

A SOUTH AFRICAN DEVELOPMENTAL STATE: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF STATE CAPACITY.



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ABSTRACT

This study uses secondary literature and primary sources to explore the significance of state capacity in proposals to build a South African developmental state. Its main aim is to get a deeper understanding of state capacity as a significant ingredient in building a successful developmental state. The analysis is based on the postulation that no country can successfully build a developmental state without the necessary state capacity. The study surveys the literature on developmental states, explores the key attributes/institutional benchmarks of a developmental state and draws out findings about what accounts for a successful developmental state. One of the key conclusions drawn from the literature is that in order for a state to be a successful developmental state, it needs to be institutionally configured in such a way that it possesses the capacity to formulate and implement policies successfully. Using theoretical benchmarks propounded by scholars as a point of reference, the study establishes how we should understand state capacity and shows that such state capacity is a necessary precondition for a successful developmental state. Following from this analysis, it explores how the South African government has to come into grips with the issue of state capacity in its quest to build a South African developmental state. The failure of post-1994 macro and micro economic reform strategies to address the principal challenges of poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment indicates that successful implementation of any policy is dependent on state capacity.

ABBREVIATIONS

ANC- African National Congress
ASGI-SA- Accelerated Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa
BEE- Black Economic Empowerment
CIU -Co-ordination and Implementation Unit
COSATU-Congress of South African Trade Unions
DTI-Department of Trade and Industry
EDD- Economic Development Department
GEAR- Growth, Employment and Redistribution
iPAP- Industrial Policy Action Plan
MITI-Ministry of Internal Trade and Industry
NGP-New Growth Path
NPC- National Planning Commission
NP-National Party
PCAS-Policy Coordination and Advisory Services
PSC- Public Service Commission
RDP- Reconstruction and Development Programme
SACP-South African Communist Party
SRI-Solidarity Research Institute

Table of Contents

PLAGIARISM DECLARATION.....	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	iv
CHAPTER ONE.....	vi
1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY.....	1
1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH TOPIC.....	1-2
1.3 THE STRUCTURAL NATURE OF POVERTY, INEQUALITY AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT.....	2-4
1.4 POST-1994: GOVERNMENT’S EFFORTS TO CHANGE THE STRUCTURE OF THE ECONOMY.....	4-5
1.5 CONSIDERING AN INTERVENTIONIST ROLE FOR THE STATE IN DEVELOPMENT.....	5-7
1.6 COMMITMENT TO BUILD A SOUTH AFRICAN DEVELOPMENTAL STATE.....	7-8
1.7 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NPC AND DED.....	8
1.8 STATE CAPACITY AS A SIGNIFICANT INGREDIENT FOR A SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENTAL STATE.....	8-vi1
1.9 RESEARCH QUESTION.....	1vi
1.10 SUB-QUESTIONS.....	1vi
1.11 RATIONALE.....	11-12
1.12 CONCEPTUAL/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	12-14
1.13 AIMS/OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.....	15
1.14METHODOLOGY.....	vi5
1.14.1 <i>OVERALL APPROACH/RESEARCH DESIGN</i>	16
1.14.2 <i>METHODS OF GATHERING DATA</i>	16
1.15 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....	16-17
1.16 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS.....	17-18
CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW.....	vi9
2.1 ORIGINS OF THE TERM ‘DEVELOPMENTAL STATE’.....	vi9-21
2.2 WHAT IS A DEVELOPMENTAL STATE?.....	2vi-27

2.3 INDUSTRIAL POLICY AS THE OVERARCHING ECONOMIC POLICY IN EAST ASIA.....	27-29
2.4 LESSONS THAT CAN BE DRAWN FROM EAST ASIAN COUNTRIES' INDUSTRIAL POLICY.....	29-30
2.5 WHAT THEN IS A DEVELOPMENTAL STATE?.....	3vi-32
2.6 STATE CAPACITY.....	32-33
2.6.1 KEY ELEMENTS/COMPONENTS OF STATE CAPACITY.....	33-35
2.7 CONCLUSION.....	35-36
CHAPTER THREE - POLICY FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION AS A MEASURE OF STATE CAPACITY.....	37
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	37
3.2 CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND.....	37-38
3.3 TRANSFORMING THE SOUTH AFRICAN ECONOMY: RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME.....	38-40
3.4 FROM RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME TO GROWTH, EMPLOYMENT AND REDISTRIBUTION.....	40-4vi
3.5 IMPACT OF GROWTH, EMPLOYMENT AND REDISTRIBUTION ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE ECONOMY.....	4vi-44
3.6 IN SEARCH OF A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH TRAJECTORY: ACCELERATED SHARED GROWTH INITIATIVE FOR SOUTH AFRICA.....	44
3.7 BLACK ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT.....	44-47
3.8 CONCLUSION.....	47
CHAPTER FOUR - TOWARDS A SOUTH AFRICAN DEVELOPMENTAL STATE: AN ASSESSMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA'S INSTITUTIONS AS A MEASURE OF STATE CAPACITY....	48
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	48
4.2 SOUTH AFRICA'S POLITICAL LEADERSHIP.....	48-49
4.3 THE PRESIDENCY AS THE POLICY CO-ORDINATION CENTRE.....	49-5vi
4.4 CONSENSUS BETWEEN LABOUR, GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS.....	5vi-52
4.5 THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND SERVICE DELIVERY.....	52-55
4.6 SOUTH AFRICA'S INDUSTRIAL POLICY : AS A POLICY PROBLEM LINKED TO CAPACITY.....	55

4.7 INADEQUATE MANUFACTURING STRATEGY	55-57
4.8 CONCLUSION	57
CHAPTER FIVE - SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.....	58
5.1 INTRODUCTION	58
5.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS	58-59
5.3 OVERALL ASSESSMENT.....	59
5.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	59-60
5.5 CONCLUSION	60
REFERENCES.....	61-69