

Research in South African Public Administration: The Paradox of Science, Politics and Economics of a Public Policy

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Abstract: *This article investigates the significance of research in public policy decision and adoptions in South Africa centering its argument on the HIV/AIDS debate of the former President Thabo Mbeki era in South Africa. This paper argues that while the South African government may commission universities and research institutes to conduct studies to determine the impact of particular policy implications, little of these research findings have the potential to influence the government to solve public policy problems. Governments are known to prefer a so-called political-administrative solution to any issue rather than using scientific evidence that does not fulfill a correct economic and political objective. This article uses a literature analysis approach in order to agree the standpoint held by the author on this issue that science based evidence does not supersede the economic and political considerations of a country in policy decision-making. The article therefore concludes that ruling governments only consider scientific recommendations that purports to support their preconceived ideologies before scientific studies are undertaken. Any contradictory recommendation that does not befit the political and economic direction pursued by the government of the day is likely to be discarded. It is indeed the economic and political context of a country that determines the level by which a policy standpoint can be accepted or declined.*

Keywords: Public administration, public policy, scientific recommendations, South Africa

Introduction

Government's policy decision is to be based on data that can be scientifically verified (Hunter & Schmidt, 1996; Brynard & Hanekom, 1997; Brynard & Hanekom, 2006) and therefore it can be argued from the onset of this discussion that research has a significant role to play in policy decision-making. This is based on the assumption that governments structures such as cabinets, parliament and other portfolio committees understand that they indeed provide services to human-beings and therefore any decision taken should be in the interest of human life and dignity and that such decision is informed by evidence that can be seen and tested. The use of instinct to govern a country is seen as a sign of ignorance, neglect and risking the livelihood of the modern society. It is considered significant that human society cannot be used as guinea pigs to test the workability of policy choices in either way by governments. These however have not prevented some governments in using their intuitive knowledge in public administration and therefore bringing the country into a complete non-delivery organ characterized by anarchy and public disorder.

Governments have a responsibility to ensure that informed scientific decisions are taken to provide for proper health, safety of citizens, protection of civil rights, social security, international relations and protection of the environment. This article raises the following research question: Is research significant in informing policy-decision in South Africa other than the dictates of politics and economic contexts of the country? Roux (2002) has argued that the role of outside experts in South Africa's policy research is important because they are in a position to provide an objective answer than public officials in the service, who in regular circumstances base their decision on issues in political interest of the ruling elite than objectively meant for the benefit of the citizens. In answering this question, the author will keep the relevance of this article to the following issues; the significance of research in public policy; public administration and research in South Africa, use of research in public policy choices, research and the South African government affair and whether or not science, politics or economics determines policy choices in government.

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Significance of Research in Public Policy

Arguments are that it is globally acknowledged that advances in knowledge is a major contribution of economic and social development in most countries (Stewart, 1995;Vaughan, 2008), hence that leading to many countries worldwide to consider research to be a significant vehicle of administrative, economic and political development. Admittedly it is acknowledged worldwide that research findings have been used to the benefit of improvement of people's life (Jones & Walsh, 2008) and to a greater extent it has led to breakthroughs in improved productivity, innovation, economic growth and a good understanding of the world we live in (Olsen, Call, Summers& Carlson, 2008) while at the same time being beneficial to the society. Government provides a variety of services to the public and from time to time they have to ensure that their services are of a fair societal relevance (Schmidt, 2008). Such services are provided in the lines of health, education, safety and security and agriculture. To achieve these services in the most efficient and effective way; science based knowledge become necessary (Mejlgaard, Bloch, Degn, Ravn& Nielson, 2009:44).The Republic of South Africa and other African countries experiences shortfalls in policy decision and implementation consequently resulting in an unacceptable service delivery backlogs and problems which threatens internal peace and stability. However it can be argued that proper evidence based knowledge is likely to improve the administrative, economic and political environment better if it is well applied and utilized.

In South Africa lack of or unacceptable policy implementation resulted in service delivery protests which caused unnecessary civil disturbances, death and destruction of existing government properties and those of politicians (Tsheola & Sebola, 2012). It is argued that only evidence based knowledge can help countries to introduce good policies and govern better without political, economic and administrative problems. On the other hand most previous studies on similar assertion argue that the relationship between research and policy making and decisions are highly complex (Mills & Clark, 2001; De Connig, 2006), and therefore making it difficult to attach the significance of research into public policy agenda. This however cannot be contested that much from the academic discourses, simply because there are practical examples in government where evidence based knowledge served to solve public problems better than where it was not used. It is, therefore, sufficient to claim that specific studies have indeed on several occasions solved public policy problems (Smith, n.d) and therefore to discard the significance of research in public policy decision making and implementation cannot be completely justifiable in Public Administration discourses.

Health problems worldwide are solved through evidence based research (Gonzalez-Block, 2004; WHO Task Force & WHO Equity Team, 2005; Kyaratsis, Ahmad& Holmes, 2012; Orton, Lloyd-Williams, Taylor-Robinson, O' Flaherty &Capewell, 2011). However and often in many circumstances certain governments have not used evidence based knowledge to deal with societal problems as expected. They have instead preferred political solution to social problems than administratively and economically required. This had happened mostly in cases where the solution anticipated by the studies conducted has more costly implications than what the government can handle with the available resources. In this instance the evidence based knowledge will contribute less into solving political, economic or administrative problem in a public administration environment.

Public Administration and Research in South Africa

The development of a reliable developed research system and the responsibility of science and innovation in South Africa is held by the Department of Science and Technology (SAccess, 2013:5). It is indeed this department that should ensure that universities and research institutes are established, supported and empowered to carry out science activities that would promote new innovation. South

Africa as a country commissions a variety of policy research on annual basis mainly meant for administrative, economic or political guidance or for immediate implementation to solve public administration problems. Some of such research studies are conducted by private and non-governmental organisations, while others are conducted by universities and research institutes.

Admittedly and convincingly, such could be the efforts that promote or better the public policy implementation in the country by the ruling party (The African National Congress). Lundberg (n.d: 2) concludes that South Africa is generally doing well in pursuing and making the right policy choices which could be the reason that makes the African National Congress the most popular political party in the country to date, thus making it a non loser in the countries general elections. There are however arguments raised at various forums and public spaces in South Africa that the country is not doing well with regard to policy implementation (Kahn& Thurman, 2001: 11-13; Landsberg, n.d; 2; Kahn, 2012:3). Public dissatisfaction is but a challenge that is not peculiar to South Africa, but also a challenge to even the most developed countries. Despite the attempt by the government to satisfy the people, the societies needs remain heterogeneous and cannot be simultaneously satisfied. South African public policies, however, are meant to achieve the good; they face a challenge which might include aspects such as capacity and misalignment of ideal and real public policy implementation environment.

The South African government have in the post-apartheid era adopted funding model for both public research institutions (Universities) and funding support for research institutes and centers (Pillay, 2003; Ministry of Education, 2004:1-20; Schulze, 2008; Mouton, Louw& Strydom,2013). The purpose and intends of this action is mainly to balance the scientific, political economic and administration logic (Braun, 1998; OECD, 2011:2-3), through specific relevant research institutes, centers and or academic institutions. Research centers in South Africa still physically fall short off within most academic institutions of the country, especially the previously disadvantaged universities which serves the rural African population. The research centers are believed to be able to generate positive research outcomes if established within universities (Sabharwal& Hu, 2013) in the sense that research pushed at those centers cut across faculties and disciplines(Boardman & Corley,2008) and therefore promoting major research output for the country to use. In South Africa examples of research institutes are but not limited to; Public Affairs Research Institute (PARI), Agricultural Research Council (ARC), Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), South African National Energy Development Institute (SONEDI), Human Science Research Council (HSRC), Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA), National Research Foundation (NRF), Mapungubje Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA).

All these institutes depending on their reason of existence focuses on and not limited to social, political, administrative, safety and security, natural resources management, bio-diversity and technological research. To a particular extent some of them pursue a variety of research areas at the same time. With the exclusion of academic institutions all these research institutes, centers are established in accordance with the countries relevant acts for the specific purpose of the research focus or focuses to be carried out by the institute concerned. It is argued that in South Africa higher education is highly state funded through the Department of Education (Council for Higher Education, 2009:9) mainly with the belief that quality teaching and research at universities will help government to govern and manage the countries resources better. Such move put South Africa in the same footing as Botswana, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Lesotho and Swaziland in spending most of their budget in higher education for development. The quality of researchers produced by higher education institutions in those countries is likely to help in solving both administrative and political problems in sub-Saharan Africa. That is however possible if funds invested for research is appropriately utilized and applied for the benefit of the country and its citizens.

The use of Research in Public Policy Choices

The use of research in decision-making either administratively or in policy decisions is often contested by many; however, research is believed to be having the potential to identify the best policy development and choices (Dukeshire & Thurlow, 2002:2; Gonzalez-Block, 2004; Goel, Payne & Ram, 2008) which in turn will improve the livelihood of the citizens. This is mostly backed by the contestation of scientific based evidence knowledge as against democratized knowledge (Jones & Walsch, 2008:1-2). The knowledge of the interface between research and policy decision is of utmost importance in modern public administration and policy decision-making. That will in all probability assist the policy makers, implementers and politicians to take cognisance and fairly balancing their act in dealing with these two aspects of mutual implications.

The use of research results to make decisions is today common in medicine, management and policy decision (Lomas, 2000). It is however also acknowledged in various literature that dealing with policy issues and using evidence based knowledge is too complex (Dhaliwal & Tulloch, n.d; Lardone & Roggero, n.d:1; Boydell & Lander, n.d:1; Smith, n.d: 1; Almeida & Bascolo, 2006) because there are other problem related issues with significant effect on the use of research in order to make sound and helpful decisions. A variety of such issues are but not limited to politics, resources and a mismatch of the roles of researchers, policy makers and implementers in this context. It is known that politicians will always prefer a political solution (a solution that pleases the mass) to issues than using science to inform them of a right policy decision-making. That has however lead to decision-makers accusing researchers of poorly communicated products while researchers accused decision-makers of political decisions that resulted in irrational outcomes (Lomas, 2000). Policy-makers on the other hand operate in an environment that differs from the implementers to the extent that Stone, Maxwell & Keating (2001, 5-9) noted that policy makers and researchers often ignore the significance of implementers in their space of work. In some instances policies formulated are not only unclear, but also lack proper expectations and the policy process (Grebmar, nd: 455- 459; Trottle, Bronfmann & Langer, 1999). This may also pose a challenge in a situation where implementers do not have the capacity to use and interpret the given data to inform their implementation plans.

The success of a research data to inform policy decision or implementation is highly depended on various factors. Bowen, Erickson, Martens & Crocket (2009) are of the opinion that it is indeed the availability of resources, political context, values, community experience and capacity that may determine the success of using research to make a rational decision on policy matters. This therefore continues to justify the assertion that the relationship between research and policy-decision-making is highly complex in both the political and administrative environment of public administration. Like all other countries of the globe, South Africa faces a similar challenge when coming to use research for decision-making which is either to be used for health, safety or other matters of governmental significance. The conflict of interest among the variables (politics, science based evidence and economics) are known to be competing factors in policy decision- making.

Research and the South African Government's Affair

The use of research in public administration of South Africa is as confusing as it can be in any other country when it comes to policy adoption and implementation. To this extent it can only be argued that the use of research in public administration for decision-making cannot be a conclusive solution to policy implementation problems. It is however accepted that it should be in the interest of policy makers to ensure that the use of research results guarantees good value for use of public resources

(Lyal, Bruce, Firn, Firn&Tait, 2003). Research results can arguably be used to provide guidelines in attempting to find solution to policy problems. As articulated by Ganann (2012:12) it is evidence based approaches that can help in increasing policy effectiveness and informing risk assessments of policies to be adopted. And often there are descending views against particular research assertions and findings that support a particular policy imperative. It is however not known why contestations by the dissidents' views against the orthodox views are always responded to with arrogance and irrational tones than calm and attention. Are scientists not supposed to provide a rational answer to queries irrespective of who posed the question? In a situation where a rationalist approach is preferred it is argued that scientific evidence should take precedence over all other issues (Brock, 2010). However, the weakness of this approach could be highly linked to information gathering which cannot be guaranteed at different stages of data collection for research. But often as it may happen especially in the political environment; politicians have to choose whether the decision is administratively sound, efficient and economically effective or whether it has the potential to sustain a political trust from citizens. Balancing a weight of satisfaction between the two is often difficult to be attained by politicians and public administration practitioners.

In some instances however some private research companies had their findings contested by political results. In South Africa for example, a research company MarKinor (PTY) Limited has often before any post South African national elections were held issued survey results that suggest that the African National Congress (ANC) is losing popularity among the south African citizens and predicting a high reduction of loss by the ANC from the electorates, but instead in the same manner it becomes clear that the ANC instead acquires more votes than in the previous elections where such estimates were not made. In the same note similar private research companies will present findings that predict losers to be future winners. That however ultimately put the credibility of research findings to influence policy; to be in a manner that is highly contestable from the practical public administration environment. In keeping this article relevant to the discussion, the author decided to use an example of a policy choice in South Africa where research results and the need for political, administrative and economic efficiency supersedes scientific evidence by the South African government and therefore rejecting the scientific discourses of HIV/AIDS and the policy direction pushed for it.

The Mbeki HIV/AIDS Policy Dilemma

Mbeki's era of office with regard to research and HIV/AIDS policy is but remembered as an era of governments' unscientific, neglect, irresponsibility and denialism that caused the country unnecessary death rates that could have been avoided (Pearson, 2001:1; Glaser, 2010: 11-14; Pillay, 2012; Roux, 2013: 56-58). This was informed by global scientific studies that put South Africa's HIV/AIDS statistics on top of countries of the globe. The response by President Mbeki on this matter was however viewed from the perspective of ignorance by his opponents who are thought of as undermining African intelligence on handling own issues of critical concern. Being in the same position of seeking scientific clarity from the position occupied by an African leader (Thabo Mbeki) of his thought; that could have been the only possible response the global village could have expected from a rebel of politics of western ideals against the African continent. Also this issue should not be viewed outside the context that such dissident view could have only been expected in South Africa because of the fact that it has been concluded that of the twenty five top "think tanks" in sub-Saharan Africa, thirteen of them are located in South Africa (Tawfik, 2010:4) thus putting South Africa in an advantage position to argue publicly against any suspect thinking about the western political agenda against the African continent.

President Thabo Mbeki was believed to be a visionary African leader whose ideals challenged the West by setting a political and economic agenda of the African continent. Without arguing for or against the recklessness associated with the responses and the incorrect message and interpretations accorded to the sentiment expressed on this debate, one would argue that such could have been better argued from the perspective of politics and economics rather than using science as a scapegoat. From time to time as it may be argued that anyone accused of having a dissenting view against HIV/AIDS issue was never accused of on grounds of rationalism, but rather on the basis of recklessness talking about the epidemic that is attempting to wipe the entire globe. Bethel (2000) argues that it is indeed politics that guides the HIV/AIDS policies in governments rather than science as evidence. This debate should be understood from the perspective of political and economic contestation between the Western and the African political and economic ideals in which medical scientific evidence is used as a scapegoat of the real underlying critical issues of concern. The international media coverage on the issue (print and audio) has portrayed Mbeki as a reckless and negligent President who gambled with people's life by failing to avail the drugs on time. The scientific articles written on the same subject of which influenced his thinking was not talked of in the same media, neither did the same media tried to probe the credibility of medical scientists who influenced his ideals.

Statistics South Africa's (2005: 21-29) studies on mortality and causes of death in South Africa in the period 1997- 2001 revealed that HIV related deaths were in actual fact the least of a cause of deaths in South African population. Instead tuberculosis was a major killer of South Africans followed by cerebrovascular diseases. A further report by Statistics South Africa (2010:25-35) still revealed that in the period (2001-2008) a major killer of South Africans continued to be cerebrovascular diseases followed by tuberculosis and HIV continues to be listed as a minor cause of mortal fatalities in the country. The diseases named as major killers are however labeled as opportunistic infections that cannot be dissociated from the scourge of HIV/AIDS (TAC electronic newsletter, 2013). Conclusive evidence on this matter does not exist as it is highly unreliable considering the manner in which such data is recorded analysed and interpreted by scientists. If scientific results are indeed a guide of the scientific community or rather a guide to the orthodox scientists' one would argue that the dissidents (in this context Thabo Mbeki and his denialists allies) have been unfairly criticized because their arguments were mainly based on scientific evidence which the orthodox scientists do not conform to or subscribe to since such evidence was said to be coming from pseudo-scientists.

The questions and answers required about the causal link between HIV and AIDS in Africa were never answered by the orthodox scientists who instead dismissed such as ignorance and denialism. Scientific evidence which we believe the same orthodox scientists believe in revealed that in Western Europe and Northern America's improved public health had little to do with use of newly developed drug as a medical solution, but rather had everything to do with improved health nutrition and living conditions of the people (Mhlongo, n.d:1-16; Mhlongo, 2003), it should therefore be concluded that the orthodox scientific viewpoint of the causal link between HIV and AIDS indeed may require both drugs and nutritional solutions than a toxic drug with the potential to aggravate the medical situation of victims suffering from both poverty and inequality.

The Hidden Political and Economics of the HIV/AIDS Policy Issue in South Africa

In South Africa the constitutional perspective provides that all citizens have a right to health care services. Not only are South Africans having constitutional privilege of free access to health services and medical treatment, but equally all individuals of foreign origin irrespective of their importance are

covered by the same constitutional principle. And yet out of all this inclusive constitutional privilege the country is still facing a challenge of dealing with poverty and social equality of its own people. On the other hand it becomes difficult for politicians to argue their reason of failing policy implementation on bases of scientific evidence but rather most of them resorting to political discourses. It is on that base that the Durban Declaration (2000) composed of more than 5000 scientists expected President Mbeki to change his political discourse to a medical one (Mulwo, Tomaselli& Francis, 2012) a move which Mbeki denounced without considering the reputational risk to be associated to his political credibility (Clark, 2000; Jones, 2002; Natrass, 2005) basing his argument that only poverty in Africa is a problem than the virus concerned. This kind of political agenda could in the continent be raised by Africans of independent thought whose purpose is mainly to defend the image of the Africans in the continent than subscribing to scientific evidence which in their opinion was meant to belittle the African society. Gesheker, (2007) also viewed the debate from the perspective in which the African populace is medically undermined through western orthodox science which seems to belittle the sexual behavior of Africans and at the same time painting them as promiscuous beings. Politics on this issue plays a significant hidden role and that does not come to the fore so much when such contestations are played on the global space.

In Zimbabwe for example Makamani(1998) noted that the Zimbabwean government controlled the issuing of HIV/AIDS statistics which had for some time showed to be lower in reporting than what the independent researchers found about the level of the epidemic in the country, and therefore non-governmental organisations were cautioned not to conduct research on their own without governments monitoring so that they can provide similar statistics. The debate on science cannot be dissociated from the political debacle because in case where science cannot reach a consensus it is understandable that politics should take supreme (Weinel, 2009:1). The issue of the economics associated with policies was never put in the forefront by any politician or medical scientists in Africa on this debate. The arguments on policy implementation are often dodged on the basis of factors that are suspected of having little to do with the real issues of contention on the matter of discussion. In the HIV/AIDS argument policy in South Africa the matter of discussion were either politically or economically influenced in responses and genuine questions remained unanswered.

The so called dissidents of the HIV/AIDS debate with their controversial questions were never provided with answers asked but were rather arrogantly responded to as either pseudo-scientists, denialists or dissidents while the same accused view the orthodox scientists and reactionary group against them as serving a particular economic or political agenda of the pharmaceutical companies that are launching a genocidal drug (Mulwo,Tomaselli& Francis, 2012) aimed to exterminate the African society. The dissident's scientist such as Prof. Mhlongo (a SouthAfrican Medico based in Medical University of South Africa (MEDUNSA) Duesberg&Rasnik (the Americans) and South African magazine editors Rian Malan and Martin Welz were but labeled as individuals that lack credibility to debate on HIV/AIDS issues (Geffen, 2004) and such counter arguments were raised for clarity of the debates (Galea&Cherman, 1998) in which personal individual attack was made against any dissidents viewpoint. Both the opposing views either by the so called pseudo-scientists and orthodox scientists are argued from empirical evidence provided by studies conducted on similar issues of debate where such issues of the debate are divergent of each other. The matter that remains unresolved is whether or not this debate is political or economic. It remains safe to conclude that science-based evidence in this context is used as a scapegoat for political and economic agendas of the global superpowers and the manner in which Africa is failing to make its voice on the international platform about the manner they want to conduct their political and economic agenda's.

Politics, Science or Economics of Policies?

It is a known fact that empirical research can only be used to support the existing policy agenda (Whoofrey, 2009) or the ideology of the government in power. One of the major constraints of policy adoption or implementation in developing countries can be linked to lack of capacity that also suffers from insufficient resources which could be technical, skills and financial. When resources are a problem of policy implementations, governments in developing countries have always hidden behind political answers because of being in fear that providing economic answers could be politically costly to their constituencies. In South Africa it was argued that President Thabo Mbeki's denialist stance on HIV/AIDS saga was not influenced by economic costs, but rather by medical scientific studies counteracting the medical orthodox views on the issue of debate. This is however arguable since most African leaders and Mbeki included have questioned the economic motive of western pharmaceutical companies on the issue (Bethell, 2000; Cullinan, 2003: 82; Natrass, 2005; Heywood, 2010:11) and to a larger extent the estimated costs for providing ARV's during the Mbeki presidency was calculated at 47 US dollars per annum should he decide to allow such drugs to be provided in public hospitals. Additionally the former President was himself a renowned orthodox economist who could not have preferred to save the life of orphans and terminally ill unproductive HIV/AIDS victims who were going to be a financial burden to the state. As it can be argued the responses on this issue had little to do with science and its related studies.

Not only is the political leadership of developing countries that failing to convince even the average intellectual that the issue of contest here have little to do with evidence based science, but also the west are not capable of convincing the Africans that their interest in the debate had little to do with politics and economics than evidence based science. The whole debate of this science based arguments have indeed paraded Africans on the global village as irresponsible sex mongers that can only be saved by therapic medical methods of the west while at the same time remain indebted to such medical suppliers at high costs. African countries have or are compelled to put bill boards in their own city's advertising themselves as carriers and transmitters of HIV/AIDS, hence to be viewed and perceived as such wherever they travel across the globe. Such is basically what orthodox scientists of our era needs to be remembered of to such an extent that if an African of an opposite school of thought ask a controversial question; he is either perceived as a denialists or dissident of medical science and therefore an ignorant individual. It is therefore safe to conclude that politics and economics rule supreme in any policy debate and that evidence based science is but a scape goat of policy decisions. In South Africa when President Jacob Zuma took over from former President Thabo Mbeki; his first reaction was to satisfy the anti- Mbeki group on the issue by ordering that ARV's be made available to victims at an early stage. That was indeed winning a political game with less effort. Organized groups such as TAC stopped public protests, but individuals and families affected continued to complain about the difficulty of accessing such drugs in public hospitals.

In South Africa the opposition of the ruling administration (ANC) has often questioned the use of child support grant as a means of poverty alleviation rather than creating jobs for the society. That was also amid allegations that the child support grant as a social security means may encourage among the youth to indulge in risky sexual behavior, alcoholism and drug abuse. In order to counteract that opposition thinking the Department of Social Development, South African Social Security Agency and UNICEF (2012:1-115) conducted a study that dispute the myths by the opposition. The study instead concluded that the Child Support Grant in South Africa is more beneficial to the country and is not comparable to any poverty alleviation programme ever considered by the government and have managed to reduce risky sexual behavior, pregnancy, drug abuse and gangsterism. Such studies including the one conducted by Gutthre (2002) cannot be exempted from political biasness since the

key informants were either parents as caregivers or child headed family caregivers which are the ones that are accused of abusing funds that are supposed to benefit the beneficiary children.

Looking at the political standpoint upheld by the South African government that poverty is a problem than health or that there is a correlation between poverty and poor health condition in the country, then there is no any type of evidence based study that will discourage the governments' mandate of poverty alleviation. It is difficult to conclude that in the government administration environment, evidence based knowledge is likely to be applied in a truthful manner than as a guiding principle for administration. As Makamani (1998) argued the problem of HIV/AIDS policy in Zimbabwe is that it is handled through foreign means and principles than local ones and therefore making it difficult for the solution to the epidemic to be found. This article therefore concludes that while science based knowledge is significant, but it has limits of application because governments consider options that are aligned to political and economic costs than what science may dictate. Whether it makes sense or not science must fit the economics and the ideology of the ruling party if the relationship between such variables is to be maintained.

Conclusion

This article put in the front the debate on policy as adoptable through verifiable data. The HIV/AIDS policy was used as an example that policy adoptions and their persuasions have economic and political hidden tones than to depend on evidence based knowledge achievable through scientific studies. The argument of contestation in this was mainly based on the scientific influence on the solution to HIV/AIDS in South Africa as opposed to the stand upheld by the President on the same debate. It is in actual fact good policies that put governments into power and it is in fact the incorrect handling of policies that removes governments from power. As this article argue it is difficult to clear the world wide orthodox scientists that opposed South African president Mbeki of his views on HIV/AIDS of having operated from a mind exempted of economic and political hidden agenda as much as it is also difficult to completely clear the President from economic and political hidden agendas of protecting African against the west.

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