

**ROOM TO MANOEUVRE:
Understanding The Development Of Provincial Government In South Africa,
1994-2004**

(Case Studies: Gauteng and Mpumalanga)

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ABSTRACT

Since its inception in 1994, South Africa's federal system of government has been the subject of intensive scholarly debates and wide-ranging academic writing. In particular, the functioning of the country's provincial institutions has engendered heated public debates over the years about whether or not they have played their proper role as institutions of democratic governance. The major challenge that faced the framers of the country's new constitution, and which continues to face policy makers currently, was to create functioning and effective democratic institutions of government at sub-national level. In addition to their role as democratic/political institutions of governance, the provinces are also agents of socio-economic development and the delivery of basic social services to citizens.

In the course of attempting to fulfil their functional responsibilities since 1994, the provinces have encountered enormous political, constitutional, administrative and logistical problems that have led to widespread dissatisfaction about their performance and effectiveness. In fact, this dissatisfaction has also led to fundamental questions being raised about the future of the provinces in South Africa. This thesis seeks to evaluate the performance and effectiveness of the provincial system during the 1994-2004 period, by looking at the question: to what extent has the provincial system of government fulfilled its responsibilities of promoting democratic governance and ensuring effective delivery of social services to citizens at sub-national level? It also provides an in-depth examination and analysis of the development of South Africa's federal system of government between 1994 and 2004.

The study utilised a wide range of research materials gathered through in-depth interviews, an opinion survey, direct observations, official documents, published and unpublished documents, and numerous other sources.