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Service delivery, moral political capital and democratic legitimacy: a case study of Langa and Wentworth, South Africa

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ABSTRACT

This article is a case study of the experiences of residents of two historically disadvantaged communities, Langa Township, which is an historically black African township in the Western Cape, and Wentworth, an historically 'coloured' township in KwaZulu-Natal, of the first 30 years of democratic rule. The focus is on services and governance and regenerating moral political capital and democratic legitimacy. Use is made of insights found in qualitative interviews conducted with residents of the two residential areas on the delivery of services in five priority areas, the impact of their perceptions of the delivery of services on the moral political capital of the ruling political party and the legitimacy of the new democracy, and on how moral political capital and democratic legitimacy can be regenerated. The key finding is that most residents of the two areas believed that their lives have not improved in these priority areas in the first 30 years of democracy, and have worsened in some cases, and that this illustrates a loss of moral political capital because the ruling political party has failed to live up to its promise of a better life for all, as well as a loss of democratic legitimacy because the democratic state has not served their particular interests. The article informs political leaders and policy makers and implementers of the steps to be taken to regenerate both moral political capital and the legitimacy of the democracy that was established in 1994.

Introduction

Thirty years into democracy, South Africans continue to encounter various challenges in terms of service delivery. Not long after the dawn of democracy in 1994, researchers began investigating and assessing South Africans' perceptions of service delivery (Møller and Jackson 1997; Akinboade and Mokwema 2012; Asha 2014; Masiya, Davids, and Mangai 2019). These studies examined perceptions of the delivery of services such as access to education, healthcare, water, and roads and transport (Møller and Jackson 1997), water, housing, job creation, electricity, solid waste removal, crime reduction and community services (Akinboade and Mokwema 2012), and housing, electricity, healthcare, water and waste collection (Masiya, Davids, and Mangai 2019).

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While these studies showed mixed perceptions with regards to service delivery, with some participants indicating improvement in the delivery of services and others reporting either no change or detrition, the general conclusion in these studies is that most citizens are frustrated and dissatisfied with the delivery of services. These studies also note that citizens blame limited administrative capacity, poor finance management, insufficient performance incentives and huge delivery backlogs (Asha 2014), and historical racial disparities, uneven access to services, unfulfilled political promises, relative deprivation and inequality (Masiya, Davids, and Mangai 2019) for their dissatisfaction with service delivery.

However, none of these studies attempt to demonstrate how this dissatisfaction affects the moral political capital of the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC), or the legitimacy of the new democracy itself.

In this article, we show how citizens' perceptions of the delivery of services such as access to economic opportunities, housing and infrastructural development, safety and security, quality healthcare and quality basic and higher education have affected the moral political capital of the ruling party and democratic legitimacy. The analysis is based on perceptions of whether the delivery of these services has improved or declined since 1994, primarily because the party that has ruled the country for the past 30 years, the ANC, promised 'a better life for all'. The article also focuses on citizens' views of how moral political capital and democratic legitimacy can be regenerated.

Use is made of qualitative data gathered in research in Langa Township, a historically black African township located about 10 kilometres from the Cape Town Central Business District (CBD), and Wentworth, a historically coloured residential area about 11 kilometres from the Durban CBD. The research was conducted for a Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) 'Democracy@30 project' at the two research sites between November 2023 and March 2024. Data from interviews conducted with 30 Key Informants (KIs) in Langa and 20 KIs¹ in Wentworth is used. KIs were asked to describe whether there has been any improvement or decline in the delivery of each of the services mentioned, and what needs to be done in the next 30 years to improve the delivery of these services, and their experience of governance and accountability during the period, and what needs to be done to improve governance and accountability.

Definition of concepts and theoretical framework

The definition of moral political capital used in the article draws from Kane's (2001, 10) conceptualisation of moral capital and politics. Kane argues that the moral capital of political agents and institutions is determined by the extent to which citizens bestow respect and approval on them based on how faithful and effective they serve and stand for the fundamental principles, values and goals they set for themselves to gain the citizens' support. In this study, moral political capital flows from the extent to which citizens believe that the ANC has fulfilled the promises of five successive administrations to improve the lives of all citizens.

The definition of democratic legitimacy applied in this article derives from Rosanvalon's (2011, 1–14) analysis of new forms of democratic legitimacy. Rosanvalon sees democratic legitimacy as more than majority rule through elections in a system of universal franchise supported by an impartial bureaucracy, but to include citizens' belief that their government serves the general interest by acting impartially, i.e., detached from

any particular interest, by acting with reflexivity, i.e., considers, and responds to the multiplicity of interests in society, and by acting with proximity, i.e., taking attention of particularity by involving itself in every citizen's problems (Rosanvallon 2011, 6–7). In this study, democratic legitimacy flows from the extent to which citizens believe that their government serves the general interest by dealing universally with every key challenge they face.

Several studies have shown how service delivery impacts democratic legitimacy. McCloughlin has illustrated that 'the relationship between a state's performance in delivering services and its degree of legitimacy is nonlinear' but is instead dependent on the significance the citizens give to service delivery as a criterion to judge it (2015, 341). Rule and Langa (2010, 21) have illustrated that South African citizens at that time viewed the most significant national priority to be unemployment, followed by HIV/AIDS, crime and security, poverty, service delivery, affordable housing, corruption, education and economic issues. Although service delivery is seen as a separate issue, the South African government is perceived as having an important role in providing services that deal with each of these challenges. It is possible, then, to conclude that service delivery is an important criterion for citizens to judge the legitimacy of the democratic state in this country.

Methodology

The Langa and Wentworth research teams embarked on data collection in November 2023. In-depth semi-structured face-to-face interviews averaging two hours were conducted with KIs (see Table 1) in both research sites that were purposefully selected based on their leadership roles, activities in certain relevant community organisations

Table 1. Demographic profile of the Key informants, December 2024.

Pseudonym	Site	Gender	Age group	Interview date	Pseudonym	Site	Gender	Age group	Interview date
Nosipho	L	F	60–69	11/12/2023	Malusi	L	M	50–59	17/03/2024
Ayanda	L	M	60–69	11/12/2023	Siphesihle	L	M	70–79	18/03/2024
Nomvula	L	F	50–59	13/12/2023	Andile	L	M	60–69	22/03/2024
Thandeka	L	F	50–59	13/12/2023	Sibusiso	L	M	50–59	24/03/2024
Mzwandile	L	M	50–59	14/12/2023	Bheki	L	M	40–49	07/03/2024
Sipho	L	M	50–59	10/01/2024	Mark	W	M	50–59	16/01/2024
Noluthando	L	F	50–59	11/01/2024	Tony	W	M	50–59	30/12/2023
Lindiwe	L	M	40–49	12/01/2024	Brian	W	M	60–69	07/03/2024
Thabo	L	M	30–39	12/01/2024	Colin	W	M	50–59	17/01/2024
Bongani	L	M	30–39	12/01/2024	Sharon	W	F	60–69	04/01/2024
Thabiso	L	M	60–69	12/01/2024	Michelle	W	F	40–49	28/02/2024
Nokwazi	L	F	80–89	13/01/2024	Estelle	W	F	40–49	12/12/2023
Vusi	L	M	60–69	16/01/2024	Tanya	W	F	30–39	15/01/2024
Khaya	L	M	60–69	18/01/2024	Andrew	W	M	60–69	14/01/2024
Buhle	L	F	60–69	18/01/2024	Cyril	W	M	50–59	17/12/2023
Yoliswa	L	F	80–89	22/01/2024	Tyrone	W	M	50–59	20/12/2023
Siyabonga	L	M	60–69	27/01/2024	Sydney	W	M	40–49	17/01/2024
Thandi	L	F	40–49	06/02/2024	Paul	W	M	20–29	17/01/2024
Zanele	L	F	40–49	14/02/2024	Craig	W	M	50–59	12/03/2024
Themba	L	M	50–59	17/02/2024	Salome	W	F	50–59	14/12/2023
Xolizwa	L	F	50–59	16/02/2024	Joyce	W	F	60–60	16/12/2023
Luyanda	L	M	60–69	25/02/2024	Celeste	W	F	30–39	16/01/2024
Nomonde	L	F	50–59	13/03/2024	Joan	W	F	30–39	01/03/2024
Zukiswa	L	F	40–49	16/03/2024	Lucille	W	F	50–59	12/03/2024
Jabulani	L	M	40–49	16/03/2024	Stanley	W	M	60–69	09/03/2024

and/or as people directly affected by issues related to specific thematic areas, for example, basic and higher education and housing. The KIs in both areas were selected in terms of gender and age, with a focus on having an equal number of females and males, and of including KIs from each age-group between 20 and 89 years of age. The KIs included many unemployed people, as well as students, unskilled and artisan labourers, volunteers in non-governmental organisations, community activists, leaders of community organisations, businesspeople, and professionals.

This study employed a qualitative research approach, utilising in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, workshops and document analysis to explore the socio-economic and political realities of Langa and Wentworth. To ensure trustworthiness in the research process, the following strategies were implemented in both the Langa and Wentworth research sites:

Credibility

Through prolonged engagements with community members and ensuring an in-depth understanding of their lived experiences, credibility was established. Triangulation of data sources, interviews with community members, government reports, and historical documents helped validate findings and reduce researcher bias. Peer debriefing sessions were with fellow researchers to challenge assumptions and interpretations enhancing the rigour of the analysis (Patton 1999).

Transferability

To provide detailed contextual information about Wentworth and Langa enabling readers to determine the applicability of findings to other settings, thick description was employed. By documenting the historical, social, and economic characteristics of both communities, this study ensures that the results can be meaningfully interpreted in broader discourses on urban marginalisation and post-apartheid transformation (Shenton 2004).

Dependability

To maintain consistency in data collection and analysis, an audit trail was kept, detailing the design, data collection methods and coding process. This ensured that the study's findings could be traced back to the original data and verified by external reviewers. Additionally, inter-coding reliability was established through collaborative coding sessions among researchers, minimising subjective biases (Merriam and Tisdell 2015).

Confirmability

Reflexivity was a critical component of this research, with the authors maintaining reflective records to document their positionality and potential biases throughout the study. Member checking was also conducted, wherein preliminary findings were shared with community members for feedback ensuring that interpretations accurately represented their lived realities (Nowell et al. 2017).

ATLAS.ti qualitative data management and analysis software was used to conduct a thematic analysis with a focus on the KI's views on: the experiences of access to economic opportunities, housing and infrastructural development, safety and security, quality healthcare and quality basic and higher education in the past 30 years; governance and accountability in the same period; and what needs to be done to improve the delivery of services in each priority area above and to improve governance and accountability.

Service delivery in the past 30 years of democracy

The interviews conducted in Langa and Wentworth showed that residents of these two residential areas share several key challenges in common. [Figure 1](#) below provides details about the most significant similarities and differences between the two research sites.

The main challenges these two communities face are improved access to economic opportunities, housing and infrastructural development, safety and security, quality healthcare, and quality basic and higher education. The analysis below draws from data found in the views of the KIs from both areas on these priority challenges. Extensive use is made of quotations from the interviews in the data presented to draw attention to the views of the KIs in their own words.² This was also done because both the moral political capital of political actors and institutions and the legitimacy of a democratic state are largely based on the beliefs of citizens.

Economic opportunities

Langa residents had mixed opinions about economic development in the township over the past 30 years. Although unemployment, particularly youth unemployment, was identified as a significant barrier, there was acknowledgement of economic development with regards to tourism, transportation of groceries for the elderly and the building of supermarkets. However, there was a belief that the economic growth had been negatively impacted by the lack of support for entrepreneurs from the municipality and big franchisers in Langa. In addition to the increased presence of big franchisers, one resident stated

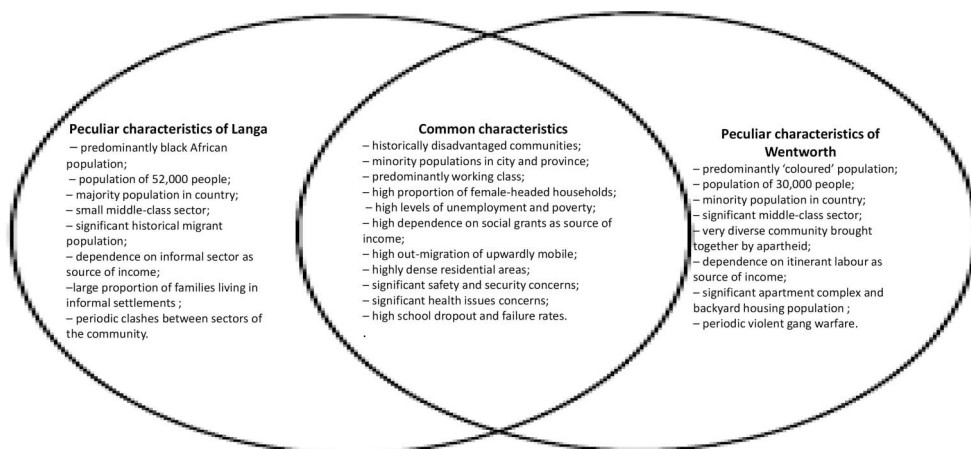


Figure 1. Social characteristics of Langa and Wentworth.

that the increased presence of trade by foreign nationals acted as a key challenge to economic growth in Langa.

That is also the only business in Langa, the tourism. There is also the business of bicycles that are used to transport groceries for old people. We also have health assistance, people who assist old people with their health. Otherwise, there isn't much business in Langa. Langa is just stagnant. (Siyabonga)

What I can say is that ever since they've built Boxer Usave and ShopRite there has been a slight improvement. (Nosipho)

Unemployment is very high to a level that one will start engaging in criminal activities. (Thabo)

There's a lot of unemployed graduates. She graduated, she got frustrated, then she goes for drugs because there's no job. (Themba)

What has become worse is that when the Pakistanis and Somalians came, they took away the businesses that families from Langa had. The only black owned shop that is here in Langa is the one by the roundabout. The rest are Somalian owned. (Nosipho)

If you start a business, you can't access the city base, even though it's empty. The city says someone is paying for it. What can we do? (Lindiwe)

There was consensus among the Wentworth residents that the area had not experienced economic growth in the past 30 years. Most importantly, unemployment levels are much higher than they were during the apartheid era. The residents interviewed provided several examples of how coloured people in general, and those living in Wentworth in particular, have not experienced the positive impacts of efforts to build inclusive economic growth. Included here is the under-representation of coloureds countrywide in top management positions and the small number of businesses in Wentworth.

There [is] a high unemployment rate [in Wentworth]. In terms of steady income, it's very, very poor. (Tony)

Our database of unemployed people spans between 4,000 and 7,000. (Craig)

Coloured people occupy less managerial and top positions in companies throughout South Africa. But before, we did occupy these positions, and we were good enough. (Paul)

A lot of people got brilliant ideas to open businesses. But they can't because they need a startup, and there's no one to give them a startup. (Salome)

The quotations illustrate that while there has been some economic change in Langa itself in terms of the growth of supermarkets and franchisers and some small businesses and no similar growth in Wentworth, the residents of both communities are experiencing high levels of unemployment as well as limited job and business opportunities, with unemployment in particular reaching levels higher than they were during apartheid. Residents in both areas see the lack of economic opportunities in their areas as the most significant service delivery failure.

Housing and infrastructural development

Langa residents had mixed opinions about infrastructural development. Some expressed satisfaction with the infrastructure in Langa, with regard to roads, libraries, traffic lights,

roundabouts and speed humps. Others felt that the situation concerning infrastructure has remained unchanged. The shortage of housing was identified as a significant challenge, illustrated by a long waiting list for housing, the increase in informal settlements, and overcrowding in Langa. One resident believed that the housing situation was politically motivated.

The parks and libraries have been developed. In terms of roads and infrastructure, they have done a great job. Infrastructure has improved in the sense that there are now traffic lights. We have roundabouts that alleviate the traffic, [and] they have put speed humps to slow drivers that are speeding on the roads. (Buhle)

In the past 30 years, Langa has been the way it is. But what has happened in Langa is that there's a growth of informal settlements because of migration to the cities. (Thabiso)

People have been waiting for houses for 30 years. There is a vacant land there and they have been saying that they will build, and it's been 5 years now. It's been long since they've built anything here in Langa. (Nosipho)

I see people not wanting to move out of Langa because of Langa being close to town and their workplaces. Yes, Langa is getting overcrowded. (Sipho)

The Democratic Alliance must stop trying to separate us, racially. One day there will be a huge fight here between the township dwellers and those that live in flats. (Nosipho)

All the Wentworth Key Informants interviewed for the Democracy@30 project stipulated that there has been no housing and infrastructural development in the area since the advent of democracy. They also pointed to a high level of need for housing and provided examples of overcrowding. In terms of the latter, many mentioned knowing of families with up to 20 people, often consisting of up to four generations of a family, living in one- and two-bedroom flats. Others knew of families living in Wendy houses in the backyards of other people's houses.

Housing has been a major problem for the past 29 years, the reason being that there have been almost no new housing developments. You will get one family where there are about four generations living in the same house. (Cyril)

The housing situation is so bleak. We have many homeless people. We have people that have created their own makeshift houses. We have people who don't have access to basic and proper housing. I have a friend who has almost 20 people living in one household. (Estelle)

Wentworth is overcrowded. It is one of the most densely populated areas in the country. And if you take it on a global scale, it's scary how overpopulated it is. (Brian)

It's the most disgusting sight to see that our government would actually put people in Wendy houses. And this is supposed to be their permanent housing. (Sharon)

The flats have been painted and given very minimal refurbishment in 30 years. They could have done much more. They are not building low-cost housing for the Wentworth community. (Tony)

While Langa has experienced some infrastructural development in the first 30 years of democracy and Wentworth none, the residents of both communities felt that the housing shortages had reached crisis levels in the two communities. There has been no housing development in Wentworth since 1994, while the housing backlog in Langa,

and the growth of informal settlements there, make housing a serious challenge and service delivery failure in both areas.

Safety and security

Crime was identified as a huge challenge in Langa. For several residents, crime had worsened significantly since the advent of democracy. Overcrowding and high levels of unemployment were given as reasons for the high levels of crime in Langa. House break-ins, robbing of people, and the mandatory payment of protection fees by businesses were described as common criminal activities in Langa. Residents in Langa have lost faith in the South African Police Service. The police were generally described as corrupt, not visible in the community, and not doing enough to curb crime.

[The] crime rate was close to non-existent in the apartheid era. It is now that we have so much crime in Langa. (Zukiswa)

Langa has gone down the same way as the rest of South Africa when it comes to crime. You see shacks with hardly space to move. An area like that becomes difficult to police. (Thabiso)

The other criminal activities we face are house break-ins and the people that are committing these crimes are the same people that smoke [drugs]. They break-in because they are trying to make money to sustain their addictions. (Thandi)

What people are doing now is making us pay protection fees. (Thandi)

They are being helped by the police also because the police are not paid well to do their job. So, if I'm a thug I say, 'Give me a gun. I'm going to give you R20,000', police is going to bring it because he doesn't have R20,000. (Luyanda)

All the residents interviewed for the Democracy@30 project believed that Wentworth is much less safe than prior to 1994. Several KIs saw a situation today that is significantly worse than it was during apartheid. They pointed to the influx of hard drugs in the community and the violent drug wars that have characterised the community over the past five years; the fear they have of going out of their homes and of violence reaching into their homes; the failure of the police force to provide security and breakdown of the community's trust in the police; and the laws that seem to protect criminals and lack of trust in the criminal justice system.

30 years ago, there was order because they enforced the law, and people were scared to get punished. And so, they adhered. Now, you can break the law and go home free as a bird. (Tanya)

In the past 29 years, crime has spiralled out of proportion. I am even terrified in my own house because of crime. The criminals have their own way because of the government laws that protect them. In my community, drug wars and drug lords have sprung up all over the show. There is shooting every single day. (Cyril)

SAPS do nothing because they are getting paid off by drug dealers. (Tyrone)

The merchants (drug lords) have more rights than anything because they get locked up but two days later you see the same guy walking out. (Sydney)

The residents of both Langa and Wentworth felt that crime had increased dramatically since the advent of democracy in 1994 and that the police force in both areas have

been ineffectual in dealing with it. While attention was drawn to robberies, house break-ins and protection extortion in Langa, Wentworth residents felt that the persistent warfare between drug gangs has made the area extremely unsafe. The failure of SAPS to reduce crime and create safe communities in both areas is considered by residents to be a major service delivery failure because it affects every resident in these communities.

Access to healthcare

Although a few residents in Langa acknowledged improvement in health services, a significant number of residents shared their dissatisfaction with the healthcare system. The removal of the hospital from Langa was a recurring issue for residents, while residents described having to share a hospital with a neighbouring coloured township, Bonteheuwel. Accessing this facility was largely described as dangerous due to unsafe roads and high levels of crime in the area. The hospital was also described as not easily accessible to the elderly and disabled. One resident described the racial disparity in terms of service at the hospital. Long queues, lack of ambulance services, lack of specialised medical services, and uncaring and disrespectful hospital staff were also described as negatively impacting service delivery in terms of health in Langa.

The small clinic that we had was moved away from Langa. We have to go to Bonteheuwel [where] there's a long queue of people. Then they say we are only going to admit 30 today and you are 32 in the queue. (Vusi)

At Vanguard [clinic] they attend to the coloureds. There's always an excuse, 'You can't come to a clinic at 10:00 and expect to be attended while there were people that were showing up there at 07:00'. (Sipho)

The ambulance takes time to arrive. [It] takes four to six hours. Sometimes it doesn't arrive at all. (Luyanda)

Nurses that work at hospitals don't care about the people. They don't have respect for sick people. So, things have really changed. The previous government was better. (Sibusiso)

Most participants from Wentworth acknowledged that there has been significant improvement in access to healthcare for residents. There is a provincial hospital on one of the area's borders and a clinic that is located in the middle of the township. However, virtually all participants had problems with the quality of healthcare provided at both facilities. Participants drew attention to several other challenges at the two healthcare facilities, including the time one spends getting medical attention; the shortage of medical personnel; insufficient and wrong medication given to patients; the lack of equipment to deal with cancer and respiratory illnesses that are plaguing members of the community; the lack of a 24-hour clinic, mobile clinics and standby ambulances; and the failure to keep the facilities clean. However, the most significant problem that most residents drew attention to is the attitude of the staff at both healthcare facilities.

We have access to our health facilities. You can say they are a walking distance from us. What we lack is that when we go to our facilities, the number of hours that we spend in the facility is too much. (Tanya)

You go to the clinic or the hospital, 90% of the time they do not have your prescription. (Cyril)

Our aged people go to these hospitals and these clinics and are made to sit there for hours. And the way they are treated by the people that work in these hospitals and clinics; like they are doing these people a favour or it's a sacrifice they are making for them. (Andrew)

We have a higher incidence of cancer and respiratory disorders than any other area. And for as long as I can remember, people have been asking for that kind of facility [to deal with these disorders] to be put into place for the people of Wentworth. (Tony)

Both communities have serious health issues concerns, making access to quality healthcare a priority issue. Wentworth has experienced an increase in access to healthcare facilities, while Langa has experienced a decline that is very challenging for residents. Nevertheless, the residents of both communities drew attention to their concerns about the quality of healthcare services, which is not what they were expected in the democratic era. This disillusionment with access to quality healthcare is considered a serious service delivery failure that affects significant sectors of both communities.

Basic and higher education

The residents of Langa interviewed for the Democracy@30 project had mixed responses with regards to basic education over the last 30 years of democracy. While some acknowledged improvement with regards to access and resources in schools, other residents felt that the quality of education in Langa had worsened or remained unchanged. Some residents felt that the education system was in fact better under apartheid. Residents cited the low subject pass mark³ and low matric pass rate as indicators of the poor quality of education in Langa. Some residents also felt that the schools in other areas that are historically coloured and white are better than the Langa schools. The removal of corporal punishment⁴ and the poor quality of teachers were seen as key challenges for education in Langa. Teachers were described as not possessing the necessary dedication, passion and substance to effectively teach and support learners at school. The problematic circumstances teachers are subjected to at schools were also cited in residents' narratives.

Even though Bantu education was bad, it was better than what is happening in our schools today. (Nokwazi)

We are forever crying about the standard of our education system. How on earth can [the basic] education [department] say that 30% is a pass mark? (Nokwazi)

The white schools have been maintained. They always have a person to look after [them], cleaning, maintaining, [and] painting. Everything is sustained, whereas ours would be left until we cry wolf. (Ayanda)

The rule that says there must be no corporal punishment at schools was the thing that lowered the standard of the school because the children are disrespecting the teachers and are no longer scared of the principal. (Thandi)

And the teachers in those black schools then are overwhelmed. They already have bigger numbers than other schools. They are not motivated by anything because they are dealing with despondent students. The school is not equipped enough with all that is fun and games in other schools. (Ayanda)

Wentworth participants in the Democracy@30 project were unanimous in their belief that, while access to basic and higher education have improved, the quality of basic education

has declined significantly since 1994. These residents of Wentworth also felt that the education system was better during the apartheid era. Many expressed similar concerns raised by Langa residents, including the lowering of standards in basic education, in particular the 30% subject pass mark and the requirement to allow failing learners to progress to the next school grade.⁵ They were concerned about the overcrowding at schools and large classes due to the influx of schoolchildren from neighbouring black African townships. They also criticised the government for failing to implement free education by requiring parents to pay unaffordable school fees and to pay for stationery and textbooks. The government also failed education in the community because it provided schools with very limited resources set at a level similar to those provided to schools in wealthier communities.

Residents drew attention to several other challenges in the basic education system, including the lack of feeding schemes at schools in what is an impoverished community, the increasing number of schoolchildren who are illiterate and lack numeracy capability, the impact of the ban on corporal punishment on discipline at schools, and violence at some schools.

You can now get away with the 30% pass. You don't have to do maths. You can do maths literacy. (Tony)

Our kids cannot do a simple addition sum. They can't read a word problem and comprehend what is being asked of them, interpret that and then do the answer. (Brian)

How do you, as an educator, teach a child that's got no respect for you? They know you can't discipline them in a way that you really need to. (Colin)

Being in a class with 45 kids, I think that is not good for the child as well as the teacher, because how is that one teacher going to give the attention that's needed to 45 different children? (Salome)

Our schools are terrible and are falling apart. There are drugs being sold in our schools. There's gangsterism in our schools. It's not what we expected. (Michelle)

With regards to higher education, while residents in Langa acknowledged the positive impact of democracy with regards to improving access to higher education, they also felt that access to education at this level is significantly challenged by the low pass rate of matriculants in the area and the lack of funding from NSFAS.

In 1994, the proportion of young people between the ages of, say, 19 and 24, who were in higher education was very low, something like 15% for blacks. But now they are in the majority. So, access to higher education and to education generally [has improved]. (Khaya)

There is no higher education anymore. For example, a grade 12 class can have 50 something kids and only 5 will pass. (Nomvula)

All the students are complaining in colleges [and] in universities about NSFAS. They never get their funds. (Vusi)

Some participants in the Democracy@30 project interviewed in Wentworth noted the increased access to higher education and availability of bursaries and scholarships. However, most participants noted that access to higher education is limited because most bursaries that are available are generally given to black African youth, particularly

in a situation where most parents cannot afford to pay the fees for tertiary education. Other challenges include the inability of matriculants from the area to compete with learners from better performing schools for bursaries and scholarships, and the racial quota system for new students applied by tertiary institutions.

The parents don't have money for education. In the apartheid era there were more opportunities. (Estelle)

When it's time for them to apply for NSFAS funding they do not get it. I haven't heard of a coloured child getting that money. (Celeste)

You've got to be at the top of your game to get into a prestigious higher education institution or you have to go to an FET college or a trade school. So, because you are really competing against people that have seven distinctions, your chances of getting in are slim to none. (Brian)

The residents of both communities acknowledged increased access to basic and higher education but raised concerns about the standard of basic education in general, and the quality of education and resources provided to schools in their areas as well as access to funding for tertiary education. While Langa residents pointed to a poor matric pass rate, Wentworth residents drew attention to racial bias in access to funding for tertiary education. There is a general sense that the delivery of quality education, and in particular the failure to fulfil the promise of free education, has been a dismal failure that impacts both communities.

Table 2 below includes a summary of the common and differing concerns and beliefs of Langa and Wentworth residents with regards to service delivery. Residents of both areas have seen improvements in certain aspects of their lives in the democratic era from what they experienced in the apartheid era. Included here is improved access to basic and higher education. The residents of both research sites have also experienced improvements in different areas, e.g., an increase in infrastructure such as roads, speed-humps, and traffic lights in Langa, while no such improvements have taken place in Wentworth, and increased access to healthcare facilities in Wentworth where Langa has experienced a decline in access to such facilities.

Residents in the two areas raised similar concerns, such as the decline in education standards, increased crime and unemployment, the attitude of medical personnel towards patients, and housing shortages. They also raised concerns that are peculiar to their communities, such as the mandatory payment of protection fees by businesses in Langa and gang wars over the drug trade in Wentworth. However, residents of both Langa and Wentworth are disappointed at the lack of any significant improvement in their lives over the past 30 years.

Loss of moral political capital

In large part, the research in both areas illustrate that residents believed that their lives have not improved because of the failure of the ANC-led government to fulfil election promises. The African National Congress came to power in South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994 with the promise of 'a better life for all'. The residents of both areas gave several reasons for the failure to fulfil these promises that illustrate the loss of the moral

Table 2: Common and differing concerns and beliefs of Langa and Wentworth residents on service delivery

ISSUE	COMMON CONCERN OR BELIEF	LANGA CONCERN OR BELIEF	WENTWORTH CONCERN OR BELIEF
Economic opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High levels of unemployment, especially among the youth - Few job opportunities - Few business opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourism has grown as an industry - Grocery transportation has grown as an industry - Has significant economic development - Racism in access to business opportunities - Loss of business opportunities to foreigners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No economic development in township - Few coloured people occupy top positions in the private sector
Housing and infrastructural development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Huge housing shortages - Overcrowded living conditions - Densely populated areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has significant infrastructural development - Growth of informal settlements - Conflict between residents over housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No infrastructural development since 1994 - No new housing since 1994 - Dilapidated public housing
Safety and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crime rate has increased since 1994 - High crime rate - Robbery/house break-ins most common crimes - Corrupt and unresponsive police force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informal settlements that are difficult to police - Vulnerable to protection extortion racketeers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Warfare between drug gangs - High incidence of gunshot deaths - Laws protect criminals
Access to Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased access to healthcare - Too much time spent at facilities - Overcrowded facilities - Uncaring and disrespectful staff - Lack of adequate ambulance services - Lack of specialised medical services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lacks adequate healthcare facilities - Racial disparity in access to facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has adequate healthcare facilities - Shortage of medicines at facilities - Shortage of medical personnel at facilities - Lacks a 24-hour clinic - Peculiar health concerns due to proximity to polluting industries
Basic and higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased access to education - Decline in standard of basic education - Overcrowded classrooms - Limited resources at schools - Impact of removal of corporal punishment - Demoralised and uncommitted teachers - Limited funding for tertiary education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in resources at schools - Schools are less resourced than schools in coloured and white areas - Low matric pass rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Influx of black African learners at schools - Lack of feeding schemes - High school fees - Violence in schools - Most bursaries given to black Africans - University racial quotas limit access

political capital the ruling party enjoyed when it came to power in 1994. Included here is the failure to keep its promise due to poor governance, high levels of corruption, the lack of accountability, and low levels of government interaction with communities.

Residents of Langa have expressed growing disillusionment with democratic governance under the ruling ANC. In particular, they see corruption as a major challenge for governance and accountability and the failure to fulfil election promises. Overall perspectives on democratic rule under the ANC in Langa have been negatively affected by persistent corruption within political and security structures, which has led to disengagement from the political process and frustration with the status quo. Residents also described corruption among ward councillors and accused this level of government as not being transparent about their spending as it relates to the funding of projects.

When the vote started in 1994, that two-third that the ANC got [was] because we were happy that we are going to live a new life now. We were very disappointed later. (Yoliswa)

We, the ordinary people, don't benefit anything; no jobs, no free education as they promised. (Luyanda)

I think that the ANC should be out voted because they eat the money too much. We never used to pay for rent and water in apartheid. But now we are paying for things that we aren't used to. Another party must be given a chance because ANC has been here for 30 years, and they have done nothing at all. They don't improve the lives of their voters. (Nosipho)

Everything is now seen as corruption. You could just stand at the road and say that the councillor has eaten R4 million, people wouldn't hesitate, but they will believe because of the state of politics in South Africa. (Siphesihle)

We are facing it right now with the 100 years celebration. They say that they have used about R20,000 or R200,000. And honestly, I haven't seen anything [getting done]. (Nosipho)

All the Wentworth Key Informants identified poor governance, corruption and the lack of accountability under the ANC government as serious challenges currently facing South Africa and as the main reasons why there is no service delivery. In addition, there is a general belief that there is very little interaction between the community and government. In particular, residents felt that government officials have no interest in Wentworth and only appear during the election period.

The promises that were made in the struggle relating to freedom have not really been forthcoming. Here in Wentworth, we find that we don't see much of that. And that stems from a culture under the democratic government in that people misuse and do not manage the funds. (Andrew)

The government is not doing what they are supposed to do. Instead, they are eating our money. And the people are suffering. They are not accountable for what they do because they do not get charged for their actions. (Joyce)

They are stealing money like it's nobody's business. They are depriving the citizens of having a better life by doing what they are doing because if they didn't do what they were doing we would have access to many things. (Michelle)

There's no interaction with the government. Even with the Council, there's no interaction. (Mark)

Table 3 below includes a summary of the common and differing concerns and beliefs of Langa and Wentworth residents with regards to governance and accountability and the loss of moral political capital. The ANC has suffered a significant loss of moral political capital in both residential areas. The residents of the two areas view the failure to fulfil promises and deliver services due to poor governance, corruption and lack of accountability as the main reasons for this. They differ in that Langa residents pointed to corruption among ward councillors as a further indication of loss of moral and political capital, while the residents of Wentworth felt that their lives had not improved because they are marginalised as a group, which is indicative that the ANC has very little moral political capital amongst these residents.

Loss of democratic legitimacy

Residents from both research sites also believed that the failure to bring about any meaningful change in their socio-economic circumstances has diminished the legitimacy of the new democracy. However, the residents gave differing views of the main reason why their specific communities have not benefitted from the democratic dispensation.

For the residents of Langa, the legitimacy of democratic rule flows largely from the extent to which the democratic government has achieved what was promised as a ruling party. The initial excitement over democracy has faded, with many Langa residents now feeling that democratic processes have not brought substantive improvements. Key informants spoke of stagnation, unmet promises, and ongoing socio-economic struggles, which have shaped their views on democracy.

We never thought that when they talk about democracy most people will stay in the shacks. We thought when Mandela comes out of prison we will go and stay in the white suburbs. That is why we were so excited. Today we must beg people to go vote. (Luyanda)

The hope and excitement of the early years of democracy have evaporated, and people now are just trying to survive. (Khaya)

I feel that there's no democracy at all. I still feel like the previous years of apartheid. (Thandeka)

Democracy has been bittersweet. We are no longer under oppression, but we lost a lot due to democracy. The systems in place are just there for display. (Zukiswa)

We had high hopes for democracy. But what is democracy without economic power and freedom for the people being given this so-called freedom? (Andile)

In contrast, the residents of Wentworth view the loss of democratic legitimacy, as well as the failure to fulfil election promises, largely in terms of their marginalisation as a minority group under a black African dominated government. There is a strong perception that the democracy is not legitimate because it does not act impartially and has favoured one race group and ignored the needs and challenges of coloured communities.

What really has this government done for us? Absolutely nothing. The situation just hasn't gotten any better over these 30 years. The situation has just got worse for us as coloureds. (Joyce)

I strongly feel that South Africa is not a true democracy. As a minority in this country, I feel very isolated because the country that I live in doesn't serve me and my community whatsoever. I don't feel represented, but rather suffocated. (Paul)

There isn't much of a democracy at all because previously we had the white people that were privileged and were entitled to all the stuff. And now it's reversed where it's the blacks that are entitled. (Salome)

I find that there are many things that we are still restricted from enjoying as members of the coloured community. We had great hopes with the promise that there would be freedom and greater opportunities in a democratic country. I found that there is not much of that experience. (Andrew)

As indicated in [Table 3](#) below, disillusionment with the new democracy is very high in both areas, with residents having a common view that democratic rule has not led to any significant improvement in the lives of most residents and a decline in some aspects of their lives. For Wentworth residents, an additional factor behind the decline in democratic legitimacy is their marginalisation as a group in the democratic era. Thus, democratic rule has not lived up to expectations by serving the interests of the sectors of society to which these two communities belong.

Regenerating moral political capital and democratic legitimacy

The moral political capital of the ANC and the legitimacy of democratic rule are largely inextricably linked because the ANC has been the ruling party throughout the democratic era. Residents of Langa and Wentworth differ significantly in their views of how the moral political capital of the ANC and democratic legitimacy can be regenerated. Langa residents believed that moral political capital could be regenerated if there is greater accountability and involvement of the government to address systemic corruption and poor governance and bring about meaningful change. Narratives in Langa that reveal a sense of disappointment, frustration, and disillusionment with the democratic outcomes also highlighted the critical need for the ANC to address socio-economic disparities and service delivery failures if it is to regenerate the legitimacy of the new democracy. While there are a few residents who called for the replacement of the ANC as a ruling party, most residents felt that the ANC could regenerate both its political capital and democratic legitimacy if it takes these broad steps.

The first thing to get rid of corruption is to protect the whistle-blowers, because they are being killed. So, people can see what's wrong. (Luyanda)

Improve the education system, firstly, by looking at the workload of teachers. They are administrators more than teachers. (Nokwazi)

Suppose our schools are fenced, protected by security or police, then there won't be violence inside the school. (Luyanda)

If we can build those facilities – business hubs [and] skills development facilities – so that people can tap in those facilities, get trained, [and] find mechanical work in Langa. We can get a database of people with skills. (Thabo).

In contrast, most of the residents of Wentworth interviewed for the Democracy@30 project did not see any possibility of the ruling party regaining any moral political capital. The dominant view was that the ANC must be replaced as a ruling party.

We look towards positive changes by getting rid of a negative government. (Joyce)

An entire governmental change will need to happen because the systems and the departments that operate in our country are rooted in so much corruption and many other negative things. (Paul)

However, Wentworth residents suggest some changes that can lead to a regeneration of the moral political capital of the political actors and institutions in the country as a whole. Included here are a host of recommendations to improve governance and accountability as well as the delivery of every service under discussion. Below is a selection of these recommendations.

Governance: A system needs to be created in such a way that it doesn't allow people who are corrupt to get away with what they've done. They need to be accountable and face the law of the land like any other citizen. (Paul)

Education: [Reintroduce] the old system of education. That would already be an improvement because the standards in the past were much higher. (Cyril)

Access to quality healthcare: Invest trillions into healthcare systems and institutions to ensure quality health care and accessibility. Focus on the high-tech facilities and produce a large quantity of qualified, experienced, and efficient personnel. (Paul)

Safety and security: They need to bring back the death penalty so that the criminals can be scared a little bit because there's no fear. (Estelle)

Economic opportunities: Increase economic opportunities, giving people zero reasons or time to commit crime. (Paul)

Housing and infrastructural development: There are so many parks that are unused. Use that and put homes for the people. (Michelle)

In addition, in contrast to the views of the Langa residents, most Wentworth residents believed that the legitimacy of the country's democracy could only be regained if there is a genuine effort on the part of the democratic government to act following the constitutional values such as equality and non-racism. They suggest several ways in which this can be done.

BEE needs to be abolished. Economic and other opportunities should be based on education, qualification and experience, and not race. (Paul)

The issue of affirmative action needs to be addressed because people view affirmative action as if you are a certain race and you are entitled to everything. (Brian)

We need to be equal in that we need the same jobs as other people do. We need the same housing. So, it is equal opportunity for everybody that we need. (Joyce)

As indicated in [Table 3](#), while most of the Langa residents believed that the moral political capital of the ruling party could be regenerated, most Wentworth residents felt that it could not and called for the removal of the ANC as the ruling party. In addition, while resident of both areas felt that addressing certain challenges, namely, systemic corruption, the lack of accountability, service delivery, and socio-economic disparities, collectively

and universally would lead to a regeneration of democratic legitimacy, Wentworth residents felt that there was an additional need to address their perceived marginalisation by installing a government that ensures equality and non-racism in every facet of governance.

Table 3: Common and differing concerns and beliefs of Langa and Wentworth residents on moral political capital and democratic legitimacy

ISSUE	COMMON CONCERN OR BELIEF	LANGA CONCERN OR BELIEF	WENTWORTH CONCERN OR BELIEF
Governance and corruption and the loss of moral political capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant loss of moral political capital by ANC - Service delivery failures due to poor governance, corruption and lack of accountability account for this loss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corrupt ward councilors add to ANC's loss of moral political capital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of interaction with government officials adds to the ANC's loss of moral political capital - Lack of interest in coloured community accounts for the ANC's loss of moral political capital
Loss of democratic legitimacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant decline in democratic legitimacy - Democracy has not improved most people's lives - People's lives have worsened in some facets 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marginalisation of coloured community accounts for loss of democratic legitimacy
Regenerating moral political capital and democratic legitimacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address systemic corruption - Increase accountability - Deliver services - Address socio-economic disparities - Addressing these collectively and universally will lead to the regeneration of democratic legitimacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most residents believed that the moral political capital of the ANC could be regenerated - Only a few believed it could not be regenerated, and that the ANC must be removed as the ruling party 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most residents believed that the moral political capital of the ANC could not be regenerated - Only a few believed it could be regenerated - Address black economic empowerment and affirmative action that marginalise coloureds - Most residents called for the removal of ANC as the ruling party to regenerate democratic legitimacy - Install a democratic government that ensures equality and non-racism

Conclusion

This study has illustrated that the residents of two historically disadvantaged communities in different parts of the country and belonging to different population groups held a significant number of common concerns and beliefs about service delivery, moral political capital and democratic legitimacy. The quotations and the analysis show that most residents of Langa and Wentworth believed: (i) that their lives had not improved in the first 30 years of democracy, and that in many cases it has gotten worse than what it was during the apartheid era in areas such as access to quality education, quality healthcare, safety and security, economic opportunities and housing and

infrastructure; and that this illustrates (ii) the failure of the ruling party to live up to its promise of a better life for all; and (iii) that the democratic state has not served the general interest of citizens. Thus, these residents felt that service delivery failures had led to both a loss of moral political capital because the ruling party has not achieved the goals it set for itself, and loss of democratic legitimacy because the democratic state has not served the interests of Langa and Wentworth residents.

Despite some minor differences in terms of the improvements in their lives that the residents of both areas identified, and in terms of the peculiar concerns related to aspects of service delivery failures in their communities, most residents in both areas believed that the ANC has lost its moral political capital and that there has been a loss in the legitimacy of the new democracy. However, the most significant difference between the two communities is their views of the steps needed to regenerate moral political capital and democratic legitimacy. In particular, the views of the residents of Wentworth are shaped largely by their perception of marginalisation as a population group, and not on marginalisation as a poor community that is experiencing similar disappointments and service delivery failures experienced by the residents of another poor community that is different to them in terms of the population group they belong to. In consequence, while they largely share similar views about the steps needed to regenerate moral political capital and democratic legitimacy, they differ significantly only where the residents of Wentworth desire the replacement of the ANC as a ruling party as well as a change in affirmative action legislation and policies.

Notes

1. The Wentworth research team interviewed only 20 Key Informants in Wentworth because it had already gathered useful data in life history interviews with over 100 current and past residents for a Wentworth Social History Project.
2. The authors decided to use pseudonyms in all publication where this data is used because using the KI's real names could expose some of them to stigmatisation, e.g., where they discuss their history of substance abuse, or potential harm, e.g., where they describe the criminal activities of gangs.
3. A new National Senior Certificate was introduced in South Africa in 2008, which requires learners to achieve a mark 40% or above (including the home language) in three subjects and 30% or above in another three subjects, while allowing them to fail one subject. See Wedekind 2013, 14.
4. Corporal punishment in schools was abolished by the provision in the National Education Policy Act of 1996, which states that 'no person shall administer corporal punishment or subject a student to psychological or physical abuse at any educational institution'. See Maphosa and Shumba 2010, 387.
5. In 2003, Outcomes Based Education (OBE) was introduced in South African schools for grade 1–10 learners, bringing about a shift away from a merit-based policy to one of Progression and Promotion. A learner is promoted to the next grade on the basis of demonstrating competencies in formal assessments that cover seven subjects. A learner is only allowed to 'repeat once in a phase,' and be declared Not Ready to be Promoted (NRP) twice. See Kader 2012, 16, 36-37.

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