the Dispatch, he was supposed to hand himself over for vetting by February 8.

An excerpt of his letter, signed by the former director-general in the office of the Premier, Dr Sibongile Muthwa, reads: "Given that the pre-employment screening was not done, you must undergo vetting within three months of assump-



can't wait to see him removed from the R1.2 million a year position.

Mannya, who was previously employed by the department in 2000 and left abruptly under mysterious circumstances, had a reputation for fighting corruption.

The teachers' union previously made no bones about demanding Mannya be reinstated.

But six months into the job, questions are being raised about the legitimacy of Mannya's three-year employment contract.

"He did not do the vetting he was supposed to do, and now we're saying government must follow the prescriptions of his appointment letter and terminate his contract," Sadtu Zwelitsha site secretary Nonkqubela Nyoka told the Dispatch.

"Yes we did back him, but just like in the case of Thabo Mbeki when he was told he would not get a third term, we are saying we do not want Mannya because he is not doing what is expected and he has destabilised the department instead of doing what he came here for."

The union has written to Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga, Premier Noxolo Kiviet and MEC Mandla Makupula asking for intervention. In a May 6 letter, the union states:

"It is evident the appointment of the current Head of Department was subject to him undergoing security vetting within three months, failing which his appointment will be terminated

tion of duty... Should you receive an adverse report from the vetting agency, this office will be left with no option but to terminate your employment."

Mannya's alleged refusal to subject himself for vetting has also angered opposition member in the Legislature's portfolio committee on education Edmund Van Vuuren, who said it was a "big sin" that they were not informed that Mannya has no security clearance.

Approached for comment, Mannya declined to answer questions. "I'm not going to discuss my employment with the media. You must contact my employer, the Office of the Premier, for comment."

Education spokesperson Loyiso Pulumani referred all queries to Makupula, who could not be reached for comment.

Vetting of senior government officials is done by the National Intelligence Agency and includes:

- A check on academic qualifications;
- A check for criminal records; and
- An insovency check.

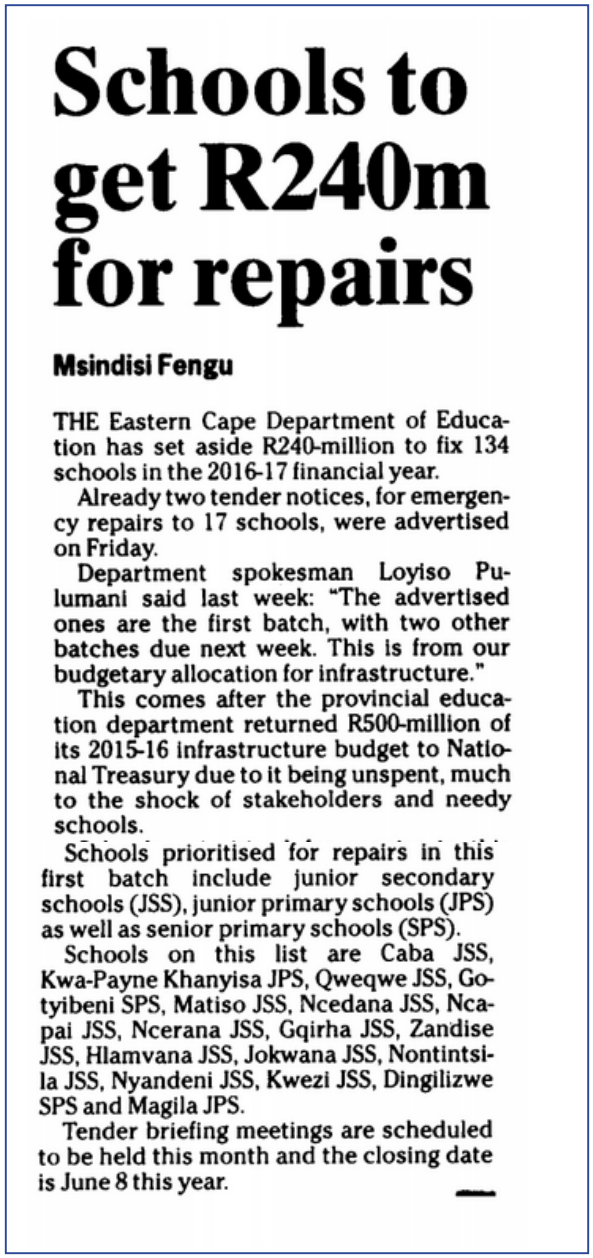
Dr Johan Burger of the Institute for Security Studies said it was important for senior public officials go through the process. He said vetting was necessary to confirm candidates' academic qualifications and make sure they were beyond reproach. — *sabelos@dispatch.co.za*

Figure 7: Example of newspaper story from sample (Daily Dispatch, 11 May 2011)

The story above highlights one of the higher subjects coded – corruption. The ECDOE has been beset with allegations of corruption and misuse of funds. These high levels of corruption are what prompted multiple interventions by the national education department to manage the administration of the provincial department. What is also clear from the article above is an episodic style of reporting, which fails to ensure there are any questions of accountability asked or answered, and very little analysis about the impact of the event (the calling by SADTU for Mannya to step down) on the wider political and social context within the Eastern Cape.

At a more qualitative level, the stories were assessed in terms of the tone used towards the actors and sources. The tone means the way in which either the actors or voices/sources were written about by the journalists. This was judged to be either neutral, slightly positive, mostly positive, slightly negative or mostly negative. What was common across all the results of the tone towards both actors (main and secondary) and sources (main and secondary) was that the tone was mostly neutral to a significant extent. What this means is that regardless of the category of actor or source, they were written about without any position, whether negative or positive, by the reporter. This, despite the fact that most stories were reporting on events of negative service delivery, corruption or poor administration. This points to reporting that adheres to the very traditional notion of objectivity, where journalists are merely thought of as providing 'balanced' information without bias or any element of prejudice. It further indicates a normalisation of corruption and poor service delivery, where

maladministration and poor public resource management is reported on in the same way as other events. What this kind of journalism fails to do is hold duty bearers to a higher standard of judgement as a result of their positions of power. It is interesting to note that in a study on the perceptions of South African mainstream journalists to their roles in society, many considered their role as adversaries to government. In the study, one journalist noted "I think it's very important for any government to have a very strong watchdog presence because otherwise they can just do what they please and if there is no criticism then it becomes a completely state-run media" (De Beer et al. 2016: 47). So, while journalists may think of themselves as adversaries to government, they do so in a manner which perpetuates the balanced is best reporting style. It is perhaps indicative of the commercial interests of the media sector, and the newsroom routines which do not allow journalists the space to interpret issues and events, and thus provide a deeper analysis of the story's relationship to society and citizens in general.



Schools to get R240m for repairs

Msindisi Fengu

THE Eastern Cape Department of Education has set aside R240-million to fix 134 schools in the 2016-17 financial year.

Already two tender notices, for emergency repairs to 17 schools, were advertised on Friday.

Department spokesman Loyiso Pulumani said last week: "The advertised ones are the first batch, with two other batches due next week. This is from our budgetary allocation for infrastructure."

This comes after the provincial education department returned R500-million of its 2015-16 infrastructure budget to National Treasury due to it being unspent, much to the shock of stakeholders and needy schools.

Schools prioritised for repairs in this first batch include junior secondary schools (JSS), junior primary schools (JPS) as well as senior primary schools (SPS).

Schools on this list are Caba JSS, Kwa-Payne Khanyisa JPS, Qweqwe JSS, Gotyibeni SPS, Matiso JSS, Ncedana JSS, Ncapai JSS, Ncerana JSS, Gqirha JSS, Zandise JSS, Hlamvana JSS, Jokwana JSS, Nontintsila JSS, Nyandeni JSS, Kwezi JSS, Dingilizwe SPS and Magila JPS.

Tender briefing meetings are scheduled to be held this month and the closing date is June 8 this year.

A sample story with a typical story structure – an issue is identified (infrastructure) and is explained briefly. Then officials from the provincial department are called to explain and no further analysis is provided. Many questions are left unanswered for the reader and a reader that would want to pursue action towards accountability of those involved would be left without the necessary information to be able to do that. This is a typical example of an opportunity missed by the mainstream media to better equip citizens with the information they need to hold duty bearers to account and call for the justification and explanation of how public resources are being spent.

Figure 8: Example of newspaper story from sample (The Herald, 9 May 2016)

The content analysis also examined the types of journalism present in the sample reporting. Here the stories were examined in relation to the type of role each story was playing as a piece of news. This was categorized according to whether the story was:

A. *Episodic*: person-centred and event driven. This type of reporting is almost purely focused on one event or issue without any further explanation of how this impacts further on society and on citizens. Reinemann et al. argue that "episodically focused news items present an issue by offering a specific example, case study or event oriented report" (2012: 238);

B. *Thematic:* reporting that examines an event or issue at the societal level, "thematically focused news items place issues into a broader context (Reinemann et al. 2012: 238);

C. *Investigative news*: these were stories that provide analysis of the problem, and explanation of the story beyond the event. It also requires, as argued by Albæk that "journalists make use of experts in order to understand, interpret and explain complex issues and events" (2011: 344).

D. *Soft News:* While there have been debates about the difficulty of defining 'soft' news (and it's opposite, 'hard' news), a useful definition is provided by Patterson, who argues that soft news can be described "as news that typically is more personality-centred, less time-bound, more practical, and more incident-based than other news…more personal and familiar in its form of presentation and less distant and institutional" (2000: 4). Reinemann et al. having reviewed conceptualisations of hard and soft news argue that "the more a news item is not politically relevant, the more it reports in an episodic way, focuses on individual consequences of events, is personal and emotional in style, the more it can be regarded as soft news" (2012: 233). These two definitions were used in the analysis of the news sample, and stories that present characteristics such as being personal, emotional, incident-based, and less timely have been coded as soft news.

Stories are very rarely able to be categorised with a singular characteristic, therefore stories were coded according to all of the characteristics above that were evident. So, for example, a story could be categorised as thematic and investigative, or as episodic and soft. The purpose was simply to understand the characteristics of the type of journalism that was evident in the sample. This provides some understanding of the focus and style of reporting on education in the Eastern Cape. As such, it provides the study with some evidence to be able to critique the journalism in the sample.

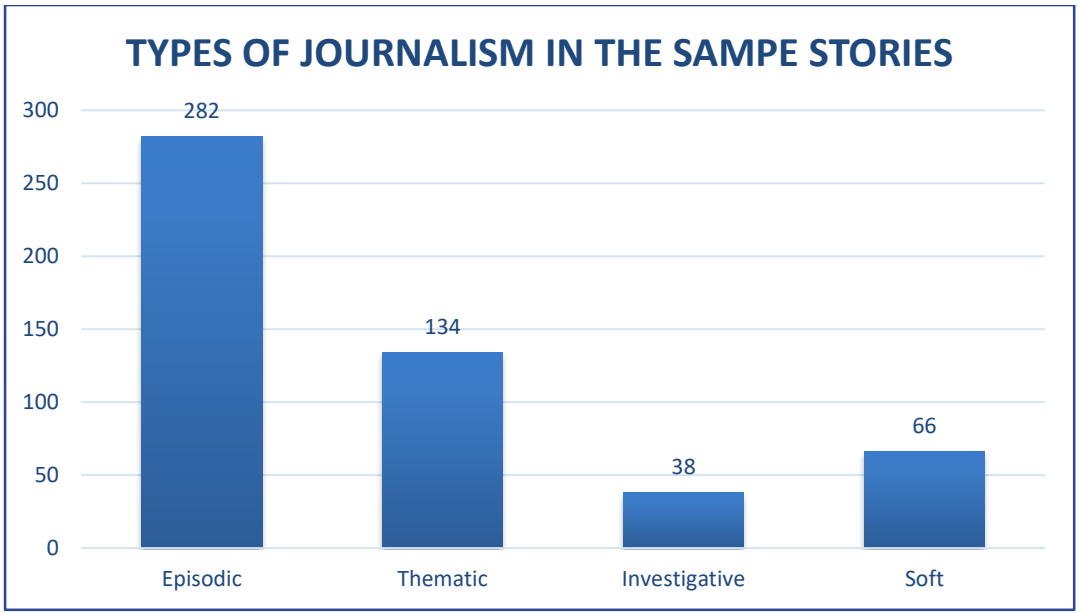


Figure 9: Types of journalism in the sample

This is an almost entirely subjective assessment of each story, but the fact that the overwhelming majority of stories fell within the episodic category does point to a lack of in depth and analytical journalism in the sector. Those stories which fell within this category were the kind that simply reported on an event or incidence, usually pulled/sourced from a press release, or as a result of a media briefing. It is interesting to note that despite the quite balanced reporting, the neutral tone towards actors and sources, and the lack of investigative journalism, that some of the headlines of the sample stories were very sensationalist and disparaging of education in the province. The following are some descriptions used in the headlines in relation to education in the Eastern Cape: *shambles, crisis, poor, fiasco, chaos, dysfunctional, lags, filthy, collapsing, matric misery.* Perhaps this is typical of mainstream media, which aims to attract readers through sensational headlines, but then reverts to notions of 'objectivity' and 'balanced' reporting in the main story.

Damaged Transkei schools still waiting for repairs

By SINO MAJANGAZA
Mthatha Bureau

TRANSKEI schools damaged by severe storms in December are still in ruins despite promises by the Eastern Cape Department of Education to fix them.

On rainy days, pupils are told not to come to school as many classes are without roofs and windows.

At some schools, up to three different grades share a classroom which teachers say is not conducive for teaching.

At Jersey Farm Junior Secondary School at Old Payne Village near Mthatha, 128 Grade 1 pupils are crammed into a single classroom.

Deputy principal Luvuyo Ntsepho said: "We are left with no option but to put all Grade 1 pupils in one classroom:"

The situation was worse at Bambilanga Junior Secondary School at Matyengqina village, near Mthatha, where the roofs of six classrooms were blown off and three other classrooms are partially damaged.

Parts of a ceiling in another of the classrooms hangs dangerously.

"We just hope it will not fall on us," said Grade 5 pupil Someleze Gqosha. "We get distracted when the Grade 6 teacher is teaching. While I am listening to my teacher, I find myself listening to the other teacher. It is impossible for us to concentrate."

Damaged corrugated iron has been used to build a shack for the Grade 4 class.

Principal Nozintle Ncokazi said the situation forced them to come up with a desperate solution.

"We had to do something, and individual pupils," he said.

Provincial Education spokesperson Loyiso Pulumani said R207 million had been set aside to repair 106 schools damaged in the province.

"We had to urgently provide them with alternative pre-fabricated structures at a cost of R127 636 000," he said.

He said the department allocated a further R79 424 000 for repairable schools.

"We expect that all the schools will be fixed by the end of April," he said.

— *sinom@dispatch.co.za*

Figure 10: Example of newspaper story from sample (Daily Dispatch, 16 February 2011)

The story above provides an example of a story categorised as episodic and soft in the coding. The focus on a singular event – schools damaged by severe storms – and the use of individual stories about hardship in relation to the event clearly point to a story which is event driven and lacks analysis. It feels like a missed opportunity by the journalist and publication to interrogate the problems in resource allocation and expenditure management within the ECDOE. While the story does aim to raise the emotions of the reader by highlighting the plight of disadvantaged learners, what it fails to do is provide the reader with a sense of who is accountable for such a disservice, what avenues are available to the citizens to rectify the situation, and how this one incident is part of a bigger system of failure in education infrastructure in the Eastern Cape.

The final category to be examined was whether the stories in the sample had any element or mention of the social accountability system or the public resource management processes. The purpose of this qualitative measure was to gain an understanding of whether the reports were able to make connections between events

such as lack of services or infrastructure in schools with PRM and the wider cycle of public resource administration within a government department. This was done by assessing each story based on whether it made any mention of any of the 5 processes in the PRM cycle. Each story in the sample was analysed to determine whether it mentioned (whether explicitly or implicitly) any of the 5 PRM processes up to three times per story. Some stories were coded as not needing any elements of PRM because they reported on elements of education which were in no way related to public resources. This included for example a story on purchasing school uniforms, another on curriculum, stories which were wholly political, or stories regarding learner behaviour outside of school. Stories were assessed and coded in relation to the PRM processes based on whether the mention was explicit (directly mentioning any of the elements of the 5 PRM processes such as oversight through the Auditor-General's report, or budget allocations following the State of the Province address) or implicit (mention made of any of the 5 PRM processes or elements thereof in a way that does not directly speak to them but represents a connection to them. For example, stories that report on repairs to a school and provide a figure for those repairs would be coded as having mentioned expenditure of public resources but implicitly). The vast majority of stories were coded as having made implicit reference to public resource management or any of the 5 PRM processes.

It is perhaps surprising, considering the fact that the majority of stories related in some way to PRM issues (administration, infrastructure and budgets) that most of the stories failed to make direct and explicit links between the event being covered and the PRM processes. Instead, most made implicit mention of one or two of the PRM processes in a way that suggests there is a lack of understanding the links between poor service delivery and issues around corruption, wasteful expenditure, poor resource allocation or oversight to the way in which the system of public resources is managed. This was perhaps judged harshly as it required that journalists, for example, make connections between budgets and performance management, when very few of the stories related at all to performance, or that connections are made between budget allocations and accountability.

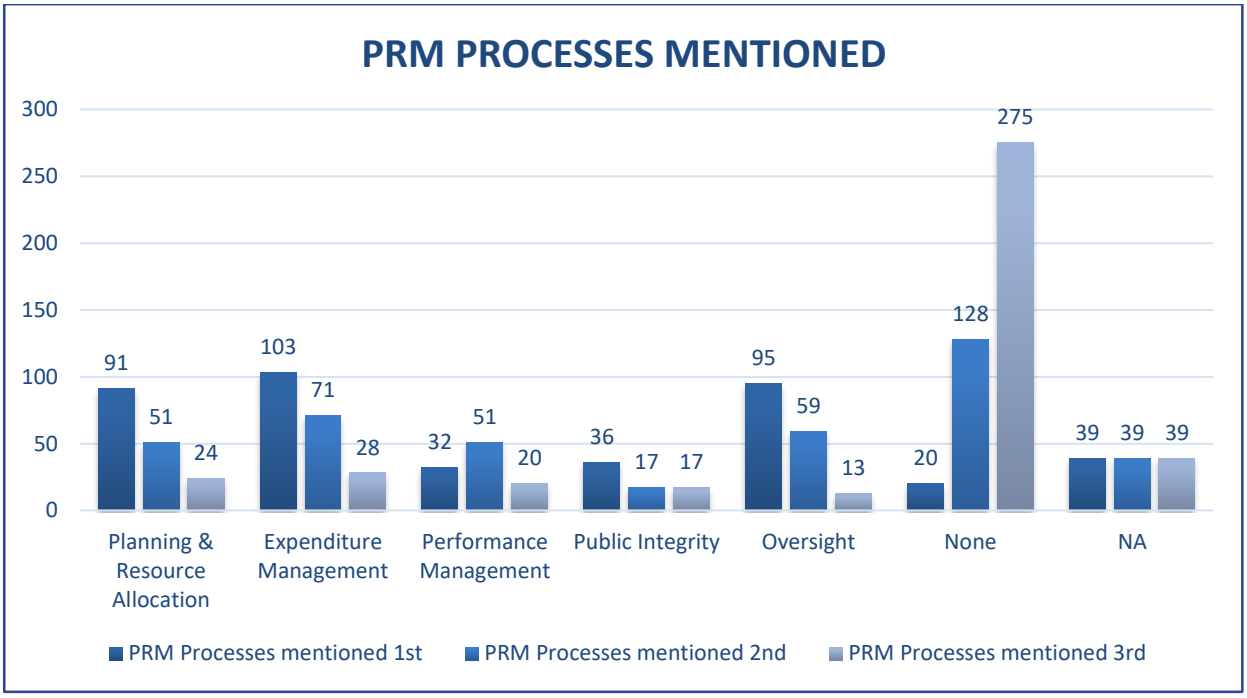


Figure 11: Stories with elements of the social accountability system

Bhisho underspends on education budget

Msindisi Fengu

THE Eastern Cape Department of Education's expenditure is expected to be underspent by more than R358.8-million in the 2015-16 financial year, out of a total of R29.48-billion.

The figur...

"The department's total expenditure as at the end of September 2015 is R13.5-billion which represents 46% of the total budget," department accounting officer Siza Netshilaphala said in her financial oversight report.

It detailed expenditure trends from April 1 to September 30 this year.

Reasons for underspending include:

Ý Delays in filling critical administration posts (R8.5-million unspent);

Ý Delays in paying performance bonuses and other items (R53.2-million);

Ý Delays in filling infrastructure development posts (R2.9million); and

Ý Late payment of early childhood development (ECD) practitioners, totalling R12.8million in underspending.

Netshilaphala said this was because the contracts of ECDs were terminated annually.

"Some of the districts omitted practitioners during the reappointment process," she said.

In addition, the department had spent R11.2-billion on salaries as at the end of last month, representing just 47.5% of the R23.6-billion for compensation of employees.

These costs make up 80.3% of the department's budget.

It has been projected that R36.4-million of the salary costs will be unspent.

In the 2014-15 financial year, the department spent 97.7% of its total appropriated budget of R28-billion.

The department's chief financial officer, Henry Isaacs, said that R128.7-million could not be spent due to the delayed recruitment of replacement teachers.

The department had also underspent R335-million of the R1.9-billion budget for goods and services, mostly due to failure to meet pupil-teacher support material financial obligations.

Bhisho legislature UDM chief whip Thando Mpulu said the problems faced by education were systemic, not structural.

Figure 12: Example of newspaper story from sample (The Herald 29 October 2015)

This article fails to question relationships between the resource management process and who is accountable for mismanagement, what systems are in place to ensure this does not happen again, examine in depth why the budgets were not effectively spent? The last sentence is telling of the failure of this news report in that it quotes a member of the provincial legislature as saying "problems faced by education were systemic" but does not provide its readers with a clear understanding of what this means, how the system works, how they are impacted by the system, or why the system is failing. This article illustrates some of the problematic nature of the reporting in the sample. While it may explicitly mention budgets and resource allocation, it fails to provide any analysis of these and one has to ask whether a news story like this would be beneficial to citizens in holding duty bearers to account?

7 DISCUSSION

The aim of this research is to explore the role of the media in social accountability in the context of the education in the Eastern Cape, and in light of the monitoring and research carried out by the education programme at PSAM. What the results are pointing to is that, media coverage of the ECDOE has been extensive during the sample period. However, the type of 'balanced' and episodic reporting that proliferates the mainstream press is inadequate in providing citizens with the information they require to become active participants in social accountability of public officials in the education sector. Beyond its inadequacy, the type of coverage analysed in the sample also normalises public resource management crises and corruption in the public sector because it reports on these in much the same way as it reports other events. This results in journalism which fails to act as forth estate because it fails to hold public officials to higher standards than other citizens. This normalisation of corruption and public service failure means that while the mainstream print media are reporting in volumes about corruption and other PRM weaknesses, their coverage fails to go beyond the hype. As Coronel argues, "they make waves, win awards, generate controversy for a couple of weeks, but the wrongdoings they expose are not acted upon" (2010: 124).

Part of the reason that the media coverage fails to result in real accountability is because there is an offhand manner in which 'accountability' is used in the sample news reports, with a clear failure to make connections between system weaknesses and how public officials should be held accountable. The stories produced and analysed in the sample lack depth and a critical understanding of the way in which individual events are related to a bigger system of PRM. Even more importantly, there is a failure by journalists to understand where the weaknesses in the PRM system are resulting in maladministration, lack of service delivery and corruption, and

as such are unable to play a greater role in social accountability of the ECDOE. As Voltmer (2010) notes, they are presenting the issues in an 'episodic frame' rather than a 'thematic frame'. A thematic frame would allow the media to provide a broader examination of the issues, and in doing so, equip citizens with the kinds of information they need to be able to hold public officials to account for the way in which public resources are spent. It would allow issues around education to be linked to societal and political implications, and provide a deeper understanding of issues beyond a crisis event.

Too often the assumption made by journalists is that by simply reporting on the scandal, the corrupt official or the instance of maladministration this is enough to justify their role as watchdogs. What the watchdog journalist should do is adequately inform citizens in a critical way, in order to equip them to voice their concerns and demand answers from power holder. But without adequate information, citizens are left simply informed about an event and not the resultant impact of that on their rights. In Figure 8, for example, while there is some detail about public resource management, it fails to go beyond the event to provide the reader with a greater understanding of how these failures result in a lack of services for learners in the Eastern Cape. What citizens require in order to perform any kind of social accountability monitoring is relevant, accessible and in-depth information which enables them to understand where the problems are within a wider system of PRM.

The history of the media in South Africa shows that the printed press have a particular vested interest in the way they report on the government at national and provincial level. This, in addition to their commercial interests, means that their agenda setting focus is not always in the best interests of citizens. The question that media should ask themselves is, how can we serve our commercial interests and serve the information needs of citizens to enable enhanced social accountability monitoring and engagement?

It is clear from the content analysis that the media are failing to effectively hold public officials to account, and failing to equip citizens to hold public officials to account because they are failing to draw on the expertise which would enable them to do this. The mainstream media in South Africa have been accused of overly negative reporting on the government, acting as an 'unofficial' opposition to the ANC government, and failing to represent the interests of all citizens (particularly the marginalized and disadvantaged), this seems to be holding true. The data is showing that while there is a large amount of reporting about the problems in administration within the ECDOE, this does not translate to accountability-relevant information. It is a strange paradox that they are critical of the government, but in doing so profile mostly power holders and powerful elites with less priority given to the voices of marginalised communities.

The data also shows that the education programme within PSAM is producing a large amount of information. This information is able to not only examine the 5 processes within the PRM cycle, but also make explicit and direct links between those 5 processes, so that a wider systemic analysis is the result. It undertakes a detailed

and in-depth process of social accountability monitoring, but as Peruzzotti & Smulovitz argue "social accountability requires visibility, and the media is the most important instrument to achieve this goal" (2006:23). Thus, while PSAM should be a valuable source of information for any story related to the management of public resources within the ECDOE, the data shows that PSAM were only listed as main sources for the 416 stories on 4 occasions. The challenge for civil society organisations working towards change and more effective service delivery is how to set the agenda within the public domain? While society may expect the media to act as watchdogs, if civil society fails to equip the media with the expertise that they hold, these expectations are unfounded. The question that CSOs should ask themselves is, how can we leverage the power of the media so it can be an essential element within social accountability monitoring?

It is no longer enough for CSOs like PSAM to simply react to media requests for comments on events, or release statements in reaction to a crisis. What is required is a better understanding of the role the media can play in social accountability practice, and then an acknowledgment that this requires concerted effort on the part of CSOs to foster and build relationships with media. These relationships can ensure a shared vision between CSOs and the media in their power, together, to hold public officials to account. Working together allows CSOs to share their expertise and in depth knowledge in a field with journalists, who are then equipped to adequately inform citizens through critical and in depth journalism to hold duty bearers to account for failures in public resource management. The expectation from PSAM that they could produce vast amounts of research on the ECDOE and that this would then be taken up by the media in a meaningful way was short sighted. What is required to take advantage of the position of the media in society as the bridge between government and citizens is active engagement between CSOs and the media, and acknowledgement by CSOs that the media should be harnessed as a central element of their social accountability practice.

In order for South African citizens to better hold public officials to account, they need to understand the ways in which public resources are used and abused, and how to make public officials explain and justify those actions. Without adequate information from the media, beyond coverage of corruption, crisis and scandal, citizens are left information-poor, and the problems of structural weaknesses in the PRM will continue at all levels. What is required is that journalists are able to understand the PRM cycle, report events in a way that relates those to the different PRM processes, and in doing so equip citizens with information they can use to carry out their right to social accountability. One way to do this is to better equip journalists to understand the social accountability system through capacity building and collaboration.

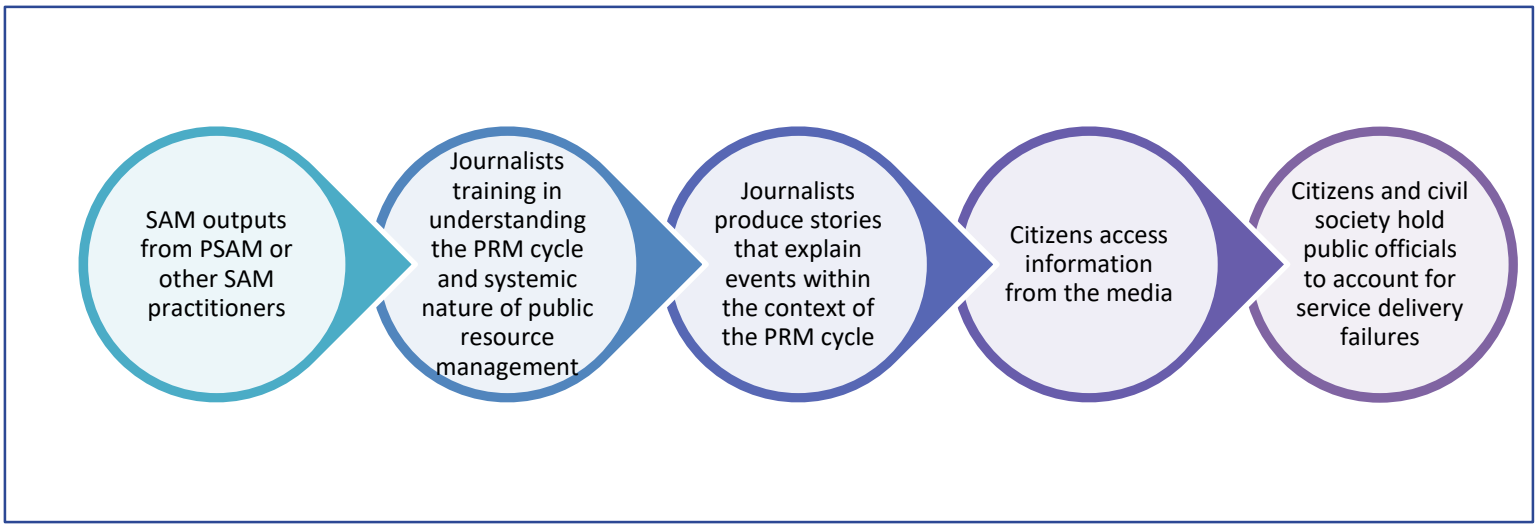


Figure 13: Improving social accountability monitoring through improved reporting

Another important element to improve the media's role in social accountability monitoring is to build and foster direct relationships between the media and CSOs. This means CSOs need to engage with the media not simply as an outlet for outputs, but as a partner in social accountability monitoring. The obvious gap between the outputs produced by PSAM and their use by the media points to a need to bridge that gap in a meaningful and conscious manner. This would ensure that CSOs are not simply another source in a 'balanced' story, but rather situate themselves as agenda setters within the public sphere. The media have also failed to draw on the work of experienced CSOs in order to better equip their readers to be active citizens. Instead, they rely on the same sources of information, portraying complex issues in a formulaic manner that leaves readers ill equipped to participate in social accountability. This further normalises PRM maladministration and corruption in society.

8 LIMITATIONS

Additional in depth research is required to more effectively understand the engagement between the media and CSOs in the social accountability field. Particularly an examination of positive deviance which allows for successful engagement between a CSO and the media in a particular context. This would allow an examination of what characteristics enable successful engagement between these two entities which builds an information-rich and active citizenry, and a more conducive social accountability context.

The study was limited by the fact that it only examined mainstream print media, and as such did not gain any insight into the manner in which either commercial or public service broadcasting is able to play a role in

social accountability in the Eastern Cape (and perhaps more broadly). Television and radio provide additional and different opportunities for investigative and analytical journalism which is not possible in print media. The role of the public broadcaster, as a key resource for information in the public sphere and a space for development is another avenue of research, and would provide an interesting examination of the challenges for public broadcasting in social accountability. In addition, the possibilities for community media to play a role in social accountability has to be engaged with in future research. Community media are a key source of information for many South Africans at the local level and would perhaps have closer ties with local CSOs. As such, they offer a different, perhaps more dynamic engagement between the media and SAM practitioners. The role of social media in social accountability also provides opportunities for future research and would provide interesting insights into the more direct role of citizens in holding duty bearers to account through social media platforms – and would perhaps provide some insight into future possibilities for CSOs in their social accountability campaigns that would not rely as heavily on the media as the bridge between government and citizens.

This study is suggesting a mind shift on the part of both the media and CSOs working in the social accountability sector. First, it is requiring media to reconceptualise the way in which they report on issues which are part of the public resource management process. This would be done by not only changing the way in which they regard the characters, sources and style of reporting, but also by capacitating themselves in the PRM processes and making explicit links between events and issues, and those PRM processes in a way which allows citizens to relate systemic weaknesses to service delivery failures. It requires journalists to think differently about the way in which they report on scandal, corruption or maladministration so that it is not the same as other events, and thus further normalised. Second, the study requires CSOs to rethink their position in relation to the media and the public sphere, and to consider their role not simply as providers of information, but as agenda setters within society, promoting a thematic view of events. It also requires that CSOs consider the media as integral social accountability partners rather than simply tools for promoting information.

9 CONCLUSION

This research provides an analysis of three key areas within the broader social accountability sector. The first is the way in which media can play a role in accountability through their coverage of public resource management processes. The second is the way in which PSAM (and potentially other CSOs) are positioned in relation to newspaper coverage and how they can see the media as a key element in their social accountability practice. And the third is the relationship between these two institutions (the media and civil society) in holding duty bearers to account for the way in which public resources are managed.

Mainstream media in South Africa are providing extensive coverage on education in Eastern Cape, but their failing is that they assume the nature of this coverage fulfils their role as provider of information and by extension fulfils their role in holding government to account. I would strongly argue, as evidenced through the research that it does not. The role of the watchdog should go beyond simple coverage and rather include crucial analysis of events and situations in order to adequately equip citizens to hold duty bearers to account. Without coverage which provides an analysis of the linkages between failures in service delivery with failures in the PRM, citizens are left with information about events, but not the causes or contexts of those events. They are, therefore, not equipped to understand their own position in that context and how they can hold public officials to account.

In considering the role of PSAM in relation to the media, the research shows that PSAM has underestimated the power of the media as a key element for social accountability practice. While the education programme often interacts with journalists and responds to queries about events that take place, the expertise it has in understanding public resource management means that it should be setting the agenda when it comes to coverage of the ECDOE (and the other key sectors it works in). The vast amount of research produced by the education researcher at PSAM should provide the basis through which it the organisation is able to establish an awareness of social accountability in the public sphere. This can only be done by better understanding the possibility for engaging with the media, not simply as a tool for awareness raising, but as a key element in PSAMs social accountability practice. There should be more direct engagement through capacity building of journalists, fostering relationships with particular mainstream media in the Eastern Cape and a concerted strategy for using the media in PSAMs social accountability monitoring efforts.

This research has been a process towards understanding the roles of two quite different institutions (the media and civil society) in social accountability. The main argument made is that for both to be more effective in holding duty bearers to account, and helping citizens to hold duty bearers to account, they need to have a more complimentary and symbiotic relationship. Both the media and civil society need to rethink the way in which they understand their roles in the social accountability sector, but perhaps more importantly, their roles

in relation to each other. Their needs to be a greater acknowledgement that by drawing on the strengths of both civil society and the media, the potential for social accountability practice, and through this greater service delivery, can be enhanced.

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11 APPENDIX ONE

Year	Output	Scope and key themes
2005	Service Delivery Monitoring Brief. The Educational Infrastructure Crisis in the Eastern Cape.	- Creates a clear link between different PRM processes and clearly communicates these. - Combines empirical data/research, government reports, parliamentary reports and media stories to create a holistic overview of the state of education infrastructure in the EC. - "It is important to understand the crisis in infrastructure as one component in a far greater financial crisis within the ECDOE as a whole…It is the PSAM's argument that the departments failure to address personnel issues has contributed to the current infrastructure crisis" (p.15)
2005	Classroom Crisis: School Infrastructure in the Eastern Cape (PowerPoint Presentation)	- Key issues identified: skills shortages, poor planning, inability to monitor, poor communication.
2005	Research Report: Classroom Crisis: The state of school infrastructure in the Eastern Cape	- Names individuals at school, district and provincial level that are seen to contribute to the problem.
2005	Input to Finance Standing Committee on 2004/05 Budget Allocations and Strategic Plans for Eastern Cape Departments of Health, Social Development, Education and Housing	- Joint report by PSAM, TAC and Black Sash.
2005	Schoolroom Stumbling Block (Press release)	- Identifies the fact that there is overspending on educator personnel which has resulted in a budget cut for infrastructure, but there is still a 60% vacancy rate of non-educator personnel.
2005	Research Report: Schoolroom Stumbling Block. School infrastructure in the Eastern Cape.	- 572 mud-structured schools, backlog of 14 000 classrooms, 661 386 learners without adequate classrooms, and 271 638 learners without adequate toilet facilities.

		- Key issues which will hamper attainment of target to address backlog by 2014: lack of funding for infrastructure (establishment of Infrastructure Conditional Grant recommended), communication within and between departments, lack of skilled personnel, and clearly links these broader issues to lack of infrastructure implementation.
2006	EC Education budget for 2007/08 insufficient to deal with its problems (Press Release)	- The decrease in the administration budget is highlighted as particularly problematic as without effective administration, other areas of the department's operations won't function property. - While the infrastructure budget has been increased enough to address the backlog, there are doubts about this being possible as a result of the lack of effective administration.
2006	Presentation to the Department of Education Portfolio Committee	- Four key areas addressed: summary of problems going back to 2001; findings around expenditure management; summary of issues around internal controls and performance monitoring; and regulatory requirements to deal with legislative breaches and financial misconduct.
2006	Eastern Cape Department of Education – An Evaluation of Accountability and Service Delivery Systems: Submission to Eastern Cape Legislature Standing Committee on Education, Annual Report Hearings (PowerPoint Presentation)	- Provides context and introduces social accountability as a concept. - Language may be considered adversarial for example the presentation notes thing like: "*the Department must*"; "it *is imperative that the department*"; "*the department needs to*"; "*if the accounting officer fails to comply with legislative duties, disciplinary action must be initiated against him/her*"
2006	Submission to the Standing Committee on Education, Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature	- Introduces social accountability as a concept. Provides explanation of the right-based approach to governance, to PSAM's definition of social accountability. - Lacks contextual background and a link of the context to the history of the province and sector. - Recommendations are suggesting what should be done, but without much direction in how this can be achieved.

		- Performance management a key area: "we *respectfully request that the Standing Committee on Education consider more thoroughly the conduct of the public servants concerned*" (p.27). "*The MEC and accounting officer for education need to enforce the provisions of the PFMA and other legislation and institute disciplinary action consistently in response to all breaches of this legislation*" (p.30)
2006	PSAM call on the Eastern Cape Premier to urgently outline school feeding plans for 2007 (Press release)	- Response to report/forensic investigation into the SNP - Language shows the urgency of the situation by noting PSAM "*calls on Premier to urgently*"; "*PSAM calls on the Premier to immediately*"; "*the Premier must also*"
2007	Eastern Cape Department of Education Budget Analysis	- Shift away from the previous focus on staff, vacancies, HR overspending to emphasis on the fact that "*the Department needs to improve its capacity to spend its resources effectively"* (p.5). - The analysis also provides details of the outputs which will be produced by PSAM in the year to come stating that from 2007 PSAM will produce 7 main outputs: Budget Analysis, Strategic Plan Evaluation, Expenditure Tracking Report, Service Delivery Report, Accountability to Oversight Report, Scorecard, Integrity Systems Evaluation. "*Together they provide a comprehensive overview of performance of government departments*" (p.16)
2007	Eastern Cape Department of Education Strategic Plan Evaluation: Annual Performance Plan 2007/08 – 2009/10	- Evaluation is divided into two parts: the first is an analysis of the annual performance plan and the second is an analysis of the final operational plan. - Able to link and compare the different departmental plans "*these examples are two of a significant number of strategic objective inconsistencies that exist between the APP and the OP. It is unclear how these objectives will be achieved when there are such discrepancies between the two plans*".

2007	A study into the delivery of the School Nutrition Programme (SNP) in selected schools and districts in the Eastern Cape. Occasional Paper.	- Empirical research with the purpose to evaluate the roll-out of the SNP and whether the current model is more effective than the previous one. - Analysis reveals a link between mismanagement, and lack of delivery by service providers and the staff shortages required "*to ensure effective administration and monitoring of the SNP*" (p.19).
2007	Eastern Cape Department of Education Expenditure Tracking Report 2006/07	- Underspending, ineffective spending and lack of financial management means that the department will not "*be able to receive a significant increase in its allocations for future financial years despite ever increasing demand from those who depend on the departments services*" (p.6). - Not only poor spending but a lack of accountability means "*the departments failure to provide such explanations is unsatisfactory and will impact negatively on the oversight role of the legislature portfolio committee*" (p.5). - Report is able to link different processes in the PRM.
2007	Eastern Cape Department of Education Performance Monitoring Report 2006/07	- Highlights the fact that despite staff shortages the department has overspent on its personnel budget. - Poor reporting mechanisms which "*partly provide the basis for the auditor general's adverse opinion for the year under review*" (p.8).
2008	Eastern Cape Department of Education Accountability to Oversight Report 2006/07	- Calls out department officials for poor reporting and accounting to the auditor general stating that the "*accounting officer and MEC are ultimately responsible and should face the consequences of inaction by department officials*" (p.2). - Highlights the fact that the department has failed to provide enough or accurate information for the auditor general to make a determination in key areas (compensation of employees, expenditure, and property and plan equipment amongst others).

2008	Eastern Cape Department of Education Strategic Plan Evaluation: Annual Performance Plan 2008 – 2011	- Report lacks narrative and context and is targeted at those with knowledge of the processes. - Provides an overview of what the APP should contain based on the provincial framework, and then an evaluation of the departments APP based on this framework.
2008	Eastern Cape Department of Education Budget Analysis 2008/09	- Analyses policy priorities at the national and provincial level and budget allocation trade-offs and suggests "*the department needs to urgently improve its spending to prevent this budget from being reduced during the adjustment budget*" (p.1).
2009	Budget Analysis 2009/2010	- Links national priorities with provincial priorities. - Link back to previous PSAM reports "*as pointed out in previous PSAM outputs, increases in budget allocation do not necessarily translate into better service delivery*" (p.25). - Department is still using infrastructure funds for other activities as a result of poor expenditure and a lack of tracking systems.
2009	Eastern Cape Department of Education Expenditure Tracking Report 2009/10	- Highlights the interconnected nature of the PRM processes. - Links to other processes within the social accountability system. - Highlights the importance of oversight and accountability "*the department must ensure that recommendations made by the legislature and auditor general are acted upon and implemented. It must also ensure that public servants implicated in expenditure irregularities are disciplined*" (p.1).
2010	Eastern Cape Department of Education Strategic Plan Evaluation: Annual Performance Plan 2009 – 2012	- Highlights some possible impact of previous PSAM outputs by noting "*the alignment of the APP and the five-year strategic plan in terms of timeframes was mentioned as a problem in the PSAMs 2008 SPE. The department appears to have remedied this problem to some degree…This means that unlike in the previous financial year, the planning timeframe of the former does not overshoot that of the latter"* (p.11).

		- Links the lack of alignment between the SP and the OP, noting a lack of consultation with stakeholders.
2010	Department of Education Eastern Cape. Budget Analysis 2010/2011	- Report links the importance of planning to effective budgeting by noting "*it is starkly clear that before any real budget management recommendation can be adhered to, the department needs to desperately deal with planning challenges*" (p.13).
2010	An Evaluation of the School Nutrition Programme in the Grahamstown Education District, Eastern Cape (written by Dr Neil Overy for PSAM)	- Written based on "small scale Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS) into school feeding within Grahamstown education district in the Eastern Cape to see if the problems that the programme experiences were in any way caused by leakage of funds" (p.i). PETS is another social accountability monitoring tool not usually used by PSAM. - However, the initial research could not be done because the department would not release supplier payment information and "*PSAM reoriented its research towards an efficiency survey in the style of a Quantitative Service Delivery Study (QSDS)*" (p.i). - Links departmental implementation problems to poor management of human resources and that weak financial management has resulted in: regular over/underspending; misallocation of funds between personnel and non-personnel expenses; inadequate control over departmental assets; and unauthorized, fruitless and wasteful expenditure.
2010	Department of Education Eastern Cape Strategic Plan Evaluation: Annual Performance Plan 2010 – 2014	- Highlights the importance of plans across departments and across timelines to relate to each other "*there is no undertaking made by the MEC to address the province's infrastructure needs. This is a glaring omission as the APP must be closely connected to the department's long-term objectives*" (p.4).
2011	Budget Analysis 2011/12	- Department of education had been placed under administration and the report was able to regard this intervention in a positive light "it is hoped that the Section 100 intervention will not only have immediate positive outcomes but will also result in sustainable administrative

		capacity building and strengthening of the key weaknesses in oversight, budgeting and planning exhibited by the provincial department|". - Calling for intervention to result in long term changes at the provincial level by "*in addition to providing human resources support and financial oversight, that the national department assist in the implementation of department-wide human capacity assessment, as well as comprehensive disciplinary action where necessary*" (p.2).
2012	Department of Education Eastern Cape Budget Analysis 2012/2013	- Notes that a key issue is not access to primary education, but access to and delivery of quality education. - Links the poor expenditure track record to key areas of PRM – administrative leadership, improving spending capacity and performance, confusion surrounding the Section 100 intervention. - Other key areas of concern noted are planning, post-provisioning management, lack of coherence across departments and implementing partners, and a lack of focus by the department "*the ECDOE would be better placed to deal with issues at the core of its mandate: teaching and learning*" (p.16).
2013	Education Budget Analysis 2013/14	- Key focus and emphasis on the role of oversight in ensuring effective PRM "there is a need to enhance the current oversight and monitoring mechanisms by placing specific emphasis on personnel expenditure" (p.1); "*The provincial legislature also has a critical role to play in strengthening oversight in the finalization of a clean PERSAL system*" (p.3). - The report highlight national priorities and the position of the national Department of Basic Education (DBE) "*The DBE does, however, provide counsel on several aspects including personnel spending based on the findings of the Directorate of Provincial Budget Monitoring*

		and Support…this then begs the question how this information is used and how the reports are used to improve expenditure trends in the various government departments" (p.10). - Links between national priorities and provincial performance "*budgetary allocations continue to illustrate the prioritization of the education sector nationally. It is the management of allocated funds that is an ever present problem. The provinces of Limpopo and Eastern Cape are of particular concern*" (p.13).
2013	Eastern Cape Department of Education Expenditure Tracking Report	- Acknowledges positive developments within the department "*an overview of the department's recent performance in terms of audit outcomes reveals positive changes…The department's most recent audit resulted in a qualified opinion…the positive shift is attributable to collective support from provincial treasury, social partners, the office of the premier and to the section 100 (1) b intervention by the DBE*" (p.2).
2013	Department of Education Eastern Cape Strategic Plan Evaluation: APP - 2013/14	- Notes the lack of plans which are meant to be implemented: "*the unavailability of operational plans serves to frustrate and hinder any oversight regarding the quality and adequacy of annual plans*" (p.2); "*there is insufficient details outlining the performance and operational plans for the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Development Initiative (ASIDI*)" (p.12); "*it is imperative from an oversight perspective that the DBE present articulate operational plans for public information, parliamentary interrogation and monitoring relating to the implementation of the ASIDI*" (p.13). - Acknowledges positive developments within the department "*a positive improvement as compared to past repeated under spending. From a performance perspective, the ECDOE must continue on this trajectory of improved expenditure…while improved expenditure alone will not guarantee better service delivery, it will contribute to an overall improved planning and performance environment*" (p.13).

		- Highlights the importance of linking provincial plans to national plans "*the provincial programme performance measures and target only superficially link to the national priorities. It is unclear how these measures and targets will be met nor how the work will be allocated according to implementing* agents" (p.18).
2013	Submission by the Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM) to the Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature's Portfolio Committee on Finance at the public hearing on the Division of Revenue Bill 2013/14 and Provincial Budget	- Highlights the importance of access to information and public participation "*many government departments do not make available either timeously or at all a range of documents that could assist members of the public to engage in the budget process…most of this information should routinely be made public in accordance with various statutes – interested parties should not have to use the PAIA to acquire such material*" (p.6); "*we applaud the public participation efforts undertaken by the MECs of Finance and Education…we would ask the finance committee encourage other MECs to make similar invitations to the public*" (p.7). - Calls for greater oversight by the portfolio committee in response to the AGs report "*PSAM would like to see the Portfolio Committee upscaling its role in holding the executive and senior leadership to account for such misuse and abuse of public resources*" (p.7).
2013	Budget Transparency and Child Nutrition (PowerPoint Presentation) (contribution by PSAM)	- "*This report set out to establish the degree of budget transparency in five African countries in relation to one critical issue: child nutrition*" (p.6) - Generally, findings show positive trends of budget transparency for child nutrition. - Highlights the need for clear standards of transparency at both national and sub-national (provincial) levels.
2014	Hunger: A complex, many-headed monster that we cannot afford to ignore (press release)	- Not specifically focused on education, generally focuses on government budgets in relation to the right to food, which "*is central to determining the extent to which a government is utilizing the maximum available resources to address hunger*" (p.3).

2014	Joint submission to the Standing Committee on Appropriations during the Public Hearings on the Medium Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS) (joint submission by PSAM and EE)	- Linking the different PRM processes and highlights the importance of effective planning for implementation "*amongst the greatest factors influencing this failure is the lack of capacity to plan and budget effectively at various administration levels of the DBE. This has a direct impact on the implementation and completion of school infrastructure projects*" (p.14). - Highlight the importance of oversight functions and institutions. - Recommendations use clear and strong language "*The DBE must allocate*"; "*The DBE and national treasury must improve*"; "*The DBE must implement*" (p.11 & 12).
2015	What does the 2015/2016 Medium Term Budget Promise for Learners in the Eastern Cape? Reflections on the 2015 Budget Speech by the MEC for Finance, The Honourable Sakhumzi Somyo	- Notes positive developments in the SNP in the Eastern Cape, while commends the department for positive audit results, still cautions "*there is a very real need, therefore, to ensure that no regression occurs and that the gains in financial and programme management become a sustained response to years of warning and recommendations from, amongst others, the AG*" (p.7) - Highlight the impact of the PSAM-EE partnership in getting the national commitment to assess the effectiveness of the quintile system. - Despite these gains, the report also highlights a number of failures and setbacks. Also creates a link between the practicalities of PRM processes and lives of actual scholars "*what lies in store for thousands of learners in the Eastern Cape who – while being ostensibly prioritized in fiscal terms – remain largely within a system that teaches many of them poorly and deprives many of them of safe transport and learning spaces*" (p.4).
2015	The Right to Food in South Africa. An analysis of the content, policy effort, resource allocation and enjoyment of the constitutional right to food. (Working Paper 11) (Published by the Studies in	- Case study by PSAM of the NSNP - Warns against budget reduction of M&E of the NSNP because M&E is a weak point across all NSNP programmes

	Poverty and Inequality Institute, with contributions by PSAM)	- Highlights some progress (decentralization of the national progamme) and warns against complacency because "*the DBE must take action to improve its current implementation in order to optimize the effective use of limited available resources*" (p.59)
2015	Expenditure Tracking Report. Infrastructure spending in the Eastern Cape Department of Education.	- Focus on infrastructure expenditure and "*also provides a brief account of what funds were available and whether they were spent efficiently and effectively during the financial year under review*" (p.2) - Links vacancy rates to poor administration, and notes also "*complementary to efficient budget execution and planning must be robust consultation of all affected stakeholders*" (p.10) - Highlights positive progress in the department having come out of the Section 100 intervention, but "*despite these positive trends, the department itself acknowledges fundamental limitations in institutional administration capacity*" (p.2)
2015	Submission on the 2015 Adjustments Appropriation Bill and the 2015 Division of revenue Amendment Bill to the Eastern Cape Portfolio Committee on Finance and Provincial Expenditure (Joint submission by PSAM and EE)	- Report is comprehensive assessment of planning environment in which budgetary decisions are made, and budget allocation and expenditure trends "*highlighted by pertinent case study examples emanating from field visits to schools in the province*" (p.1). - Partnership with EE brings in the case study element of the report which allows for technical PRM evidence to be made relevant and applicable to real examples, and also highlights the importance of multi stakeholder partnerships across CSOs and with government as the organisations are "*dedicated to promoting and supporting effective planning and budgeting in addressing infrastructure needs and as such will endeavour to play a complementary role in provincial oversight initiatives*" (p.1).
2015	Submission to the Eastern Cape Portfolio Committee on Finance and Provincial Expenditure (PowerPoint Presentation by PSAM and EE)	- Reiterates the role the organisations would be willing to play in oversight as they "*hope to promote collaboration between relevant committees of provincial legislature and our*

		organisations in the interests of promoting positive change and development in the education sector" (p.4).
2015	Submission on the 2015 Division of Revenue Amendment Bill and 2014/15 Outcomes (PowerPoint Presentation)	- Calls on treasury to effect greater oversight in terms of tracking expenditure and programme implementation, post distribution and post provisioning model.
2016	Education Budget Brief 2016.	- Highlights the needs for "*continuous M&E of capital expenditure projects …on a regular and rigorous basis. Both national and provincial treasury must create – and publicize - clear accountability and oversight mechanisms through which departments such as the ECDOE can be supported and held to account for education service delivery failures*" (p.10). - Calls for M&E are not merely for oversight functions, but also to ensure "*critical admin and technical support*" (p.11). - Notes the impact of poor service delivery on the poor, and highlights the fact that the onus is not only the ECDOE to "*ensure that this changes but on the provincial legislature and treasury departments to ensure that they carry out legislated mandates tirelessly and rigorously*" (p.11).
2016	Submission to the Standing Committee on Appropriations: Parliament of South Africa on the 2016 Medium Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS)	- Focus on school infrastructure delivery, expenditure, maintenance and other key interventions in the education sector such as the SNP. - Highlights the importance of open budgets and transparency "*the minister of finance announced the launch of the Municipal Money data portal, a significant step forward in opening up public budgets. Worryingly overarching OGP commitments in South Africa remain without dedicated budget*" (p.5). - Notes the importance of access to information by citizens and the need to improve their understanding of different role players in the PRM processes.

The Public Service Accountability Monitor forms part of the School of Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa. The long-term goal of the PSAM is to ensure accountable service delivery due to improved interaction between citizens and the state that has a particular focus on strengthening governance and public resource management systems.

PSAM's activities include research, monitoring, advocacy and capacity building. Working through Sub-Saharan Africa, PSAM generates and shares knowledge about the right to social accountability and the monitoring tools necessary to give effect to this right.