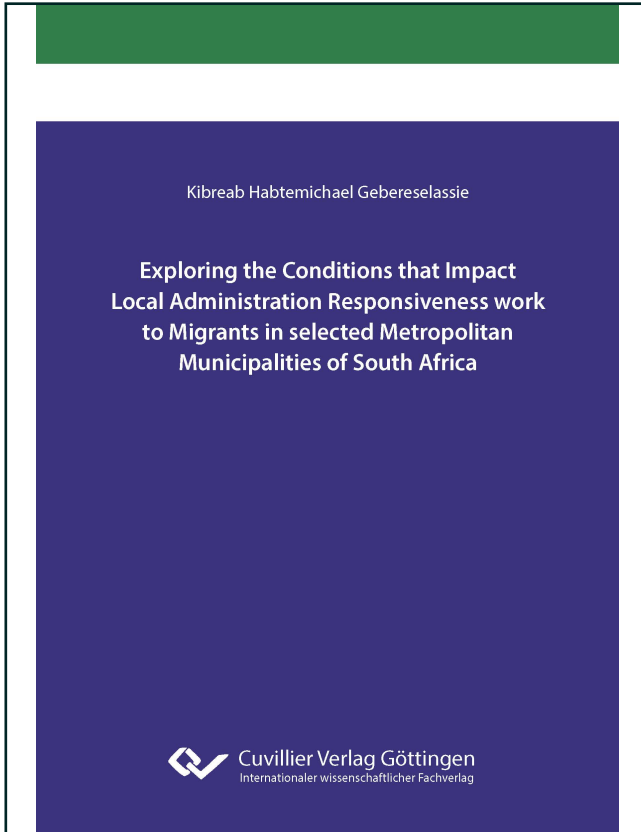




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**Exploring the Conditions that Impact Local  
Administration Responsiveness work to Migrants in  
selected Metropolitan Municipalities of South Africa**



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

In this first chapter, I will discuss the problem under investigation, present the purpose statement and research objectives of the study. After thorough discussion of the mentioned points, this chapter will present and elaborate the significances of the research, the main research questions, and present an overview of the study area. At last, I will discuss the current study in the lens of the public administration research.

#### 1.1. Setting the Problem

The word '*respond*' or to be '*responsive to*' something is often used in everyday life. Responsiveness is often seen as a positive stance and is considered important (Hood, Hopson, & Frierson, 2005; Garrett, Covin, & Slevin, 2009). It has been extensively examined in both the political science, business management and public administration literatures. For instance, Chaney & Saltzstein (1998), & Schumaker (1975) discussed political responsiveness. They addressed the relationship between public administration and politicians. In this case, the role of bureaucracy (which is a particular organizational form of an administration system) is largely ignored. In addition, as Yang & Pandey (2007) indicated, the reason that political officials represent the will of the public open a question on equity and citizenship and minority rights. The business literature primarily give attention on responsiveness to customer needs. Also in this case, citizens are basically different from customers (Liao, 2018). In public administration, responsiveness is however understood as how accurately an administration system and worker identify the needs of citizen, and offer what is needed quickly (Vigoda, 2002). For the purpose of my dissertation, responsiveness is understood based on the following definition:

*'The ability of organizations and public administration workers to listen and recognize the aspirations and needs of the community. The speed of public administrators in responding to problems encountered by members of the community with the basic rules of equity, fairness, and convenience. It is the willingness of public offices and apparatus to listen and act in response to the expectations, desires and demands of the community to maintain and improve the quality of services and processes'* (Stivers, C. 1994).

Most public administration theories and literatures are based on homogeneity assumptions between local administration responsiveness and population (Vigoda, 2002). Many consider similar state, region, race, and contexts (Chaney & Saltzstein, 1998). However, the issue of migration makes this problem different. Migrants have no political say, are not politically represented, are ethnically and culturally different, marginalized, vulnerable and they are detached from the host community. These socio-demographic changes at the local level create many new problems and issues for public administration to address (Lucio et.al., 2013). These issues about the nexus between representation

and responsiveness will be discussed in detail in the coming chapters. In general, administration responds differently to various migration characteristics and types (Zarenda, 2013). Hence, identifying the conditions that influence and control administration responsiveness efforts to the needs of migrant communities will give a foundation to meet the values of integration and facilitate greater civic engagement.

The issues of how the local administration responds to migrants who do not have elected representatives is less researched (Lucio et.al., 2013; Lucio, 2016). The conditions that hinder or motivate an administration worker to respond in conformity with migrants needs and fulfill equity and fairness is not widely addressed. These issues motivated this research to critically explore and identify the conditions that have an impact on local administrative responsiveness work to migrants. This study attempts to address administrative responsiveness by identifying the various conditions in which administration workers respond to migrants in the three metropolitan municipalities of South Africa. The rationale of picking South Africa as a study area will be discussed in the next sections. Migrants are between the interface of responsiveness and representation (Zarenda, 2013). Issues of administrative responsiveness to those who do not have a direct representation (migrants) possess an important problem for contemporary public administration in South Africa. In this regard, the conditions that facilitate or impede administrative responsiveness to migrants deserve attention.

The problem of concern is that the contemporary public administration in South African municipalities suffer serious challenges in dealing with responding to migrants needs and demands. The South African government's unfulfilled promises and its inability to deliver basic services to migrants have challenged the integration process of migrants. This has caused frustrations and mistrust in the migrant and local community (Zarenda, 2013). Municipalities and other local administration departments deliver services to residents, just as all residents contribute to the fabric and everyday life of communities within their jurisdictions. Public officials and local administration workers interact with local residents every day in schools, hospitals, police departments, business areas and in other local government branches. Yet, for the most part, migrants are excluded from those services and the public administration is challenged by not exercising fairness and equal service provision to migrants. In addition to this problem, the current migration debate shed a renewed light on public administration to design an approach how to address migrant issues. Migration policies passed at the national level have direct implications on the roles of public administration employees at the local level. As migration policy has evolved, mandates continue to come down to the elected officials who will make decisions about what role the local administration workers will play in responding and providing services to migrants (Varsanyi, Lewis, Provine, & Decker, 2012).

Population dynamics (in context of migration: the change in the structure, distribution, and number of population) in municipalities have increasingly led to greater challenges for local administrations that struggle to be responsive to the increasingly diverse needs of their communities

(Lucio et. Al., 2013; Landau et al., 2013, 2015). According to World Economic Forum report (2017), population diversity in most developing nations is attributed to internal and regional migration. South Africa and many other African countries do not have clear policies, structures, and capacity to respond to migrant community issues (IOM, 2016). As Schiller & Caglar (2009) indicated, international migrations have forced local administrations at the host community to take the role in administering and managing it. This has increased migration governance and autonomy at the local administration level (Schmitter, 2004; Zapata, 2017). The role of municipalities in responding to the global refugee crisis has been a good illustration of such trends. Whatever part of the world migrants move to they overwhelmingly settle in big cities, which offer more opportunities and access (Saunders, 2012). The majority of migrants in large South African cities are not given equal access to basic health and housing services. And the administrative structures do not respond to their requests and needs (SAMP, 2001). Attacks on migrants in South Africa have intensified in the last ten years. According to Gildenhuis (2015), the years from 2008-2015 were tragic for migrants living in South Africa. In 2015, there were an upsurge in xenophobic attacks on migrant workers throughout the country. These attacks started in Durban and spread to Johannesburg and Western Cape. Xenophobia is mostly defined as a negative attitude expressed mostly by host communities that often causes exclusion and stigmatization from the rest of the community (IOM, 2001). Shindondola (2003) also explained it as a result of anger that originates from economic and political demands of the locals. Local South Africans are afraid of economic competition, increase in crimes, and loss of identity. They often feel insecure because of the threat posed by the migrants (Landau, 2005; 2015). Research on migrants in South Africa has shown the overwhelming problems they face and have made them susceptible for various challenges (Crush & Chikanda, 2014). In recent years, the scapegoating sentiment is coming back intensively by taking migrants as unfair and underhanded economic competitors who disadvantage poor South Africans (Gordon, 2017). Despite the resilient nature of many migrants in South Africa, the actions of the police and law enforcement, mobs against migrant workers, and the lack of inclusion are also day-to-day challenges (Peberdy, 2016). Some studies showed that migrants living in urban areas are denied responses of getting services at various departments and municipality offices (Achieme, 2014; Kavuro, 2015). On the other hand, local administration workers are in limbo. They are also challenged to address and respond to migrants needs. The main reason for this responsiveness challenge is that, often elected officials in South Africa consider migrants as a source of desperation and problem rather than chance (Pavanello, 2015; Williams, 2013). In South Africa, migrants have often been viewed as sources of problems, security challenges and resource takers (Roever & Skinner, 2016).

Research in public administration have opened unanswered and critical issues in the arena of how the public administration is responding to migrants needs and demands, the issue of resource distribution, and municipalities efforts to address migrant issues. Responding to the issues of migrants is often associated with authority and power control at the political level (Christensen, Laegreid, &

Rykkja, 2016). Political interests challenge public administrator's effort in responding to migrants (UNESCO, 2016). In addition, most of the municipalities in South Africa are facing with challenges of resources and capacity to develop an empirically informed responsiveness strategy to migrant's issues (Kok & Collinson, 2006) and making local administrations more responsive to migrant's needs (Lyytinen & Kullenberg, 2013).

Populations in the southern hemisphere are dynamic. The demography in this part of the world is continuing to grow and transform in reaction to social and economic pressures (Crush et al. 2005; Potts, 2009; Landau et al., 2015). Local governments are pressured to draft strategies to deal with the issues of migrants. In South Africa, the large migration of people of mainly from African origins has put a pressure on the local administration and municipality's struggle on how to respond to migrant's needs and integrate them more sustainably (Potts, 2009). In heterogeneous countries and communities, local administration is also perceived as a perfect instrument that achieves justice between public policy and culture (Gladstone, 1995). Although, each country has its own administrative structures and responsiveness strategies, different conditions and factors are responsible in affecting the local administration's responsiveness to communities (Kok & Collinson, 2006). These conditions will be discussed thoroughly in the next chapter.

## **1.2. Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study is to explore the conditions that impact on the local administration's responsiveness work to migrants in Durban, Cape Town & Johannesburg metropolitan municipalities of South Africa. The study also seeks to investigate local administration worker's responsiveness to migrant's needs and problems in a situation where there is no direct representation. In addition, this research is dedicated to investigating and deliver a significant original contribution to knowledge by identifying and uncovering the conditions that impact on the local administration's responsiveness work for migrants who lacks a direct representation. This dissertation will also enable scholars and readers to understand the interface between political and administrative mandates in addressing migrant's issues. The study will also develop recommendations to assist the local administrations in the study areas and different stakeholders to improve their responsiveness work and fulfill equity and fairness in addressing migrant's issues. Finally, the research will also contribute to the field of local administration responsiveness to migrants by offering insights and inputs to literature, for interventions in policy, practice and stimulate further research.

### **1.3. Research Objectives**

To meet the above purpose of this study, the following research objectives have been set objectives:

1. To explore the different conditions and factors that impact on the local administration responsiveness work for migrants.
2. To understand why and how local administrations respond to migrants in the absence of a direct representation.
3. To investigate the challenges experienced by local administration workers in their responsiveness work to migrants.
4. To develop recommendations that will help local administration workers and political officials in their responsiveness work to migrants and enhance integration and interaction in the study areas.

### **1.4. Significance of the Research**

This qualitative study aims to offer an original contribution to the existing knowledge by exploring and understanding of the major conditions behind administrative responsiveness work to migrants. It seeks to contribute by identifying the conditions that impact responsiveness work towards migrant people in a situation where migrants are not actively represented in the political structure. Hence, by using different theoretical and methodological lenses and empirical analysis, the study addresses the current blind spots in the following way.

Primarily by identifying the conditions impacting on administrative responsiveness work to migrants, this dissertation contributes to possible tangible practical improvements towards the local administration's responsiveness capacity to migrants and enhance administrative professionals' responsiveness work to migrants. By understanding and identifying the conditions, this dissertation seeks to provide new original inputs and knowledge for the sample metropolitan municipalities of Johannesburg, Durban, and Cape Town. Via the recommended inputs, the dissertation benefits local leaders and policymakers to implement a strategy that can be instrumental in addressing how the local administration responds to migrant issues and address their challenges. In addition, it offers a practical contribution that will enhance public administration's efforts, empower local administration workers, and educate civic communities in the effort to achieve a responsive public administration to migrants. By doing this, the research contributes to reduce knowledge gaps by providing an extensive and systematic empirical analysis of the conditions that impact on the local administration responsiveness work to migrants living in the study areas. Having this information, the metropolitan municipalities in the study areas can improve the local administration responsiveness approach towards migrants and design a tailored system that can unfold its positive outcomes.

The results from this study can be considered as preliminary inputs for local administration response capacity building programs, migrant's empowerment and integration initiatives and fair and equitable service provision strategies. Secondly, the contribution of the study also adds new dimensions on the existing theories of public administration that address public administration's local structural concerns, and political-administration interface, and administrative responsiveness work to migrants. Thirdly, this study contributes to further research dealing with local administration responsiveness work to migrants who lack direct representation. These research areas have been particularly poorly studied within the developing countries context. Taking South Africa as a case study and having three metropolitan municipalities into consideration, with two rounds of extended field research and rigorous qualitative analysis, the study gives insights and inputs for further studies. This could give an opportunity for a better understanding of responsiveness work that address migrant issues in a regional and international perspective.

### **1.5. Research Questions**

Accordingly, in order to investigate the above research problem and address the objectives, this study has the following main research question:

*Under what conditions does the local administration in Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg metropolitan municipalities responds in an environment where there is no scope for direct representation by migrants?*

Under the above main research question, the study also encompasses the following sub-questions:

- *Why do local administrations respond to migrants who do not have a direct representation in the local government structures?*
- *What are the challenges that impact local administration's responsiveness work towards migrants?*

### **1.6. Overview of the Study Area**

The empirical research for this dissertation takes place in three metropolitan municipalities of South Africa, namely: Cape Town, Durban, and Johannesburg. The study focuses on these three metropolitan municipalities because:

- Cape Town, Durban, and Johannesburg metropolitan municipalities are centers of socio-economic and political activities in South Africa (Crush, Peberdy, & Williams, 2007).
- Most migrants and their livelihoods are settled in Cape Town, Durban, or Johannesburg (Morris, 1998). These three municipalities continue to be the major sites of migrant settlements and business hubs (SA. Stats, 2016).

- The three study areas have a high concentration of migrants mainly from other African countries (Southern African Migration Project, 2011; UNHCR, 2014; Africa Check, 2016).
- The presence of different political parties. Politically, the local government scene is dominated either by the African National Congress (ANC) or the Democratic Alliance (DA). Until 2016 election, Johannesburg has been ruled by the ANC. However, for three years' time (2016-2019), the DA mayor governed the metropolitan municipality. And since 2019, Johannesburg is again back to be governed by the ANC. Whereas, the Durban metropolitan municipality is dominated by the ANC. In the Cape Town metropolitan municipality however, it is entirely controlled by the DA, the national opposition party. The presence of different political parties in the municipalities has ignited a different outlook and policy interest regarding to migration (Crush, 2015).

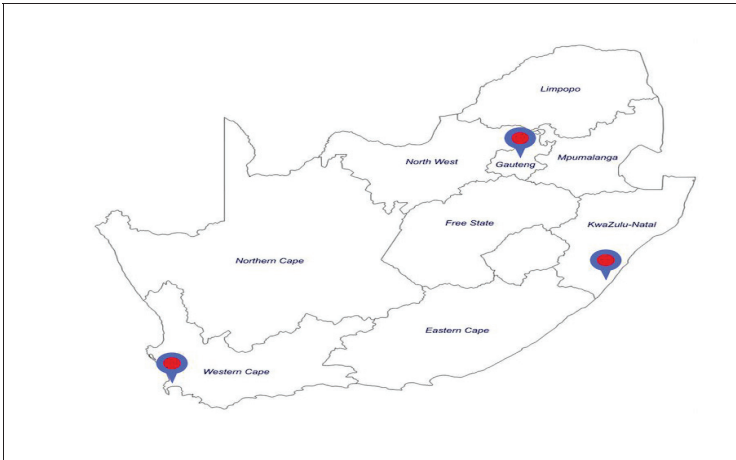
*Table 1. South Africa's Metropolitan Municipalities*

SOUTH AFRICA'S METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITIES			
MUNICIPALITY	PROVINCE	SEAT	POPULATION
Buffalo City	Eastern Cape	East London	755,200
City of Cape Town	Western Cape	Cape Town	3,740,026
City of Johannesburg	Gauteng	Johannesburg	4,434,827
City of Tshwane	Gauteng	Pretoria	2,921,488
Ekurhuleni	Gauteng	Germiston	3,178,470
eThekweni	KwaZulu-Natal	Durban	3,442,361
Mangaung	Free State	Bloemfontein	747,431
Nelson Mandela Bay	Eastern Cape	Port Elizabeth	1,152,115

*Source: South African Government Communication and Information System, 2015.*



**Figure 1: The Selected Study Areas**



In South Africa, local administrations are obliged to lead local matters and must involve local communities in its decision-making process, as the community is affected by its affairs (South African Local Government Association, 2011). Section 152 of the Constitution of South Africa sets out the five main objectives of the local administration: to provide democratic and accountable administration for all, to promote social and economic development, to be impartial, to be fair and equitable for all, to be responsive and involve communities and community organizations and provide basic services to communities (Education Training Unit report, 2010; South African Local Government Association, 2011). A detailed local administration structure will be presented in chapter four of this study. As also Crush et.al. (2017) indicated, in South Africa, rules and regulations regarding to the administration of migration are by law given to the Department of Home Affairs. Further migration laws versus administration regulations in South Africa will be also thoroughly discussed in chapter three of this dissertation.

The scope of the empirical research in this study concentrates only on selected departments of each study area. Because of the frequent visit by migrants, and due to direct responsibility of some departments to migrants, the research concentrates only on the following departments: Department of Home Affairs, Health Department, Education Department, Trade and Business Department and Police and Law Enforcement Departments. And because of their demographic numerical characteristics, the dissertation concentrates only on the following six migrant origin countries: Ethiopians, Zimbabweans, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundians, Somalis, and Nigerians. Detail discussions is available in chapter three of the dissertation.

The following summary will give a Birdseye view to the three study areas:

### **I. Cape Town Metropolitan Municipality**

This study area is found in the Western Cape province which is located on the southern tip of the African continent, between the Indian and Atlantic Oceans. The Western Cape's natural, topographical, and climatic diversity makes it the major tourist destination of the country. It covers an area of 129,462 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of 6,279,730. It is the fourth largest province in South Africa, and it is also the fourth in population number (municipalities.co.za). The province has a modern industrial and business base having a low unemployment rate in the country. Sectors such as finance, real estate, and tourism are the dominant ones and are the main contributors to the economy of the province (municipalities.co.za). Many of South Africa's major insurance companies and banks are residing in this study area. Cape Town also hosts most the country's petroleum industries and the printing and publishing industry.

#### ***Socio-Economic context***

This study area has the highest literacy rate in the country. It is the third highest contributor to the national economy, with a higher GDP per capita than other provinces. Cape Town, a strategic outpost in the region, has a cosmopolitan feel with a thriving tourism sector that hires many laborers and contributes around 15% of the GDP of the province, followed by the finance and business sectors (municipalities.co.za).

#### ***Political Context***

The Western Cape is one metropolitan municipality, the City of Cape Town, and five district municipalities. The district municipalities are subdivided into 24 local municipalities (municipalities.co.za). Cape Town metropolitan municipality is being governed by Democratic Alliance (DA) with an outright majority in the 2009 general election. And in the 2011 local government elections, the party won control of most of the municipalities in the Western Cape.

#### ***Urban Growth and Local Governance***

According to the city's local governance report (2016), the metropolitan municipality of Cape Town faces various challenges associated with rapid urban growth and development. This has impacted on an increased demand for physical space for housing, infrastructure, and service delivery. According to Gebhardt (2009) urban governance is viewed as the responsibility and civic engagement of the government, and it often extends beyond the essence of urban management. Cape Town has undergone significant progressive transformation since 1996. Cities at a global and national development context are gaining increasing importance in the 21st century. The roles of urban governments are also expanding and becoming more complex. A metropolitan city has a strong track record as a resilient organization with good accountability measures in place, growing experience in working transversally, and innovative use of technology and smart tools to aid service delivery

excellence (World Bank, 2016). The South African Constitution states that, municipalities are mandated to provide residents, with the opportunity for real engagement and influence over matters that affect their daily existence irrespective of their background. Municipalities have a greater responsibility to be accountable in the way they govern, and to encourage the involvement of communities, minorities, and community associations in the matters of local government (City of Cap Town, 2016).

## **II. Durban Metropolitan Municipality**

This study area is situated in the province of Kwa Zulu-Natal, located in the southeast of South Africa, bordering the Indian Ocean. It covers an area of 94,361 km<sup>2</sup>, and has a population of 12,065,240, making it the second most populous province in South Africa. Pietermaritzburg is the capital city and Durban is the largest city of the province. The city of Durban (*eThekweni*) is the only metropolitan municipality of the province. In addition, the province has 10 other district municipalities. These are also subdivided into 43 local municipalities (Durban Metropolitan Municipality, 2010).

### ***The Socio-economic context***

This province owes its importance to its two ports. Durban, a multiethnic and multicultural city, attracts many foreigners mainly because it has the largest port (Richard's Bay) in both South Africa and the African continent. This municipality is the second most economically wealthy province and the second contributor (16.5%) to the economy, next to municipality of Johannesburg (municipalities.co.za). It is also the second most important manufacturing and industrial center, after Johannesburg. Durban metropolitan municipality is a center of tourism. With a population of 3.7 million, it is also one of the biggest cities on the Indian Ocean coast of the African continent (Census, 2011). Durban is also historically the city that hosts the largest Indian migrant diaspora. The city also has foreigners and migrants who are working in many of its service and industry sectors (Stats SA, 2011). The economy of the province is composed of finance, manufacturing trade and tourism (KZNonline.org.za, 2016). Migration into the metropolitan area of Durban has been increasing in recent years (Maharaj, 2000; Stats SA, 2011).

### ***The Political Context***

The African National Congress (ANC) party governs Durban metropolitan municipality (Durban Metropolitan Municipality, 2016). Members of executive council are appointed by the Premier from amongst the members of the Provincial Legislature.