



The impact of organisational culture on corporate governance in public entities: The case of South African Revenue Service

**Authors:**

Mzukisi Matandabuzo¹ 
Noah K. Marutlulle² 

Affiliations:

¹ARC-Irene Analytical Services, Animal Production Institute, Agricultural Research Council, Pretoria, South Africa

²Department of Public Administration & Management, Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa

Corresponding author:

Mzukisi Matandabuzo,
matandabuzom@arc.agric.za

Dates:

Received: 09 Oct. 2025

Accepted: 21 Jan. 2026

Published: 11 Mar. 2026

How to cite this article:

Matandabuzo, M., & Marutlulle, N.K. (2026). The impact of organisational culture on corporate governance in public entities: The case of South African Revenue Service. *Advances in Corporate Governance*, 3(1), a26. <https://doi.org/10.4102/acg.v3i1.26>

Copyright:

© 2026. The Authors.
Licensee: AOSIS. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

Read online:

Scan this QR code with your smart phone or mobile device to read online.

Background: The pillar and quality of good corporate governance in an organisation is its culture: such as the culture of inquiry, freedom of expression, sense of pride, and culture of healthy dissent. South African public entities, including the South African Revenue Service (SARS), have been confronted with numerous managerial and corporate performance challenges at some stage.

Objectives: The study aimed to critically examine the impact of corporate culture in state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and how it influences corporate governance, productivity, and profitability of the entity. SARS was chosen as the focus area of this study owing to the various corporate governance challenges it has faced over the years under different commissioners.

Method: This investigative study espoused largely the qualitative research approach, with some elements of the quantitative approach. Additionally, the use of a deductive approach chiefly helped the investigator to understand the research subject and eventually respond to the principal research questions.

Results: The data collection methods include relevant materials such as commissioned reports, peer-reviewed articles, and online news articles that have reported on the research questions. The study findings revealed that SARS encountered several challenges during this period due to various management missteps, ineffective leadership, and unethical leadership behaviours at the time.

Conclusion: This study concludes that there is a need for the clarification of roles between the board and the executives in the SOEs, in line with the understanding of the agency theory on corporate governance.

Contribution: This research study seeks to make theoretical and practical contributions to SOEs' governance policies and practices.

Keywords: organisational culture; corporate governance; SARS; state-owned enterprises; agency theory.

Introduction

Good and quality corporate governance is principally about effective and ethical leadership of an organisation or entity, underpinned by important drivers such as responsibility, accountability, fairness, and transparency (Naidoo, 2016). Noticeably, there has not been a consensus among scholars regarding the definition of the concept of corporate governance. However, corporate governance can be defined as leadership, the corporate processes and systems, and the bureaucratic approval processes that govern and regulate how the corporation operates (Matsiliza, 2024; Mbele, 2015). Corporate governance calls for ethical and effective leadership that shows a sense of responsibility, transparency, accountability, and efficiency over the corporation's governance processes. Furthermore, it is also key to emphasise that accountability is the lifeblood of the performance of the corporation's leadership and all the stakeholders involved. In South Africa, the concept of quality corporate governance is wholly defined by the King IV Report, which emphasises effective and ethical leadership as the pillar of good governance. The essence of good and quality corporate governance in South African public entities will never be overemphasised, considering the need for effective and efficient governance, the success of the state entities, and their role in developing the state.

On the other hand, organisational culture, which is the organisation's mission, objectives, beliefs, and values that relentlessly drive or guide workers, plays a critical role in enhancing corporate governance.

A sound and ethical organisational culture encourages employees to excel in undertaking their jobs and meeting their targets. Organisations possessing a strong and sound workplace culture tend to realise the outcomes of good corporate governance, such as ethical culture, good performance, effective control, and legitimacy. In the period between 2014 and 2018, the corporate situation at the South African Revenue Service (SARS) was dominated and marred by instability, corporate mismanagement, and a loss of corporate culture. This could be attributed to a periodic culture of 'power and person', where employees were intimidated, targeted, and unfairly dismissed from work. During this period at SARS, a few individuals had all the power to make decisions and control the system with few rules and bureaucratic elements.

Therefore, this research work aimed to highlight and discuss the influence of organisational culture on corporate governance in SOEs, particularly in the case of SARS in South Africa. It also sought to promote the role to be played by the executive management of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in ensuring that a positive organisational culture prevails and has an effective contribution to the corporation's overall performance. In this study, the words: state-owned enterprises and public entities will be used interchangeably to mean the same thing.

Background

Public entities in South Africa

South Africa's *Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999* (PFMA) defines public entities or a state-owned enterprise (SOE), using the term 'national government business enterprise', as:

- a juristic person under the ownership and control of the national executive
- has been given financial and operational power to carry on a business activity.

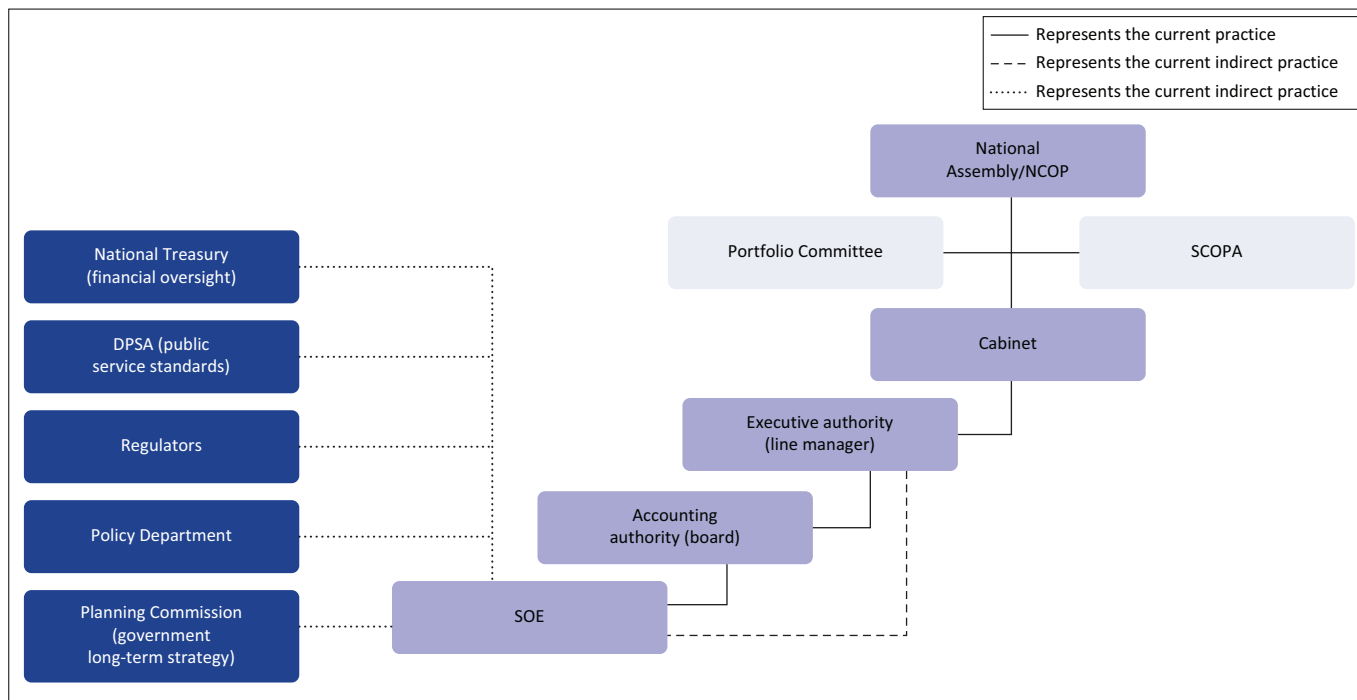
In addition to the PFMA and the *Companies Act*, SOEs in South Africa are governed by the principles of the King IV Report. Efficient and affordable services to the nation were the main reasons for the introduction of SOEs in South Africa. The primary role of SOEs is to enhance the government's agenda of developing the state by accelerating economic development and social cohesion (Leftwich, 1996). As government entities, SOEs are meticulously entangled with the economic, social, and developmental aims of the state in various contexts (Mpete & Maier, 2024). According to the World Bank (2014), SOEs directly contribute to the economic growth and poverty reduction in a country of origin. In South Africa, SOEs are mainly found in strategic sectors of the economy, such as infrastructure (water supply, road, air, weather, railway, energy), in communications (broadcasting), and finance (banking, insurance, and taxation). In essence, SOEs are established to ascertain the government's control over strategic industries and the country's natural resources (Singh & Chen, 2018).

As of 01 October 2024, South Africa has approximately 300 public institutions (SOEs), classified as either Schedule 1, 2, and 3, according to PFMA, where Schedule 1 are constitutional institutions, Schedule 2 are major public institutions, and Schedule 3 (Part A, B, C, & D) are national public entities, national government business enterprises, provincial public entities, and provincial government business enterprises, respectively (Mpete & Maier, 2024). However, the attention of this study is on Schedule 3A (major public entities), as the unit of analysis in this study (SARS) falls within this category, and they play a significant role in stimulating economic growth and state development. As alluded to above, South African SOEs are governed by the prescripts and/or provisions of PFMA, *Companies Act*, Protocol on Corporate Governance, and the principles of the King IV Report on Corporate Governance. Figure 1 shows the governance structure of SOEs in South Africa (National Treasury, 2005).

Challenges facing public entities in South Africa

Several scholars have argued that SOEs (worldwide) have similar challenges to those in South Africa (Abramov et al., 2017; Arens & Brouthers, 2001; Singh & Chen, 2018). Since the dawn of democracy (1994), several SOEs have played a crucial role in reducing poverty and stimulating economic growth in South Africa (Kikeri, 2018). However, those SOEs, such as Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA), South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), Transnet, Road Accident Fund (RAF), Denel, South African Airways (SAA), and Eskom, have found themselves in dire financial distress, mismanagement, and poor corporate governance (Zondo Commission, 2018). Some, such as SARS, Onderstepoort Biological Products (OBP), and Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA), may not have been embroiled in dire financial difficulties, but mismanagement and poor corporate governance have been reported (Butar-Butar et al., 2019; Lawton et al., 2011; Madumi, 2018). South African SOEs are faced with several challenges, ranging from political interference (Mashamaite & Raseala, 2019; Thabane & Snyman-Van Deventer, 2018), a lack of governance (Mfeka, 2018), and poor leadership and rampant corruption (Chauke & Motubatse, 2020). Several South African public entities are falling, unable to generate revenue, and are wholly dependent on governance for bailouts (financial assistance).

There has been an argument that several challenges facing public entities in South Africa are mainly self-inflicted (Nzimakwe, 2023). Economic mismanagement of public entities in South Africa remains the major challenge, and that seriously poses an imminent threat to the state's fiscal and policy priorities. Governance inefficiencies, maladministration, and power abuse are also found rearing their heads in several SOEs in South Africa. In their study, Mpete and Maier (2024) discuss the main challenges facing SOEs and their executives, which include inappropriate conduct by the politicians, the board of directors, and other stakeholders; leadership instability; and legislation and corporate governance.



Source: National Treasury. (2005). *Governance oversight role over state-owned entities (SOE's)*. Retrieved from <http://www.treasury.gov.za/publications/other/soe/governance%20oversight%20Role.pdf>

SOE, state-owned enterprises; NCOP, national council of provinces; SCOPA, standing committee on public accounts; DPSA, department of public service and administration.

FIGURE 1: South African state-owned enterprises' governance structure.

In several South African SOEs, the absolute failure of good corporate governance, accountability, and transparency has significantly contributed to the increase in corrupt activities and corruption scandals reported nationwide, such as governance failure at the SARS. Since the dawn of democracy, South Africa has experienced corruption of a special type in both the private and public sectors (Sithomola, 2024). For example, during the Zondo Commission of Inquiry, several public entities in South Africa were mentioned to have been entangled in various corruption scandals and unethical activities such as favouritism, swindling of state resources, maladministration, mismanagement of resources, and total disregard of the rule of law and ethical codes (Sithomola, 2024). However, notwithstanding the array of pieces of legislation, policies, and codes of conduct, public entities in South Africa are still embroiled in acts of corruption and unprofessional ethics. Unfortunately, as argued in the agency theory, when private interests of public officials prevail in state affairs, adherence to regulations, policies, and frameworks that seek to guide the conduct of public officials takes a backseat (Pillay et al., 2023).

Problem statement

South African public entities, including SARS, have been confronted with numerous managerial and corporate performance challenges at some stage. Unending corruption and unethical behaviours remain serious threats to public entities in South Africa and can hurt the financial and management strength of the public entities (Pillay et al., 2023). The Zondo Judicial Commission of Inquiry unearthed several inconsistencies in the management of several SOEs,

including SARS (Zondo Commission, 2018). The Zondo Commission discovered that executives of SOEs were tangled in procurement contracts for personal gain. Specifically, the handful of managerial and corporate performance challenges at SARS could be attributed to dwindling ethical and effective leadership and organisational cultures, poor corporate governance, and the entrenched culture of flouting internal control measures (finance, human capital, and supply chain management). It is therefore paramount to probe the impact of corporate culture in SOEs and how it influences corporate governance, productivity, and profitability of the entity. SARS was chosen as the focus area of this study owing to the various corporate governance challenges it has faced over the years under different boards and commissioners.

Purpose of the study

Owing to the problem stated above, the purpose of the research study was to:

- Critically examine and describe the impact of organisational culture on corporate governance in public entities, specifically SARS.

Research objectives

The following objectives have been identified, and they form a synergistic connection with the research's significance, the research problem, the research questions, the data collection, and the data analysis processes thereof:

- To define critically and contextualise the concepts of corporate governance, organisational culture, and examine their interplay within South African public entities.

- To explore and discuss the organisational culture and corporate governance challenges, with specific reference to SARS between 2014 to 2018.
- To propose targeted strategies for cultivating an ethical and accountable culture that enhances corporate governance in South African SOEs.

Literature review

Corporate governance

Corporate governance has attracted enormous thoughtfulness from different scholars who have given different definitions from various perspectives. Broadly, as the systems in which organisations are directed and controlled, corporate governance is defined as processes linked with leadership, laws, decision-making, and effective control in organisations (Mbele, 2015; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2005). On the other hand, the King IV Report describes corporate governance:

[A]s the exercise of ethical and effective leadership by the governing body (board of directors) towards the achievement of governance outcomes such as ethical culture, good performance, effective control, and legitimacy. (IoDSA King IV report, 2016, p. 11)

King IV emphasises that ethical and effective leadership ought to complement and strengthen each other (Institute of Directors Southern Africa [IoDSA] King IV report, 2016).

Because corporate governance is concerned with how entities are overseen, managed, and managers are held accountable, important concepts such as accountability, responsibility, transparency, and monitoring and evaluation of the entities' resources are indivisibly connected with corporate governance. Therefore, good corporate governance demands that the shareholders, board members, executive management, and general employees of the organisations demonstrate high levels of honesty, transparency, ethics, and integrity when conducting their fiduciary duties. One of the important characteristics of corporate governance is ensuring that organisations can attract capital, make a profit, and adhere to all relevant legal frameworks that govern them. Lastly, Qhobosheane (2018) notes that in a quest to attain good corporate governance, the administration (government), board of directors, top management, and stakeholders need the ability, knowledge, and integrity to make sound choices for the benefits of all shareholders, the corporation, and all stakeholders (including the community). According to the above definitions and explanations of corporate governance, one can correctly and conclusively argue that corporate governance means responsible leadership in corporations.

Agency theory and corporate governance

In their study, Pillay et al. (2023) argue that agency theory gives birth to corporate governance, classified as the illogicality of interests between a corporation's shareholders (company owners) and management. With corporations

facing several challenges such as rampant corruption, ineffective control and monitoring systems, and feeble regulatory frameworks, the importance of corporate governance and understanding of the agency theory will never be overemphasised. Now, the agency theory speaks about the roles or how the corporation owners (shareholders) and the management (agents) interact while running the affairs of the corporation. In other words, agency theory is about the relationship between the shareholders (principals) and the agents (management/executives) (Pillay et al., 2023).

According to the agency theory, agents (executives) are employed by the owners of the corporation to run (with delegated powers) the corporation. That is, shareholders will delegate work to the management, who are expected to perform their tasks for the benefit of all stakeholders, including the owners of the corporation (Pillay et al., 2023). However, agency theory claims that the appointed management (agents) of corporations are self-interested, and their interests are contrary to those of the corporation owners (Pillay et al., 2023). As a result, agency theorists believe that this misalignment of interests has dire implications for both the corporate governance of the corporation and its overall performance (Pillay et al., 2023).

The agency theory is chosen in this study for its influence on organisational thinking, attitude, and information management. Internationally, SOEs have implemented corporate governance, with the inferences of the agency-principal association (Matsiliza, 2024). In this study, agency theory is applied from the perspective of SOEs to interpret the relationships between the governance (executive management) and the existing culture within the SOEs. The theoretical proposition is that SOEs encounter poor corporate governance because of an unhealthy corporate culture, owing to the separation of executive management and government (owner). In the context of public entities, governance is pinned in the agency theory, with owners delegating executive powers to the agents to fulfil the objectives of the government (Pillay et al., 2023). In the case of the South African SOEs, the shareholder is the government, represented by the ministers, and while agents are the board of directors and executive members, running the SOE.

Corporate governance and organisational culture in public entities

Governance of institutions, whether private or public, is influenced and/or affected by the culture that exists in an institution. It is therefore imperative that organisational culture, particularly in public entities, is studied and understood. Inasmuch as there is limited literature linking organisational culture and corporate governance in South African SOEs, various commissions of inquiry in many SOEs have shown that some unwanted and unprecedented cultures have wittingly and/or unwittingly affected corporate governance in some SOEs. However, there has not been a consensus among scholars regarding the influence of organisational culture on corporate governance.

In addition, Pillay et al. (2023) has argued that the literature conducted on the effect of organisational culture on organisational performance is very inconsistent. For example, Raguž and Zekan (2017) and Vegro et al. (2016) found that a healthy and supportive organisational culture helps to improve an organisation's overall performance. However, on the contrary, Ahmadi et al. (2012) concluded that there is very limited or no connection between the organisational culture and the overall performance of an organisation. This study, therefore, seeks to investigate the impact of organisational culture on SOEs' corporate governance and overall performance. Well, understanding the organisational culture in SOEs comes with several advantages that include but are not limited to the formulation of job satisfaction strategies, enhancing effectiveness in the public sector, and strategic policy undertakings for leadership and change development.

Corporate governance and organisational culture: The case of South African Revenue Service

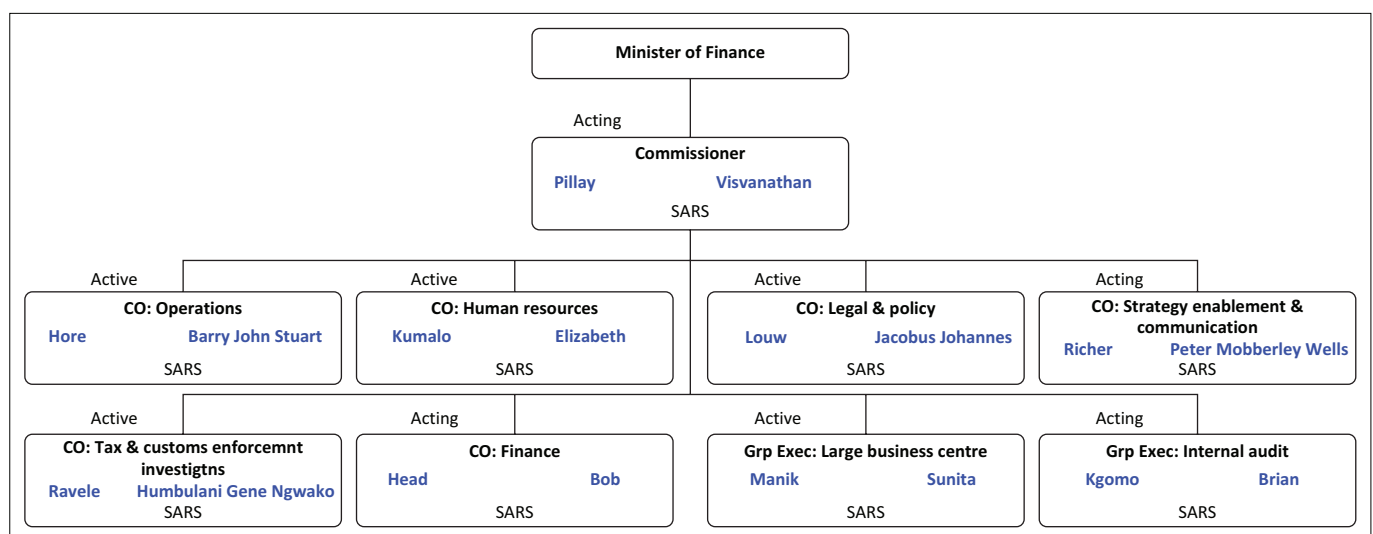
In 1997, the South African government embarked on a journey to combine all the tax and customs authorities that existed during the apartheid era and established the SARS. The SARS is the nation's tax-collecting authority, established in terms of the *South African Revenue Service Act 34 of 1997*, with an autonomous agency status to administer the nation's tax system and customs service, outside the public service sector. The responsibility of SARS is to collect tax and customs revenue on behalf of the government (across all the government spheres) (SARS-AR, 2008/2009). South African Revenue Service enjoys this mandate as a Schedule 1 government institution, owing to several constitutional frameworks such as the *SARS Act 34* and 22 other relevant legislative frameworks.

Upon merging all the tax and customs authorities, the first commissioner of SARS was Mr Pravin Gordhan (1999–2009).

When he took up the ministerial position in 2009, Mr Gordhan was replaced as commissioner of SARS by Mr Oupa Magashula in May 2009. Mr Magashula resigned in July 2013 as the commissioner of SARS, and Mr Ivan Pillay acted until Mr Tom Moyane was appointed in September 2014 as the permanent commissioner of SARS. Figure 2 shows the high-level organogram of SARS during the acting period of Mr Pillay.

During the tenure of Mr Gordhan (and until March 2014), SARS was known to be a world-class revenue entity, conforming to good international practices with several accolades domestically and internationally. International organisations such as the OECD had a lot of respect for SARS, modelling it as the best public institution in the country (Nugent Report, 2018). In collaboration with his team, Mr Gordhan developed and implemented a revenue operating model that focused on reversing non-compliance with tax laws, which was founded on education, service, and enforcement. This model led to the organisation meeting its objectives year after year. Under Mr Gordhan, SARS had very effective and necessary measures in place to curb illicit trades that were depriving the country of billions of rands.

Evidence heard during the Nugent Commission of Inquiry illustrates that during the tenure of Mr Gordhan, the staff morale was very positive and inspiring, such that the phrase 'the higher purpose' was coined and practised throughout the organisation. This culture continued over the years until the end of Mr Pillay's acting. Employees were not just mere employees but were regarded as servants of a higher purpose in building a democratic South Africa. Employees felt pride in working at SARS, such that some skilled professionals disregarded rewarding offers to join SARS. The Nugent Commission also heard that the environment at SARS during Mr Gordhan's time was stimulating and innovative, the culture of inquiry and robust debate was there, and employees were willing and available to work long hours without extra remuneration when called for.



Source: South African Revenue Service (SARS). (2016). *Annual report 2015–2016* (p. 20). South African Government.

SARS, South African Revenue Service; Grp Exec, Group Executive; CO, Chief Officer.

FIGURE 2: High-level organogram of the South African Revenue Service.

As of the end of the 2017/2018 financial year, a lot has happened, and the SARS environment was no longer the same as described at the end of Mr Pillay's acting tenure. Evidence heard during the Nugent Commission has described it as a culture characterised by intrigue, fear, suspicion, and distrust. On his arrival at SARS, Mr Moyane installed several CCTV cameras to put employees under constant surveillance, creating an environment full of fear and intimidation. With no consultation whatsoever (with those who led the creation and inception), the promising trajectory of modernisation was suddenly stopped upon the arrival of Mr Moyane. In addition, Mr Moyane immediately remodelled the organisational structure of SARS, fragmenting functions; the Large Business Centre (LBC) was embroiled in the loss of both governance and revenue collection, and measures to curb revenue criminality were destroyed to favour those who trade illicitly (Nugent report, 2018). Pillay (2004) described ineffective and unethical leadership as an unfortunate impediment to good governance. Under Mr Moyane, SARS lost what was coined as 'the higher purpose', which motivated and kept SARS employees going for many years. In his report, Nugent concluded that Mr Moyane arrived at SARS without integrity, and all the mismanagement activities that happened and were reported under his watch were manifestations of the failure of integrity and corporate governance on an industrial scale.

Newspaper media on corporate governance in state-owned enterprises

In South Africa and other countries in the world, the newspaper media play a critical role in reporting on corporate governance, both in the public and private sectors. Newspaper media perform this 'watchdog' role through their extensive reports on governance issues, encouraging management transparency, and engaging public discourse. In the recent past (from 2016), there has been an excess of corporate governance scandals and issues of management accountability in the news media, especially in South Africa. There were also cases where newspaper outlets were suspected of being involved in some corporate governance scandals within some corporations in the country (Pillay et al., 2023). In South Africa, broadcast and print newspaper media are engaged in intense journalism with a serious emphasis on corporate governance, politics, and economics in general. As corporate watchdogs, South African print newspaper media normally provide early detection of corporate scandals and malpractices in both the public and private sectors.

However, the ability of a newspaper outlet to objectively report corporate malpractice sometimes depends on its independence from the corporation that it reports on. Currently, South African newspaper media is governed by the Press Code of Ethics and Conduct (Pillay et al., 2023). The Press Council expects the media to remain the watchdog over 'the forces that shape society to curtail unbridled power and to limit abuse and corruption' (Pillay et al., 2023). It is

therefore clear that the newspaper media have a crucial role to play in empowering the population with important information about the governance of government institutions. According to Pillay et al. (2023), media must be well-informed to provide citizens with well-researched information and enhance good governance and democracy. The newspaper media is expected to make a meaningful contribution in promoting transparency and accountability in all processes of government and public institutions (Chuma et al., 2017).

In conclusion, the objective of this research study was to critically examine the impact of organisational culture on corporate governance in public entities, with specific reference to SARS over the years under different commissioners. Owing to the orientation and complexity of this research work, the researchers also aimed to probe and understand corporate cultural issues at SARS by collecting pertinent data through a widespread literature search, referring to scholarly literature using academic journal articles, books, online media articles, dissertations, commission reports, and legislation. Therefore, this research study fell under the ambit of a qualitative and descriptive study, because the study ought to demonstrate the causal relationships linking variables and elucidate the relationships relating to these variables (the organisational culture and corporate governance). So, the researchers sought to probe or excavate the corporate governance issues related to corporate culture at SARS as reported in online media articles.

Research methods and design

The relevant literature reviewed looked at: the concept of corporate governance; the organisational culture; organisational culture and corporate governance in public entities; because the study's focus entity was SARS, the organisational culture and corporate performance at SARS over the years were also reviewed accordingly. Most importantly, the aftermath of the literature review aided the thematic and synergetic shaping of the conceptual structure of the research study. The study was guided by the qualitative approach, with some features of the quantitative approach, which provides a couple of important advantages to the research study's accuracy and complementarity of the approaches (Choy, 2014). Pragmatism is regarded as the most appropriate research approach to be adopted in this study. This is so because it permits and admits that any knowledge acquired through this research is comparative, rather than a principle. That is, the influence of organisational culture on corporate governance is related to a particular variable(s). According to Cavana et al. (2001), Pillay et al. (2023), when pragmatism with an element of interpretivism research is used, the encounters and views of individual persons are sought for their data as an alternative to relying exclusively on arithmetical statistics. In addition, Hanson (2008) contends that the practical or hypothetical justification to focus explicitly on whether the research should be qualitative or quantitative may diminish.

Because this current study intended to probe and critically discuss the influence of organisational culture on corporate governance in public entities, SARS being the focus entity, the units of analysis were relevant online information sources (i.e. reports, laws, books, and newspapers). The study's unit of analysis is SARS, and the focus of the study is to explore the impact of organisational culture on corporate governance at SARS. Although the researcher could not obtain permission to utilise internal employees of SARS as the unit of analysis, the population of the study remained the data in the public domain, relating to the research topic and questions to be answered by the study. Therefore, the data collected from the selected online news articles over the period 2014–2018 were used in the analysis. Also, the sampling procedure was designed to ensure that pertinent opinion pieces, commission reports, and online news reporting appropriate for this research work are used.

The sampling approach used in this study was called 'purposive sampling', because it was based on a limited set of data sources over a fixed period (2014–2018, in this case). For this study, the period to collect data begins on 27 September 2014 and ends on 19 March 2018 (3 years and 6 months). This selected period was based on two facets: firstly, the period during which many mismanagement issues at SARS were reported in various media platforms, and unprecedented senior executive resignations occurred frequently. Secondly, this selected period was enthused by the reports and witnesses that came before retired judge Robert Nugent during the commission of inquiry into tax administration and governance by SARS.

As alluded to above, this study used qualitative data. Therefore, the first set of data was collected from relevant commission reports, laws, books, and published peer-reviewed articles on the research subject. Then the second set of data was collected via online news articles involving four reputable South African media sources: *News24*, the *Sunday Times*, the *Eyewitness News*, and the SABC. This research study heavily relied on secondary data to attain valuable and imperative information to achieve its research objectives and subsequently address the problem statement at the centre of the topic. This research study scrutinised the quantity of literature in books, peer-reviewed articles, commission reports, and online news articles to achieve its objectives. In essence, extensive literature and online news articles were used as secondary data sources to explore organisational culture's influence on corporate governance at SARS (Thusi & Selepe, 2023). Because the study focused on collecting data from relevant commission reports, laws, books, published peer-reviewed articles, and online news articles on the research subject, there was no need for audio recording or subsequent transcription.

The study focused on qualitative data collected from online news outlets, commission reports, and peer-reviewed journal articles; therefore, the involvement of participants was limited. Concerning the ownership and control of data emanating from this study, the researchers emphasised that this research study is an academic study.

Theoretical and conceptual framework of the study

Through theoretical and conceptual frameworks, authors were able to put together ideas that demonstrated the study as a logical extension of current knowledge by organising a theoretical framework based on a relevant theory. Most importantly, the conceptual framework itself is underpinned by matters raised in the problem statement and literature review. To begin with, the authors defined corporate governance and the agency theory in detail. Borrowing from the OECD (2005), the authors of this work defined corporate governance as processes linked with leadership, laws, decision-making, and effective control in organisations. Against this, legislative frameworks, policies, and procedures governing SOEs were reviewed. The way in which South African SOEs are controlled, managed, and overseen can be critically explored within several theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Given the surrounding circumstances, the study used the agency and stakeholder theories, where the agency theory speaks about the roles or how the company owners (stakeholders) and the management (agents) interact while running the affairs of the corporation (Pillay et al., 2023). The environmental complexity surrounding the SOEs is somewhat dynamic and calls for an interdisciplinary, comprehensive and theoretical approach based on the theories mentioned above.

Results

Sunday times

The *Sunday Times* published several articles relating to SARS matters and developments between 2014 and 2018. However, only those relevant to this study or the topic of this study were reviewed and counted to be more than 13. They were deemed pertinent to this study because they covered topics such as the first appointment of Mr Moyane as SARS Commissioner, the suspensions of several top officials at SARS, the alleged rogue unit scandal, the investigative panels at SARS, and the significant controversies and inaccuracies surrounding these reports about SARS developments.

News24

From September 2014 to November 2018, *News24* published several articles mentioning SARS developments, including policy shifts, leadership changes, and rogue unit controversies. For example, leadership changes and management controversies reported by *News24* during this period include Mr Tom Moyane's appointment and tenure as SARS Commissioner, investigative panels on several issues at SARS, rogue unit allegations, unending litigations, and the Nugent Commission. Although it is impossible to mention the exact number of *News24* articles published about SARS matters during this period, more than 12 *News24* articles relevant to this study were published. They were reviewed for this research project.

South African Broadcasting Corporation

The South African Broadcasting Corporation published several articles covering notable events at SARS between 2014 and 2018, which include leadership changes, the 'Rogue Unit allegations', and the establishment of the Nugent Commission. The number of SABC online newspaper articles reported on SARS were on a case-by-case basis, but relevant to this study, SABC published about 5 online articles about SARS internal matters.

In total, 30 online newspaper articles were considered and reviewed in this study. In addition, investigative panel reports such as the Sikhakhane Commission report, Kroon Board Advisory report, KPMG report, and the Nugent Commission report were all considered and reviewed, considering this study's problem statement, research questions, aim, and objectives. The analysis of the relevant data and the results presented mainly focus on responding to the research questions and the objectives of the study. The researchers limited the analysis and discussion to the pertinent questions of the study and the literature gathered so far.

A parallelism between the public entities management and the existing culture

Those who were at SARS long enough (1997–2014), before the arrival of Mr Tom Moyane as SARS Commissioner, attest that the morale and pride of working for SARS have always been very high. Working at SARS has always been dubbed as 'serving the higher purpose'. The phrase 'the high purpose' was invented and advanced for years by Mr Pravin Gordhan during his tenure as SARS Commissioner (Nugent, 2018; Pillay et al., 2023). However, the post-September 2014 experience at SARS has been characterised as an institution ruled by fear, intimidation, and distrust (Nugent, 2018). Within 3 years at the helm as SARS boss, Mr Moyane saw over 2000 employees resigning and leaving the employ of SARS. Among those were notable experts in the tax collection industry, and over 600 of them were subjected to spurious disciplinary actions. The exodus of so many skilful SARS employees within a short period should have been a wake-up call to the leadership team if it cared.

What was known as the culture of serving a high purpose, a healthy workplace, and a thriving institution became an institution of endless and spurious disciplinary processes. Employees were constantly under CCTV surveillance at work. In less than 3 years (September 2014 to August 2018), the most respected and reputable tax collection institution in the world has become an arena of traumatised employees, palpable racial tensions, and a lack of trust in the leadership. The question is: What happened to SARS, and how?

The South African Revenue Service's management versus the culture

From 1999 to 2013, the culture at SARS was that of an organic organisation, purposefully pursuing its mandate, and cordial.

However, from September 2014 to 2018, the culture at SARS changed dramatically into an atmosphere full of fear, intimidation and suspicion. Studies have shown that in an organisation, culture is created by the leaders, and it trickles down the entire organisation (Pondicherry, 2024). Of course, SARS was never going to be an exception to this, and that can be seen and witnessed from the different tenures of SARS commissioners. When describing these unfortunate developments at SARS, Judge Nugent said, 'The hallmark of good governance in an institution is the existence of a culture of healthy dissent. However, Mr Moyane substituted instead a culture of fear and intimidation'. Mr Tom Moyane was appointed chief tax collector (SARS Commissioner) in September 2013 by the then President of the Republic, Mr Jacob Zuma. However, in 2013, a year before he was appointed SARS boss, Mr Moyane held meetings with Mr Zuma and the officials of Bain & Company Inc. This is the company that would have been or ended up being appointed to handle the so-called 'repurposing and restructuring' at SARS (Nugent, 2018). The main purpose or subject of those meetings was 'CEO coaching' to induct or develop a plan to be executed by Mr Moyane once appointed to capture and repurpose SARS (Nugent, 2018; Pillay et al., 2023). The Nugent Commission report revealed that Mr Moyane met the representatives of Bain and Company Inc. more than four times in 2013 before he took over SARS.

It is, therefore, clear that the agenda to capture and repurpose SARS was well-conceived way before Mr Moyane's arrival, and its intentions were always malicious and selfish. So, the notable changes that followed, which may have influenced or necessitated the culture that existed at SARS, were, by no means, professional and in the best interests of the organisation. Unfortunately, this capture and repurposing could only be achieved when the existing tax compliance, investigative, and enforcement structures are dismantled. In addition, control of the entire organisation's functions was critical to those wishing to capture and repurpose the tax collection agency. Lastly, to achieve this malevolent intent, there existed an immediate need to silence or keep those ethical employees at bay. Unfortunately, the latter could only be accomplished through instilling a culture of fear and intimidation across the organisation.

The 'rogue unit' and the departure of senior officials at the South African Revenue Service

The *Sunday Times* newspaper alone published more than 30 articles about the so-called 'rogue unit' at SARS from October 2014 to the end of 2019 (until retracting their articles). The first *Sunday Times* article about the rogue unit was published on 12 October 2014, exactly 2 weeks after the appointment of Mr Moyane as SARS's top boss. The following day, on the 13th of October 2014, Mr Moyane summoned a team of Executive Committee (EXCO), members at SARS and questioned them about their knowledge of the rogue unit (Cowan, 2018; Pillay et al., 2023; Ramphedi et al., 2014). Although many of them

disavowed any knowledge of the 'rogue unit', Mr Moyane expressly announced his loss of confidence in all the EXCO members and immediately disbanded it. The most unfortunate part was that the EXCO at SARS was disbanded based on a mere newspaper report, which was later retracted.

In November 2014, a couple of articles (SABC, *News24*, and *Sunday Times*) were published about how Mr Moyane stopped the services of his executive advisory committee and how he started to deal with each manager or executive brutally on an individual basis (News24, 2014). This was the genesis of the exodus of senior officials from SARS, either through unlawful suspensions or voluntary or forced resignation. For example, on 05 December 2014, online newspaper articles reported the suspension of the then SARS Deputy Commissioner, Ivan Pillay, and the Group Executive of Strategic Planning and Risk, Peter Richer (Sapa et al., 2014). The suspension of Mr Pillay and Mr Richer took place less than 3 months after the new SARS boss had taken over the reins at SARS. In addition, their suspension was motivated by the allegation of their involvement in the so-called rogue unit within SARS (Narsee & Mashego, 2014). However, the Labour court ruled in favour of Mr Pillay and told the SARS boss that he had breached the SARS contract with Mr Pillay when he failed to allow Mr Pillay to state why he should not be suspended (in line with the suspension policy at SARS). This hasty decision to unprocedurally suspend the deputy commissioner based on a mere newspaper article proves how hellbent Mr Moyane was to capture and control all functions and powers at SARS.

At the back of the unfounded allegations of establishing a rogue unit within SARS, Mr Pillay and Mr Richer eventually left SARS on 07 May 2015. They joined several former SARS officials who had already left SARS for different reasons (suspensions or resignations) (Mashego, 2015). Unfortunately, the debacle of the rogue unit was not without casualties. Several senior SARS employees were visited with pain, suffering, and loss of income during this period. These include Barry Hore: Former, Chief Operating Officer (COO), Jerome Frey: Former Modernisation and Strategy Head, Jacques Meyer: Former Head of the Case Selection Division, Clifford Collings: Former Head of Anti-Corruption and Security, Johan Van Loggerenberg: Former Head of Investigations, Yolisa Pikié: Ivan Pillay's Special Advisor, Adrian Lackay and Marika Muller: Former Spokespeople.

The investigative panels at the South African Revenue Service and their modus operandi

Several separate investigative panels were instituted at SARS to investigate mainly the allegations of the rogue unit made by a Sunday Times newspaper article. Interestingly, yet shockingly, these investigative panels were used to discredit senior SARS officials. Moreover,

these panels were the components of disinformation at SARS, and they were used as a basis to suspend or fire some senior executives at SARS (Nugent, 2018). Another interesting part about these panels is how each panel would use or reference the work and/or recommendations of the other, especially when it comes to the so-called rogue unit, without doing any further investigation. The other important thing to note about these panels, including the audit done by KPMG between 2015 and 2016, is that none of the implicated people were ever called or invited to submit an affidavit or state their cases during the sittings of the panels. The so-called investigations would only focus on the newspaper articles and the findings and/or recommendations of the previous panels and make their own recommendations (Pillay et al., 2023).

Lastly, there was a shocking modus operandi employed after each panel had concluded its report; the report would be leaked to the media, mainly the *Sunday Times*, way before the subjects of the investigations could see the report (Pillay et al., 2023). However, in late 2017, KPMG admitted that its report findings, conclusions, and recommendations were prescribed to them by the then SARS Commissioner, Mr Moyane. This simply means that for each investigative panel instituted, there was a predetermined outcome; hence, they were used to suspend or fire other officials at SARS. In February 2018, KPMG retracted parts of the report it produced or compiled concerning the SARS 'rogue unit' (Mngadi, 2018). This KPMG report was the same (in part) that was used by the then commissioner of SARS, Mr Moyane, to suspend his deputy commissioner, Mr Pillay, the Head of Investigations, Johan van Loggerenberg, and others. It is also believed that the same report was used to remove the then Minister of Finance, Mr Pravin Gordhan. KPMG went as far as paying back the money (R23 million) it received from SARS for its tainted report.

The Nugent Commission

During his first State of the Nation Address (SONA) on 19 February 2018, the President of the Republic, Cyril Ramaphosa, announced his intention to establish a commission of inquiry into SARS leadership and tax administration matters. On the 19th of March 2018, President Ramaphosa decided to suspend Mr Moyane as the commissioner of SARS with immediate effect (*News24*, 2018). A few months later, the president announced the establishment of the commission of inquiry into tax administration and governance within the SARS. The commission was led by retired Justice Robert Nugent, and among its key deliverables were the expectation to provide an interim report as soon as possible (on 30 September 2018) and a final report by 30 November 2018 (News24, 2018). On the 27th of September 2018, the commission of inquiry into tax matters and governance at SARS produced and presented its interim report to the President of the Republic. Among the notable and relevant findings in the interim report are:

- SARS is ruled by intrigue, fear, distrust, and suspicion.
- Reversing the trajectory of modernisation and degeneration of systems since Mr Moyane took over.
- Organisational restructuring has displaced more than 200 managers, several skilled professionals have left the institution, and many employees have been placed in redundant positions.
- Icy relations between the commissioner of SARS and other important sister institutions, such as the Treasury, Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC), and Auditor General of South Africa (AG).
- Bad image and reputational damage from all fronts.
- Lastly, since the appointment of Mr Moyane as the boss of SARS, there has been serious reckless management of the tax collection agency.

In its interim report, the commission of inquiry recommended that the president should permanently remove the incumbent national commissioner of SARS, Mr Moyane, with immediate effect, and replace him with a new commissioner without delay. In its final report, submitted later in November 2018, the Nugent Commission found that there had been massive governance and integrity failures at SARS under the tenure of the then SARS Commissioner, Mr Moyane. The recommendations of both the interim and final reports of the Nugent Commission highlighted the massive failure in governance and integrity at SARS, which is believed to be related to the culture that was dominant at the time: the culture of fear, intimidation, and suspicion. The Nugent Commission also found that the allegations of the formation of a rogue unit within SARS were unfounded, and there was no basis for the allegations. As a result, the *Sunday Times*, KPMG, and the SARS' advisory board chair, Judge Frank Kroon, later retracted all their reports, conclusions, and/or findings regarding the unlawfulness of the establishment of the rogue unit within SARS.

The corporate governance and the organisational culture at the South African Revenue Service over the years

Shortly after the former SARS Commissioner, Mr Gordhan, was appointed Finance Minister in December 2025, the battle along defiance lines began between him and the then SARS Commissioner, Mr Moyane, in January 2016 (News24, 2016). The national commissioner of SARS is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and accounting authority for SARS, and he or she must report to the Minister of Finance regarding the management of SARS. In other words, the finance minister is responsible for overseeing and providing guidance on the management of the SARS through the National Treasury. However, as early as January 2016, it was clear that a serious conflict and ongoing misunderstandings would arise between the finance minister and the then commissioner of SARS. Signs of communication breakdown and tension were already evident within less than 2 months of their collaboration. For instance, in a memo written to SARS employees on 28 January 2016, the SARS Commissioner initiated a defiance

campaign against the finance minister concerning the SARS restructuring plans. In this memo, Mr Moyane stated that he would proceed with the restructuring process without the minister's approval.

In 2017, several newspaper articles reported countless stories regarding SARS and its governance issues. For instance, there was a scandal surrounding the payment of over R70 million to the Guptas as a value-added tax (VAT) refund. Although the SARS officials responsible for tax payments refused to pay funds to an account that did not belong to the taxpayer, the alleged intervention of Mr Moyane secured the payment to the Guptas using the account of an unknown private company. This action left tax payment employees despondent and angry at SARS management, frustrated that rules were disregarded to benefit a select few. These are some of the reasons many SARS employees felt discontented, lost confidence in top management, and no longer felt part of serving a higher purpose.

The South African Revenue Service's public image between 2014 and 2018

Several taxpayers, tax experts, and civic associations expressed their concerns at the level at which SARS has lost its integrity over the years and how the formerly reputable institution was at risk of imploding (Van Rensburg, 2017). Several public feuds suggested an institution that was losing public confidence and legitimacy, and at the risk of total collapse (Van Rensburg, 2017). In less than 2 years in the office, the SARS boss had sent more than 20 emails and press releases to the SARS population, trying to address one public feud after another or trying to counter a negative media report. Although there is nothing wrong with the CEO sending emails from his office, if that becomes a norm, it raises eyebrows and unnecessary questions, and panic within the organisation.

Discussion

This systematic and qualitative review study suggests that there was a deliberate attempt to capture SARS years before the appointment of Mr Moyane, and he was strategically appointed to execute it thoroughly. The repurposing and restructuring were solely meant to weaken SARS, damage its reputation, and hijack its mandate to benefit a few. Unfortunately, this could only be possible by dismantling the existing functions and by instilling a culture of fear and intimidation in those who dare speak out (Foley, 2019). A culture of lawlessness and unethical conduct was purposefully instituted at SARS. The unethical activities aimed at undermining SARS and its processes began immediately after Mr Moyane's appointment. Central to these activities was the use of investigative panels and their reports to suspend or dismiss senior executives. To ensure that the agenda to capture SARS proceeded without interruption, several senior officials, such as Ivan Pillay, van Loggerenberg, Jeromy Frey, Barry Hore, and Clifford Collings, had to be removed.

Once all the officials deemed problematic to the agenda of capturing and repurposing SARS had left, the real work of capturing SARS began across the institution. Tax collection and administration processes were no longer followed; junior managers and employees were coerced and intimidated into executing unlawful tasks, and employees were placed under constant surveillance. Some individuals connected to or known by the leadership began evading taxes owed to SARS, particularly those in the tobacco industry, those involved in illicit financial flows related to cigarettes, and corrupt individuals. Findings also show that there were several unlawful payments of tax refunds to undeserving individuals (Nugent, 2018). A deliberate erosion of the SARS' expertise was inevitable. Due to the toxic culture, many skilled employees left SARS for jobs elsewhere. A few of those who left unceremoniously during those turbulent times came forward to testify during the Nugent Commission, with some complaining that micromanagement had become the norm at SARS during that period.

A general and public distrust in the SARS between 2014 and 2018 resulted in reduced taxpayer morale (Foley, 2019). Owing to several negative media reports, internal developments, and souring relationships with other financial-related institutions, there was a significant loss of confidence and trust in SARS around the period under study. Ordinary taxpayers no longer believed that their tax affairs were handled professionally. Tax experts and associations constantly raised concerns about how SARS was managed, how taxpayers' money was used at SARS, and generally how employees were treated at SARS. The organisational culture existing at SARS between 2014 and 2018 negatively affected the corporate governance in the public entity. The findings of this study show that at some point, SARS' organisational culture became unhealthy, toxic, and inhumane, with detrimental effects on the organisation's overall performance and corporate governance.

Limitations and future research

The results of this study should be interpreted in the context of its limitations. The researchers could not obtain access or permission to use SARS employees as participants in the study due to the sensitive nature of the tax-related issues and internal research dynamics within the unit of analysis (SARS). However, this could not negatively impact the success of the study, considering the extent and the amount of information in the public domain regarding the main purpose of this study, and the research questions set out in the study. Therefore, the limitations do not in any way weaken the explanatory worth, value, and truthfulness of this research study. In terms of the future research, the researchers believe that the current research focus could be expanded to include other SOEs and private institutions, which were not covered in this study, owing to time constraints and the gatekeeper's approval. This will provide a clear perspective on the importance of organisational culture across the board. Lastly, further research in this subject would critically zoom in on several matters in SOEs that pertain to the culture and corporate governance in broader perspectives.

Major recommendations

The findings and recommendations of this study are limited to the case of SARS in South Africa. However, it is expected that the findings of this study will contribute to other public entities in terms of understanding the influence or impact of organisational culture on corporate governance and the overall performance of the entity. The authors believe that the current research focus could be expanded, owing to time constraints and the gatekeeper's approval, to include other SOEs and private institutions. Leadership culture, stakeholder trust, governance structures and control, and the retention of talent and capacity are some of the avenues for future research.

Conclusion

The research study aimed to probe the impact of corporate culture in SOEs and how it influences corporate governance, productivity, and profitability of the entity. SARS was chosen as the focus area of this research study owing to the various corporate governance challenges it has faced over the years under different boards and commissioners. Therefore, the main purpose of this research study was to explore the pertinent relationship between organisational culture and corporate governance in a public entity. The research questions to be answered were presented, and the data collection methods aligned to the qualitative research approach to be employed in this research study were discussed. The sources of data of this study included relevant materials such as commissioned reports, peer-reviewed articles, and online news articles that have been reported on the research question.

The study findings revealed that SARS encountered several challenges during this period (2014–2018) due to mismanagement, ineffective leadership and unethical leadership behaviours at the time. The findings showed that the unethical activities aimed at undermining SARS and its processes began immediately after Mr Moyane's appointment. The study revealed that the former commissioner of SARS, during that time, utilised media reports to vilify and damage the reputation of certain senior executives at SARS. This was followed by the establishment of dubious investigative panels with predetermined outcomes and no proper investigations to merely rubber-stamp or reinforce the conclusions of the previous panel. SARS employees were treated inhumanely, coerced into unlawful actions, and subjected to micromanagement. Therefore, this study asserts that managers and top executives who are given opportunities to lead such financial and tax institutions should be vetted to confirm that they are suitable for the roles. Moreover, there is a need for the clarification of roles between the board and the executives in the SOEs, in line with the understanding of the agency theory on corporate governance.

The research findings and discussion also showed that there is a correlation between the existing organisational culture and corporate governance. For example, the organisational

culture that existed at SARS between 2014 and 2018 negatively affected the corporate governance in the institution. Unfortunately, many South African SOEs are characterised by ineffective leadership, a lack of proper managerial strategies, mismanagement of entities' resources and wasteful expenditures. Lastly, this study proposes certain recommendations to ensure that what has befallen SARS never occurs in any other SOEs.

Acknowledgements

The authors gratefully acknowledge the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) of South Africa, and Mzukisi Matandabuzo gratefully acknowledges the ARC scholarship.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

CRedit authorship contribution

Mzukisi Matandabuzo: Conceptualisation, Methodology, Formal analysis, Investigation, Writing – original draft, Visualisation, Project administration, Funding acquisition. Noah K. Marutlulle: Writing – review & editing, Supervision. All authors reviewed the article, contributed to the discussion of results, approved the final version for submission and publication, and take responsibility for the integrity of its findings.

Ethical considerations

This article followed all ethical standards for research without direct contact with human or animal subjects.

Funding information

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Data availability

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and are the product of professional research. It does not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated institution, funder, agency, or that of the publisher. The authors are responsible for this article's results, findings, and content.

References

Abramov, A., Radygin, A., Entov, R., & Chernova, M. (2017). State ownership and efficiency characteristics. *Russian Journal of Economics*, 3(2), 129–157. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ruje.2017.06.002>

- Ahmadi, S.A.A., Salamzadeh, Y., Daraei, M., & Akbari, D.J. (2012). Relationship between organisational culture and strategy implementation: Typologies and dimensions. *Global Business and Management Research: An International Journal*, 3(4), 286–299.
- Arens, P., & Brouthers, K.D. (2001). Key stakeholder theory and state-owned versus privatized firms. *MIR: Management International Review*, 41(4), 377–394.
- Butar-Butar, N.A., Sadalia, I., & Irawati, N. (2019). Determinant of corporate turnaround: A review study. *Paper presented at the 2019 International Conference on Organisational Innovation*, 20–22 July 2019. University of Ulsan.
- Cavana, R.Y., Delahaye, B.L., & Sekaran, U. (2001). *Applied business research: Qualitative and quantitative methods*. Wiley.
- Chauke, K., & Motubatse, K. (2020). King IV state-owned enterprise supplement: The impact on the SOE's approach to governance in South Africa. *Paper presented at the 5th Annual International Conference on Public Administration and Development Alternatives*, 07–09 October 2020, Virtual Conference.
- Choy, L.T. (2014). The strengths and weaknesses of research methodology: Comparison and complimentary between qualitative and quantitative approaches. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 19(4), 99–104. <https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-194399104>
- Chuma, W., Wasserman, H., & Bosch, T. (2017). Questioning the media-democracy link: South African's journalists' views. *African Journalism Studies*, 38(1), 1–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23743670.2017.1292703>
- Cowan, K. (2018, 28 June). Rogue unit allegations hogwash, former SARS enforcement head tells inquiry. *News24*. Retrieved from <https://www.news24.com/fin24/rogue-unit-allegations-hogwash-former-sars-enforcement-head-tells-inquiry-20180628>
- Foley, R. (2019). *The role of bain and KPMG in capturing SARS*. *Ahmed Kathrada Foundation seminar: How business enabled state capture*. Retrieved from <https://www.kathradafoundation.org/2019/10/03/bussiness-enabled-capture-presentation/>
- Hanson, B. (2008). Wither qualitative/quantitative? Grounds for methodological convergence. *Quality & Quantity*, 42(1), 97–111. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-006-9041-7>
- Institute of Directors Southern Africa (IoDSA). (2016). *King IV report on corporate governance for South Africa*. IoDSA. Retrieved from: https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iodsa.co.za/resource/resmgr/king_iv/King_IV_Report/IoDSA_King_IV_Report_-_WebVe.pdf
- Kikeri, S. (2018). *Corporate governance in South African state-owned enterprises*. Retrieved from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/30029>
- Lawton, T., Rajwani, T., & O'Kane, C. (2011). Strategic reorientation and business turnaround: The case of global legacy airlines. *Journal of Strategy and Management Decision*, 4(3), 215–237. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17554251111152252>
- Leftwich, A. (1996). On the primacy of politics in development. In A. Leftwich (Ed.), *Democracy and development: Theory and practice* (pp 1–301). Polity Press.
- Madumi, P. (2018). Are state-owned enterprises (SOEs) Catalysts for or inhibitors of South African economic growth? *Paper presented at the 3rd Annual International Conference on public administration and development alternatives*, 04–06 July 2018. Saldahna Bay.
- Mashamaite, K.A., & Raseala, P.S. (2019). Transgression of corporate governance in South Africa's state-owned enterprises. *Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology*, 16(1), 124–134.
- Mashego, A. (2015, 07 May). Sars saga: Under-fire Pillay and Richer resign. *City Press: News24*. Retrieved from <https://www.news24.com/news24/sars-saga-under-fire-pillay-and-richer-resign-20150507>
- Matsiliza, N.S. (2024). Corporate governance in the South African public agencies: Implications for oversight and accountability mechanisms. In M. Mohiuddin, S. Ed-Dafali, E. Hosseini, & M.S.A. Azad (Eds.), *International business – New insights on changing scenarios* (pp. 1–23). IntechOpen. Retrieved from: <https://www.intechopen.com/chapters/88410>
- Mbele, N.O. (2015). *Corporate governance in state-owned enterprises*. Doctoral thesis. University of the Witwatersrand.
- Mfeka, B. (2018, 05 December). The SOEs date back to the apartheid era, and many are no longer relevant to SA's economic trajectory. *BusinessDay*. Retrieved from <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/opinion/2018-12-05-rationalisation-of-state-owned-enterprises-has-become-inevitable/>
- Mngadi, M. (2018, 03 February). SARS won't confirm whether KPMG SA has paid back R23m for its report on the 'rogue unit'. *News24*. Retrieved from <https://www.news24.com/News24/sars-wont-confirm-whether-kpmg-sa-has-paid-back-r23m-for-its-report-on-the-rogue-unit-20180203>
- Mpete, M., & Maier, C. (2024). Challenges faced by CEOs in executing turnaround strategies in state-owned enterprises in South Africa. *South African Journal of Business Management*, 55(1), a4220. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajbm.v55i1.4220>
- Naidoo, R. (2016). *Corporate governance, an essential guide for South African companies* (3rd edn.). LexisNexis.
- Narsee, A.J., & Mashego, P. (2014, 19 December). Labour court slams SARS for way Pillay was suspended. *TimesLive*. Retrieved from <https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2014-12-19-labour-court-slams-sars-for-way-pillay-was-suspended/>
- National Treasury. (2005). *Governance oversight role over state-owned entities (SOE's)*. Retrieved from <http://www.treasury.gov.za/publications/other/soe/governance%20oversight%20Role.pdf>
- News24. (2014, 16 November). Sars head studying rogue unit reports. *News24: Business*. Retrieved from <https://www.news24.com/fin24/sars-head-studying-rogue-unit-reports-20141116>
- News24. (2016, 18 January). *Battle lines drawn at Sars as Moyane 'defies' Gordhan*. Retrieved from <https://www.news24.com/fin24/battle-lines-drawn-at-sars-as-moyane-defies-gordhan-20160128>

- News24. (2018, 19 March). SARS' Tom Moyane suspended with 'immediate effect'. Retrieved from <https://www.news24.com/news24/sars-tom-moyane-suspended-with-immediate-effect-20180319>
- Nugent Report. (2018). *Commission of inquiry into tax administration and governance by SARS*. Retrieved from https://static.pmg.org.za/190213SARS_Commission_Final_Report.pdf
- Nugent, R. (2018). *Commission of inquiry into tax Administration and governance by SARS: Interim report*. Retrieved from <https://static.pmg.org.za/190213interimreport.pdf>
- Nzimakwe, T.I. (2023). Procurement in state-owned enterprises and its implications on service delivery in South Africa. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 14(1), 1–18.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2005). *Guidelines on the corporate governance of state-owned enterprises*. OECD Publishing.
- Pillay, S. (2004). Corruption – The challenges to good governance: A South African perspective. *International Journal of Public Center Management*, 17(7), 586–605. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513550410562266>
- Pillay, P., Chitunhu, K., & Chivandire, L. (2023). State capture in South Africa: Going back to basics. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 14(1), 152–173. https://journals.co.za/doi/pdf/10.10520/ejc-ajpa_v14_n1_a9
- Pondicherry, T. (2024). *The trickle-down effect theory*. Medium. Retrieved from <https://tararaj-54850.medium.com/the-trickle-down-effect-theory-e5a1e2630c15>
- Qhobosheane, L.M. (2018). *The impact of political interference in state-owned companies: A case study on SABC*. Master's dissertation. University of the Free State. Retrieved from <https://scholar.ufs.ac.za/collections/4557eb23-f57c-4b54-a27a-0a8ec0210e78>
- Raguž, I.V., & Zekan, S.B. (2017). Organisational culture and leadership style: Key factors in the organisational adaptation process. *Review of Contemporary Business, Entrepreneurship and Economic Reviews*, 30(1), 209–219.
- Ramphedi, P., Wa Afrika, M., Hofstatter, S., & Rees, M. (2014, 12 October). SARS bugged Zuma: Politics. *TimesLive*. Retrieved from <https://www.timeslive.co.za/politics/2014-10-12-sars-bugged-zuma2/>
- Sapa, Wa Afrika, M., & Rampedi, P. (2014, 17 December). SARS withdraws suspension against alleged brains behind 'rogue unit'. *TimesLive*. Retrieved from <https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2014-12-17-sars-withdraws-suspension-against-alleged-brains-behind-rogue-unit/>
- Singh, J., & Chen, G. (2018). State-owned enterprises and the political economy of state-state relations in the developing world. *Third World Quarterly*, 39(6), 1077–1097. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2017.1333888>
- Sithomola, T. (2024). The public sector's futile fight against corruption: Lessons for South Africa through the Kantian ethics lens. *Administratio Publica*, 32(3), 66–87. <https://doi.org/10.61967/adminpub.2024.32.3.5>
- South African Revenue Service (SARS). (2016). *Annual report 2015–2016* (p. 20). South African Government.
- Thabane, T., & Snyman-Van Deventer, E. (2018). Pathological corporate governance deficiencies in South Africa's state-owned companies: A critical reflection. *Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal/Potchefstroomse Elektroniese Regsblad*, 21(1), 1–32. <https://doi.org/10.17159/1727-3781/2018/v21i0a2345>
- Thusi, X., & Selepe, M. (2023). The Impact of poor governance on public service delivery: A case study of the South African local government. *International Journal of Social Science Research and Review*, 6(4), 688–697.
- Van Rensburg, D. (2017, 05 March). SARS at risk of imploding. *News24: Business*. Retrieved from <https://www.news24.com/fin24/sars-at-risk-of-imploding-20170305-2>
- Vegro, T.C., Rocha, F.L.R.R., Camelo, S.H.H., & Garcia, A.B. (2016). Organisational culture of a private hospital. *Revista Gaúcha de Enfermagem*, 37(2), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1983-1447.2016.02.49776>
- World Bank. (2014). *Corporate governance of state-owned enterprises: A toolkit*. Retrieved from <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/228331468169750340/pdf/Corporate-governance-of-state-owned-enterprises-a-toolkit.pdf>
- Zondo Commission. (2018). *Judicial commission of inquiry into allegations of state capture, corruption and fraud in the public sector including organs of state*. Zondo Commission. Retrieved from <https://archive.parliament.gov.za/handle/123456789/4084>