

DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

**MONITORING AND EVALUATION ON THE PERFORMANCE OF LOCAL
GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA: INSIGHT FROM SELECTED DISTRICT
MUNICIPALITIES IN KWAZULU-NATAL**

HLENGIWE NOMZAMO MABIZELA

AUGUST 2023

APPROVED FOR FINAL SUBMISSION

Dr Zwelithini Michael Zwane

18/08/2023

NAME SUPERVISOR/S

DATE

(PHD, MPA- UKZN)



**Monitoring and evaluation on the performance of local government in South
Africa: Insight from selected district municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal**

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Management Sciences

Specialising in Public Administration

in the

Faculty of Management Sciences at the

Durban University of Technology

HLENGIWE NOMZAMO MABIZELA

AUGUST 2023

APPROVED FOR FINAL SUBMISSION

Supervisor (Affiliation): Dr Zwelithini M. Zwane Signature

18 August 2023

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Hlengiwe Nomzamo Mabizela hereby declare that this is a reflection of my original independent investigation and I further declare that it has not been submitted or published to any other institution or for any other degree.

Signature

Date

18 AUGUST 2023

DEDICATION

This research study is dedicated to my late brother who was called to the Lord at a very young age and never got a chance to witness any of my achievements. This one is for you bro Nkululeko PraiseGod and I love you forever.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- **Ngicela ukubonga uMdali weZulu nomhlaba ngokungigcina ngize ngifike kulesi sigaba sempilo. Ngibonga amakhehla nezalukazi zami oMabizela, Mkholo, ndimande nkomfe kayithambi ithamba ngamanzi abilayo.**
- **I would like give thanks to UBaba no Mama wami, ngyabonga ngezimfundiso zenu, ezingenze ngafika kulelizinga lempilo.**
- **My siblings, Nathi, Thulile, Slindile, Sindisiwe, Andile my nieces Zato, Zakithi and nephews, Fani and Luyanda for the support and encouragement in this journey.**
- **My Supervisor, Dr Zweli Zwane, Mangethe, Ntshosho, thank you for your wisdom and guidance throughout this research and my academic journey**
- **Dr Maleni Thakur, thank you for sharing your expert knowledge and skills in analysing my research data.**
- **Dr Steele, thank you for your expert contribution on language editing**
- **Dr Omololu Fagbadebo and Dr Martin Kabange, thank you for your guidance and support during the journey.**
- **A special thanks to the Municipal Managers of uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu district municipalities for giving me permission and access to conduct the research study.**
- **A special thanks to Thabo Sepenyane, Ben Cele and Nomalanga Ngwenya, Dr Xolani Muthwa, Yonela Mabusela and all participants for your contribution in this research study.**
- **Lungile Ngcobo, Fuze, thank you for your unreserved encouragement and support during the critical stages of my research.**
- **Friends, colleagues and associates whom I have shared this journey with, thank you for your support.**
- **The Durban University of Technology for affording me this opportunity to further my studies and also providing support in terms of research development workshops, colloquiums, and research funding opportunities.**

ABSTRACT

The poor quality of service delivery in South African municipalities has been documented in numerous studies. The lack of appropriate monitoring and evaluation and complete disregard of adherence to processes and procedures in terms the provisions of legislations such as the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 are two of the main causes of poor service delivery. Poor performance as a result, has been noted in municipalities across South Africa. UThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu district municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal were used as case studies in this research to examine the effect of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) on the performance of municipalities in South Africa.

Municipal employees within Performance Management Systems unit (PMS) and Corporate Services unit made up the target population of the research study. The sample consisted of 20 participants, with 10 from the uThukela district municipality, 2 from the Amajuba district municipality, and 8 from the uMgungundlovu district municipality. The research adopted a qualitative approach and followed a purposive sampling method to identify key respondents based on their expertise and understanding of the research issue. Data collection involved conducting focus group discussions with the selected participants. The collected data were analysed using the NVivo software programme, wherein data was categorised into themes and coded for the presentation of findings and discussion of the results. Consent was obtained from participants through the gatekeeper letters and the signing of consent forms. The main goal of the research was to contribute to the body of knowledge while identifying alternate M&E methods that the municipalities can adopt in their key functions to improve performance and service delivery.

The study analysed the effects of M&E on the performance of local government, and the models and systems utilised by municipalities to conduct M&E. It further interrogated challenges associated with M&E within the identified municipalities and the contributions of M&E towards improving performance and effective service delivery.

According to the findings, M&E in local government have been challenging as a result of the absence of comprehensive M&E systems, capacity and resources. This is one of the factors that contribute to lack of service delivery and poor performance. Weak M&E systems and practices add to municipal failure to achieve their constitutional mandate of service delivery and enhanced performance. Thus, the research reveals that M&E is essential to ensure that local government responds to the needs and demands of the people and enhances municipal performance. Admittedly, there is no single approach to resolve these challenges confronting municipalities, however, M&E can provide the conditions for increased and sustained performance.

To realise the goal of improving M&E within local government, the research suggests that municipalities should institutionalise M&E through prioritising and embracing M&E as a crucial instrument for facilitating results-based progressive local government. Municipalities should encourage mandatory compliance with the systems and procedures, adopt information technology systems to advance and strengthen the application of M&E, and adopt approaches such as participatory M&E to evaluate the impact of its functions and development initiatives.

Key terms: Monitoring, Evaluation, Local Government, Municipal Performance, Service Delivery, Development, Programmes.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|------|
| DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY | i |
| DEDICATION..... | ii |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | iii |
| ABSTRACT..... | iv |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS | vi |
| LIST OF FIGURES | xiii |
| LIST OF TABLES | xiv |
| LIST OF ANNEXURES | xv |
| LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS | xvi |
| CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY | 1 |
| 1.1 INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT..... | 3 |
| 1.3 RESEARCH AIMS..... | 5 |
| 1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES..... | 5 |
| 1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS..... | 6 |
| 1.5.1 Main question | 6 |
| 1.5.2 Secondary questions..... | 6 |
| 1.6 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS | 6 |
| 1.6.1 Monitoring | 6 |
| 1.6.2 Evaluation | 7 |
| 1.6.3 Performance | 7 |
| 1.6.4 Local government | 7 |
| 1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY | 7 |
| 1.8 STUDY LOCATION..... | 8 |
| 1.9 OVERVIEW OF MONITORING, EVALUATION, PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY | 9 |
| 1.10 OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY | 11 |
| 1.11 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND RELIABILITY | 12 |
| 1.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS | 12 |

| | |
|---|----|
| 1.13 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS..... | 13 |
| 1.14 STUDY LAYOUT..... | 13 |
| 1.15 CONCLUSION | 14 |
| CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION..... | 15 |
| 2.1 INTRODUCTION..... | 15 |
| 2.2 BACKGROUND OF THE THREE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITIES | 15 |
| 2.3 CONCEPTUALISING MONITORING AND EVALUATION AND PERFORMANCE | 17 |
| 2.3.1 Monitoring..... | 17 |
| 2.3.2 Evaluation | 17 |
| 2.3.3 Performance | 18 |
| 2.4 LINKING MONITORING, EVALUATION AND PERFORMANCE | 19 |
| 2.5 GLOBAL EXPERIENCES OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION..... | 20 |
| 2.5.1 Monitoring and evaluation in the United States..... | 22 |
| 2.5.1.1 M&E systems and tools utilised by the US government..... | 24 |
| 2.5.1.1.1 Government Performance and Results Act..... | 24 |
| 2.5.1.1.2 Performance and Accountability Reports | 25 |
| 2.5.1.1.3 Programme Assessment Rating Tool..... | 26 |
| 2.5.2 Monitoring and evaluation in Canada | 27 |
| 2.5.2.1 The role of the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat | 28 |
| 2.5.2.2 The role of the Centre of Excellence for Evaluation | 28 |
| 2.5.2.3 The intent of the Canadian M&E system | 28 |
| 2.5.3 Monitoring and evaluation in Chile..... | 30 |
| 2.5.3.1 Chilean M&E system and tools | 30 |
| 2.5.3.1.1 Monitoring tools | 30 |
| 2.5.3.1.2 Evaluation tools | 31 |
| 2.6 REGIONAL EXPERIENCES IN MONITORING AND EVALUATION..... | 33 |
| 2.6.1 M&E in the context of Ghana | 34 |
| 2.6.2 M&E in the context of Kenya..... | 36 |
| 2.6.3 M&E in the context of Rwanda..... | 37 |
| 2.7 CONTEXTUALISING MONITORING AND EVALUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA | 39 |
| 2.7.1 Institutional arrangement of M&E in the South African government..... | 41 |

| | | |
|----------|---|----|
| 2.8 | LEGAL FRAMEWORK GUIDING M&E IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SECTOR..... | 42 |
| 2.8.1 | The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 | 42 |
| 2.8.2 | Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000..... | 44 |
| 2.8.3 | The White Paper on Local Government 1998 | 45 |
| 2.8.4 | Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation..... | 46 |
| 2.8.5 | National Evaluation Policy Framework | 47 |
| 2.8.6 | The Importance of M&E in municipalities | 48 |
| 2.9 | CHALLENGES OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION | 50 |
| 2.9.1 | General challenges that hinder the successful implementation of M&E | 51 |
| 2.9.1.1 | Lack of capacity | 51 |
| 2.9.1.2 | Lack of resources | 51 |
| 2.9.1.3 | Lack of understanding of M&E and its role in an organisation | 52 |
| 2.9.2 | Current challenges of M&E facing the South African government | 52 |
| 2.10 | M&E AND INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTIONS..... | 53 |
| 2.10.1 | The benefits of 4IR on M&E | 54 |
| 2.11 | STRATEGIC PLANNING AND MONITORING AND EVALUATION | 56 |
| 2.12 | THE ROLE OF MUNICIPALITIES AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITY IN M&E | 57 |
| 2.12.1 | The benefits of M&E on the performance of municipalities..... | 58 |
| 2.12.2 | Other management benefits of M&E on the performance of local government municipalities..... | 59 |
| 2.12.2.1 | Management decision making..... | 59 |
| 2.12.2.2 | Organisational learning..... | 59 |
| 2.12.2.3 | Accountability..... | 60 |
| 2.13 | CONCLUSION | 60 |
| | CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK UNDERPINNING MONITORING AND EVALUATION | 62 |
| 3.1 | INTRODUCTION..... | 62 |
| 3.2 | TRIANGULATION OF THEORIES | 62 |
| 3.3 | SYSTEMS THEORY | 63 |
| 3.3.1 | Origins of systems theory..... | 64 |
| 3.3.2 | Benefits of the theory | 65 |
| 3.3.3 | Alignment with the research study | 65 |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|----|
| 3.4 | ORGANISATIONAL THEORY | 67 |
| 3.4.1 | Origins of organisational theory | 68 |
| 3.4.2 | Benefits of the organisational theory | 69 |
| 3.4.3 | Aligning with the research study | 70 |
| 3.5 | ADMINISTRATIVE THEORY | 71 |
| 3.5.1 | Origins of the administrative theory | 72 |
| 3.5.2 | Benefits of the administrative theory..... | 72 |
| 3.5.3 | Aligning with the research study | 73 |
| 3.6 | CONCLUSION | 74 |
| CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY | | 75 |
| 4.1 | INTRODUCTION..... | 75 |
| 4.2 | RESEARCH DESIGN | 76 |
| 4.3 | RESEARCH APPROACHES..... | 77 |
| 4.3.1 | Quantitative research approach..... | 77 |
| 4.3.2 | Qualitative research approach | 77 |
| 4.3.3 | Mixed-method research approach | 78 |
| 4.3.4 | Comparison between qualitative and quantitative research approach ... | 78 |
| 4.4 | TARGET POPULATION | 79 |
| 4.5 | SAMPLING PROCEDURES | 80 |
| 4.5.1 | Sample size | 81 |
| 4.6 | DATA COLLECTION PROCESS..... | 82 |
| 4.6.1 | Sources of data collection | 83 |
| 4.6.1.1 | Primary data..... | 83 |
| 4.6.1.2 | Secondary data..... | 83 |
| 4.6.2 | Data collection tools | 84 |
| 4.7 | PILOT TEST OF DATA COLLECTION TOOL | 85 |
| 4.8 | DATA ANALYSIS | 86 |
| 4.8.1 | Familiarising yourself with data..... | 87 |
| 4.8.2 | Generating initial codes..... | 87 |
| 4.8.3 | Search the themes | 87 |
| 4.8.4 | Review themes | 87 |
| 4.8.5 | Define themes..... | 87 |
| 4.8.6 | Writing-up | 88 |

| | | |
|------------|---|-----|
| 4.9 | TRUSTWORTHINESS AND RELIABILITY | 88 |
| 4.9.1 | Credibility | 88 |
| 4.9.2 | Confirmability | 88 |
| 4.9.3 | Dependability | 89 |
| 4.10 | LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS..... | 89 |
| 4.11 | ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS | 90 |
| 4.12 | CONCLUSION | 90 |
| CHAPTER 5: | PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS | 92 |
| 5.1 | INTRODUCTION..... | 92 |
| 5.2 | WORD CLOUD | 92 |
| 5.3 | EMERGENCE OF THEMES AND SUB-THEMES..... | 93 |
| 5.3.1 | Theme 1: Analysing and understanding M&E | 94 |
| 5.3.1.1 | Subtheme 1 : Describing M&E | 95 |
| 5.3.1.2 | Subtheme 2: The primary aim of M&E | 96 |
| 5.3.1.3 | Subtheme 3: The current state of municipalities in terms of M&E ... | 97 |
| 5.3.2 | Theme 2 : The effects of M&E on the performance of local government | 99 |
| 5.3.2.1 | Subtheme 1: The impact and benefits of M&E on service delivery . | 99 |
| 5.3.3 | Theme 3: M&E models and systems utilised by municipalities | 101 |
| 5.3.3.1 | Subtheme 1: Models and systems utilised by the three district municipalities | 102 |
| 5.3.3.2 | Subtheme 2: Effectiveness of the M&E models and systems..... | 104 |
| 5.3.4 | Theme 4: Challenges associated with m&e within the three district municipalities | 106 |
| 5.3.4.1 | Subtheme 1: Challenges within the three district municipalities | 107 |
| 5.3.4.2 | Subtheme 2: Interventions by municipalities | 109 |
| 5.3.5 | Theme 5: Contributions of M&E towards improved performance and service delivery..... | 111 |
| 5.3.5.1 | Subtheme 1: Contributions of M&E | 112 |
| 5.3.5.2 | Subtheme 2: Link of M&E and overall municipal performance | 113 |
| 5.3.6 | Theme 6: Possible M&E alternatives and solutions | 114 |
| 5.3.6.1 | Subtheme 1: Possible strategies to improve M&E and performance | 115 |
| 5.4 | SUMMARY OF THE THEMES | 117 |

| | | |
|---|--|-----|
| 5.5 | CONCLUSION | 119 |
| CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY | | 120 |
| 6.1 | INTRODUCTION..... | 120 |
| 6.2 | SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS..... | 120 |
| 6.3 | ACHIEVEMENT OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES..... | 121 |
| 6.3.1 | Objective 1: Analyse the effect of M&E on the service delivery performance in uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu | 122 |
| 6.3.2 | Objective 2: Examine the M&E models and systems utilised in these district municipalities | 124 |
| 6.3.3 | Objective 3: Explore the challenges associated with M&E in each district municipality | 125 |
| 6.3.4 | Objective 4: Explore the contributions of M&E towards the performance of the municipality and service delivery | 126 |
| 6.3.5 | Objective 5: Recommend M&E alternatives suitable for modern local governance | 128 |
| 6.4 | REFLECTIONS RELATING TO LITERATURE..... | 129 |
| 6.4.1 | THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION | 132 |
| 6.5 | PROPOSED INTEGRATED M&E MODEL FOR MUNICIPALITIES | 134 |
| 6.5.1 | Institutional M&E..... | 136 |
| 6.5.2 | M&E policy formulation..... | 136 |
| 6.5.3 | Resource allocation and capacity | 137 |
| 6.5.4 | Input-process-output | 137 |
| 6.5.5 | Impact analysis and feedback..... | 138 |
| 6.6 | OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS | 138 |
| 6.6.1 | Prioritise M&E in local government..... | 138 |
| 6.6.2 | Institutionalize M&E within municipalities | 138 |
| 6.6.3 | Increase monitoring and evaluation capacity | 139 |
| 6.6.4 | Encourage participatory M&E | 139 |
| 6.6.5 | Consider the use of digital technologies for M&E | 140 |
| 6.7 | CONTRIBUTION TO EXISTING KNOWLEDGE..... | 140 |
| 6.8 | SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH..... | 141 |
| 6.9 | CONCLUSION | 141 |
| REFERENCES | | 143 |

| | |
|-----------------|-----|
| ANNEXURES | 161 |
|-----------------|-----|

LIST OF FIGURES

| | |
|---|-----|
| Figure 1.1: Map of KwaZulu-Natal district municipalities showing study sites | 8 |
| Figure 3.1: Systems theory approach..... | 64 |
| Figure 4.1: Thematic analysis framework..... | 86 |
| Figure 5.1: Word Cloud | 92 |
| Figure 5.2: Data visualisation of Theme 1 and its subthemes | 94 |
| Figure 5.3: Data visualisation of Theme 2 and its subtheme | 99 |
| Figure 5.4: Data visualisation of Theme 3 and subthemes..... | 101 |
| Figure 5.5: Data visualisation of Theme 4 and subthemes..... | 107 |
| Figure 5.6: Challenges associated with M&E in uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu district municipality..... | 109 |
| Figure 5.7: Data visualisation of Theme 5 and its subthemes | 111 |
| Figure 5.8: Data visualisation of Theme 6 and its subtheme | 114 |
| Figure 6.1: Proposed integrated M&E model for municipalities..... | 135 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | |
|---|----|
| Table 4.1: Differences between qualitative and quantitative research approaches.. | 78 |
| Table 4.2: Advantages and disadvantages of sampling approaches | 80 |
| Table 4.3: Primary and Secondary data | 84 |
| Table 5.1: Main themes and subthemes..... | 93 |

LIST OF ANNEXURES

| | |
|--|-----|
| Annexure A: Letter of information | 161 |
| Annexure B: Consent form | 164 |
| Annexure C: Interview Schedule..... | 166 |
| Annexure D: Gatekeeper letter Umgungundlovu Municipality | 170 |
| Annexure E: Gatekeeper letter Amajuba Municipality..... | 171 |
| Annexure F: Gatekeeper letter uThukela Municipality | 172 |
| Annexure G: Data analysis certificate..... | 173 |
| Annexure H: Editing certificate..... | 174 |
| Annexure I: Turnitin report | 175 |

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------------|---|
| 4IR | Fourth Industrial Revolution |
| CEE | Centre of Excellence for Evaluation |
| DIPRES | Dirección de Presupuestos |
| DPME | Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation |
| DUT | Durban University of Technology |
| GAO | Government Accountability Office |
| GWM&E | Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation |
| GPS | Global Positioning System |
| IDP | Integrated Development Plan |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MINECOFIN | Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning |
| MINSEGPRES | Ministry General Secretariat of the Presidency |
| MM | Municipal Manager |
| MP | Member of Parliament |
| NDP | National Development Plan |
| NDPC | National Development Planning Commission |
| NEPF | National Evaluation Policy Framework |
| OMB | Office Management and Budget |
| PART | Programme Assessment Rating Tool |
| PMS | Performance Management System |
| RBM&E | Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation |
| SDBIP | Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan |
| TBS | Treasury Board Secretariat |
| US | United States |
| WEF | World Economic Forum |
| WHO | World Health Organisation |

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Since the first democratic election in 1994, South Africa opted for a developmental local government system, which was constitutionalised and mandated to deliver services by distributing basic needs to its citizens to maintain and improve the quality of life. Over the years, municipalities have fallen short in implementing key performance plans in terms of strategic plans and aligning those plans with service delivery outcomes (Matsiliza, 2018: 3). Many municipalities are not performing as intended due to a number of problems, including inadequate monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems. As a result, municipalities need to strengthen their M&E systems to improve their performance and quality service delivery (Mello, 2018:1). Jili and Mthethwa (2016: 106) believe that organs of the state have not yet seen the relevance of M&E as an important performance management tool due to the lack of M&E systems and practices in place to assess how well the government functions in terms of achieving its target, as well as the impact of service delivery pre- and post-implementation of the development programmes,

One of the reasons that municipalities cannot fulfil their constitutional mandate of service delivery is due to weaknesses in the assessment of processes aimed at accelerating service delivery and evaluating the impact thereof. Due to the municipality's continued failure to meet its strategic plan goals, this has a detrimental impact on the overall performance of the municipality. Ineffective utilisation of resources, insufficient capacity, financial constraints, and unskilled labour force are some underlying factors causing poor municipal performance. Thus, poor planning, ineffective decision-making, and incorrect information contribute to ineffective service delivery. Monitoring and evaluation are therefore critical for development and service delivery and may produce evidence-based results for the improvement of municipal performance. Eresia-Eke and Boadu (2019: 532) assert that although the government has created M&E systems that would help them measure performance, the reality is that M&E practices in the public sector institutions are more for compliance purposes

than to address the identified grey areas and use the results for the purpose of improving productivity and performance.

The government is committed to ensuring a better life for all citizens by providing adequate basic services like water, electricity, housing, and infrastructure; as a result, policies, programmes, and projects have been put in place. However, the main challenge that the government is facing is implementing those policies and programmes to address basic service delivery issues. This has mostly remained unsatisfactory due to poor performance and the absence of monitoring systems and reporting. The South African Constitution encourages democratic principles such as fairness, public participation, efficiency and effectiveness, development oriented, accountability and transparency. Monitoring and evaluation is one of the ways of increasing the level of transparency and accountability.

In order for the government to provide services as effectively as possible, Chapter 10 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (South Africa, 1996) establishes a basis of principles and standards. The principles of public administration mandates local government to govern and manage local affairs while fostering accountability and transparency. Additionally, it calls for the public service to uphold a high level of professionalism and make efficient and effective use of the available resources to increase government performance and productivity. This can be achieved by adopting of effective monitoring of its activities and operations and evaluating the impact of its service delivery outcomes (Mle, 2014: 56).

In the same context, according to Nchabeleng (2021: 1) the Cabinet of South African made recommendations to the government in 2005 that an M&E system be developed and applied in the public service and in order to track the progress of government functions and activities aiming in order to achieve quality service delivery, data collection and analysis. Furthermore, a M&E system can serve as an early warning of inconsistencies and issues related to resource mismanagement during the implementation of service delivery and development initiatives.

The Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation (GWM&E) policy framework was launched in 2007 (The Presidency, 2007) to provide an inclusive, comprehensive set of M&E principles, practices, and standards for use throughout government as well as to serve as an information system to tap into the framework's auxiliary systems to

produce useful M&E results. The intention was to deal with the requirement for coordination between planning, monitoring, and evaluation in order to guarantee efficiency and effectiveness in the public sector. Due to these legal provisions, the government was able to use M&E to help the public sector assess its performance and determine the variables that influence the outcomes of service delivery, therefore addressing the critical issue of boosting effectiveness.

The government recognised that planning and M&E were essential components for enhancing performance, and that government entities must shift their attention from the traditional approach of focusing on activities and inputs to one that emphasises outcomes and impact. The Department of Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation (DPME) was founded in the year 2009 to enable, influence, and support effective planning, monitoring, and evaluation of government programs aimed at improving the outcomes and impact of service delivery on society (DPME, 2017: 6).

Despite the resulting elaborate policy frameworks and interventions, Jili and Mthethwa (2016: 108) contend that municipalities still face difficulties because only a few municipal officials have the necessary abilities to oversee and assess service delivery activities. Municipal officials have not established institutional M&E processes nor appreciate the value of M&E. Lack of capacity and adequate resources continue to be a significant municipal challenge for municipalities to carry out their operational-related functions and to meet a wide range of community needs at the required standard and level. Even though the provision of services to the general public has advanced significantly since the declaration of democracy, more work has to be done to implement the proper M&E systems to enhance performance and service delivery.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Local government in South Africa has faced service delivery challenges in the last decade. Municipalities are not functioning at the level expected by citizens which has now resulted in them failing to meet service delivery objectives outlined in their Integrated Development Plans (IDPs). The lack of M&E has emerged as one of the causes of poor performance in municipalities, jeopardizing quality service delivery and governance. The impact, relevance and efficacy of development programmes implemented by municipalities is not closely monitored, therefore, it is unclear how effective they are and if they fulfil the intended purpose.

UThukela District Municipality mid-year performance assessment report (2021) outlines the Municipal Performance Regulations' requirements for service delivery performance analysis. According to this report, in the year 2021, the municipality has fallen short of the performance targets established for each of its units and departments. Amajuba district municipality reported only meeting 36.3% of its targets in its 2021 mid-year report and the uMgungundlovu district municipality's mid-year budget and performance review report (uMgungundlovu District Municipality, 2022) indicates that the municipality fell short of its annual goals by 23.2% in the fiscal year 2021–2022.

Adding to the above statistics, the Auditor General's report (Auditor General, 2022: 67) shows that municipalities' incapacity to plan and report on their performance is the cause of failures in local government service delivery. The report further state that municipal performance reports and requirements are not implemented or prepared correctly. The reliability of reporting and the efficiency of performance management year-round are called into question by such cases. Furthermore, it is emphasised in the Auditor General report (Auditor General, 2022: 68) that insufficient monitoring makes it challenging for municipalities to meet their performance targets and provide accurate performance reports. This supports the idea that the inability of local governments to carry out their service delivery plans is a result of the lack of monitoring and evaluation that would help municipalities assess their operations and provide accurate performance reports.

Govender (2011:7) contends that other elements that affect the effective implementation of M&E to boost the performance of municipalities are historical, institutional, financial, human resource, financial, leadership, and M&E specialist skills hence municipalities are grappling with implementing a comprehensive M&E system to monitor performance target progress and activities related to achieving quality service delivery. Municipalities are under a lot of pressure to manage their performance by completing their tasks in an efficient, effective, and cost-effective way. Govender (2011: 8) further suggests that this can only be achieved if suitable M&E systems are in place and the necessary performance management tools are being used can this be accomplished.

According to Singh (2019:15), the local government is expected to exhibit results that will positively influence the lives of citizens while ensuring that services delivered are of good quality. It is evident that municipalities only focus on service delivery outputs and disregards the impact and consequences of a programmes that should be determined by M&E systems to establish whether it has achieved the intended results. It is also widely anticipated that government will bring social and economic transformation through developing policies and programmes that will address the needs of communities and that requires strong M&E to trace the effectiveness and benefits of such programmes while improving municipal performance and promote good governance (Dube, 2018: 6). Any research study intends to uncover current issues and assist in the quest for answers rather than assigning blame. Considering this context, this research study analyses the effect of M&E on the performance of local government within the selected district municipalities.

1.3 RESEARCH AIMS

The research aimed to analyse the effects of M&E and its contribution towards the performance of local government, with reference to uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu district municipalities.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The following objectives were pursued by the study:

- Analyse the effect of M&E on the performance of uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu district municipalities
- Examine the M&E models and systems utilised in these district municipalities.
- Explore the challenges associated with M&E in each district municipality.
- Explore the contributions of M&E towards the performance of the municipality and service delivery.
- Recommend M&E alternatives suitable for modern local governance.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions were addressed by this study:

1.5.1 Main question

- What is the effect of M&E on the performance of the uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu district municipalities?

1.5.2 Secondary questions

- What models and systems do the uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu district municipalities utilise to monitor and evaluate the performance ?
- What are the challenges of M&E in uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu district municipalities?
- How does M&E contribute towards improving municipal performance and service delivery?
- What are the possible M&E alternatives and interventions that the district municipalities can adopt in improving their performance and ensuring effective local governance?

1.6 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Concepts that are important to the study are clarified in this section. The definitions given above are only meant to introduce the concepts; further in-depth explanations are given in the literature review section. These concepts serve as the main framework for the study in question.

1.6.1 Monitoring

Policy Framework for the Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation (The President, 2007: 1) states that monitoring comprises gathering information, analyzing it, and then disclosing it in a manner that promotes efficient and effective management. The purpose of monitoring is to provide managers, decision-makers, and stakeholders with frequent updates on the status of implementation and results as well as any early warning signals of potential issues. Monitoring, in a sense, compares the actual performance of work done against what was expected or intended targets.

1.6.2 Evaluation

Evaluation is referred to as the process of establishing whether a programme is effective in meeting its objectives. The purpose of evaluation is to assess if a programme is successful, efficient, impactful, relevant, and sustainable (Kabonga, 2018: 3).

1.6.3 Performance

According to Nchabeleng (2021: 8) performance is the extent to which a policy, project, or program adheres to a set of requirements, norms, and rules or produces the intended outcomes. It concerns how the allocated task was carried out based on the results in relation to a predetermined aim.

1.6.4 Local government

Local government pertains to the administration of a particular local region, which is a political subdivision of a country, a state, or another significant political entity. It serves as the governing authority for that geographical area. Most of the time, a local government can only make or execute laws that will apply to its own area of jurisdiction (Thapa, 2020: 2).

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research study seeks to bring light to the South African local government about the effects of M&E and how it can help municipalities improve their performance and quality service delivery. Given the realities of municipalities of poor performance, one of the root cause of such problems include lack of M&E to facilitate the continuous assessment of municipal systems, functions, operational plans, and service delivery outcomes. The aim is to provide a theoretical contribution to advance knowledge about M&E in South African local government and add to the body of existing research. In addition, the research study will produce a research article that will be published in an acknowledged journal to add to the body of knowledge on issues of M&E within public sector institutions with specific reference to local government.

1.8 STUDY LOCATION

The uThukela District is one of the municipalities situated in the west of KwaZulu-Natal province in a town called Ladysmith. This small town is located along the N3 to Durban and Johannesburg, with an estimated population of 706 589 people. The uMgungundlovu District is located in the center of the province and is home to Pietermaritzburg, the capital city of KwaZulu-Natal. The municipality is also located along the N3, which connects Durban and Johannesburg. Its estimated population is 1 095 865 according to its IDP (Statistics South Africa, 2011). Lastly, Amajuba district municipality is located in the north of KwaZulu-Natal, in the small town of Newcastle and comprises an estimated population of 531 327.

The diagram in Figure 1.1 depicts the district municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal with an indication of research locations.

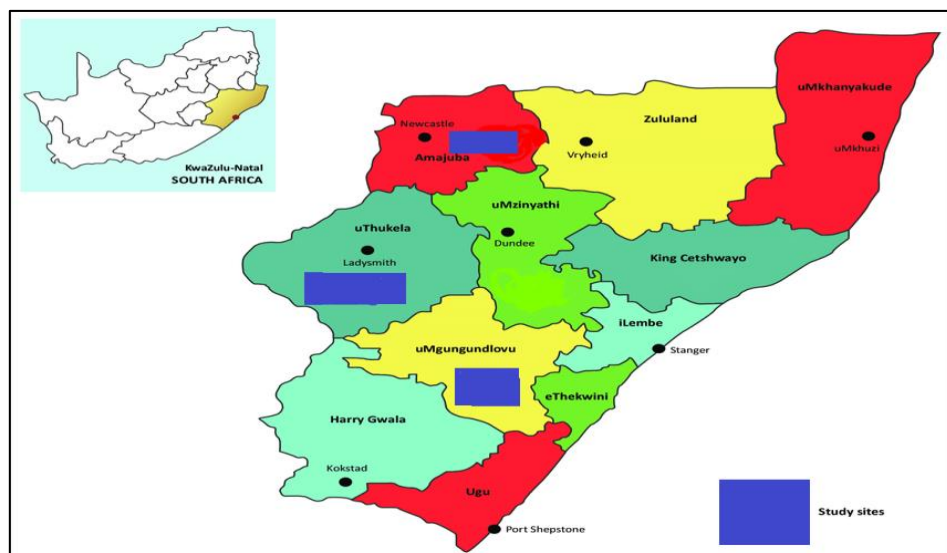


Figure 1.1: Map of KwaZulu-Natal district municipalities showing study sites

Source Data: Christie and Monyokolo (2018)

1.9 OVERVIEW OF MONITORING, EVALUATION, PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Local government in South Africa is largely understood as the sphere centred on service delivery with municipalities providing basic services and fostering development in communities. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (South Africa, 1996) assigns the responsibility of service delivery to the local government which is tasked with mobilising and channelling its resources towards improving the lives of the people in their respective communities. Basic services such as adequate water, electricity, housing, and sanitation are fundamental for improving the quality of life. Recent literature points out that service delivery progress has been made over the past years, more areas across the country have been developed in terms of infrastructure and people are able to access basic services. However, there is still a rising challenge of the provision of services, particularly in rural communities where citizens have far less access to services compared to their urban counterparts. Although the reasons for such backlogs differ between municipalities, this has had a detrimental effect on social and economic development (Lehloha, 2016: 1).

Recently the requirement for local government to monitor and evaluate service delivery operations has increased and reason for this is the need for municipalities to deliver efficient, quality services. To recognise the bottlenecks in its functions related to service delivery, there is a demand for monitoring and evaluation. The two terms 'monitoring' and 'evaluation' are distinct yet related and often used interchangeably. Monitoring refers to collecting and analysing information on the results of a specific project, policy, or programme against what is expected. Evaluation refers to an ongoing assessment of a specific project, policy, or programme to determine its fulfilment of objectives and the impact thereof (World Health Organisation [WHO], 2016a: 2).

M&E plays a critical role in assessing organisations' activities, identifying gaps, and strengthening good government by ensuring accountability. A significant number of publications describes M&E as a method for improving service delivery and performance. Scholars such as Nonyane (2019:1) point out that M&E is an approach that equips employers and employees with information on the assessment of functions and periodically measures performance using a set of tools and techniques. This is to

ensure that the systems in place support institutions in promoting the effectiveness and efficiency of services by monitoring policies, programmes and projects and evaluating the impact on services rendered. If implemented effectively, M&E serves as an early warning indicator, informing managers and practitioners on the progress of programmes and interventions and detecting faults and discrepancies that might occur. Management can then make informed decisions on the results and take action to modify or discontinue the programme.

It is important to note that there are rising concerns about the lack of service delivery in municipalities in South Africa, consequently, the absence of M&E is one of the contributors because of the unavailability of proper systems and tools to assist management in improving ways in which tasks are undertaken to achieve the strategic goals of local government. For municipalities to maintain continuous improvement in service delivery, performance mechanisms must be formulated and implemented to monitor, review, and implement objectives sets out in municipal IDPs and evaluate progress made in achieving those objectives.

Performance management is viewed as a means of increasing efficiency in government functions. It is a comprehensive approach that focuses on utilising management tools to ensure the attainment of institutional objectives and is aimed at setting goals and ensuring that they are met by planning and controlling activities that must include procedures for measuring and evaluating results in order to constantly enhance performance. Performance management is a systematic method for human resources used to identify employee strengths and weaknesses (Mokoele, Masenya and Makalela 2018: 107).

The public sector considers performance management to get better results by collecting information on various internal functions demonstrating how well the institution is reaching targets and which policies and processes are successful and in accordance with the institution's strategic goals. It facilitates accountability by enabling the government, stakeholders, and the public to monitor progress, identify challenges and provide a better understanding of issues about service delivery programmes and projects (Mokoele, Masenya and Makalela, 2018: 108).

Performance management is gradually gaining attention in the public sector. It involves the quest for effective and efficient service delivery and establishing a high-performance culture where employers and employees take full responsibility for continuously improving organisational processes. To ensure that high performance is achieved, there is a need to continuously assess service delivery programmes and projects and ensure that intended results are achieved, which can be done through M&E (Fatile, 2014: 78). Municipalities must emphasise the efficient and effective implementation of strategic plans that are responsive to the needs of the people, cost-effective, ensure value for money, and achieve total quality service delivery (Govender and Reddy, 2014a: 59).

1.10 OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed an explorative research design. Kobus (2016: 55) asserts that exploratory researchers should apply this design when they have little or no knowledge about the phenomenon then seek to identify issues to gain a deeper understanding. A qualitative research approach was adopted in this study in search of meaning and understanding of the phenomenon. This approach is valuable for this research study because of its detailed description of the phenomenon, including gaining in-depth information into the problem from the participants and generating new ideas (Merrim and Grenier, 2019: 335). The targeted population were uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu District municipality employees in the Performance Management Systems (PMS) and Corporate Services unit who were approached to participate in the study.

The researcher selected participants based on their expert knowledge and their role in M&E at uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu district municipalities using a purposive sampling method. According to Maree (2016: 192), sampling draws boundaries of the population studied due to time and costs. Focus group discussions were utilised to collect data from participants. The researcher prepared an interview schedule with open-ended questions about the research topic and used audio record to capture the responses. In addition, primary data was collected through consulting various sources of literature.

The study analysed data using thematic analysis, categorising data into common themes and subthemes. This allowed the researcher to understand the collective meaning and experiences of people. NVivo (QSR International, 2020) software was utilised for data analysis and provided data visualisation and showed how codes clustered together to make analytical conclusions from data presented as codes and themes. Ravindran (2019: 40) states that researchers gather a wide range of data in the data collection phase. Once the process is completed, the next step is to get insight and meaning and therefore, data analysis comes into play. The conversion of visual and auditory data to textual format occurs in qualitative data analysis (Castleberry and Nolen, 2018: 812).

1.11 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND RELIABILITY

Trustworthiness of this study is based on credibility, confirmability and dependability. Moreover, to ensure reliability, data collection instruments were tested by conducting a pilot study. The aim was to determine whether the research achieve the intended results without bias while ensuring the authenticity and credibility of interview questions.

1.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Fiesler (2019: 2) asserts that, in qualitative research, researchers receive rich first-hand information about human behaviour; therefore, the sharing of personal data becomes prevalent. Participants must be at liberty to withdraw from the study, refuse to participate, and permission must be obtained from them to be part of the study. The anonymity of participants and confidentiality of information must not be compromised, (Clark-Kazak 2017: 11). Three district municipalities—uThukela district municipality, Amajuba district municipality, and uMgungundlovu district municipality—granted permission for the study to be carried out. Consent was also obtained from each participant by them signing a consent letter which served as a formal agreement to participate in the study. Data was collected in a manner that ensured confidentiality and protected the identity of participants as far as anonymity is concerned.

1.13 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

The researcher must recognise the limitations or weaknesses that are out of his/her control and might negatively affect the conclusions of the study (Theofanidis and Fountoukis, 2018: 156). On the other hand, delimitations are the boundaries set by the researchers so that the aims and objectives of the study do not become impossible to achieve (Theofandis and Fountoukis, 2018: 157). A limitation in this study is that the outcomes cannot be generalised due to the qualitative nature of the data. The time frame and costs available to this study limited the scope of the study. In terms of delimitations, this study only includes uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu district municipalities as study areas.

1.14 STUDY LAYOUT

Chapter 1: Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to lay a foundation of the thesis in relation to monitoring and evaluation by providing a background of the study, the research problem, research aim objectives and research questions. It further outlined the significance of the study, the study sites, methodology, ethical issues and limitations, delimitations and the structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter provided information and explore existing literature on monitoring and evaluation and the performance of local government. It covers topics on the conceptualisation of monitoring and evaluation, drawn global, regional and the local perspective, the frameworks that guides monitoring and evaluation, challenges and benefits of monitoring and evaluation.

Chapter 3: Theoretical framework

This chapter outlined the theoretical foundation that underpins monitoring and evaluation and performance and clarifies the research path based on the theoretical constructs.

Chapter 4: Research methodology

This chapter presented methods that were used and justified why specific methods were chosen. This included the research qualitative approach and explorative research design, sampling methods, sample size and target population. It presented the data collection methods used and examined the trustworthiness and reliability of data collection tools utilized

Chapter 5: Data analysis and interpretation

Data was assessed and interpreted in this chapter. The findings were analysed and produced meaningful research results. Qualitative data was analysed through thematic analysis approach and categorized based on emerging topics using NVivo software to produce data visualisation and coding.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter summarised the study based on research questions and objectives. It answers the research questions, and outlines recommendations suitable to address the research problem and proposal for future research to be made.

1.15 CONCLUSION

This section contextualized the topic of research and provides an introduction on M&E and the effectiveness of local government in the selected district municipalities of uThukela, uMgungundlovu, and Amajuba. The chapter outlined the research aims, objectives which were linked to the research questions and presented a description of concepts, monitoring, evaluation, performance management. A qualitative research method was utilized wherein data was collected through focus group discussions. The researcher applied a thematic analysis and interpreted data based on the research findings. Trustworthiness and reliability, limitation and delimitation and ethical consideration were also covered in this section.

The following chapter provides a literature review that is currently available on monitoring and evaluation.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter on the literature review is a crucial part of this research. While the preceding section was successful in securing a foundation for the study, this section aims to establish important literature from experts or academics who have touched on similar topics of interest. The aim of this effort is to draw attention to key ideas that might help expose linkages between key monitoring, evaluation, and performance-related issues. The literature begins off by conceptualizing M&E and offers an international, regional, and local viewpoint on the topic.

It discusses M&E and its requirements from a global, regional and local perspective. The chapter covers the legislative structures that govern M&E in the South African setting as well as its importance in the public sector. It also explores the challenges with monitoring and evaluation, the relationships between M&E and the industrial revolutions, the links between strategic planning for public services and M&E, and finally, the responsibilities of municipalities with regard to M&E and how M&E can help local governments perform better in terms of service delivery.

2.2 BACKGROUND OF THE THREE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITIES

Local government is acknowledged under the South African Constitution (1996) as a distinct and autonomous of government that serves as the hub of service delivery. Additionally, it makes provisions for the classification of municipalities into three (3) categories, including:

- Metropolitan municipalities in category A
- District municipalities in category C
- Local municipalities in category B

According to Mashamaite and Lethoko (2018:118) large, highly populated areas with numerous hubs and strong economic relations are governed by metropolitan municipalities. District municipalities are in charge of issues like integrated planning, infrastructure development, water and electricity supply, and public transportation,

whereas local municipalities are in charge of all municipal duties not delegated to the district, especially local service delivery. This study provide an insight and reference to uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu district municipalities.

uThukela district municipality is primarily rural and is made up of three local municipalities: Alfred Duma, Inkosi Langalibalele, and Okhahlamba. The district of uThukela is one of the natural resource economy regions. This involves improving these regions' productive capacity, environmental and livelihood quality, cultural heritage, and access to natural resources through sustainable agronomic practices and economic development programmes focused on natural resource restoration and custodianship. The region is rich in history, with several historical structures, war sites, and memorials, (Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs-COGTA profile and analysis, 2020).

The Amajuba district municipality is located in the north of the province. The district comprises of the Newcastle eMadlangeni and Dannhauser local municipalities. Amajuba is a well-known name that has been linked to peace. The district is also well-known and renowned for the scene of a battlefield in which the Boers defeated the British years ago. Furthermore the district's economic sectors include mining, agriculture, and manufacturing power and construction, (COGTA profile and analysis, 2020).

UMgungundlovu district municipality within the midlands of KZN province is the home to Pietermaritzburg, the capital city of KZN. The district has excellent educational facilities. It also has outstanding athletic, business, and health amenities. It is a significant industrial, timber, dairy, and agricultural centre with a modern, sophisticated infrastructure. The tertiary sector, which contributes 69% of the District's GDP, drives the economic contribution in Umgungundlovu, followed by commerce and accommodation and financial and business services, with minor contributions from the transport, storage, and communications and government services sectors, (COGTA profile and analysis, 2020).

2.3 CONCEPTUALISING MONITORING AND EVALUATION AND PERFORMANCE

In order to enhance service delivery, governments and other organizations can use M&E as a tool to measure performance. Uwizeyimana (2020: 12) describes M&E as a continuous process that gathers information on certain performance indicators of government operations and relays the findings to management for action and wise decision-making. In order to assess the degree of progress made toward reaching objectives and progress with the use of allotted budget, it also gives the relevant stakeholders the knowledge and information necessary to determine if an ongoing development intervention was successful or unsuccessful.

2.3.1 Monitoring

Monitoring is regarded as a tool to assist the government and other government entities to improve how its operational activities are undertaken to achieve strategic goals. Monitoring data and information serve as indication that the government must make policy decisions and hold authorities responsible for their performance operations and service delivery (Ojok, 2016: 8). Monitoring establishes who is in charge of carrying out what tasks during the implementation process and how the process is expected to interact. Practitioners of monitoring are obligated to document information on the state or development of government intervention as they witness it (Uwizeyimana 2020: 12). To ensure that important data and information is not lost, it is necessary for monitoring to be performed often (hourly, daily, weekly, quarterly, monthly, and yearly). Thus, monitoring is the capacity to routinely evaluate progress made in comparison to a chosen plan and to confirm conformity with its constituent parts (monitoring progress in terms of outcomes) (Uwizeyimana 2020: 14).

2.3.2 Evaluation

Ojok (2016: 9) describes evaluation as the process of compiling relevant evidence to determine the value of an intervention, in terms of the outcomes produced and whether it achieved the desired results and added value to the relevant stakeholders. Xu, David, and Kim (2018) consider evaluation as all actions taken by various governmental and social actors to assess how a policy has performed in practice and project how it will fare in the future. Scholars like Dipela and Mohapi, (2021: 290)

identify the primary goals of assessment as understanding the effects of public policy and switching to a performance-based public administration. Organizations can evaluate a policy's effectiveness in achieving its goals, discuss any disparities, and, if required, take remedial action.

Kanyamuna, Kotzé and Phiri (2019: 163) opine that evaluation helps in maintaining track of how a policy is carried out or managed and offering suggestions to enhance the process. It functions in a way that measures and assesses if the policy is yielding the desired outcomes. This looks at resource management and assesses if a policy adheres to its design standards. Evaluation is useful in public management, such as in government, since it focuses on performance assessment and the need to control public finances to reach greater levels of value for money, efficiency, and effectiveness. (Kanyamuna, Kotzé and Phiri, 2019: 163).

It is obvious that these concepts are different yet complementary when they are compared. Monitoring gives information on where a policy, programme, or initiative is in regard to its specific goals and outcomes at any given time (and over time). Evaluation gives proof of whether objectives and results are being reached or not. It seeks to deal with causal difficulties. In essence, evaluation serves as a supplement to monitoring in that it can help to explain facts and patterns discovered by the monitoring system when it detects signs that activities are deviating from their intended trajectory (Kusek and Rist, 2004: 10).

2.3.3 Performance

The literature considers performance management as a comprehensive approach emphasising the utilisation of tools to ensure the attainment of institutional goals. Organisations commence with the process of assessing performance within the set framework to improve the outcome and results from individuals and the organisation as a whole. According to Van der Waldt (2014: 120), performance management entails a variety of activities designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector in achieving its strategic goals and objectives, as well as systems and processes designed to measure and manage the performance of individuals, teams, departments, and institutions within the public sector.

According to Thornhill (2016:274), performance management is to ensure that workers meet predetermined criteria while carrying out their job responsibilities. In order to maximize public policies and programmes by ongoing evaluation against the established criteria, performance management is an integrated process that identifies, assesses, and monitors employee and institutional performance. Van der Waldt (2014:119) notes that performance management was established by the private sector and has been adopted by the public sector as one of the best practices to assist the government to improve service delivery. Thus, performance management refers to an integrated strategy for improving institutional performance and service delivery. Magagula (2019:22) corroborates that performance management includes two aspects, namely, organisational performance management which includes M&E of the overall performance of the institution, and the human resource (employees) performance. In the current study, the main focus was on the overall performance of uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu district municipalities, and how M&E impacts and plays a significant role in enhancing the performance of these municipalities.

2.4 LINKING MONITORING, EVALUATION AND PERFORMANCE

Monitoring, according to Phiri (2015: 9), is the methodical collecting of data on predetermined indicators to inform management and stakeholders of the status and accomplishment of objectives. On the other hand, evaluation comprises a thorough examination of a programme that is ongoing or that has already been finished. The purpose is to evaluate the efficacy, efficiency, and impact of the goals being met. This represents the value and importance of the programme. In addition, monitoring is descriptive in nature since it provides data on the organisation's progress towards the goals stated, whereas evaluation provides proof as to why goals are met or are not being met. M&E, when employed as a function, is a critical component of managing an organisation since it incorporates a communication system that assists the organisation in the implementation of projects and programmes.

In light of the aforementioned, M&E is recognised as an important instrument that has a substantial impact on organisational performance (results), programme, and policy (Tahlil Hassan, 2019: 4). M&E is a component of the larger notion of performance management, so the requirement to show performance imposes additional demands on them. Tahlil Hassan (2019: 10) states that M&E focuses on organisational plans,

training, and surveys, whereas performance focuses on the number of deliverables achieved, timeliness, and organisational cost, as well as additional intervention variables like skilled staff members, funding, and effective use of technology. The performance of the organisation suffers if M&E is poor or does not exist. This suggests that in order to provide essential information on the developmental initiatives and functions of the organisation, M&E procedures and activities in the public sector must be credible and trustworthy.

The performance of an organisation is measured by how well its goals and objectives are met. Organisations must make sure that they keep track of whether an activity is carried out in line with the plans during the programme implementation phase. If not, evaluations offer information on why it is or is not, allowing management to make necessary adjustments to the organisational plan. This suggests that implementing M&E is essential for improving an organisation's overall performance. With the integration of public administration through the Constitution, new laws, policies, and strategies, the South African government has made considerable progress in changing the public service during the course of the country's 29-year democratic transition (Muthoni, Ong'ang'a and Githui, 2021: 411).

One of these steps is the National Development Plan (NDP) Vision 2030 (National Development Plan, 2013) which demands a developmental and a capable state comprising great leadership and management capabilities, including better planning and M&E across government. To achieve this, the public sector needs to strengthen M&E practices by implementing key principles and approaches that will help improve performance. As suggested by the literature, M&E helps organisations to improve performance and achieve the desired results as per their long-term plans. The aim is to assess and measure performance in order to obtain and better manage outcomes (Radebe 2014: 3).

2.5 GLOBAL EXPERIENCES OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This section provides an overview of M&E practices in selected international countries, the United States, Chile and Canada which are considered and characterized as developed countries due to the strength of their economies. According to research, these countries have developed M&E systems that yield monitoring data and evaluation findings deemed valuable by key stakeholders which are utilized to support

and promote good governance in the public sector. As a result, M&E in these countries is seen as the key element in the transformation of economies through ensuring that the public sector is effective, efficient, and accountable to its citizens and the government as a whole. In addition, it is important to note that the selected countries have comparable systems and tools to conduct effective M&E. This can provide light on crucial legislations and practices that South Africa, especially at the municipal level, lacks. The decentralized structure of the South African government incorporates a number of traits from advanced economies, which has improved M&E comprehension.

To give a larger viewpoint, a number of academics argue that a new approach to development is necessary, one that is socially responsible, economically inclusive, and ecologically sustainable (Matthew and Olatunji, 2016:3). Thus, M&E provides a framework which can assist in balancing many environmental considerations (Loquai and Le Bay, 2007). Monitoring and evaluation extends beyond merely stressing environmental considerations and strives to illuminate plans and actions that can be taken by stakeholders in a project to mitigate gaps and limitations so that a project can be completed within the planned timeframe. The M&E approach guides adaptation, direct implementation, and changes in any proposed development project from a national level to the local level. The M&E tools assist in data collection regarding a particular project and the outcomes and limitations are all part of the process (Honu-Siabi, 2013:14). Society considers what new development approaches entail, and it has also identified the necessity for new M&E approaches as one of the most important mechanisms in modern societies for guiding the progress and performance of the state and government (Rosenberg and Kotschy, 2020: 4).

A variety of internal and external challenges on the planning and advancement of their internal affairs have led the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and other industrialised nations to build assessment cultures and M&E systems. These challenges include uneven growth and different levels of development. The external pressures include community concerns and interest groups, which monitor the extent to which the planned project is successfully implemented and may have suggestions on how the project goals can be best achieved.

Other developed countries have moreover selected a variety of implementation beginning points for Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation (RBM&E) systems (Carey and Crammond, 2015: 1024). Governments may monitor and assess results using RBM&E, a crucial instrument for public management, and then feed this data back into continuing governance and decision-making processes. Unfortunately, other approaches, such as Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E), have not been given the attention which they deserve because they can complement RBM&E. Participatory M&E focuses on a process through which stakeholders at various levels engage in monitoring and evaluating a particular policy, programme or project and share control over the content, the process and the results of the M&E activity as well as participate in undertaking corrective actions (Mkhize, 2013:34).

M&E is a standard procedure in many international business and government agencies in the US, Chile and Canada. It is well recognized that practice plays a significant role in achieving any established policy's objectives. It is carried out to evaluate the effectiveness, need, and legitimacy of the policies in place for various ministries, as well as to examine the impacts of such policies (Uwizeyimana, 2020: 10). This plays an important role in improving the planning and implementation of future policy. However, the most common challenge is M&E remains a complex, issue-dependent process that is highly influenced by the actors involved in their initiation.

2.5.1 Monitoring and evaluation in the United States

The interests of the United States (US) government are based on the efforts to improve government performance and promote accountability. According to Mark and Pfeiffer (2011:7), the US government's history concerning accountability and oversight continues to evolve and has taken a new direction. The increased interest in outcome-based performance M&E resulted in formulation of legislations to address issues of M&E and the introduction of systems and tools such as the Programme Assessment Rating Tool (PART), bringing government performance measurement into more prominence (Giudice, 2016:7).

The growth of M&E in the US has been based on more ancient and established customs that prioritize supervision, evaluations, and reviews of governmental actions. Various M&E initiatives have been developed by the US government to address performance-based management and promote programme evaluation. However,

there are a few ways in which the US government can improve the use of M&E to promote and increase the effectiveness of programmes. To ensure successful M&E, the systems in place must not only focus on setting clear objectives, identifying and measuring indicators and performing evaluations but must also support the use of information derived and generated from the efforts to improve performance (Mark and Pfeiffer, 2011: 7).

The US government is divided into three separate houses: the executive, legislative, and judiciary, with the President serving as the head of the executive and being directly elected by Congress. The US governance system is decentralised in that many functions undertaken in other nations by central government institutions are primarily undertaken by state or local government functions. For example, local governments build schools, develop curricula and set both basic and higher education standards (Mark and Pfeiffer, 2011: 10), whereas in South Africa, the national and provincial governments are required to offer quality education at all levels, including the basic and secondary schools and higher education (tertiary education).

The size and complexity of the US government make it impossible to have a single, unified M&E framework, as a result, there are many M&E programmes throughout the major departments, federal agencies, and institutions. The most formal routine work of M&E in the US government is conducted by the Executive House which plays a significant role in providing direct staff support to the President and from other departments and agencies through which most administrative work of government is carried out (Mark and Pfeiffer, 2011:13).

Universities, independent consultants, and organizations that do research on public affairs and occasionally advocate for a solution all have important responsibilities to play in the federal government's efforts for performance evaluation and programme review (Nkuna, 2011: 633). Often, these groups operate on a contract basis with Executive Branch agencies, but they may also work for other public and private stakeholder organisations having an interest in the results of government policies and programmes. The state and municipal governments also make similar efforts.

Maepa (2014:119) investigated M&E in the US and concluded that the country employs programme evaluation as distinct social science, management, and finance initiatives. The US pushes its agencies to better their monitoring and reporting of

quality results to boost their reputation. According to Maepa (2014: 119), the US tries to ensure that M&E is a required skill set for public authorities and programme managers. This is done to facilitate the implementation of M&E systems and to improve the performance of the program. The US makes use of impact assessments to assess the effectiveness and quality of governmental programmes and initiatives. In addition, Maepa (2014: 120) states that the US has established performance objectives for public sector contracts with the objectives defined in terms of the desired results. The US collects performance data from public sector agreements on internal organisation and accountability.

2.5.1.1 M&E systems and tools utilised by the US government

Although each new presidential administration launches its own management reform efforts, this section concentrates on the US government's performance measurement and evaluation methods and tools that have the most impact on contemporary performance measurement and evaluation practices (US Government Accountability Office [GAO] annual report, 1997). The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), the Programme Assessment Rating Tool (PART), and the Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) are just a few examples of these initiatives.

2.5.1.1.1 Government Performance and Results Act

The Congress created the GPRA in response to concerns that decision-making in both the executive and legislative branches placed a higher premium on programme inputs and activities than on programme outputs and results (US GAO, 1997). The GPRA sought to increase public confidence in government by holding agencies directly responsible for: improving programme outcomes and accountability by emphasising results, service quality, and customer satisfaction; assisting federal executives to increase efficiency by demanding plans to meet project's goals and offering information on outcomes and service quality; and assisting congressional decision-makers by providing more objective data on programmes.

The GPRA mandated each federal agency to establish five-year strategic plans and goals, yearly performance plans outlining near-term objectives that match with the long-term strategic objectives, and annual performance reports outlining successes (US GAO, 2004: 4). The purpose of the reports were to explain why a target was not

accomplished and to identify the steps necessary to rectify the situation. Annual performance plans were expected to be attached to agency budget submissions and to include results-oriented annual objectives and performance measurements that were associated with long-term strategic goals and related to budgeted programmes (GAO 2004:5). Also, six months after the end of each financial year, agencies were required to submit an annual performance report that included the most recent figures for each performance indicator as well as data on the outcomes of the previous years.

The act mandated five-year strategic plans with at least three-yearly assessments. No cross-agency strategic plan was required, and the Executive Branch has yet to develop one. The Act referred to in-depth programme reviews but did not mandate them expressly (GAO 2004: 8) Nonetheless, the GPRA mandates that annual performance reports include a summary of any programme assessments that were carried out during the financial year that the annual performance report covers. The federal government upholds and continues to abide by all of these rules. They serve as the foundation for attempts by the federal government to measure performance. Since the implementation of the act in 1999, the Executive Branch has been in charge of punctually filing these reports (GAO 2004: 9).

2.5.1.1.2 Performance and Accountability Reports

Essential components of PAR involve yearly outcome-based performance goals for the next fiscal year, an evaluation of actual performance with the set goals for previous years, and an assessment and elaboration of the factors that cause any missed targets or changes in trends, including a graphic depiction of historic performance trends (Hatry, 2009). Also required is a breakdown of the agency's data usage, including how it is used to promote better results or to highlight promising practices. The PARs are described In an Office Management and Budget (OMB) circular (2010) as a transition year, with changes predicted in both the form and substance of the report for the following year.

According to the circular, to improve accountability, Congress and the public should be able to quickly understand a summary of performance so it must be produced in a succinct, user-friendly manner that is easily comprehended by a reader with minimal technical experience in these areas (Office of the Presidency, 2010). The circular advice issued in 2010 revealed that Former President Obama's administration

expected the PARs to focus on presenting clear, brief analysis to the public through the internet, while also making substantial background material available via the same medium. To demonstrate how an agency is performing and making progress toward its objectives, it mandated that PARs show trends in performance and progress toward those goals, as well as the key causal factors that affect those trends (Metzenbaum, 2010).

2.5.1.1.3 Programme Assessment Rating Tool

The PART was created to serve as a diagnostic tool for evaluating programme performance and identifying opportunities for improvement. The PART contained questions regarding whether the programme has built a performance monitoring system and if it conducts reviews, which were particularly pertinent to this review (US GAO, 2006). Although most of the PART focused on strategic planning, performance management, and evaluation, only the fourth part inquired about the programme's actual results (US GAO, 2006). Once completed, PART evaluations were to assist agencies in making budget decisions and identifying steps to enhance outcomes (US GAO, 2006). The PART was created to establish a standardised method for evaluating and grading projects throughout the federal government.

The tool examined the efficacy of whole programmes, from conception to execution and results. The PART was a multi-part questionnaire regarding a federal programme that was to be completed by specialists inside the programme being evaluated. Each team completed the survey instrument with the aid and supervision of OMB programme examiners whose primary tasks were to oversee the formulation and execution of the programme's budget and policies (US GAO, 2006). Although agencies were assigned primary responsibility for conducting the PART assessments, the process was designed to involve both agency and OMB professionals, primarily the appropriate programme examiners. Agencies incorporated staff from both the examined programme and their central budget and planning departments. The necessity that both agencies and OMB agree on the answers to each question encouraged collaboration throughout the questionnaire's completion (US GAO, 2006).

2.5.2 Monitoring and evaluation in Canada

In the Canadian public sector, evaluation was first implemented in 1969 when the government recognized the need to create official, centralized evaluation methods. In 1977, the centrally supervised assessment technique was replaced by the first evaluation strategy, which laid the groundwork for how evaluation is still practiced today. This was motivated by the idea of allowing managers to manage which entails giving deputy ministers more power and authority over their departments and projects while simultaneously holding them accountable for the success of such programmes and the adequate use of taxpayer money (Lahey and Nielsen, 2013: 46).

The Canadian government increased its use of performance monitoring and high-level reporting to provide performance information to Parliament in a more accessible and useful manner. In Canada, performance in the public sector is managed and measured using M&E, which is a complementary management technique. The government formalized a results orientation into the public sector with the introduction of outcomes-based management and a larger emphasis on improved management practices and the delivery of results over processes. In this environment, M&E were acknowledged as crucial instruments to support a results-based approach, prudent expenditure, and increased openness and accountability throughout government (Lahey and Nielsen, 2013: 46).

According to Iyayi (2022:26) the current evaluation policy in Canada, which went into effect in 2009, builds on the engrained principles of giving people first and exercising sound financial judgment. The M&E evaluation and systems are managed by the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) and the Centre of Excellence for Evaluation (CEE), which is a part of the TBS. However, the national evaluation policy continues to hold the deputy heads of government agencies responsible for the work of their staff members and the projects they are in charge of.

Iyayi (2022: 27) further states that the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) is the primary organisation that sets rules, and internal evaluation units have been established in each federal department to carry out evaluations. This central leadership structure sets the Canadian M&E system apart from many other countries. A CEE was formed inside TBS to help with rule-setting, capacity-building, and system

monitoring. With a separate policy centre, TBS also provides central leadership in performance monitoring.

2.5.2.1 The role of the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

The primary role of the TBS is to capacitate departments and provide support and guidance in formulating performance frameworks and monitoring systems. It provides oversight of the annual performance reporting including the review of performance reports required from all federal departments and agencies before these reports are forwarded to Parliament.

2.5.2.2 The role of the Centre of Excellence for Evaluation

This evaluation centre is housed within the TBS. While the TBS plays a strong role in performance evaluation and monitoring within Canadian federal departments, the CEE acts as a policy centre and provides support in evaluation functions across the system including capacity building, developing competency profiles, internship profiles and evaluation tools. It also provides leadership for assessment by creating evaluation networks, offering advice on M&E procedures, and keeping a current website; government wide evaluations, oversight and quality control on monitoring standards and evaluation practices.

2.5.2.3 The intent of the Canadian M&E system

The objective of M&E in the Canadian system, according to Lahey (2011:4), is to offer outcomes and data that will serve diverse requirements and users at various levels across the system. M&E serves as a learning tool to promote programme changes and management practices at the operational level of government. Furthermore, at a departmental level, where the deputy head of the department is responsible for the department's performance and good governance, M&E represents important management and accountability tools that are available to the deputy head (Lahey, 2015: 5).

M&E also contributes significantly to strategic evaluations that may be necessary for management to decide on the priorities of programmes and future adjustments. When it comes to the creation of M&E data and its usage guiding funding choices for specific government programs, the TBS plays a crucial role as the government's primary

agency (grant funding). At a legislative level, departmental performance reports and Canada's performance reports are used to directly submit M&E information regarding government operations and programmes to Parliament on an annual basis. The goal is to make government operations more transparent and accountable to Parliamentarians and all Canadians (Lahey, 2015: 6).

As methods for assessing the effectiveness of programmes and policies, the Canadian M&E system uses both continuous performance monitoring and the execution of scheduled evaluations. Both are acknowledged as crucial instruments for supporting responsible leadership, results-based management, and good governance. The central agency has spent a lot of time and energy ensuring that programme managers and technical specialists throughout the government receive the right direction, (Lahey, 2010: 8). The central agency produces the standards of practice for both monitoring and evaluating government administrative policies, which were then distributed to all departments and agencies. All major players in the M&E system have their roles and duties made clearer by the codified regulations and standards. The employment of oversight systems to keep an eye on the effectiveness and application of M&E throughout the government is also reinforced by this.

In terms of commitment to capacity building, the Canadian system has depended on various sources for training, beginning with centrally directed training/workshops provided by the TBS. Since the establishment of the CEE, community development has received significant attention, leading to a range of initiatives, many of which are aimed at entry- and mid-level training, such as the formulation of an internship programme for beginners and continuous workshops for evaluation practitioners and technical managers to familiarise themselves with the results-based performance frameworks. In addition, most departments with internal evaluation units are employing the services of private sector companies to conduct trainings and evaluation studies. Oversight for compliance with evaluation norms and standards is therefore the responsibility of the CEE (Lahey, 2010: 25).

2.5.3 Monitoring and evaluation in Chile

The M&E system in Chile was developed following a series of reform initiatives that began in the year 1990 calling for an administrative modernisation agenda that garnered popularity among political and technical elites. The Chilean bureaucracy was unprepared to ensure policy coordination within the government, assess the performance of service delivery programmes and the effectiveness of government policies, and how to monitor the use of resources, which presented a number of administrative and management challenges to the new government at the time. To address these challenges, a set of transformation initiatives were formulated and implemented including systems and tools that later became M&E systems. Public servants participated actively in target-setting and assessment activities as well as training on the design and use of M&E tools.

Although neither the dependability of the information supplied nor the quality of the performance indicators were optimal, the institutional learning process and experience that came along with these years were unquestionably valuable resources when the M&E system was implemented in 2000. Guzmán, Irarrázaval and De Los Rios (2014: 9) state that the adoption and building of M&E systems was a gradual process. At first, performance indicators were developed, and later the need for evaluations.

2.5.3.1 Chilean M&E system and tools

The Chilean government assigned the Ministry of Finance's Dirección de Presupuestos the duty of coordinating upon the M&E system's official introduction in 2000. (DIPRES) Due to this, the M&E system in Chile was largely created to revolve around the fiscal cycle through the construction of specialized instruments targeted at the institutions and policies of the Chilean state.

The Chilean M&E system consists of eight instruments as presented below:

2.5.3.1.1 Monitoring tools

2.5.3.1.1.1 Strategic definitions and performance indicators

Strategic definitions were introduced with the aim to provide detailed information about the mission, vision, strategic objectives, goods and services and clients of the

institution. Institutions must create strategic definitions based on the data from the previous year, taking into account the goals of the government and the budgetary allotments as outlined by the Ministry General Secretariat of the President (MINSEGPRES) and the DIPRES. Performance indicators are prepared by institutions based on the information submitted the year before to make it easier to compare targets over time and provide information about institutional performance. Strategic definitions and performance indicators are aligned because they both provide and reflect the targets to be achieved annually by the organization in terms of the provision of services.

2.5.3.1.1.2 Management reports

Even though this monitoring tool had been present for a while, it needed to be reintroduced in order to include more institutional data on organisational structure, human resources and financial management, as well as an overview and justification of target achievement. The State Financial Administration Law, which mandates that the government give information on its institutional performance, is complied with through the usage of these reports, which are generated by each institution using the rules and criteria defined by DIPRES.

2.5.3.1.1.3 Programmes for management improvement

The important institutional elements of human resources, user-services quality, planning and control, financial administration, and gender emphasis developed and employ these monitoring methods. Each institution and DIPRES come to specific agreements on targets and goals so that the latter can enhance organisational performance and managerial capability. The “experts network” that conducts progress evaluation is supervised by the Tri-Ministerial Committee, which is made up of the DIPRES, the Ministry of the Interior, and MINSEGPRES. When discussing agency funding levels during budget development, Programmes for Management Improvement annual outcomes are taken into consideration and are linked to salary increases.

2.5.3.1.2 Evaluation tools

According to Beazley and Rivadeneira (2021), the Chilean M&E system also has evaluation tools that are coordinated by DIPRES. The role of conducting these

evaluations has been assigned to external experts (consultants and academics) who are appointed through the procurement system. All evaluations must comply with the principles of transparency, reliability, cost-effective and timeliness.

2.5.3.1.2.1 Government programme evaluations

These evaluations are conducted by external experts and their evaluation process focuses on the programme design, objectives, internal organisation, management and results. The findings are therefore used for budget proposal formulation.

2.5.3.1.2.2 Impact of evaluations

These evaluations were developed to determine how the programme affects its beneficiaries. Evaluators use different methodological approaches where there is a comparison of two groups of the population, the beneficiaries of the programme and those who did not receive goods or services provided.

2.5.3.1.2.3 Spending evaluation

Evaluations are undertaken based on evaluating the whole set of institutional spending that integrates a given policy sector instead of focusing on evaluating a programme or an agency. These are also linked to several factors to be evaluated, such as management processes, organisational structures and functions as well as goods and services.

2.5.3.1.2.4 Evaluations of new programmes

These evaluations seek to offer relevant baselines to evaluate the future performance of new programmes. Guzmán, Irarrázaval and De Los Rios (2014: 12) state that since the M&E system in Chile underwent reform, all government departments and agencies have developed a culture that emphasises measuring performance. The need for monitoring outcomes, create targets, analyse policy impacts, and review and set targets appears to be understood by central government authorities. They now believe that these M&E procedures are crucial parts of management and control within the framework of public management practices.

2.6 REGIONAL EXPERIENCES IN MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The growth of M&E in African countries has been notable. It indicates organizational maturity, a focus on outcomes, impact and an answer to the rising need for responsibility from civil society (Porter and Goldman, 2013:3). Governments can base their policy and management decisions on information about what works and what does not work in their environment if functioning M&E systems are integrated into public service management processes. It makes it possible for the African government to more wisely allocate limited resources to initiatives that are more likely to benefit society (Porter and Goldman, 2013:4). Governments in countries such as Ghana, Kenya and Rwanda place a high focus on developing M&E systems based on the principles of results-based management. M&E in these African countries is well-institutionalized with various structures and systems. Public sector practices have been strengthened over the years as ministries, departments, and agencies are obligated by law to report on the performance of their institutions on a regular basis, monitoring systems are more advanced than evaluation systems (Porter and Goldman, 2013:4).

The political and administrative institutions through which monitoring and evaluation systems function are strongly linked to one another, and the state, political and ideological agendas, as well as financial and human resources, all influence how these systems develop. There is no one-size-fits-all strategy to boosting capacity-building and system since African nations have a wide range of demands (s). M&E systems are influenced by the national environment, values, culture, financial and human resources, and sociopolitical dynamics. Yet, due to the limited collaboration on evaluations and research between the government, civil society organizations, and academia, various groups operate in silos (Basheka and Byamugisha, 2015: 79)

Data governance procedures are insufficient and unable to assist M&E initiatives, and they jeopardise the adoption of outcomes. Higher education institutions and private consultancies offer professional evaluation courses, therefore, the training on M&E is essential for providing the necessary knowledge required in the field. The M&E discipline is still growing and is linked to the functionality of many independent organisations and government organisations. Their role as practitioners is to utilise M&E systems in place to collect necessary data and monitor outcomes where needed

while M&E directors determine the most beneficial approach to M&E and effective use of resources thereof (Basheka and Byamugisha, 2015: 81). The next section is the discussion of M&E in the context of Africa by examining three countries in detail, namely, Ghana, Kenya, and Rwanda.

2.6.1 M&E in the context of Ghana

Ghana's public sector has completely institutionalized monitoring with a range of organizations, processes, and practices to back it up. But nevertheless, given Ghana's expanding M&E, the different levels of technical competence, and the complexity of acquiring evaluation data, assessment is proving to be increasingly difficult to institutionalize. The National Evaluation Policy, which was established in 2018, is anticipated to be adopted by the Cabinet. A policy like that would contribute to the institutionalization of government M&E. According to Ghana's constitution, all development programs must be supervised, evaluated, and coordinated by the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC). A structured M&E framework was created with the adoption of the Ghana Poverty Reduction Plan in 2003. (Roger and Tim, 2018:14).

With the endorsement of the Ghana Poverty Reduction Plan, an official M&E framework was developed in 2003. (Larson and Williams, 2009). The Ministry of Monitoring and Evaluation was founded in 2017 with the specific purpose of carrying out the presidential goals specified in the 2016 platform of the new ruling party (Ebenezer et al., 2019). The internal and external work streams that make up Ghana's M&E division are integrally intertwined. The external work stream intends to improve Ghana's external data environment to decrease the amount of expensive and time-consuming data collecting activities and to guarantee that partners utilize accurate, reliable M&E systems to guide their own (and UNICEF-funded) evidence-based programs (Van-Ess, 2015:7). There is no explanation of the internal workflow.

This nation also founded the Ghana Monitoring and Evaluation Forum which is a non-profit organisation dedicated to the progress of professional evaluation in the country, with the power to organise and conduct M&E dialogues and advances (Ebenezer *et al.*, 2019). Implementing crucial programs correctly is the responsibility of the Ministry of Monitoring and Evaluation. Regarding the M&E issues in Ghana, the lack of a recognized national M&E policy prevents the institutionalization and structure of M&E.

(Ebenezer et al., 2019). There is minimal space for indigenous M&E practice since assessments are donor-driven. Because of the government's inability to spearhead the M&E agenda, the development of evaluation evidence, and its implementation, evaluation results are seldom used for evidence-based decision-making (Ebenezer et al., 2019). All national development programmes are monitored, evaluated, and coordinated by the National Development Planning Commission (National Development Planning Commission [NDPC], 2013), while the Ministry is only in charge of the most visible government projects and programs, which are swiftly monitored in real-time (NDPC, 2013).

Over the years, the public sector's M&E practices have been reinforced via training and technical support. Numerous funders request success reports and assessments from the government sectors they assist, bolstering M&E capability in the process. The Right to Information Act, which was recently passed in Ghana, is anticipated to raise the need for decision-making based on the best available evidence. The Ministry of Monitoring and Evaluation was created specifically for the job of keeping an eye on the 2016 campaign promises made by the new ruling party. All forms of national development programs continue to be monitored, reviewed, and coordinated by the NDPC; however, the ministry is only in charge of overseeing the most prominent government initiatives, which are swiftly monitored in real-time (Ogula, 2012: 15).

Quarterly implementation reports are submitted by districts and sectors, and the NDPC compiles them into annual progress reports (APR). The Ministry of Monitoring and Evaluation submits reports to the cabinet on a quarterly basis. Evaluations and APRs are supposed to offer feedback to the planning cycle, however this frequently does not happen, mostly because APRs are filed late. The lack of alternatives to ad hoc representations, which occasionally serve as mechanisms for public engagement in development plans, is another obstacle to the planning cycle (Ogula, 2012: 15).

The ability of Parliament to make decisions based on evidence is expanding, but protocols and procedures need to be strengthened. Lack of a clear strategic institutional direction puts a coordinated strengthening effort at jeopardy. Although while MPs are required to use evidence in a number of situations, such as Parliamentary inquiry, budget hearings and debates, and fact-finding missions, there is still a recurring tension between formal M&E processes and the political interests

that affect Members of Parliament (MPs) (World Bank, 2014). The capacity of Parliament for M&E is another problem. The research division of Parliament is unable to assist MPs in using evaluation findings in decision-making, and the poverty alleviation subcommittee, which reviews M&E findings, lacks the technical M&E expertise to carry out its mandate (Estelle, 2016). Nonetheless, there are signs that the Ghanaian parliament is eager to use evidence.

Additionally, a number of academic institutions in Ghana also provide academic M&E programmes. For instance, the University of Ghana's School of Public Health provides a Master's in Public Health with a focus on M&E, and its Business School is awaiting certification to start providing a Master's curriculum in M&E. (Ogula, 2012: 15). This is a clear indication that the M&E sector wants to advance its professionalism. Employees in the public sector already display significant M&E skills and competencies.

2.6.2 M&E in the context of Kenya

In Kenya, comprehensive M&E systems are fully institutionalised at the national government level (Karanja, 2014:4). There is a M&Eculture in place, with over a decade of experience since the establishment of the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System. Stakeholder forums at the national and local levels are likely to guarantee that critical assessment findings are vetted and distributed (Karanja, 2014:5). Moreover, there is a need for Big Four Agenda (Kenya's vision 2030) outcomes, as seen by increased requests for M&E help from the M&E department.

The Interim Poverty Reduction Plan report from the World Bank in 2000 inspired Kenya's initial initiatives to set up a thorough M&E system (Abdulkadir, 2014:59). Before this, M&E lacked any structure and was disorganized and chaotic. In the public sector, M&E is valued to the extent that it relates to monitoring progress toward national priority programs (Abdulkadir, 2014:59).

The National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System, a draft M&E policy, the Department of Monitoring and Evaluation within the National Treasury and Planning, the County Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System, and the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System make up the M&E infrastructure at the moment (Abdulkadir, 2014: 61). M&E procedures are likely to continue to be unsystematized,

nonetheless, as a result of the delays in completing the M&E policy. Although Kenya's economy has grown, social inequality in terms of income, gender, and geography is still present in the nation (Abdulkadir, 2014:61). Monitoring and evaluation are more in demand now that national government M&E systems are expanding. Nevertheless, there is insufficient capacity on both the demand and supply sides to order and manage evaluations as well as to offer monitoring data and evaluation studies (Abdulkadir, 2014:62). Moreover, there are insufficient financial resources for M&E. The government undertakes fewer assessments as a result of these challenges, and both the government and civil society organizations rely on outside experts to conduct evaluations (Abdulkadir, 2014:62). Kenyan institutions all around the country provide capacity-building in measuring and evaluation.

Legislators at the national and county levels can use the M&E services provided by the African Institute for Development Policy and the Centre for Parliamentary Research and Training (Waithera and Wanyoike, 2015:376). The monitoring and evaluation department also provides training, including guidelines for setting up M&E systems, as well as help to other nations in formulating their M&E policies. Official M&E degrees are offered by seven colleges and universities. M&E academic programmes are frequently offered alongside those for other professional certifications. The evaluation society of Kenya, the nation's Voluntary Organization for Professional Evaluation, is a leader in the professionalization of M&E in collaboration with the department of measurement and evaluation and universities (Waithera and Wanyoike, 2015:377).

2.6.3 M&E in the context of Rwanda

Rwanda has maintained political stability since the 1994 genocide. Since then, the country has made significant progress in a number of areas, including reducing poverty and experiencing rapid economic growth, fostering a market-friendly political environment, having zero tolerance for corruption, investing heavily in the fields of energy, agriculture, information technology, and tourism, and committing to the Sustainable Development Goals. The country of Rwanda wants to become middle-income by 2035 and high-income by 2050. (Republic of Rwanda, 2013).

With support from the World Bank and the IMF, M&E in Rwanda began in 2003 and included a macroeconomic monitoring system. M&E practice has developed into a government-led system that is connected to planning across time. Decentralization processes intended to identify M&E requirements at the local level served as the impetus for the initial attempt to integrate M&E at the national level. Nowadays, the Rwandan government is a big supporter of using M&E data in planning, developing policies, and making decisions (Republic of Rwanda, 2013).

In Rwanda, planning, monitoring, and evaluation are coordinated by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning under the 2015 Results-Based Management strategy, in contrast to many other nations where these tasks are handled by distinct ministries. This policy outlines the planning, monitoring, and evaluation procedures as well as the duties of all parties involved (Hwang, 2014: 21). The Ministry plays a key role in ensuring that the Results-Based Management policy is applied uniformly across the whole government. The Finance and Economic Planning Ministry requests a quarterly success report from each ministry and area. After reviewing the results, the ministry delivers a comprehensive report to the Prime Minister's Office (Hwang, 2014:23).

In addition to other things, the Rwandan National Institute of Statistics helps sectors and organizations create metadata for chosen indicators, data collection frequency, and data quality verification (Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning-MINECOFIN, 2013). A system of government-wide monitoring and evaluation (GWM&E) informs the national planning process. The system gathers data on the application of the national planning framework and provides information on decisions on adjustments to institutional, sectoral, and national planning. A framework for assessing and evaluating performance is provided in each of the medium-term and annual planning documents (MINECOFIN, 2013).

Rwanda's Parliament has its M&E mechanism embedded in its institutional framework. Parliament may request annual plans from ministries each year (Mrosek, Balsillie and Schleifenbaum, 2006:600). Additionally, ministries disclose their objectives and progress to legislative committees, particularly budget committees, throughout the year. The Rwandan government has a five-year strategic plan that is influenced by the preceding five-year plan's review (MINECOFIN, 2013). The plan establishes a

framework for M&E which includes regular and ongoing monitoring; an annual assessment of the plan; an independent mid-term evaluation aimed at improving strategies that are experiencing difficulties; and a final evaluation that will inform the next five-year plan.

A capacity-building organization in Rwanda is in charge of training the whole government, including in measuring and evaluation. The Rwandan Management Institute provides public service training on behalf of the Capacity Development and Employment Board, a state-funded organization tasked with developing governmentwide capability. A small selection of theoretical M&E programmes are offered by the agency. Although this course is not specifically designed for government personnel, the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences has demonstrated its ability to offer training in data science and data systems. Although the University of Rwanda does not provide a specialized M&E program, its professional degree programs in business administration and health incorporate M&E courses.

2.7 CONTEXTUALISING MONITORING AND EVALUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Post-apartheid is driven by desires for development in South Africa. However, there are still enormous social and economic inequities in the country as a result of the history of apartheid and colonialism. Racial, socioeconomic, and gender stratification were all developed as a result. The hierarchy issue is now a burden for South Africa's growth. In order to provide convincing reasons for monitoring and evaluation, it is essential to examine the problems and constraints associated with progress.

In 1994, the African National Congress (ANC) seized power, and a period of transition to full democracy began. The focus was on development, but there were and still are issues of effective M&E. The current research focuses on the need for M&E in the district municipalities of uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu, although the similar demand exists throughout the country. The chosen municipalities serve as a microcosm of South Africa, illuminating the problems that restrict and impede M&E growth in the public sector.

As the democratic years go by, South Africa became more committed to the M&E systems and implemented a Government-wide M&E framework in 2007 (Goldman et al., 2012). A National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF) was also authorized by the cabinet in November 2011 (DPME, 2011) to help the government achieve its objective of expanding assessments. This NEPF laid the foundation for a system of government-wide M&E that will encourage reliable assessments of government interventions to boost their efficacy, efficiency, and impact. At the national and sub-national levels, the national M&E system was swiftly yet reliably built and included into national planning processes. This was made possible by a methodical strategy that was well-planned from the beginning and involved learning from other nations' experiences as well as a favorable enabling environment that was fueled by high-level government backing (Goldman et al., 2012).

The results of completed evaluations are used to drive cabinet-level policy decisions, and the national evaluation system is effectively incorporated into national planning. The programmes or policies in issue have undergone major adjustments as a result of several of the reviews. The assessments are centered on the strategic goals of the government, which line up with cycles of national planning and implementation. Additionally, departments have improved collaboration across departments and throughout the government by employing a whole-of-government approach since they have a better grasp of how their work impacts other departments (Moji, Nhede and Masiya, 2022: 3).

Since more and more advice is provided on how to carry out efficient evaluations, there has been a major increase in the number of assessments conducted throughout the government. The Department of Planning Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) has made an effort to increase assessment capacity by offering a number of tools, including standards, recommendations, and training (Umlaw and Chitepo, 2015:4). The President, who has taken on planning and M&E duties, has played a key role in advancing national M&E in South Africa. The DPME provided assistance in developing and implementing the M&E system. A quality assessment system, evaluation system components, evaluation competences, different capacity development components, communication component, and instructions on how to carry them out have all been developed (Umlaw and Chitepo, 2015: 4).

According to Dipela and Mohapi (2021: 294), the DPME is responsible for overseeing the formation of M&E frameworks for the entire government, aiding in the establishment of five-year strategic priorities plans for the entire government, and keeping track of and evaluating the objectives and achievement plans of particular departments and municipalities. People with skills that complement the high-level government tasks for building and institutionalizing the M&E system are employed by the DPME. The success of the national M&E system has surely been attributed to the DPME staff, whose efforts allowed for comparatively quick development and implementation.

2.7.1 Institutional arrangement of M&E in the South African government

After democratic elections in 1994, South Africa established a semi-federal structure with three levels of government: national, province, and municipal. Certain government sectors have specialized knowledge only in their own fields, such as the national duties of justice and land (Greffrath and Van der Waladt, 2016). Nevertheless, some tasks are shared by many levels of government. For instance, housing and roads are shared by all levels of government, while education and health care are both national and provincial obligations.

The majority of developmental tasks (such as education, health, agriculture, social development, and so on) are carried out by the national government and the provinces, while local governments are in charge of distributing water, energy, and sanitation. Provincial legislatures have significant autonomy, national legislatures enact legislation, and local governments are in charge of providing fundamental services. Although though South Africa is a unitary state, all levels of government should have planning, monitoring, and evaluation procedures in place, but it can be difficult to coordinate the actions of all the many players.

According to South Africa's semi-federal structure, which means that national, provincial, and local administrations share duties and powers in this domain, many ministries and bodies are in charge of the planning, monitoring, and assessment. Due to organizational constraints, the national government's capacity to push M&E in some areas of government is constrained (Chirau, Blaser-Mapitsa and Amisi, 2021: 450). The Auditor General and the Public Service Commission must independently examine

certain government sectors in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (South Africa, 1996) and provide their findings to Parliament.

The Department of the Treasury, which is in charge of departmental strategic plans, annual performance plans, and quarterly reporting, the Department of Public Service and Administration, which is in charge of overseeing the performance of the entire public sector, and the Department of Cooperative Governance, which is in charge of monitoring local government, all have substantial legal authority to control specific planning processes and, consequently, M&E. Moreover, the Presidency performs some planning, monitoring, and evaluation duties while depending more on Cabinet choices and its position than on legislative power. In accordance with the Constitution, the President has the power to: (Chirau, Blaser-Mapitsa and Amisi, 2021: 452).

As democracy was established in South Africa, the public service had to update and reorganize the procedures and policies it had acquired from the apartheid administration in order to function in a way that reflected the democratic state. There was a need for M&E within government in the effort for it to accomplish development goals and guarantee good governance. The provision of evidence-based results and ensuring accountability and transparency were only two of the many goals of M&E. (Naidoo, 2012:108). In addition to the establishment of statutory bodies like the Public Service Commission and the DPME that are tasked with the responsibility of monitoring and evaluating government service delivery activities and performance, South Africa is now one of many nations with an official ministry responsible for M&E. Also, government agencies are now aware that they must create their own M&E units (Masuku and Ijeoma, 2015: 6).

2.8 LEGAL FRAMEWORK GUIDING M&E IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SECTOR

The following are the laws that guide M&E in the South Africa public sector.

2.8.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996

Every individual, including the government, is subject to the Constitution as it is the country's highest law. It outlines the fundamental rules of public management. It mandates that the public administration adhere to a strict code of ethics and be

transparent and accountable. It also provides guidelines for good governance, such as:

- Professional ethics that must be maintained
- Effective, efficient and economical use of available resources
- Provision of services in a fair, equitable manner
- Accountable public administration
- Public involvement in public service affairs
- Transparency through the provision of accurate information to citizens

The Constitution calls for M&E systems and practices in the public service to be aligned with the principles of public administrations. According to Thornhill (2016:181), Section 195 mandates that M&E activities be carried out with integrity and honesty. This requires that all M&E operations take into account the confidentiality of sensitive information, present findings as honestly as possible, and disclose all relevant limitations.

The Constitution emphasises basic human rights in Chapter 2, and encourages all levels of government to be consistent in their efforts to deliver basic services. This is in accordance with Section 41 of the Constitution which requires all levels of government and entities to work together in good faith and cooperation, encourage cooperative governance, provide one another with assistance and support, and consult one another on issues of common interest. Therefore, concerted efforts are required to put the established norms and processes into practice.

The Premiers and Executive Councils of each Province are required to exercise executive authority under Section 125 of the Constitution by ensuring that both federal and provincial legislation are properly implemented. Section 125(2) gives the provincial executive authority the responsibility of coordinating the activities of the provincial government and its ministries. When a municipality is unable to fulfill an executive commitment, Section 139(b)(1) permits the authority to step in to preserve vital national standards or enforce specified minimum requirements for service delivery (Masuku and Ijeoma, 2015: 10).

Delivering sustainable services to communities, stimulating social and economic progress, supporting a safe and healthy environment for communities, and encouraging community involvement in local government issues are just a few of the objectives of local government as outlined in the Constitution. It also specifies how local government should organize and manage operations to prioritize community needs through effective budgeting and planning, as well as taking part in national and provincial developmental programs, in order to fulfill its developmental obligations.

In view of the aforementioned Constitutional principles, M&E practices are required to aid the various realms of government in efficiently and effectively achieving their service delivery objectives. Municipalities may execute their development plans and achieve high quality service delivery with the help of effective M&E, which encourages openness and accountability and ensures responsiveness to the requirements of the populace (Kariuki and Reddy, 2017:10).

2.8.2 Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000

A framework for efficient planning, efficient resource use, performance management, and organizational transformation is provided under the Municipal Systems Act (South Africa, 2000). The Act requires municipalities to set targets that will enable M&E of performance indicators related to the IDP that will integrate and report on achievement of the set targets against the outcomes and results. It also encourages municipalities to foster a culture of municipal government that supports the existing formal structures by encouraging community growth and involvement. The Act sets forth requirements for performance management, municipal administration service delivery, and debt collection within municipalities. It also includes additional measures for the delegation of activities from other governmental domains to municipalities.

By monitoring and rating municipalities, enabling for the distribution of bylaws, and establishing criteria and duties of the federal and provincial governments Nonyane (2019:46) In addition to the aforementioned, the municipal manager is in charge of the operation and management of a municipality. The supervision and accountability responsibilities of a municipal council must be carried out by a number of committees, and the municipal manager must guarantee that municipalities can fulfill their constitutional commitments. The Municipal Systems Act's Section 105 provides guidelines on how the province government should monitor and assess municipal

performance, identify the support needed to improve performance, and develop programs to develop the necessary capabilities.

2.8.3 The White Paper on Local Government 1998

The White Paper on Local Government of 1998 (South Africa, 1998) introduced a wide spectrum of performance practices in local government to facilitate their developmental roles. The new core practice of performance management seeks to increase the continuous accountability of the municipality. The White Paper addressed the importance of integrated planning for development, budgeting, and performance management as strong instruments that can assist municipalities in creating an integrated view of development under their purview.

According to Nonyane (2019: 48), the primary objective of the White Paper is to enable municipalities to focus on priorities within a set of needs and demands that are increasingly complex and diverse, while also enabling them to direct their institutional systems and resources toward its set of developmental objectives. In order to promote accountability and responsibility, the White Paper also highlights the need for communities to be more involved in the development of municipal performance measures. As an illustration, some communities could place a higher value on how quickly a municipality reacts to a problem, while others would place a higher value on how clean an area should be or how many houses should have access to essential services. Regardless of the priorities, by including communities in the development of key performance indicators and providing regular performance reports, accountability is improved and public trust in municipalities is enhanced.

According to Mokoele, Masenya and Makalela (2018: 114), the fundamental objective of performance management in local government is to make sure that municipal strategic plans are developed, implemented successfully, and that the results have the intended impact. Municipalities must thus establish their priorities, strategic goals, indicators, and performance targets in order to implement performance management and M&E systems. Due to these factors, M&E systems and tools are necessary to help municipalities regularly assess performance and assess the impact of their development initiatives.

2.8.4 Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation

Prior to 1994, South African public sector lacked a performance management system to assess how well the government performed its duties, and monitoring and assessment received only a scant amount of attention. In order to promote the development of efficient and effective service delivery and enhance performance within the public sector, the South African government introduced a GWM&E policy in 2007 (The Presidency, 2007). This policy calls for the establishment of M&E systems across all spheres of government. The goal was to build integrated M&E concepts, procedures, and standards across the board and to act as the highest level information system, enabling all levels of government to carry out their M&E tasks successfully.

In the implementation of GWM&E further identified the need to create a framework called the National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF) in 2011 (DPME, 2011) to consider the use of evaluations as a driver to promote and enhance public sector performance, assess the impact of government development programmes, and improve accountability (DPME, 2011).

According to Molepo (2011:7), the GWM&E framework outlines the fundamental ideas and standards for observing and rating public sector policies and initiatives. The framework intends to increase management's understanding of and interest in monitoring and assessing programs, statutory and regulatory legislative frameworks, initiatives, and other role actors in the public sector. Moreover, it offers recommendations on how M&E results might be utilized to support decision-making and accountability across all national and provincial ministries.

A collection of tools and M&E standards are added to the framework to support programme and project managers, national and provincial agencies, and other M&E practitioners. In addition to serving as a planning tool for M&E operations inside national and provincial departments, the framework also functions as a diagnostic tool to help managers in charge of M&E find any shortcomings in the development of their departmental M&E system. It also serves as an effective communication tool, advising staff members of the procedures to follow when doing monitoring and evaluation responsibilities (Molepo, 2011: 8).

The DPME has the role of realising M&E as an important part of the government's function and a distinct feature of the South African public administration (Radebe, 2014: 3). Mello (2018: 2) points out that in the sphere of local government where the groundwork of service delivery is, M&E is not mandatory except for the monitoring function provided under the Planning Unit. Thus, M&E remains a missing link in South African municipalities as they are not performing well because of many problems including the weaknesses in the M&E system (Mello, 2018: 2).

2.8.5 National Evaluation Policy Framework

The National Evaluation Policy Framework (DPME, 2011) lays the groundwork for evaluations in all three spheres of government, not only to promote high-quality evaluations but also to assess and take into account successful processes and programs and to identify necessary corrections and interventions to advance efficient and effective service delivery and improve the impact on government in general. In order to improve overall organizational performance, it also ensures that trustworthy and unbiased data from evaluations is used in planning, budgeting, organizational development, policy review, and continuing programmed and project management. Last but not least, it seeks to offer a standard framework for evaluation in the public service.

The National Assessment Policy Framework's (DPME, 2011: 1) main objectives are to:

- Highlight the significance of evaluation in the policy management process.
- Provide a framework for institutionalised evaluations in government.
- Strengthen the links between planning, assessments, and policy-making.
- Develop a conceptual framework that is unique to government evaluation.
- Describe the function of evaluations in relation to performance management tools.
- Describe the evaluation function in terms of its scope, how it will be institutionalised, the procedures to be followed with evaluations, the skills required, and the financial requirements and oversight.
- Promote the quality of assessments.
- Promote the utilisation of evaluation results to enhance the overall performance of government departments.

- Identify the roles and duties of public institutions responsible for evaluations.

2.8.6 The Importance of M&E in municipalities

Monitoring and evaluation are two distinct but related concepts that are frequently used interchangeably, with monitoring referring to the act of gathering and analysing data on the outcomes of a certain project, policy, or programme in comparison to expectations. An ongoing assessment of a given initiative, policy, or programme to determine its achievement of objectives and impact is referred to as an evaluation (World Health Organization [WHO], 2016a: 4). Monitoring and evaluation provide municipalities information on what is being done and how it is being done by concentrating on the proper input of resources, the amount to which objectives are reached as anticipated, and the extent to which the programme makes a difference and benefits the people. It also helps in monitoring project development, recognizing problems with planning and execution, and making the required corrective measures (World Health Organization [WHO], 2016b).

The Constitution requires local governments to provide citizens with services including water, health care, and education since these are viewed as fundamental human rights and are required for human life (Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan, 2014: 39). The effective provision of such services is essential for eradicating poverty and achieving development objectives. There is a growing recognition that in order to improve public service delivery, it is not sufficient to concentrate only on supply-side processes (where municipalities carry out their service delivery responsibilities), but also to strengthen the demand-side of service delivery by ensuring that consumers of public services are aware of their rights and can exercise those rights by observing the quality of services provided and holding the government accountable (Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan, 2014: 39).

Experiences throughout the world have shown that gathering and utilising data on the service delivery by government may significantly improve public openness and accountability, thereby supporting adherence to better service quality standards. At the same time, it is equally important for the government to evaluate the outcome and results of service delivered to determine the extent to which it achieved the intended goals, the impact, and benefits so that it can improve the effectiveness of the public sector (Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan, 2014: 40). M&E is used by or has the

potential to be used by organizations and communities to assess service delivery effectiveness, set benchmarks, and monitor on service quality. Participatory M&E tools aim to involve members of the public in not only providing feedback but also actively participating in the assessment, planning, and implementation, in contrast to traditional approaches, which rely on external experts to evaluate quality and performance against a predetermined set of indicators. This promotes the growth of the local population's capacity for analysis, reflection, and action (Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan, 2014: 40).

Magagula (2019) claims that M&E gives managers information on policy priorities, available resources, programmes, and projects, the services that are provided, as well as the advantages and effects on the communities that the services are intended for. Monitoring and evaluation support resource allocation by highlighting issues and discrepancies that need to be addressed and, depending on the data collected, might recommend other approaches. As a result, the application of M&E effectively produces high-quality performance. By evaluating the inputs of the work generated by managers and employers against the established objectives, the procedure is carried out.

Ndevu and Muller (2017) allege that there is a growing level of distress in South African municipalities as a result of significant inequalities in the provision of services. This is seen by the frequent protests, which have weakened public confidence in the local government system. Municipal service delivery challenges, such as a lack of resources, capability, improper management of available resources, and qualified staff, are then addressed. Municipalities struggle to meet their performance goals. According to Reddy (2016: 2), municipalities must keep track of, assess, and report on the accomplishment of the goals set forth in their IDPs, with an emphasis on utilizing resources in a way that is accountable and transparent, as well as effective, efficient, and cost-effective (Reddy, 2016: 3).

M&E in local government must adapt to changing settings and higher-order management duties as part of public administration and addressing citizen requirements (Uwizeyimana and Basheka 2017). This calls for improving the intellectual capacity of evaluation researchers and practitioners to take use of the opportunities provided by technology advancements to provide realistic, suitable, and lasting solutions to M&E challenges (Uwizeyimana and Basheka, 2017). The fourth

industrial revolution expands the range of potential applications for M&E in project, program, and policy assessment methods.

2.9 CHALLENGES OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION

According to Kariuki and Reddy (2017: 3), M&E implementation faces a variety of problems, including limited capacity, and lack of experts, qualified and competent personnel. These challenges obstruct successful M&E implementation. Concerns regarding M&E include a lack of resources, inaccuracies in data, ineffective techniques, unrealistic frameworks, and the efficacy of stakeholders. M&E programmes are expensive to set up, and municipalities lack sufficient financial and other relevant resources to implement M&E successfully. In addition, because local governments are not focused on profit generation, most funds come from self-generated revenue such as property taxes, service charges, and other external funding. As a result, municipalities are unable to accommodate spending and investment in M&E tools (Jili and Mthethwa, 2016: 107).

However, because so many people and organizations are unaware of the benefits of M&E, they may run across resistance and denial that it is a waste of money. Several small-scale M&E projects might be done in place of trying to persuade people using theoretical reasoning (Jili and Mthethwa, 2016:107). These programmes may yield quick results, and some of the information might be used to persuade the participants in the programmes of the instruments' value. Secondly, the problem with inaccurate data is that, no matter how diligently M&E practitioners collect data, some of it will not be accurate.

As with any other aspect of life, there are common issues in M&E that must be resolved, most notably in the data-gathering area, before an effective solution can be established. In the process of collecting information, it is possible that data entry errors occurs, that fake data is inputted, wrong calculations are performed, data is destroyed, or that stakeholders or beneficiaries attempt to exaggerate the findings to appease one individual (Goldman *et al.*, 2018:27). Organisations may not achieve successful results if their information is inaccurate, putting their resources at risk. In this case, trial and error is the best course of action. However, government entities, especially municipalities, may need to increase their efforts and seek expert guidance to improve

their M&E processes. It will cost more initially but will pay off in the long term (Goldman *et al.*, 2018: 28).

Radebe (2014: 13) wrote a report titled *Performance Monitoring and Evaluation: Principles and Approach* and noted that there is a widespread lack of a strong M&E culture in government. According to Radebe's research, 54% of 96 federal departments lacked M&E and 39% of government agencies see M&E as a policing instrument, regulating jobs rather than as a continual improvement instrument. The widespread idea is that monitoring is a task performed by monitors who keep an eye on the work of others. As a result, managers' awareness, and adoption of M&E as a performance monitoring and assessment system, is restricted (Radebe, 2014: 14).

2.9.1 General challenges that hinder the successful implementation of M&E

2.9.1.1 Lack of capacity

Most individuals are not competent enough to perform the tasks. Naidoo (2012: 110) claims that the South African government currently employs several senior-level M&E workers who are incompetent and inexperienced in M&E. In the majority of institutions, M&E practitioners frequently lack the necessary abilities and qualifications. This encourages a lack of understanding of M&E as a crucial component, which makes failure and poor performance likely. Even without accounting for the harm that ineffective M&E officers do, it takes too much time to undo the harm that they have inflicted. There are currently numerous M&E personnel working at relatively high levels of government in the country, yet many of them lack the skills or background necessary to be productive. Competencies and training remain a significant element. Nevertheless, Naidoo (2012: 111) makes the case that hiring an incompetent M&E officer is probably preferable to not hiring one at all.

2.9.1.2 Lack of resources

Dlamini (2021: 60) asserts that the lack of resources means that M&E is not given priority in the project execution plans. The M&E processes such as data collection are unable to be carried out due to a lack of resources, and as a result, there is not enough information to provide an accurate analysis. For their daily operations, the majority of organisations do not have enough budget. The little funding they have may be limited

to service delivery projects. Naidoo (2012: 111) maintains that budget restrictions that prevent governments from institutionalising their M&E systems are now a problem. Developing links between the budgets, planning, priorities, and M&E is an issue that even developed countries face. Financial constraints is the main reason why M&E practices are not even taken into consideration nor prioritised.

2.9.1.3 Lack of understanding of M&E and its role in an organisation

Another significant issue facing various organisations, according to Nyamazana (2019), is that top management and staff, including those who are assigned with M&E roles, lack a clear understanding of M&E. Due to its lack of effectiveness, M&E is typically underutilised and does not fully contribute to the development and growth of the organisation. While some employees believe it to be a type of audit of the company, others see it as a 'police' function.

2.9.2 Current challenges of M&E facing the South African government

Radebe (2014: 5), on behalf of the DPME, conducted a survey on performance and M&E, focusing how on M&E practitioners in the national and provincial government understood M&E. This survey discovered that the following were the major challenges confronting the government :

- Government lacks a strong M&E culture since M&E is viewed more as a function of policing and controlling than as a function of continual development. There is a widespread belief that monitoring is a task performed by watchdogs who keep an eye on other people's work, and there is little understanding of the significance of managers themselves keeping an eye on and reviewing their work. Internal monitoring has an equally essential, if not even more vital, role in promoting performance improvement as external monitoring does in assuring responsibility. Managers that engage in 'internal monitoring' set performance goals for their programmes or work activities, track progress toward those goals, evaluate causes for underperformance, and make adjustments to their work or programmes as necessary.
- M&E frequently has minimal impact in departments because political and administrative leadership does not recognise the importance of M&E. Senior management frequently fails to support M&E, and M&E is frequently poorly aligned with policy agendas, planning, and budgeting.

- In reality, a culture of compliance predominates rather than one that emphasises growth and development. Problems are not viewed as substantial challenges but rather as opportunities for learning and progress. Therefore, evaluation is still only employed infrequently in government and is insufficiently influencing planning, policy-making, and budgeting. Departments do not plan or carry out any assessments of any of their important programmes if not required or instructed to.
- Lastly, poor data quality, inadequate information technology infrastructure supporting M&E activities, and insufficient M&E capacity development are further issues that government departments have observed.

2.10 M&E AND INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTIONS

There have been several industrial revolutions in the capitalist economy. The intriguing connection between M&E and the changing globe is that it introduces fresh approaches to governing, even in South Africa. Before constructing the appropriate M&E concepts in the realm of governance and administration, it is essential to examine the concept of industrial revolutions. It's feasible that adopting technology might help towns overcome many of their problems.

The third, digital revolution that started in the middle of the previous century served as the foundation for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), which is currently taking shape (Xu, David, and Kim, 2018: 90). The boundaries between the physical, digital, and biological domains are blurred by a technological convergence that defines the 4IR. The three factors of velocity, scope, and system effect explain why the revolutions of today are not merely a continuation of the third industrial revolution but also the beginning of a new one. The 4IR is developing exponentially rather than linearly in comparison to other industrial revolutions, which is unique in history. Also, it is wreaking havoc by controlling every industry in every nation. The breadth and complexity of these developments portend a complete overhaul of production, management, and governance systems (Xu David, and Kim, 2018: 15).

The current regulatory frameworks of African nations face challenges from the 4IR, notably in the areas of data security, cyber security, consumer protection, and regulations on technology usage. The 4IR offers a variety of chances for timely and less expensive services (Nalubega and Uwizeyimana, 2019). The increasing global

interconnectivity and complexity calls for critical research and analysis on the consequences of the 4IR for public sector M&E in Africa.

The debate in this thesis is the outcome of a perceived need to elevate public sector M&E status by utilizing the 4IR's prospects. African citizens and many politicians have been calling for evidence-based decision-making more and more in recent years, which has limited government officials to essentially monitoring and analyzing development projects for purely compliance-related reasons (Wotela, 2017). The current body of research expresses worry about the inability of African policymakers and evaluators to interpret and implement evaluation recommendations (Goldman et al., 2018). Due to the punitive approach employed, government systems frequently place more emphasis on monitoring and less on evaluation. In turn, the punitive approach has hampered learning from the findings because of the intense stress it creates around the concerned officers, which results in less follow-up on the assessment suggestions (Goldman et al., 2018).

2.10.1 The benefits of 4IR on M&E

The 4IR is reshaping worldwide public and private sector management and governance practices. The 4IR inventions and technology breakthroughs are uprooting and altering how civilisations do business and carry out everyday tasks (World Economic Forum [WEF], 2017: 6). These breakthroughs and inventions have been dubbed disruptive technologies that are disrupting social, economic, and political institutions and exerting pressure on leaders and policymakers worldwide (WEF, 2017: 6).

The absence of a suitable approach to monitoring in the African government can be attributed to the complexity of evaluation models replete with ideas and practices imported from foreign or western nations with little adaptation to the African context (Basheka and Byamugisha, 2015: 79). These difficulties have been identified because of M&E being a new subject and practice with a small number of practitioners (Basheka, Lubega and Baguma, 2016: 96). While several colleges and other post-secondary institutions have launched M&E programmes and are generating M&E graduates consistently, there remains a significant imbalance between the supply and demand for evaluation experts in Africa (Basheka and Byamugisha, 2016: 72). Monitoring and evaluation in the public sector, as a function of public administration

and higher-order management, can change and adapt to changing circumstances while meeting public needs (Uwizeyimana and Basheka, 2017: 30). This necessitates strengthening the intellectual capabilities of assessment practitioners to capitalise on the potential provided by technology advancements to produce realistic, appropriate, and sustainable solutions to M&E concerns in the African setting (Uwizeyimana and Basheka, 2017: 30). The 4IR provides a huge opportunity for tailoring M&E to African-rooted approaches to policy, programme, and project assessment.

Machine learning is propelling technological advancements in 4IR, as are mobile phones, the internet, and Global Positioning System (GPS) devices, sophisticated manufacturing and 3D printing, new energy sources, advanced materials, biotechnology, and genomics (Xing and Marwala, 2017: 10). Several of these technologies have been used by African nations to enhance the execution of projects and programmes. The rising use of these technologies is inextricably tied to the exponential expansion of big data, which, when used wisely and effectively, can assist in identifying community needs, providing timely alerts, and responding to catastrophes.

Notably, data have the potential to significantly improve public sector M&E in Africa if they are effectively accepted and used. Numerous African governments have reported difficulties with M&E, particularly in terms of data collecting and assessment capabilities (Goldman *et al.*, 2018: 7). These technologies can capture and collect multidimensional information or data from numerous contextual factors related to a particular population in both qualitative and quantitative forms with little cost and effort. With these technologies, data analysis can be accomplished more quickly, and when combined with mixed approaches to increase the data validity and dependability, decision-making can be accomplished much more quickly.

While implementing disruptive technologies to enhance M&E in the public sector, it is vital to keep in mind that various government institutions in different countries have varying capabilities and urgent requirements, as well as people with varying behavioural characteristics (Mukuhlani, 2014). Therefore, before a country adopts any digital or disruptive technology, considerable effort must be expended in understanding the country's communities (people), identifying trends in how they interact and communicate daily, their capabilities and skills, sets, and objectively

forecasting future change. After thoroughly researching and documenting all these factors, the appropriate team must be assembled to execute, integrate, and optimise the usage of the appropriate disruptive technology for acceptance in the nation. Throughout all these endeavours, it is critical to maintain regular communication among the team to accomplish the goal of the new technology employed (Mukuhlan, 2014).

2.11 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Strategic planning and M&E work together to form an effective governance structure. The development of the connection is a result of their responsibility for ensuring the success and goals of any project. Before fully establishing this crucial link, it is also critical to look at the idea of strategic planning. Resource allocation is influenced by taking M&E into account during strategic planning.

Strategic management, as defined by Fuertes et al. (2020: 3), is the totality of continuous activities and procedures that organizations employ to systematically coordinate and align resources and actions with purpose, vision, and strategy across an organization. The plan is transformed via strategic management activities into a system that gives strategic performance feedback to decision-making and enables the plan to expand and alter when requirements and other factors change.

According to Sandada, Poole, and Dhurup (2014: 19), formulating an institution's mission statement, determining its goals, developing and executing strategies, and overseeing and managing strategy execution are the essential elements of strategic planning. In other words, the organisation takes decisions based on its beliefs of the future and plans by imagining how and what the future will look like. According to Sandada, Poole, and Dhurup (2014: 20), the long-term vision of an organization, establishing the line of business, and achieving a strategic fit or balance between the organisations

According to this theory, a strategic fit enables an organisation to take advantage of new possibilities and lessen hazards provided by the environment. Strategic planning is usually perceived as a difficult process that only senior management can successfully complete. As an example, district municipalities like uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu draft and produce excellent strategic plans that are rarely

employed in their daily operations. The establishment of a shared vision, direction, and goals can be facilitated by strategic planning, which has the potential to be a potent process that catalyzes the municipal organization (Bryson, Edwards, and Van Slyke, 2018: 324). It can also serve as a vehicle for accountability, enabling the general public and management to assess progress and make sure the municipality makes progress in the right direction and its environment are the essential parts of strategic planning.

According to this theory, a strategic fit enables an organisation to take advantage of new possibilities and lessen hazards provided by the environment. Strategic planning is usually perceived as a difficult process that only senior management can successfully complete. As an example, district municipalities like uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu draft and produce excellent strategic plans that are rarely employed in their daily operations. The establishment of a shared vision, direction, and goals can be facilitated by strategic planning, which has the potential to be a potent process that catalyzes the municipal organization (Bryson, Edwards, and Van Slyke, 2018: 324). It can also serve as a vehicle for accountability, enabling the general public and management to assess progress and make sure the municipality makes progress in the right direction.

The relationship between M&E and strategic planning is that their unity focuses on performance and outcomes on the ground through participatory strategic planning, review, and evaluation processes. This combined effort of strategic planning and M&E provides guidance, advice, and technical support to integrate results-based planning, monitoring, and evaluation across all aspects and together, they produce impactful results. Strategic planning and M&E also ensure timely internal and external quality evaluations and impact assessments on institutional and programmatic achievements against set objectives and outcomes (Malan, 2005).

2.12 THE ROLE OF MUNICIPALITIES AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITY IN M&E

To provide a baseline for monitoring and analyzing limitations, operations, and failures, it is essential to classify the structural and functional characteristics of government municipalities in South Africa. South Africa is organized into nine provinces, each of which has 46 district municipalities and seven metropolitan regions, each of which has 248 local municipalities. A framework for district municipalities to develop their own

IDP is established under the Municipal Systems Act (South Africa, 2000). Each of the district municipalities must prepare an IDP to coordinate planning for their local municipality (Sartorius and Sartorius, 2016).

M&E efforts in local government aid in the formulation of policies, assist in the administration of finances, and enable municipal authorities to link their initiatives with national government goals (Kabonga, 2018: 6). M&E are essential for directing regional decision-making, assisting in the execution of successful interventions, and resolving problems as they arise throughout implementation. Using M&E systems, according to Engela and Ajam (2010: 11), facilitates the development of good governance and accountability in government. The supply of fundamental services will thus be improved as a result of M&E. While the delivery of basic services has remained a constant struggle for South African local government, this scenario may improve if public employees again recognize the significance of M&E. Also, government employees are starting to comprehend their responsibility for guaranteeing the timely accomplishment of established targets.

2.12.1 The benefits of M&E on the performance of municipalities

M&E systems boost development by providing fast, accurate, and relevant information, allowing for better decision-making and therefore greater effects. Development interventions can be effectively monitored and evaluated through rigorous but cost-effective approaches to collecting and utilising quality data on programme performance, outcomes, and effect (Elkins, 2011). In summary, M&E in the field of development supports the making of evidence-based decisions in the planning and implementation of initiatives and programmes through tracking and evaluating (Kamau and Mohamed, 2015: 84).

Programme Managers and other stakeholders rely on the data and information gathered during M&E to make informed decisions about future strategies, measures, and resource allocations related to the activities under consideration. Kim and Warner (2016: 791) state that M&E should inform evidence-based policy choices, encourage public debate among policymakers and society stakeholders, and aid in policy selection, but must be both technically solid and politically relevant to be effective.

Shivambu (2020: 28) also concurs with the above view that M&E is one of several tools that may be used to help management by enhancing the quality of information that can be used to make decisions. Conducting continuous monitoring and assessment may not only lead to just responsibility, but can also lead to learning for the organisation. Performance-based budgeting, results-based management, and increased openness and accountability may all benefit from the information obtained from M&E processes. Intergovernmental interactions, institutions of accountability, civil service reform, community participation, customer service standard-setting, and anti-corruption norms are all strongly linked to the information gathered via monitoring and evaluation. Every government, according to Kusek and Rist (2004: 12), requires human resources, finance, accountability, and feedback mechanisms to oversee its performance. Management decision-making, organisational learning, accountability, supporting advocacy, and openness may all benefit from M&E.

2.12.2 Other management benefits of M&E on the performance of local government municipalities

2.12.2.1 Management decision making

Managerial processes benefit from the use of M&E systems, because they provide data on which to base decisions (Nelson, 2016). Decisions on resource allocation, competing techniques for achieving the strategic goals, policy decisions, and programme design and implementation are all examples of how M&E is applied in this context. To assist management in making decisions, the accuracy and presentation of information is crucial (Ntoyanto, 2016: 25).

2.12.2.2 Organisational learning

The requirement that monitoring and evaluating outcomes and conclusions help to develop learning organizations makes this the most difficult component for organizations (Mviko, 2015: 32). The M&E exercise is also a research method to determine which program design or problem-solving approach will be most effective and why, as well as which operational practices would provide the greatest return on investment (Naidoo, 2012: 14).

The information obtained should be transformed into analytical, action-oriented reports that support successful decision-making. The focus here is on the causes of problems rather than the expression of the problems (Myrick, 2013: 15). Learning has been characterised as a constant dynamic process of research where the important aspects are experiences, information, access, and relevance. It demands a culture of inquiry and investigation, rather than one of reacting and reporting. M&E exercises, therefore, create new knowledge that organisations can adopt and utilise in their operations to achieve quality service delivery. Knowledge management entails recording discoveries, institutionalising learning, and managing the abundance of information that is constantly created by the M&E system (Myrick, 2013: 15).

2.12.2.3 Accountability

Public authorities are required by law to account to parliament and legislatures. They should be held accountable on a broad scale for how they spend public money, whether they accomplish the reasons for which the money was appropriated, and if they carried out their responsibilities with a high degree of honesty and integrity (Motingoe, 2012: 24). Monitoring and evaluation give the organised and formalised information necessary to conduct a thorough examination of public service operations at all levels. However, monitoring and assessment should not be pursued only for the goal of accountability, since this may breed mistrust and a culture of fear. (Mtshali, 2015: 26). Accountability is controlled by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and laws such as the Public Finance Management Act. It is also backed up by organisations such as the Auditor-General and the Public Service Commission, and non-compliance with accountability obligations is frequently handled with sanctions, (Mtshali, 2015: 26).

2.13 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided background information on literature clarifying the M&E and performance as the key concept of this research. It offered a discussion on global and regional perspective with specific reference to the US, Canada, Chile, Ghana, Kenya, and Rwanda as countries that are seen to have emerging and well-structured M&E systems. It also provided an overview of what M&E looks like in the South African context, outlining the government's efforts and advancements in institutionalizing M&E through the establishment of statutory bodies like the public service commission and

the DPME as a means to strengthen the M&E. However, it is important to note that despite major efforts, research indicates that M&E, particularly in the context of local government, is given minimal attention; as a result, it is recognized as one of the factors that contributes to municipalities' poor performance. This section also included legislations that guides M&E such as the GWM&E framework that the government recently established, laying down M&E standards and principles for government to provide evidence based policy decisions, identify programme challenges and improve performance and productivity. This chapter provided an overview on M&E and 4IR and how 4IR may be utilised by the government to implement and fast-track M&E as the world is moving into the digital space. Further, the relationship between strategic planning and M&E was outlined including the role and responsibilities of municipalities and how they may use M&E to improve their institutional performance and deliver high-quality services.

Theoretical models for monitoring and evaluation are discussed in the following chapter

CHAPTER 3:THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK UNDERPINNING MONITORING AND EVALUATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The theoretical framework employed in this doctoral research project is discussed in the chapter. Three theoretical frameworks are introduced in this chapter: systems theory, organizational theory, and administrative theory. They will be analyzed in order to determine how M&E issues have an impact on the performance of the uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu district municipalities. In describing the phenomena of this study, each approach will play a significant part.

A theoretical framework is a specific collection of ideas and hypotheses relating to the topic under research, according to Osanloo and Grant (2016: 18). It plays a crucial part in defining the theoretical framework and assist in the development and analysis of the research topic, problem, and questions. In other words, theories serve as a road map for researchers while they conduct their investigations and help them comprehend how various phenomena are interrelated to one another. Each theory's function is based on an evaluation of some of the organizational challenges impacting M&E in terms of organizational tasks, goals, and administrative roles to support the municipality in its duty as a servant of the community through service delivery.

3.2 TRIANGULATION OF THEORIES

Systems theory, organizational theory, and administrative theory all contribute to the foundation of this research and support various facets of the investigation. While examining a situation or occurrence, theory triangulation uses many theories or hypotheses. The intention is to investigate the phenomena using a variety of viewpoints, lenses, and questions. In this investigation, triangulation was used to jointly confirm claims made by the three theories in order to boost confidence in the findings.

3.3 SYSTEMS THEORY

Organisations are open social systems that depend on interaction with their environment to function, according to systems theory. The environment affects how consumers purchase goods and services, suppliers give supplies, employees offer labor or management, shareholders make investments, and governments enforce laws. Open-systems methodology was developed by Katz and Kahn, who applied systems theory to organisational behavior. This technique maps the recurring input, throughput, output, and feedback cycles between an organization and its external environment (Luhmann, Baecker and Gilgen, 2013).

Systems take in information or resources from the environment, process them internally (a process called as throughput), and then release the results back into the environment to restore environmental balance. The system then seeks input to determine if the output was successful in reestablishing equilibrium (Luhmann, Baecker and Gilgen, 2013). As is evident, the systems theory places more emphasis on long-term objectives than the short-term ones of the goal-attainment approach, concentrating on the methods used to assure organisational longevity.

Systems can be categorized as open or closed under this theory. In contrast to closed systems, which do not share information, energy, or resources with their environment. No social structure can be entirely closed or open, hence they are categorized as being either somewhat closed or reasonably open (Luhmann, Baecker and Gilgen, 2013). The difference between closed and open systems is determined by their sensitivity to the outside environment. In contrast to open systems, closed systems are not sensitive to environmental changes. A transparent organisation carefully monitors its surroundings and logs environmental changes as input. One may consider feedback as a type of input (Whitchurch and Constantine, 2009).

Systems theorists contend that because negative feedback warns an organization to problems that need to be addressed, it is the most important information. Good feedback shows that the organization is doing something right and should keep performing that activity or even expand it, but negative feedback shows that the organization is doing something wrong and has to adapt in order to fix the issue (Whitchurch and Constantine, 2009).

By soliciting feedback, an organisation can assess the effectiveness of its output. If the organisation's actions and messages are ineffectual, the process is repeated until a suitable solution is identified. If an organisation cannot adapt to changes in the environment, it will eventually go out of business. When a public relations professional works for a company that uses a systems theory approach, it is always focused on feedback as a way to gauge the company's success. Systems theory, however, is not without flaws. The first flaw concerns measurement, while the second concerns whether how an organisation endures is truly important (Whitchurch and Constantine, 2009). One critique of this strategy, according to some experts, is that it focuses on the ways to attain organisational success rather than organisational effectiveness itself. When opposed to measuring precise end goals of the goal-attainment approach, measuring an organisation's means or process can be extremely challenging (Luhmann, Baecker and Gilgen, 2013).

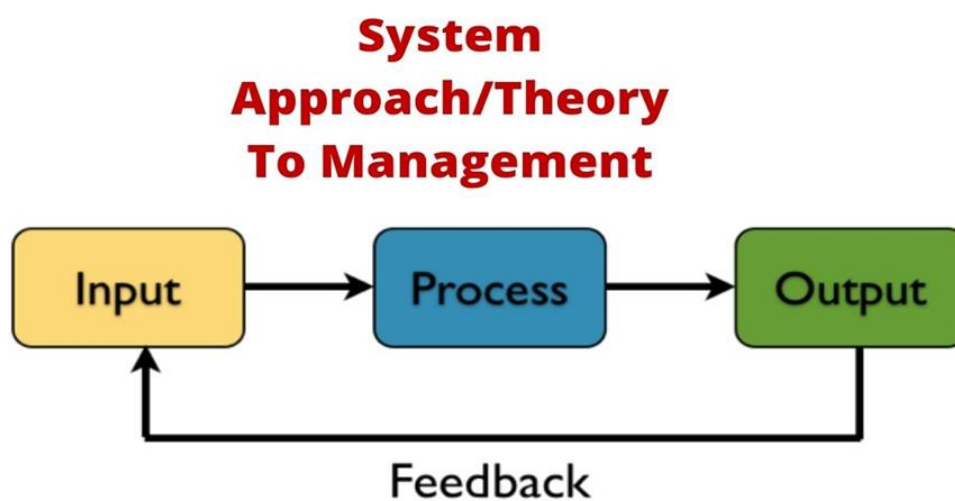


Figure 3.1: Systems theory approach

Source Data: Nobari (2022)

3.3.1 Origins of systems theory

Ludwig von Bertalanffy's research in the 1940s and 1950s is credited as being the first to propose a general systems theory, according to Drack and Pouvreau (2015: 525). In 1968, he wrote *General Systems Theory, Grundlagen, Development, and Applications*. This study set forth some fundamental principles that may be used in practically any field of science. Bertalanffy came to the conclusion that, rather than

treating the natural and social sciences separately, universal rules or principles should be used in the sciences and within educational contexts to better unite and link these two domains. The fundamental tenet of systems theory is that a complex system is composed of several smaller systems, and that it is the interactions between these smaller systems that result in the complex system that we are familiar with (Drack and Pouvreau 2015: 526).

3.3.2 Benefits of the theory

Systems theory enables individuals to become better communicators because it broadens their view from a narrow focus on an issue to the overall situation. This paradigm approaches interpersonal communication from a comprehensive perspective (Gale *et al.*, 2020: 87). It improves an organisation's ability to respond to environmental changes. The organisation is examined as a whole rather than in pieces. This allows it to adapt to changing environmental conditions. Decisions are made with the organisation-environment interface in mind. Systems theory is a strong tool for describing homeostatic systems, which are those that have feedback-controlled regulation processes (Nobari, 2022). Systems theory is useful for psychological study because it can explain how certain systems affect people's behaviour that is goal-directed. Homeostatic systems, which feature regulatory mechanisms that are governed by feedback, may be well-described using systems theory.

3.3.3 Alignment with the research study

Organisations are established as open social systems that depend on their surroundings for survival and sustainability. This portrays the district municipalities of uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu as an open system organisation operating within the parameters of the public sector. An integral part of the input stated in theory is the endeavor to emphasize the context of national government budget allocation, which provides the municipality with necessities for service delivery. According to the idea, input is essential for completing projects that address basic needs of the citizens. This extends to the development of systems and procedures that guarantee municipalities fulfill their goals, such as evaluation and monitoring.

The municipality's input activities and the report compilation phase demonstrate its capacity to concentrate on human and organisational resource management. Each monitoring and evaluation framework or strategy must have a reporting component. The systems theory approach emerges as a structural and functional representation of value chain and supply that manifest from the open municipality system. Effective reporting enables municipalities to communicate the value of their work and its effects, as well as to demonstrate aid effectiveness and improve performance, collaboration, learning, and adaptation within their organization and across the project cycle. The open municipality system creates operations so that interested parties, including communities, non-governmental organisations, investors, and the national government, may see how things are progressing.

These district municipalities are referred to be open systems in the theory. The element of cycle repetition appears as processes, procedures, phases, and layers that the entire system must take into account when it operates in the delivery of public services. The scope and style of municipal activities are determined by the set of constitutional goals. The national government budget is an input for the open system, whose feedback is determined by the effectiveness of service delivery. The idea holds that since communities and interest groups may elect representatives, short- and long-term objectives may be what determines an organization's existence. Hence, a balance between the input and output is necessary for the systems to be sustainable.

All of the municipality's development plans, including uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu, are in the interests of the stakeholders. The short-term planning evaluates the existing situation and creates an action plan to improve performance every day; this also constitutes the input. On the other hand, long-term planning is a complete framework that consists of objectives that must be accomplished within a four- to five-year time period. The cycle of repetition, according to the systems theory, engages both management and employees. Plans enable the entire organization to maximize production since frequent feedback is recommended for organizational survival.

The fundamental element of intangible input based on strategy and planning is the open system's reliance on stabilizing mechanisms. They include strategic planning, which accelerates municipal human resource contributions and develops a plan of action for project structure and implementation. The uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu district municipality in the context of this study is an example of an open system, and the output is a crucial component of that system, according to systems theory.

The objective of this theory is the interaction and relationship between elements holistically. This is to understand the functioning and outcomes of the organisation. These outcomes, in the case of this study, involve short-term and long-term plans for the uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu district municipality that consist of project completion and the feedback and results. The factors may extend to the number of resources invested (input according to the systems theory); the stakeholders such as the Provincial Treasury, Provincial and National government and communities may expect a balance between input and output along with the feedbacks.

3.4 ORGANISATIONAL THEORY

Organisational theory is an area of social science theories that focuses on organisational problems. The theory can be regarded as an ordered set of statements about a general behaviour or structure that can be applied to a wide range of specific circumstances, according to Boxenbaum and Rouleau (2011: 377). To begin with, organisational theory is a collection of interconnected concepts and terminology that explain the behaviour of individuals, groups, or subgroups who collaborate to accomplish a common goal (Scott and Davis, 2015). In other words, organisational theory investigates the impact of social interactions among employees and their activities on the organisation.

This theory also examines how an organisation is impacted by its internal and external business environments, including political, legal, and cultural factors (Scott and Davis, 2015). A group of people is referred to as an organisation when they work together to complete tasks in order to achieve a shared goal. The synergy notion, which holds that a group can do more than a single person working alone, is the foundation of the organisation. Organisational theories are well-articulated when it comes to studying

the interactions between coworkers and their overall impact on the functioning of the organization.

A framework for examining an organization's structure, function, and performance as well as the behavior of its members as individuals and as a group is provided by the ideas and principles of organization theory. A collection of assertions made about the field of organizational science is referred to as "organizational theory." It offers a glimpse into how businesses actually operate. An understanding of how various elements of an organization interact with one another and with their environment is built through observation and research. Organisational theory is the study of the behavior, makeup, and environments of organisations (Miner, 2005). Even though it is not strategic management, economics, or philosophy, it has elements that have to do with group dynamics, interpersonal relationships, organisational structures, and context-related challenges. Most significantly, it is focused on the interaction between individuals and groups as it relates to the pursuit of personal and organisational goals

The fact that organisational theory aims to describe management styles and structures in a way that advances management knowledge is one of its most important features (Brunsson and Olsin, 2018). This indicates that organisational theory is an applied science since it conducts a rigorous study of and explanation of organisational behavior before disseminating the findings for use in problem-solving and decision-making during routine business and organisational operations. Yet in recent decades, it has been improved as terms like organisational behavior, organisational science, business theory, and many more have been debated and, when feasible, defined. The distinctions are still unclear, though.

3.4.1 Origins of organisational theory

Modern organisation theory is based on ideas on the holistic approach of people working together to achieve the common organisational goal through the division of tasks and activities. (Hatch, 1997:1) provides that organization theory began in concepts developed during the evolution and transformation. During that time, the research of German sociologist Max Weber (1864–1920) was extremely important as he believed that bureaucracies staffed by bureaucrats were the perfect form of organisation. Weber's model of bureaucracy was built on the principles of legal and absolute power, rationality, and order. Worker tasks are well defined in Weber's idealised

organisational structure, and behaviour is strictly controlled by rules, policies, and procedures. Weber's organisational ideas, like others of the time, showed an impersonal attitude toward the individuals who worked in them.

Henri Fayol was another key contributor to organisation theory in the early 1900s. He is recognised for recognising strategic planning, staff recruiting, employee motivation, and employee direction (by policies and procedures) as critical managerial activities in the development and maintenance of a successful firm. Because of Frederick Taylor (1856–1915), Weber's and Fayol's theories gained widespread acceptance in the early and mid-1900s. Taylor published his beliefs in a 1911 book called *Principles of Scientific Management*, and they were finally applied on American manufacturing floors. He is credited with defining the function of training, wage incentives, staff selection, and work standards in determining organisational effectiveness, (Hatch, 1997:2).

Hatch (1997:2) further state that in the 1930s, researchers began to take a less mechanical approach to organisations and pay more attention to human factors. A series of research work that shed light on the role of human fulfilment in organisations prompted this development. The so-called Hawthorn Studies were probably the most well-known of them. These investigations were done at a Western Electric Company unit known as the Hawthorn Works in the mid-1920s and 1930s, principally under the guidance of Harvard University scholar Elton Mayo. The organisation sought to know how much working conditions affected productivity.

3.4.2 Benefits of the organisational theory

Organisational theory offers a useful framework for developing actions and policies. It make it easier for operators to see how all of the company's many links are interdependent (Lindebaum and Ashraf, 2021). Organisational theory gives guidance to members on how to manage their internal relationships and offers recommendations for more efficient ways to contribute to the organisation. It does this by explaining how organisations function and how they view themselves (Mantie and Tan, 2019). if Its organisational management structure is clearly established, I t might increase productivity and efficiency and t he working atmosphere is enhanced. It facilitates the development of relationships between management and staff.

3.4.3 Aligning with the research study

The theory has provided an explanation for the current municipal relationships that affect how well services are provided by highlighting the challenges posed by the scarcity of monitoring and evaluation. For the conclusion of this study on M&E issues, it is critical that the district municipalities of uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu be represented as organizations. The idea has supported these district municipalities' structural and functional capacity to display unity to carry out social and administrative obligations since the success of M&E depends on organization.

Both successes and failures have been experienced by the selected municipalities. On the one hand, fraud and unauthorized spending were to blame for the failures. This might have been caused by a variety of things, including inadequate managerial communication and cooperation. On the other hand, a number of service delivery activities that have been accomplished, development projects for community development, and the transformation of community-based projects with the significant contribution of M&E are the foundation of success. The strength of strategic planning, the use of M&E, and enhanced awareness of the M&E specialists allowed the municipal structures to function together. The idea demonstrates a clear connection between organisational unity and the accomplishment of organisational goals, in this example, evaluation and monitoring.

As formal organisations, the uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu district municipalities play a significant role. The formal element includes the divisions, sections, or units (excluding delegation) and cohesion of the municipal section necessary for the accomplishment of M&E between the strategic management group, public administration, project management, administrators, and so forth. It also includes the hierarchy of municipal authority in decision-making. The idea has also shown the significance of specific personnel inside an organization, in this case, M&E practitioners. The municipality is an organisation that depends on the cohesion and compliance of every employee. M&E's shortcomings and successes in these district municipalities call for strong and well-coordinated organisational goals. These steps will assure consistency in service delivery for the municipal-based project, particularly in the contribution projection and successful preparation of M&E reports, which

contribute in resource allocation and offer updates on the state of the municipality's development activities.

The idea of the physical setting is one that organisational theory has embraced. Fundamentally, this is the workplace setting (municipality offices). Because the action takes place there, a specific attention to the physical location is necessary. The municipalities could start to wonder about M&E issues and how they affect the efficiency of local government as a result of this action. The administration of the municipality, resources, human labor, and capability are only a few of the internal and external elements that affect an organisation's performance. Talent, structure, and resources must all be optimized if the uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu district municipalities are to project and comprehend the dynamics of M&E and, if possible, improve M&E.

3.5 ADMINISTRATIVE THEORY

Scholars such as Lamidi (2015: 20) have argued that this theory is important because it gives value to public administrators who are tasked with achieving results through organisational management and understanding the theoretical perspective of organisations. To attain increased success in their organisation, they must first understand individual and group behaviour. Several tasks are divided and retained by the administrative function, according to Wren, Bedeian, and Breeze (2002: 911). The researchers argued that management must establish and balance plans to fulfill the financial, commercial, and technological requirements under which the organisation must launch and operate if it is to achieve the intended success. It is focused on managing, selecting, and organizing the workforce. It is the connection between various organizational management functions and the outside world.

The purpose of administration theory is to combine principles from the social and behavioral sciences with insights from the humanities in order to better administrative procedures for achieving legally required goals that are ethically justified. The administrative theory offers opportunities for effective management in administration as well as a place to accept and advocate for novel ideas, firsthand knowledge, and more practical working procedures. The individuals in the organisation are more effectively integrated into the process and carry out the administrative activities in the prescribed sequences (Wren, Bedeian and Breeze, 2002: 912). The complex nature

of administrative tasks and the changing character of society make it challenging for the traditional generalist administrator to carry out their duties and achieve their objectives.

Also, a more comprehensive knowledge of the administrative phenomena as a whole is required. As Edwards (2018: 43) noted, a lack of understanding of administrative theory is one of the factors that contributes to an administrator's inability to realize organisational goals. The idea of departmentalization, which is the foundation of administrative theory, holds that in order to complete a job efficiently, the many tasks that must be carried out to meet the organization's overall objective should be defined and divided into separate sections, groups or departments (Bach, 2016: 2). According to Bach, more focus should be given to organisational management, as well as human and behavioral elements (Bach, 2016:3). Thus, the administrative theory is built through a top-down approach.

3.5.1 Origins of the administrative theory

Henri Fayol (1841–1925) was the first to elaborate on the administrative theory of management in his writings and publications. French mining engineer Fayol wrote out his procedures. Fayol referred to managerial skills as administrative tasks. In the book *Administration Industrielle et Générale*, published in 1916, he talked about his experiences leading a team of employees. The work by Fayol and his 14 management principles played a role in the growth of administrative theory. The father of modern management is credited as being Henri Fayol. His management ideas, which he developed and published in major part in the early 1900s, had a big influence on how industrial management practice developed in the 21st century.=.

3.5.2 Benefits of the administrative theory

The theory supports the idea of collaborative effort. Several organisations build teams of workers with a variety of skills and capabilities rather than having individuals work on projects alone (Wang, 2020). Workers with different skill sets collaborate to make up for each other's shortfalls, which helps to fill up any gaps. The administrative management concept places team members in tasks based on their areas of expertise, which accelerates outcomes, boosts output, and helps achieve goals. The

main goal of the organisation may be achieved with the help of this smart management approach.

3.5.3 Aligning with the research study

The administrative theory is concerned with monitoring and enhancing the effectiveness of M&E management procedures before proceeding to the operational level, where individual employees are required to understand the changes and execute them in their regular activities. The theory supports the administrative positions that are based on the achievements of objectives of the uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu districts municipality. The theory takes into account intrinsic value, which becomes an important factor in resource allocation. Cooperative administration leads in outcomes that are anticipated by all municipal stakeholders. This may be the national government of South Africa and the private sector accelerating through the local development plans. The selected district municipalities could have administrative challenges, particularly with regards to M&E. The theory links the organisational approach and its departmentalising element, which are vital in achieving M&E objectives.

The primary goal of administrative theory is good management and the development of opportunities for employees in uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu municipality. The South African local government has established the objectives for local government: to ensure that local communities have a democratic and accountable government; to ensure that services are provided to communities in a sustainable manner; to promote social and economic development; to promote a safe and healthy environment; and to encourage community participation in local government issues. Thus, a municipality must operate within its support resources to achieve its constitutional objectives. They are all related to the administrative theory, which gives M&E in district municipalities a functional focus.

Delegating tasks is a need of administration, which increases productivity by allowing municipal staff to focus on a smaller area of responsibility. To guarantee that every employee can handle the assigned responsibilities and workload, this reduction is important. Nonetheless, there have been fewer M&E practitioners due to many municipal issues including restricted financial resources; this adds to data fragmentation in M&E reports. The uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu district

municipalities should find a compromise between workload and the fulfillment of M&E objectives.

3.6 CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to interrogate theories that link to the research study to form a basis and supports the purpose of the study. It thoroughly examined the systems theory as a means of development of systems and procedures that guarantee municipalities fulfill their goals, such as M&E. As a result, M&E is part of the systems and processes of municipality's input that should be applied within the process of delivering of basic services so that it gives feedback on the successes and or failures of development programmes. The success of M&E is supported by organisational theory, which underlies uThukela, Amajuba, and UMgungundlovu municipalities as organisations with the competence to carry out their operational and administrative responsibilities. Because of this, the success of M&E depends on organizations being effective. The administrative theory is concerned with management and enhancing the effectiveness of M&E procedures and practices at an operational level within organisations.

The research methodology and approaches are discussed in the following chapter

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Numerous academics suggest that research methodology calls for the researcher to take a methodical approach to solving an issue that already exists.. It may be interpreted as the art and science of how the research is done scientifically by adhering to different procedures and strategies chosen by the researcher to explore the research subject. Patel and Patel (2019: 48) claim that methodology consists of a range of procedures that vary according on the kind of study the researcher plans to perform. Researchers must understand which approaches and methodologies are pertinent to the research study and which are not.. In addition, researchers must comprehend the presumptions underlying these diverse procedures as well as the criteria that will enable them to choose which techniques are applied to certain problems.

Nayak and Singh (2015: 11) view research methodology as a plan that specifies the guidelines and principles that should be adopted when doing research, as well as the practices that should be followed. They also assert that no one approved research technique is perfect and appropriate for all identified research problems, hence selecting a methodology always involves both gain and loss, meaning the researcher may or may not obtain the intended results.

This section of the study reflects on the methods and procedures adopted by the researcher in conducting the research. This includes an outline of the study aims and objectives, study site, research approach and design, target population, sampling technique, data collection, reliability and trustworthiness, limitations, delimitation and ethical issues pertaining to the research study. This chapter also describes the methodology used for the research for this study.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

A framework for the investigation is offered by the research design. It is a technique that the researcher uses to successfully combine several study aspects in order to answer the research question (Van Manen, 2017: 775). The research design incorporates a tactical action structure that acts as a link between the research question, the execution and data collecting, and the analysis and discussion of the findings. The literature suggests three main research designs, namely, descriptive, explanatory and exploratory. Descriptive research provides a detailed representation of components related to the research problem while explanatory research establishes any casual connections between variables related to the research problem. Exploratory research aims to acquire insight and discover new ideas to increase knowledge of the research subject at hand (Ponelis, 2015:536).

The explorative research design was chosen as the most appropriate design for this research study as it aimed at gaining insight and familiarity with the existing problem. This design offered the researcher a well-grounded image of the situation of M&E and its effects on the overall performance of the institutions. It enabled the researcher to gather information from a wide range of respondents in order to be familiarised with basic details, setting and concerns of M&E and performance management in municipalities, and this helped in analysing the responses obtained on the impact of M&E and its relevance on analysing the performance of local government in South Africa.

Lelissa (2017: 2) maintains that exploratory design is usually conducted when the phenomenon is not clearly understood and not enough is known about the subject. The aim is not to provide conclusive answers to the research questions but to explore the research topic and its level of depth in a practical context. It also explains and accounts for descriptive information, meaning most of the time it seeks to understand the “how” and “why” part of things, and goes on to identify reasons why a phenomenon occurs. In short, exploratory research looks at finding reasons and evidence to support or disprove an explanation.

4.3 RESEARCH APPROACHES

There are three methods for conducting social research: mixed-methods research, qualitative research, and quantitative research. Each one has a different process that the researcher must adhere to in order to answer the research questions and meet the research objectives. These three approaches are elaborated as follows:

4.3.1 Quantitative research approach

This is a method of research that prioritises quantification in the collection and analysing of data. Eyisi (2016: 93) confirms that this type of research approach focuses on investigating the answers to the research questions, in other words, the emphasis is on measuring variables that exist in the social world. Quantitative research, according to Mohajan (2020: 52), plans to find patterns in people's behaviour by presenting variables that are expressed in numerical and statistical methods. Moreover, this involves aspects of social behaviour that can be quantified rather than finding and interpreting their meaning. The quantitative approach results in research findings that can be interpreted in numerical fashion, entailing closed-ended information to measure variables relating to the research subject. The analysis of quantitative data involves the use of questionnaires and surveys to address the research objective or test the hypothesis (Rahman, 2017: 5).

4.3.2 Qualitative research approach

A qualitative research methodology is a method of doing research that yields findings not supported by statistical evidence. Using this method, research is done on people's lives, experiences, behaviours, and emotions as well as on how organizations operate, social movements, and cross-national relationships. This indicates that qualitative research is not reliant on numerical data and encompasses a variety of realities.

Flick (2014: 1063) asserts that qualitative research is interested in scrutinising the subjective meaning of issues and events by collecting non-standardised information, analysing text rather than numbers and statistics. Creswell and Creswell (2017:173) add that qualitative research is concerned with various aspects of how people make sense out of the research subject, and involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. Moreover, it is apparent that this type of approach is concerned with many perspectives covering the interpretive techniques which seek to analyse,

describe and translate the collected data into meaningful information related to the research subject. Qualitative data collection and analysis involves an iterative approach to answering open-ended questions.

4.3.3 Mixed-method research approach

This form of research methodology combines the findings of qualitative and quantitative studies. Doyle, Brady, and Byrne (2009: 177) state that the researcher gathers data, analyzes it, and then makes conclusions based on both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. It incorporates a component of both major approaches, but it is seldom simple for scholars to explain how the two components interact. According to Hafsa (2019: 45), mixed-method research entails the blending of qualitative and quantitative data, with the former coming from sources that are typically open-ended and do not have pre-designed responses and the latter coming from sources that are close-ended, like questionnaires and surveys.

4.3.4 Comparison between qualitative and quantitative research approach

The differences between the two approaches, qualitative and quantitative, are numerous yet they complement each other. Both methodologies link empirical data and measurements to the topic of the study, but because of differences in presentation and measuring process, these two approaches cannot be directly compared, therefore, they are different.

Table 4.1 illustrates the differences between the qualitative and quantitative research approaches as indicated by Mehrad and Zangeneh (2019: 4).

Table 4.1: Differences between qualitative and quantitative research approaches

| Qualitative approach | Quantitative approach |
|--|---|
| Focuses on social reality and cultural meaning | Weigh objective truth |
| Authenticity is an important value | Reliability is an important value |
| Cases are subject to thematic analysis | Cases are subject to statistical analysis |
| Researcher is involved | Researcher is detached |
| Entails open-ended data | Entails close-ended information |

Source: Mehrad and Zangeneh (2019:4)

This research study adopted a qualitative research approach. This type of research approach was suitable for the research study because of its concept of gaining in-depth information about the research topic. To achieve valuable research results, the researcher applied a qualitative approach and obtained detailed insight into issues of M&E and its impact on the overall performance of the selected district municipalities.

4.4 TARGET POPULATION

In an effort to achieve the research objectives and make significant contributions to advance knowledge, scholars and researchers gather information from participants. These participants form part of a particular population which is a group of individuals with characteristics the researcher is interested in. In essence, research findings are attributed to the population by linking them to specific or all participants. Credibility and data integrity in research is of paramount importance; data integrity derives from the credibility of findings which the researcher obtains from participants who are actually involved with the phenomenon and have expert knowledge (Asiamah, Mensah and Oteng-Abayie, 2017: 1607).

Majid (2018: 3) believes that it is sometimes impossible to include the complete population when conducting research; instead, researchers sample a specific percentage of the target population of interest to be included in the study. In the end, the goal is to apply the findings to the whole target group. What is important is that the researcher devises criteria containing characteristics that the selected population must have in order to be eligible to participate in the research study. For example, the researcher may describe demographic characteristics such as age, ethnicity, and level of education or job position. This helps to identify potential research participants who qualify to be included in the study.

This research project recruited employees from the three district municipalities who were working in the Performance management systems and corporate services divisions as participants for the study. The notion behind selecting these respondents is that they have vast knowledge of issues of M&E affecting the municipality. They are experts in monitoring, reviewing and improving the execution of strategic plans outlined in the municipal IDP and gauging progress made in achieving the municipal objectives. Their significant contribution to the study was valued and considered

appropriate to help the researcher locate comprehensive, in-depth data and findings to accomplish study objectives.

4.5 SAMPLING PROCEDURES

In the quest to solve a research problem, devise better solutions and obtaining additional knowledge through research, sampling must be carried out systematically. Rahman *et al.* (2022: 43) state that sampling aims to produce a representation of the population made up of a limited number of units so that the researcher can study a small group and draw accurate generalisations about the larger group based on the findings.

There are many aspects to be considered when conducting sampling. A suitable sampling technique must be chosen for a particular study, depending on the research design. Thus, researchers focus on the techniques that will give them a highly comparable sample. They include non-probability sampling, where no unit of the population has an equal chance of participating in the study, and probability sampling, which includes the selection of participants where every member of the population has an equal chance of being included in the research (Taherdoost, 2016: 19).

Table 4.2 describes the advantages and disadvantages of the two sampling techniques, namely, probability and non-probability.

Table 4.2: Advantages and disadvantages of sampling approaches

| Sampling approaches | Advantages | Disadvantages |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Probability Sampling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the chance of systematic errors • Minimise biasness • Better sample representation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs a lot of effort • Time-consuming • Expensive |
| Non-Probability Sampling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need less effort • Need less time to finish up • Not much costly | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prone to encounter systematic errors • High chances of producing biased results • Cannot be claimed as a good representation of the population |

Source Data: Datta (2018: 1)

According to Taherdoost (2016: 21) each sampling approach consists of types of sampling. Probability sampling consists of:

- Simple random sampling
- Systematic sampling
- Stratified sampling
- Cluster sampling
- Multi-stage sampling

Non-probability sampling consists of:

- Convenience sampling
- Quota sampling
- Snowball sampling
- Purposive sampling

This study applied a purposive sampling technique. The researcher selected the persons deliberately to obtain information that cannot be sourced elsewhere. Participants were chosen based on their understanding of M&E and how it impacts the operation of the municipality, the M&E systems employed and their efficacy, M&E challenges, and effects of M&E on service delivery. In addition, the researcher found participants who were open to taking part and sharing their thoughts and experiences on the research topic. Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016: 2) refer to this as a judgement approach where the researcher makes a conscious decision based on characteristics the population of interest possesses. The researcher decides what information is necessary and selects individuals who are willing to supply it. This method does not require an underlying theory or a large number of participants.

4.5.1 Sample size

Since the researcher cannot study the entire population, a representative sample is selected. Sample size is the number of participants that are included in the study. There is no uniform norm for the maximum and minimum number of interviews for a qualitative study. Because of this, different scholars use different procedures and techniques to choose the number of respondents to be interviewed (Etikan, Musa and Alkassim, 2016: 4). In this study, the researcher planned to select 20 participants from each district municipality which made up a total of 60 participants. However, only 20

participants in total (10 participants from uThukela, 2 from Amajuba and 8 from uMgungundlovu district municipality) volunteered to participate in the study, others were reluctant to participate and were not available at the time of data collection due to work commitments. Bekele and Ago (2022: 43) explain this type of numbers anomaly by stating that researchers come up with a methodological plan to determine the sample in the proposal stages. At the proposal stage it is difficult to predict how many study participants a researcher will be able to get because they cannot know ahead of time how many possible participants will avail themselves to participate in the study. Hence, it is recommended that researchers apply a sampling strategy until a saturation point is achieved.

4.6 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

The success of a good research depends on the accuracy and reliability of the information. Data collection involves the process of acquiring information on a research topic in order to draw conclusions, respond to research questions, and accomplish research objectives. The data collection component is crucial and forms the basis of research because this is the stage that research findings about the research topic are generated. In doing so, there is a systematic fashion that researchers must follow in collecting data that is relevant to this study (Barrett and Twycross, 2018: 63).

Since this study is based on qualitative research, it required data that was rich and subtle, allowing themes and findings to emerge through rigorous analysis. The researcher utilised a qualitative data collection methods which provided a good understanding of the experiences and attitudes of participants on issues of M&E within district municipalities, and provided detailed insight into how the intervention may assist in improving the state of M&E within municipalities while enhancing performance.

4.6.1 Sources of data collection

The research literature classifies sources of data into two categories, namely: primary data and secondary data.

4.6.1.1 Primary data

Primary data are facts that the researcher has independently gathered in the area of interest. Muthwa (2021: 63) claims that it alludes to information that is gathered for the first time, has never been published, required time and effort to gather, and has financial implications. Moreover, primary data collection involves acquiring truthful information from the source. It is used in studies to collect first-hand information about a problem or topic. The majority of studies that require input from subject-matter experts employ primary data techniques. In this study, the researcher collected first-hand information from municipal employees from uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu district municipalities through focus group discussion. The researcher developed questions answered by key participants regarding M&E and its effect on the performance of local government.

4.6.1.2 Secondary data

According to Balu, Balasubramanian and Suryadevara (2020: 120) this source of data refers to document analysis and review of information that has already been published, such as books, newspapers, journals and magazines. Secondary research, sometimes referred to as desk research, is a study method that makes use of previously collected data. Existing data is collated and summarized to improve the overall efficacy of study. Using secondary data has the benefit of reducing time and costs.

This study collected data from the existing literature such as books, journals and reports on the research topic. This provided an insight into the effect of M&E in local government and its linkage to municipal performance, and provided research methodologies and procedures adopted and employed in the study. Balu, Balasubramanian and Suryadevara (2020: 121) simplify the differences between primary and secondary sources of data, as outlined in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Primary and Secondary data

| | Primary data | Secondary data |
|-------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Data collection | Collected by the researcher | Already available |
| Obtaining of data | Through interviews, questionnaires, surveys | Books, publications, journals |
| Accuracy | More accurate | Less accurate |
| Costs | More costly | Less costly |
| Time | Requires more time to collect data | Requires less time |
| Reliability | More reliable | Less reliable |

Source Data: Balu, Balasubramanian and Suryadevara (2020: 121)

4.6.2 Data collection tools

The underlying need for data collection in research is to capture quality data that seeks to answer the research questions. To attain effective data, researchers adopt different methods of data collection depending on what is appropriate for the research study. There are various data collection tools in social research, depending on the research approach that is being employed in that particular study. In quantitative research, the researcher generally uses observation, surveys and questionnaires to collect data while in qualitative research, interviews, and focus group discussions are used to collect research data (Muthwa, 2021: 65).

The information in this research was collected through focus group discussions. According to Nyumba *et al.* (2017: 23), conducting focus group discussion is the most direct and practical technique to learn detailed, rich information on a specific event. The opinions of numerous participants may be collected by qualitative researchers in focus groups in an efficient manner. Because so many individuals were talking about the same subject at once, the researcher was frequently able to take a backseat and allow the focus group engage in a free-flowing debate. This presented a chance to compile in-depth information on the research topic from a target group. Barrett and Twycross (2018: 63) regard the focus group discussion as being more comfortable for participants than a one-on-one interviews because respondents will not need to participate in every aspect of the conversation and may feel more at ease expressing opinions when they are shared by others in the group. Additionally, focus group discussions enable participants to bounce ideas off one another, which causes fresh perspectives to emerge from the debate.

The procedure followed by the researcher in conducting focus group discussions in uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu municipalities:

The researcher visited all three municipalities to identify potential participants and held briefing meetings with the office of the municipal manager regarding the nature of the research study and the role that the municipality will play in contributing to the research. The researcher also prepared a schedule of questions containing open-ended questions and conducted focus group discussions in the three district municipalities (uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu district municipalities). The participants were divided into two groups per municipality. This was done for manageability reasons and to make it possible to elicit qualitative data from every member of the population efficiently and effectively. The data collection process took place over the course of two months in September and October 2022. Focus group discussions were conducted in municipal boardrooms, where the researcher made an introduction and provided the background of the study to paint a clear picture of what the research was all about and what is expected from participants. Consent forms were signed by participants during these gatherings for ethics purposes.

4.7 PILOT TEST OF DATA COLLECTION TOOL

A preliminary study was conducted to test and determine the relevance and quality of the data collection tool. The aim was to refine the interview questions to improve clarity on the research questions outlined and eliminate repetition of similar statements/questions before proceeding with the full-scale research project. Additionally, this exercise helped to determine limitations that may hinder the process of achieving the results and the alignment of research questions with research objectives.

A pilot test was conducted in July 2022 with 5 members of the population from each district municipality and these participants were excluded from participating in the main study. The results showed that there were similar questions in **SECTION A** and **SECTION C** of the schedule of research questions and grammatical errors in **SECTION E**. Necessary amendments and modification was made to ensure relevance and improve the reliability of the interview schedule.

4.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Since this was a qualitative study, a thematic approach to data analysis was employed. The term "thematic analysis" refers to a technique for analyzing qualitative data that involves classifying data into themes and using interpretation while selecting codes and developing themes (Kiger and Varpio, 2020: 1). This approach to data analysis is an appropriate and suitable method as it seeks to understand people's experiences, thoughts and behaviour across the collected data. Sundler *et al.* (2019: 733) note that thematic analysis identifies themes based on data frequency, repetition, and persuasiveness. It also involves a technique for locating, analysing, and reporting patterns. In short, the thematic analysis method is commonly used in qualitative data analysis to discover and analyse themes to determine the meaning of the data.

Braun and Clark (2006) provide a widely-accepted framework to conduct thematic analysis which involves the six stages as depicted in Figure 4.2.

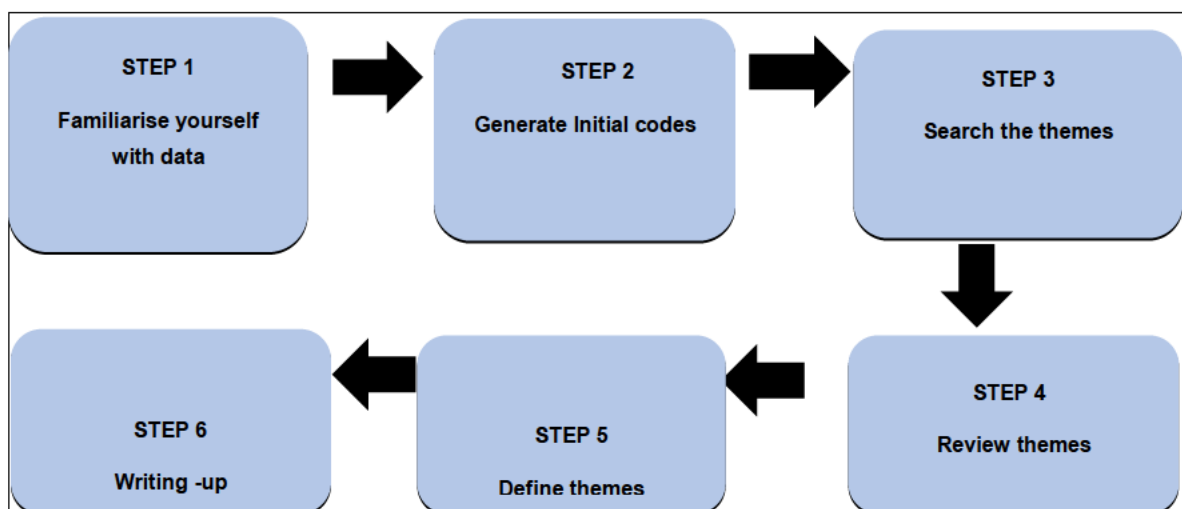


Figure 4.1: Thematic analysis framework

Source Data: Braun and Victoria (2012: 60)

Maguire and Delahunt (2017) describe these stages in detail below:

4.8.1 Familiarising yourself with data

This is the first step in qualitative data analysis where the author reads and re-reads transcripts generated from the interviews. The aim is to become familiar with the entire body of data by jotting down important notes that relate to the study in order to get an early impression of the study. In this study, the researcher listened to recordings, and read notes to obtain a common sense of the responses from participants regarding M&E in local government.

4.8.2 Generating initial codes

In this stage, organising and systematically arranging of data takes place to reduce data to meaningful amounts and to eliminate data that is not relevant to achieve the objectives of the study. In the study, the researcher uploaded data into the NVivo software to generate codes and arranged them in a systematic fashion across the data set.

4.8.3 Search the themes

This stage identifies initial themes which are referred to as similar patterns that capture something significant and interesting about the research question. In this study, similar data were identified and grouped together and initial themes were generated.

4.8.4 Review themes

During this stage, the identified themes are reviewed and modified to make sense out of them and ensure that the themes were supported by the data. The researcher utilised coding strips to review themes and read information associated with each theme to determine whether the data supported it.

4.8.5 Define themes

This is the refinement stage of themes which aims to identify what each theme is about, find out what it means and, if there are sub-themes, the researcher determines how they interact with the main theme. In this study, after rigorous analysis, theme names were defined that emerged from the data.

4.8.6 Writing-up

This is the end-point of research that requires an explanation. Once themes have been examined, a conclusion reached, and they are prepared to publish a final report or thesis. In this study, the researcher exported themes from the NVivo program and put together a final report on the research's findings.

4.9 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND RELIABILITY

Trustworthiness and reliability are related to the quality of the data produced by the research study (Robson and McCartan, 2016). As qualitative research methodologies are increasingly being recognised, it is important to conduct such studies rigorously to achieve meaningful and useful results. Trustworthiness of the data was maintained to ensure the quality of the data produced by the research study. In this study, trustworthiness was established through the elements presented below.

4.9.1 Credibility

According to Stahl and King (2020: 26) the term credibility relates to confidence and belief in the accuracy of research findings, meaning that the findings of the study can be trusted. The data collection instruments were tested by conducting a pilot study to ensure the accuracy of findings. The researcher ensured the credibility of the findings by taking notes of the responses of participants through transcribing and also recording the responses via an audio recording device. Additionally, the triangulation approach was used to strengthen the reliability of the results by combining information from many sources, such as participant's responses and publications pertinent to the research topic. This was to obtain a deeper understanding of M&E as the main focus of the research.

4.9.2 Confirmability

According to Rose and Johnson (2020:5) confirmability refers to the level of which the researcher remains as objective as possible to avoid biasness and having personal motives that have a detrimental impact on the research findings. The researcher remained neutral during the focus group discussions to avoid being biased during the study. The goal was to ensure that the interview questions were genuine and credible and that the study produced the desired results without bias.

4.9.3 Dependability

Dependability was maintained by ensuring that the interview questions were structured in such a way that future research investigations could obtain similar results. According to Brigitte (2017: 260) this stage relates to the extent to which future research studies will produce the same results and that the findings will be consistent.

In addition, to ensure reliability, the data collection instruments were tested by conducting a pilot study. The aim was to determine whether the research was able to achieve the intended results without bias while ensuring the authenticity and credibility of interview questions. The pilot study consisted of 15 participants who were employees within the Performance management systems and corporate services unit in the district municipalities (five participants from each municipality).

4.10 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

Limitations of the study refer to the restrictions that the researcher encounters while conducting research and are typically out of the researcher's control (Theofanidis and Fountoukis, 2018: 155). In this study, limitations included the unavailability of participants due to their busy work schedule. An additional limitation was that the findings of the study can only apply to the three district municipalities that were selected for this research study, therefore, the results cannot be generalised to all district municipalities, even though they may be impacted by the same M&E problems that this particular research examined.

Delimitations are boundaries that are within the researcher's control (Theofanidis and Fountoukis, 2018: 156). Delimitations ensure that the objectives of the study do not become impossible to achieve. Thus, the study is delimited and only includes three district municipalities (UThukela, Amajuba and UMgungundlovu) as the focus area. The researcher targeted these district municipalities due to their accessibility and low cost in terms of collecting data. The researcher did not include other district municipalities because of situational elements differ in their distinctiveness and given their individual complexities. In addition, the selected municipalities were previously flagged as poor-performing municipalities on the basis of providing consistent service delivery according to the Auditor-General audit findings (2020/2021).

4.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics in research serve as guidelines that the researcher must adhere to in order to prevent any misconduct. Hasan *et al.* (2021: 3) state that ethical principles in research are essential to protect the rights and dignity of research participants and the quality of behaviour of researchers must be governed by research ethics. Ethical considerations include the possible influence of research findings on participants, problems with confidentiality and anonymity, and the potential to cause harm to others while conducting research.

In this study, the researcher observed ethical principles by obtaining an ethical clearance letter from the Institutional Research Ethics Committee of the Durban University of Technology (DUT). This letter guarantees that the proposed research complies with ethical standards and principles, and provides the study with the authority to proceed. The municipal managers of the district municipalities were asked for permission to undertake the research study, which was granted. Participants were informed of their rights to voluntary participation in the study and that they could withdraw from the study at any moment when the data were being collected.

They were requested to fill out and sign consent forms, which indicated their informed and voluntary participation in the study. Participants were given information on how anonymity and confidentiality of their identity and personal information would be maintained in the study. This research adhered to all ethical principles and was aligned with the guidelines set by DUT research policy. In terms of data storage, manual information will be archived in the Department of Public Management, Law & Economics and audio records will be stored electronically. The collected data will be stored for five years and thereafter be disposed of as stated in the DUT ethics policy.

4.12 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the methodological procedures followed in this study. This section discussed the applicability of the qualitative research approach and study design. Following that, the focus group discussion was recognized as a method of

data gathering technique, including the target population and its significance in the study. Secondary data such as journal articles and books were used to support the arguments of the study. Participants were purposefully selected based on the necessary expertise and knowledge, followed by a sample size of participants suitable for this qualitative study.

The researcher used the elements of credibility on the accuracy of research findings, confirmability of the researcher's objectivity during the research process, and dependability to ensure the consistency of research findings for subsequent research to ensure that the study produces high-quality data and guarantee the research findings. The research was carried out in compliance with ethical standards to preserve participants' rights, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and disclosure. The limitations and delimitations were clearly defined. Permission was obtained from the three municipalities, UThukela, Amajuba and UMgungundlovu to conduct the study, consent was also obtained from participants. Research data was carefully stored in the memory stick, and will be desposed and deleted completely after 5 years as per the university research policies.

The following chapter covers the presentation and analysis of the collected data.

CHAPTER 5:PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and discuss the responses of participants relating to their knowledge and experience of M&E and its effects on the performance of local government. The findings were obtained through conducting focus group discussions with the participants that were purposefully selected from the three district municipalities, namely: uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal. The information collected from participants was coded using the NVivo software version 12 (QSR International, 2020).

5.2 WORD CLOUD

According to Depaolo and Wilkinson (2014:34), a word cloud refers to the visual presentation of words that have an important application in various sections of the study. In qualitative analysis, word clouds offer a technique to visualise thoughts on what participants believe or know about the topic and provides a summary of the content of information by depicting words that appear the most in the collected data, as reflected in Figure 5.1.



Figure 5.1: Word Cloud

Source: Generated by NVivo12 from study data (QSR International, 2020)

Figure 5.1 shows the words that were most frequently used by the participants during the interview process. The word “municipality” which serves as the major focus of the study, is the most dominant.

5.3 EMERGENCE OF THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

The analysis of the collected data from the focus group discussions produced six (6) key themes and eleven (11) subthemes as shown in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: Main themes and subthemes

| Main themes | Subthemes |
|---|---|
| Theme 1: Analysing and understanding M & E | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describing M&E • The primary aim of M&E • The current state of municipalities in terms of M&E |
| Theme 2: The effects of M&E on the performance of local government | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact and benefits of M&E on service delivery |
| Theme 3: M&E models and systems utilised by municipalities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Models and systems utilised by three district municipalities • Effectiveness of the M&E models and systems |
| Theme 4: Challenges associated with M&E within the three district municipalities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges within three municipalities • Interventions by municipalities |
| Theme 5: Contribution of M&E towards performance and service delivery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution of M&E • Link of M&E to the overall municipal performance |
| Theme 6: Possible alternatives/solutions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible strategies to improve M&E and performance |

Table 5.1 depicts the main themes and subthemes that emerged from the analysis of data obtained through the focus group discussions with municipal employees relating to the effects of M&E on the performance within the selected district municipalities.

These themes were identified in alignment with the study’s research questions which were:

- What is the effect of M&E on the performance of the uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu district municipalities?
- What models and systems do the uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu district municipalities utilise to monitor and evaluate the performance of the municipalities?

- What are the challenges of M&E in uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu district municipalities?
- How does M&E contribute towards improving municipal performance and service delivery?
- What are the possible M&E alternatives and interventions that the district municipalities can adopt in improving their performance and ensure effective local governance?

The collected information was verbatim recorded and utilised. The names of participants were kept anonymous to preserve their identity. The main themes and subthemes are outlined using data visuals such as project maps generated by the NVivo software and are presented in the following discussion.

5.3.1 Theme 1: Analysing and understanding M&E

This theme sought to elicit feedback from the participants on their understanding and analysis of how M&E is undertaken in the local government sphere. The purpose was to gain the opinions and perspectives on what they already knew and understood about M&E and its significance in the operation of their specific municipality. Three sub-themes were discovered as a result of the thematic data obtained from the focus group discussions as outlined in Figure 5.2.

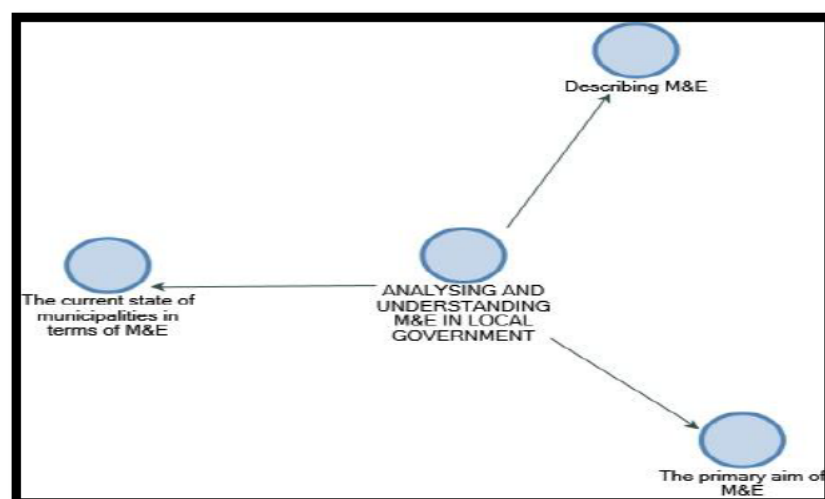


Figure 5.2: Data visualisation of Theme 1 and its subthemes

5.3.1.1 Subtheme 1 : Describing M&E

According to the literature, M&E is a crucial component for the assessment and oversight of municipal operations. This feature helps to ensure high levels of productivity and performance, reduce risks, and report on the findings in order to achieve their operational and annual targets (Ochieng, Rambo and Osogo, 2018: 68).

The majority of the participants from the Amajuba District Municipality were recorded saying:

M&E involves the process of performance planning, monitoring, review of municipal activities, reporting on them, thus the level of performance is improved, organised and managed. (Amajuba municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

Echoing similar sentiments, participants from the UuThukela district municipality said that:

M&E is a system that determines if the organisation is using its resources and managing its functions and operations effectively and efficiently. It involves a process of establishing and managing operations and reports back on performance to the council. It also focuses on designing and coordinating service delivery programme to evaluate impact and benefit analysis. (uThukela municipality, focus group discussion, 2022).

Meanwhile, one of the participants at the focus group discussion in uMgungundlovu district municipality added:

In my view, M&E is an assessment procedure to track municipal progress towards achieving its strategic goals. (uMgungundlovu municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

From the above responses, it can be inferred that the majority of the participants within the district municipalities have a basic knowledgeable and understanding of the the essence of monitoring and evaluation. They understand why its crucial for municipalities to include M&E in it functions. These findings are in line with Uwizeyimana (2020: 12), as shown in chapter 2,section 2.2, that M&E is an ongoing activity that collects information on performance indicators of government activities to inform management of the institution's effectiveness and productivity. It also gives the key stakeholders information and evidence of the success or failure of an ongoing

development intervention or program, allowing them to monitor how well the money provided are being used to advance goals and progress.

In addition, the literature recognises M&E as an effective tool to address issues of non-performance and improve the quality of programmes and project planning. Furthermore, it provides useful evidence for policy and decision-making and the desire to provide management with guidance on determining which programme appears to have an impact (Nonyane, 2019: 12).

5.3.1.2 Subtheme 2: The primary aim of M&E

M&E involves more than only assessing and evaluating operations and producing reports based on the findings of the assessments (Ochieng, Rambo and Osogo 2018: 62). The results under this subtheme indicate that M&E was responsible for the regular tracking of key elements of programmes by assessing the inputs, activities and the results. This process assists the selected district municipalities to monitor and evaluate their operations and service delivery programmes, and this is evident in the extent of impact and benefits it presents to the public. Consistent with this statement, participants commented that:

In my knowledge, M&E facilitate and report on planning, assessment and evaluation of municipal programmes that we implement which are aimed at improving service delivery outcomes, benefiting and having an impact on the society. (uThukela municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

In addition,

Perhaps we could say that M&E ensures that procedures and processes are in place to collect relevant information about the functions of the municipality, analyse the information and generate a report outlining whether the municipality is performing well. (uThukela municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

A critical point that emerged from the findings was that the goal of M&E is to provide information to the municipal council and executive management. This allows the municipality to make informed decisions about its operations, and identify and detect potential risks that could have a negative impact on its performance.

In support of the above statement,

M&E assist in creating an information-embracing organisational culture where managers utilise reports and any other assessment results to make informed decisions based on evidence generated via M&E. It also contributes to strategic planning as the council take resolutions based on reports on progress of the municipality, its performance, and take necessary action in areas that need improvement and/or in areas where challenges are identified. (uMgungundlovu municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

Furthermore, in support of the sentiments shared above, Nonyane (2019: 14) asserts that M&E aims to contribute to advancing good governance and enhance the effectiveness of service delivery in all spheres of government. Reddy (2016: 3) argues that fundamental service delivery has been declining over the course of local government history due to a variety of problems, including a weak performance culture in many municipalities. As a result, having an M&E system in place ensures that this area of governance runs smoothly by providing services that are responsive to the needs of citizens.

5.3.1.3 Subtheme 3: The current state of municipalities in terms of M&E

The responses from participants revealed that the state of M&E activities and operations within municipalities remains a concern. This is driven by a variety of factors, including the fact that municipalities consistently underperform because they are unable to achieve their set targets as indicated in the strategic plan.

This is reflected in this statements from a respondent in the Amajuba municipality focus group discussion:

The current state of municipal performance remains a concern as some of the key performance areas are not achieved. (Amajuba municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

UThukela municipality added:

The current state of municipal performance is average, in some areas the municipality is performing well and in other areas it is lacking. There has been no improvement over the years although there are performance management systems in place. (uThukela municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

This concurs with the views of scholars such as Tshishonga (2021: 32) who writes that poor performance in local government is due to range of challenges including poor implementation and monitoring of policies, programmes and projects amongst many other issues.

In contrast to the views expressed above, uMgungundlovu municipality noted that the municipality achieved an unqualified audit opinion, but there were matters that municipality need to focus on to achieve their annual targets and enhance performance:

Drawing from the previous audit outcomes, the municipality is doing very well in terms of performance and in the last financial the district did receive an unqualified audit opinion that indicates clear presentation of the municipal state of affairs but with few matters. (uMgungundlovu municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

The above sentiments indicate that the municipalities are struggling to reach their performance goals and targets. The lack of effective and proper M&E is the one of the reasons why the number of underperforming municipalities have increased, and the gaps in service delivery have widened. However, apart from the responses above, it is notable that other municipalities continue to use the tools and resources at their disposal in an endeavour to achieve excellent performance hence the achievement of unqualified audit results in uMgungundlovu municipality.

Ndevu and Muller (2017) in chapter 2, section 2.7 ,corroborate this narrative that as seen by the high number of protest action, the state of distress in South African municipalities is growing as a result of significant discrepancies in service delivery, which has decreased public confidence in the local government system. Municipal service delivery challenges, such as a lack of resources and capacity, poor management of the resources that are available, and a lack of monitoring and evaluation are continuously observed. Municipalities are unable to reach required performance targets. Govender and Reddy (2014b: 163) add that the implementation of change interventions that have been observed over the years such as the GWM&E and the level of performance of municipalities have not produced the desired service delivery outcomes. Therefore, there is a need for an M&E system in municipalities to improve their productivity and performance.

5.3.2 Theme 2 : The effects of M&E on the performance of local government

The level of performance of municipalities is as a result of the assessment of operations and functions, which is what M&E can contribute. This theme explores the effects of M&E on the performance of municipalities. As indicated in Figure 5.3 the analysis of data identified one subtheme.

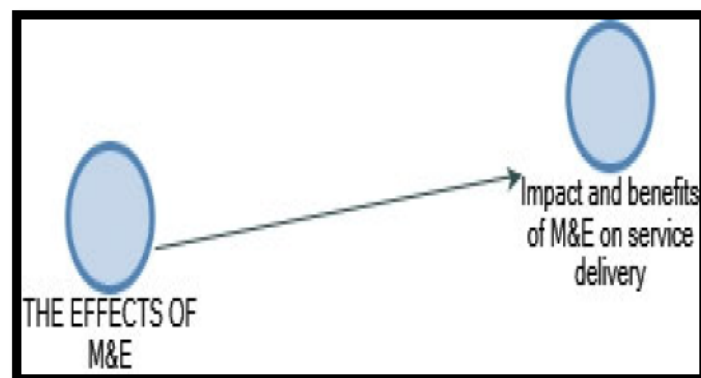


Figure 5.3: Data visualisation of Theme 2 and its subtheme

5.3.2.1 Subtheme 1: The impact and benefits of M&E on service delivery

If conducted effectively, M&E can improve the performance and effective delivery of services which will benefit the community at large. The assessments of operations and service delivery programmes can result in practical indication of areas that are in danger and needing urgent intervention, possible deviations in terms of budget allocations and any other potential risks. M&E can boost service delivery and performance of municipalities, which will have a positive impact on the general welfare of the community. It produces a realistic indication of areas that need immediate action, and can pick up potential budgetary deviations and other potential dangers that can be obtained from reviews of operations and service delivery programmes.

Added to the submission above, participants provided that:

When we implement projects, an evaluation exercise helps us in determining the impact of the project or programme aimed at benefiting the public, and detect areas that need to be rectified during and after the implementation of the project. And also determine whether the intended results have been achieved or not. (uThukela municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

Equally important, it was articulated that M&E seeks to ensure the relevance and fulfilment of municipal programmes and interventions by conducting comparison of the planned activities against the actual outcomes. Other participants said:

There is a positive impact from evaluation and monitoring with regards to the provision of service delivery. If implemented effectively, the community should benefit greatly from improved service delivery, especially when it comes to basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity. (Amajuba municipality, focus group discussion, 2022).

The above narrative is further reinforced by Kamau and Mohamed (2015: 84) who state that M&E systems boost development by providing fast, accurate, and relevant information, allowing for better decision-making and therefore greater effect on the implementation of projects and programmes. Development interventions can be effectively monitored and evaluated through rigorous but cost-effective approaches to collecting and utilising quality data on programme performance, outcomes, and impact. M&E in the field of development supports the making of evidence-based decisions in the planning and implementation of initiatives and programmes through tracking, evaluating and reporting on progress.

Participants expressed a similar opinion that,

With our municipality, the great benefit lies in ensuring that services are delivered to the people as promised, do revision and corrections where necessary and be able to effectively communicate timeously on the progress of projects. This helps us to exercise accountability and transparency and also minimises community protests if we know that reports evaluation reports give us negative results. (uMgungundlovu municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

Shivambu (2020: 28), as indicated in chapter 2, section 2.12.1, acknowledged that conducting continuous monitoring and assessment may not only lead to just responsibility, but it can also lead to learning for the organisation. To put it another way, the purpose of M&E is critical as it has a significant impact on the outcome and the performance of the organisation.

The majority of participants further emphasised that municipalities have the critical duty of providing the essential services needed by local communities to sustain and improve their standard of living. To make sure this happens, M&E must be strengthened in their operations and implementation of activities related to basic

service delivery so that they can report on the status of the programme and determine whether it is carried out in line with the original plans and the budget allocated. This is reflected in the statement below:

In the context of service delivery, the municipality ensures that people in their respective areas have basic needs such as water, electricity and waste collection. The municipality monitors the performance during the implementation of the programme through reports to ensure that all the requirements are being met and that citizens receive good quality service. The municipality monitors budget and the performance of all stakeholders involved in projects including service providers to ensure that the service provided is of good standard. Align evaluation results with the planning and implementation guideline to determine areas that needs more attention and corrective action. (uThukela municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

5.3.3 Theme 3: M&E models and systems utilised by municipalities

Municipalities monitor and assess their operations and activities using various techniques, frameworks, and processes. The models and systems used by the three district municipalities to carry out their M&E activities are reflected in this theme. This theme seeks to add to the discourse by analysing participant responses and identifying subthemes, as seen in Figure 5.4.

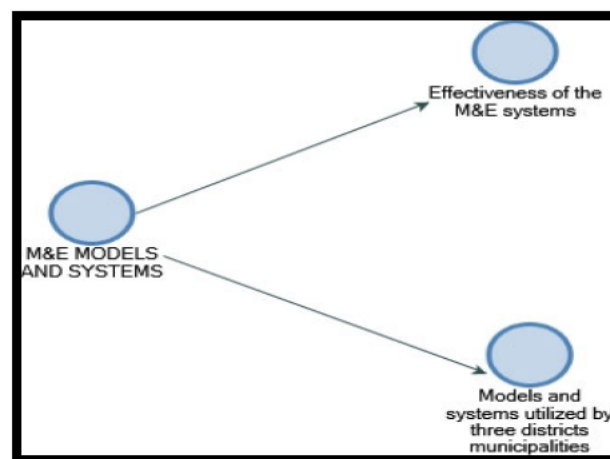


Figure 5.4: Data visualisation of Theme 3 and subthemes

5.3.3.1 Subtheme 1: Models and systems utilised by the three district municipalities

The NEPF (DPME, 2011) points out that before 1994, South Africa did not have a system that focused on performance management to measure the performance of the government in terms of its functions, and minimum attention was given to M&E activities. As a result, the current South African government introduced a GWM&E policy in 2007 to establish M&E systems across all spheres of government to promote efficient and effective service delivery development and improve performance within the public sector. In this case, the findings indicated that municipalities utilise different models and systems to monitor and evaluate their operations and service delivery programmes.

Our municipalities uses statistics and logical frameworks which is a scientific method that separates a program into reasonable segments to expedite evaluation. This responsibility is assigned to the Performance Management Systems (PMS) unit. (uThukela municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

From the response above, it was discovered that the PMS unit, tasked with monitoring, reviewing, and improving the execution of the municipal IDP and evaluating progress toward the accomplishment of municipal goals, is also responsible for performing ongoing evaluations of municipal operations and activities. Another participants said that:

There are periodic surveys that the municipality conducts based on functions and operations. This is to generate information and assess the status of performance of each unit in the municipality. This M&E system is designed in a manner that enables the management to detect early whether it is underperforming in all aspects. (Human resource/employee performance and organisational performance – uThukela municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

This demonstrates that the municipality decentralises its evaluation systems and methods by keeping an eye on each unit's performance so that management may assess how well each unit is achieving its objectives. Other participants added the following:

Municipality also rely on M&E consultants. (uThukela municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

Some participants mentioned that the municipality rely more on external consultants who are thought to be specialists, possess M&E skills and expertise, and are better able to offer accurate results and an unbiased evaluation of the performance of the municipality.

The following was also shared by participants:

The municipality uses Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP) to monitor its project, and Performance Manager is the one responsible to ensure that all reports are submitted timeously from each unit/department within the municipality. SDBIP is a plan that converts IDP and budget into measurable criteria on how, where and when the strategies, objectives and normal business process of the municipality is implemented. It also allocates the responsibility to directorates to deliver services in terms of the IDP and Budget. (uMgungundlovu municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

Additionally:

The SDBIP, Budget and IDP are interlinked through municipal strategic objectives and financial allocations, thus allowing for measurable municipal operations translated into Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) stated in the SDBIP. (Amajuba municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

From the above elaboration, another model for measuring the effectiveness of municipal projects and performance is the usage of service delivery and budget implementation plan (SDBIP), which is a document that includes an outline of municipal plans, budget allocation, and the scope of each activity. As per the findings, it can be concluded that there is no standardised system that is comprehensive for municipalities to monitor and evaluate their operations and service delivery. They apply different models and systems that are thought to be appropriate and effective for their operations. Therefore, a proper M&E system that is uniform and centred on M&E is necessary since local government is the area that is closest to people, communities, and the general public and are tasked with the responsibility to achieve quality service delivery.

Similar findings by Mello (2018: 2) confirm that so far in the sphere of local government, which is where service delivery occurs, M&E is not mandatory except for the monitoring function provided under the Planning Unit whose function it is to adopt and formulate M&E frameworks that will assist municipalities to measure their

performance of set targets against the actual goals and service delivery achievements. Mello (2018: 2) further admits that M&E remains a missing link in South African municipalities as they are not performing well because of many problems including the weaknesses in the M&E system.

Adding to the above submission, the findings in this study revealed that municipalities, like any other government entity, use reporting as a standard practice and as a model for M&E. Reporting focuses on giving an indication of progress toward meeting the established targets, communicating M&E information and findings to management and other relevant stakeholders for the purpose of accountability, making knowledgeable decisions, and developing solutions for upcoming development interventions.

One participant alluded that:

Quarterly reports are submitted to the office of the Municipal Manager for verification and thereafter submitted to internal Audit Committee. (uMgungundlovu municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

The aforementioned narrative is also reinforced by Lekoba (2017: 34) who observed that the data and information gathered during M&E serve as a crucial foundation for management to take action. As a result, managers must be able to recognise emerging issues and make decisions about critical strategies, corrective actions, and revisions to plans and resource allocations pertaining to the activities in question through timeous progress reports.

5.3.3.2 Subtheme 2: Effectiveness of the M&E models and systems

In order for a municipality to succeed in reaching its strategic objectives, effective M&E systems must be put in place. It is essential to monitor and evaluate municipal operations, functions, and service delivery initiatives since it increases the effectiveness of planning, implementation and management. Additionally, municipalities have a duty to improve the socioeconomic well-being of the populace. To do this, it is important to use M&E systems that are efficient and effective and take action based on the results to maintain high standards of performance in local government.

Participants expressed their views that the current systems that municipalities utilise are effective, however, the problem is with the non-compliance of units within the municipality:

The systems are somewhat effective, however not all units comply with them. (Amajuba municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

Additionally:

To some extent they are effective, however performance should be further cascaded down to individuals in order for the municipality to achieve its objective. (uMgungundlovu municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

Emerging from the comments above, it appears that M&E is seen as the responsibility of a specialised unit, in this case the PMS unit, although, in reality, it should be everyone participating in the processes of achieving the strategic goals of the municipality.

Other participants shared that:

The logical framework includes inputs, activities, outputs, results and effects. Therefore, it shows the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme/project that is being assessed. The systems show the improved, intended outcomes and the impact of the programme in terms of the IDP. (uThukela municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

While using external consultants for M&E may seem like the best way to give accurate information and outcomes, the municipality suffers from budgetary constraints and other related issues if this approach is taken. The following assertion reflects this:

The municipality also relies on consultants from outside, with necessary M&E skills and competencies who work together with the municipality to ensure that M&E is conducted efficiently and effectively, producing results/outcomes that are not biased. Although this approach is effective however, the municipality invests a lot of money on consultants. (uThukela municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

Drawing from the above responses, it is sufficient to assume that the available systems utilised by municipalities are not so effective. This could indicate that as much as municipalities use these systems and models, they are not significant in terms of providing accurate data, not producing the intended results, and there is a high level

of non-compliance hence the high level of underperformance is still rife. Additionally, there is a reliance on external consultants, which means that municipalities spend a lot of money on their expert services even though they have a limited budget. One can conclude that municipalities spend money on consultants but ultimately fall short of their service delivery objectives.

Eresia-Eke and Boadu (2019: 532) add that although the government has created M&E systems that would help measure performance, the reality is that M&E practices in the public sector are more for compliance purposes than for improving performance. On the other hand, Jili and Mthethwa (2016: 106) believe that organs of the state have not yet seen the relevance of M&E as an important performance management tool because of insufficient M&E systems in place to evaluate the functioning of government and service delivery, pre and post the implementation of service delivery programmes.

5.3.4 Theme 4: Challenges associated with m&e within the three district municipalities

The lack of appropriate M&E is one of several problems that prevent municipalities from performing at the level that is desired. Several constraints come into play when trying to implement M&E as a management tool that can help municipalities enhance the way in which tasks are conducted to achieve excellent service delivery. This theme identifies M&E challenges within the three district municipalities, and highlight some of the interventions that the municipalities adopt to mitigate these challenges, as shown in Figure 5.5.

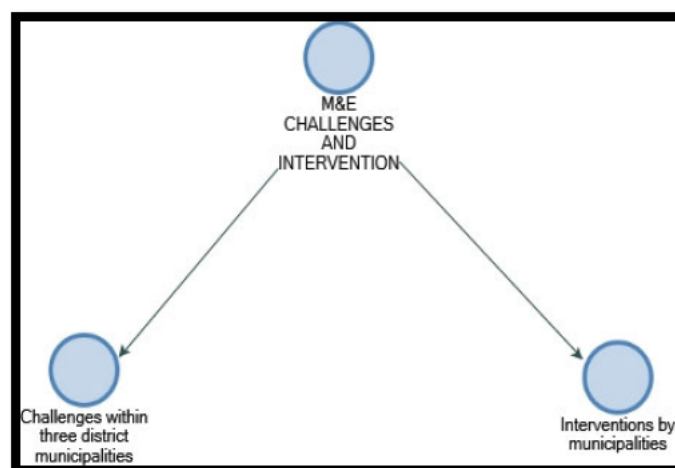


Figure 5.5: Data visualisation of Theme 4 and subthemes

5.3.4.1 Subtheme 1: Challenges within the three district municipalities

Nonyane (2019: 49) is of the view that M&E has not been understood or embraced in the government sector. This is one of the main reasons why local government struggles to achieve successful service delivery and enhance performance. Participants from Amajuba municipality reported that the issue of municipal employees' continued non-compliance with the systems, procedures and policies pertaining to M&E is noted, exacerbated by the lack of disciplinary action for non-compliance.

The statements given by the participants shed light on this:

You may find that some of the employees do comply with the systems in place but some do not and there are no punitive measures to enforce employees to comply. There is a challenge with consequence management for departments which do not meet targets. (Amajuba Municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

One of the main issues, according to some participants, is that employees do not report on their operational functions and activities, which makes it difficult for strategic management to evaluate how well units manage to attain their intended goals.

Some departments do not produce reports on their functions and activities, therefore the management and council does not get a sense of how far are these departments in meeting their objectives, until the external auditors come. (Amajuba Municipality, focus group discussion, 2022).

Moreover, a gap was uncovered in Amajuba municipality in terms of the Municipal Manager (MM) post that has been vacant for a long time. The MM holds a strategic position and is tasked with an oversight role regarding the function of the municipality, as a result, the MM has a big impact on municipal decision-making, particularly those that relate to monitoring activities and performance.

In addition, the Municipal Manager (MM) post is still vacant since January 2021, this makes it difficult for the municipality to take informed decisions pertaining to the performance of the municipality (Amajuba Municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

Participants from the uMgungundlovu municipality added to the aforementioned by saying that the absence of a unit that only undertakes M&E responsibilities presents a challenge within the municipality as it struggles to successfully adopt and implement M&E practices.

The absence of the proper M&E unit and experts that deals with M&E might create a problem for the Municipality. There is no fully fledged M&E department that focusses on the organisation M&E and performance, and no staff members are tasked with matters of M&E for now, it is only the PMS Manager. (uMgungundlovu Municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

While participants from uThukela municipality presented that only one employee within the entire municipality is handling issues of performance and also added other broader issues that prevent municipalities to successfully adopt and apply M&E as an independent function, including financial resources. This is elaborated in the statement below:

The M&E unit is completely new in the municipality, with only 1 staff member responsible for M&E in the entire municipality. Lack of financial resources to undertake M&E functions, Lack of technical expertise, skilled and competent individuals who are qualified and are experts of M&E. (uThukela Municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

In support of the above assertions, Table 5.6 provides a statistical indication of the extent of challenges which hinder the successful implementation of M&E in the municipalities:

Figure 5.6: Challenges associated with M&E in uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu district municipality

| | A. Amajuba Municipality | B. uMgungundlovu Municipality | C. uThukela Municipality |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| M&E challenges within three district municipalities | 51.82% | 25% | 23.18% |

Source: Data generated by NVivo

The narrative and statistical data presented above revealed that the underlying problems that are related to or pose challenges to M&E include lack of compliance and lack of punitive measures for those who do not comply, lack of reporting, the absence of a dedicated, fully functional M&E unit, the lack of financial resources to carry out M&E activities, and the lack of skilled and competent employees to carry out M&E duties. Moreover, there is no permanent municipal manager in Amajuba municipality who is an accounting officer and is entrusted with overall duties and functions of the municipality including M&E. This results in poor institutionalisation of M&E leading to the poor performance of municipalities. Table 5.6 shows that the Amajuba municipality has a challenges rate of 51.83% which indicates that it is the most affected by the challenges related to M&E, while uMgungundlovu is at 25% and uThukela at 23.18%.

Based on these findings, it is sufficient to establish that municipalities are impacted by the challenges that prevent them from successfully implementing and implementation of M&E. M&E is therefore not given priority, even though it is an essential task which assists municipalities to implement their development policies efficiently. The findings by Nyamambi (2021: 46) concur that municipalities are grappling with challenges of effective and efficient service delivery and the root cause of these challenges is attributed to a weak or uncomprehensive M&E system in municipalities. The quality of service delivery is therefore generally compromised.

5.3.4.2 Subtheme 2: Interventions by municipalities

This subtheme reveals the interventions applied by municipalities in an effort to overcome the above issues. These interventions include a Performance Evaluation Panel which conducts annual assessments, generates reports and submits them to the relevant structures; the PMS champions who are tasked with M&E functions on

top of their individual workload and do not have the necessary skills and competencies to undertake and perform M&E activities; and the proposed plan of filling the vacant strategic posts with an individual who possesses great influence on M&E activities across municipalities.

The Amajuba municipality participants discussed the establishing of a committee to address evaluation-related concerns and the municipality's encouragement of continuous and fast reporting on service delivery operations. Participants said:

The municipal council has established a Performance Evaluation Panel for the purpose of conducting annual assessments. Furthermore, assessments of the SDBIP were conducted on a quarterly basis; reports of which were submitted to Council for consideration. With regards to the MM, although there is an individual acting on the post, the municipality is working on hiring a permanent MM. Maybe then it can move forward. (Amajuba Municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

The uMgungundlovu municipality declared that the municipality's intervention was that each unit has champions who are in charge of managing performance, and that preparations are being made to appoint staff members to this role.

The Municipality is now trying to use PMS Manager to address the issues of M&E. Each department has an PMS champion, however it is vital that the champions be trained and/ workshopped. Also it is vital to have constant training/workshops. There has been posts advertised for PMS Officer. (uMgungundlovu Municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

The uThukela municipality is working on a plan to make performance management and monitoring and assessment more clear and straightforward because the two functions are distinct but related. This is to make sure that the tasks are clarified so that employees can understand them. Participants mentioned that:

The municipality is currently working towards addressing staff and clarifying PMS and M&E duties to avoid clashes. Improving financial planning, implementation management & monitoring and evaluation projects that will take care of M&E in the entire municipality. (uThukela municipality, focus group discussion, 2022).

Drawing from the discussions, it is reasonable to believe that municipalities are concentrating on temporary solutions to the challenges. Notwithstanding the mentioned interventions, there is no comprehensive, well-thought-out long-term plan in place that strives to address and resolve M&E-related problems in municipalities. Motingoe and Van der Waladt (2013: 7) support the above assertion that even though the GWM&E was launched in 2007 with the aim to facilitate M&E within the public sector, there are still government entities that are operating without an M&E system, thus making it difficult to determine whether they can perform. Jili and Mthethwa (2016: 106) adds that municipalities must develop and put in place an extensive M&E system, one that will make it easier to continuously evaluate municipal systems, structures, and procedures. This should be executed in accordance with the IDP of the municipality, service delivery outcomes and operational plans for budget implementation.

5.3.5 Theme 5: Contributions of M&E towards improved performance and service delivery

The growing demand for evidence-based service delivery and development requires effective and succesful implementation of M&E as an oversight mechanism to enable municipalities to enhance their performance and achieve quality service delivery. This theme explores how M&E contributes towards improving municipal performance and effective service delivery and the link between M&E and performance.

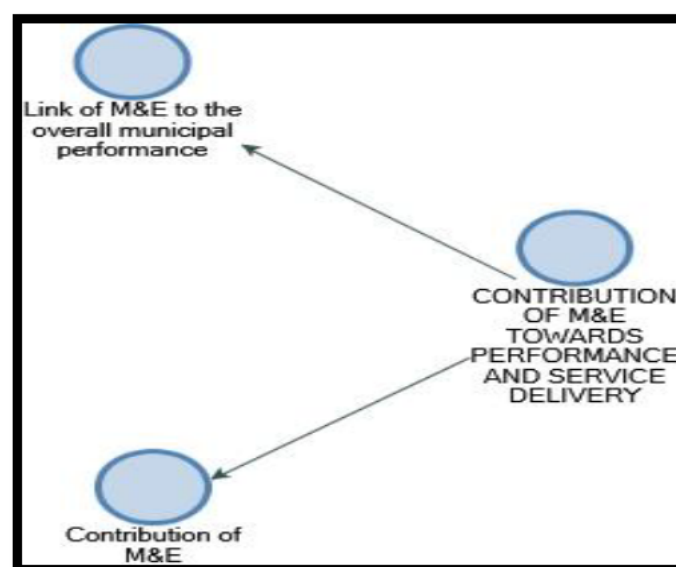


Figure 5.7: Data visualisation of Theme 5 and its subthemes

5.3.5.1 Subtheme 1: Contributions of M&E

Municipalities hold a constitutional mandate to render basic and essential services to communities within their area of jurisdiction. This policy expectation calls for municipalities to carry out a series of activities and development initiatives in an effort to guarantee that this mandate is fulfilled. In the process of making this a reality, oversight and assessment of these activities must be conducted through the development and of M&E systems and models to ascertain whether intended results are achieved, resources are used effectively, identify potential risks that might prevent successful service delivery, and analyse the effects of the implemented projects on the lives of the people.

The above points are reflected in the following statements:

Monitoring and evaluation contributes by ensuring that funds and budgets are adhered to and ensure that the projects that are planned are monitored and evaluated formally so that there is accountability. This ensures that the people on the ground, the community get the benefit of improved service delivery of the municipality. (Amajuba municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

A critical point emerged that M&E is significant since it produces accurate data regarding progress on the state of development initiatives and challenges; communication of that information amongst relevant stakeholders is an important aspect of the work.

Projects are monitored timeously and if there is any deviation, corrections are done early before is too late. It assists in terms of predetermined objectives and if those objectives are not achieved then the Municipality can review the targets. Communicating its performance progress and achievements, and challenges through various platforms via IDP Forums, ward committee meetings, social media, Mayoral Izimbizo, Oversight visits by Council, etc. being able to communicate leads to communities knowing and understanding the intricacies of municipal governance. (uMgungundlovu municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

Further to the above, the following statement was shared by a participant:

M&E provides management with the information it needs to make decisions and take action about the projects and also make changes on the project where necessary. It helps to improve current and future management of outputs, outcomes and impact. It plays a role in doing regular follow up on the status of decisions made, and updating decision

matrix on different committees to ascertain progress. (uThukela municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

This is in line with Mubangizi's (2019:559) assertion that, in accordance with the constitutional mandate, municipalities must deal with a variety of complex and difficult service delivery problems. M&E can make it possible for programmes and initiatives to be carried out more successfully and to have a significant influence on the targeted communities in order to ensure effective service delivery.

5.3.5.2 Subtheme 2: Link of M&E and overall municipal performance

Drawing from discussions of the previous subtheme, it is important to interrogate the link between M&E and performance to determine how they relate to each other and how municipal performance cannot be achieved without practising M&E. This raises the question of how M&E brings improvement into the public service which then leads to the achievement of efficient and effective service delivery. The findings revealed that in a municipal setting performance management measures the extent to which targets are achieved, i.e., how they are derived from the IDP and are translated to SDBIP. However, municipalities need to be able to detect whether the set targets are achieved and are performing in a manner that is expected, which is where M&E plays come into effect.

The participants commented by saying:

In my understanding, it is linked by the alignment of the Performance Management System (PMS), Budget and Integrated Development Planning (IDP). Municipal performance is derived from the IDP strategic objectives which are translated into the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP). (Amajuba municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

In terms of the achievement of strategic objectives outlined in the IDP, it was uncovered that M&E also a significant role in ensuring that targets are met. Participants shared that :

The M&E measures the performance of the municipality by ensuring that it achieves its annual targets. The reports and information generated assist the municipality in planning and providing quality service delivery. (uMgungundlovu municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

In addition, M&E helps in determining whether there is high level of performance or poor performance in municipalities.

Monitoring and evaluation assist municipality in measuring its performance, whether it is not performing well or it is performing in a manner that is expected. It assists in determining whether the plans outlined in the IDP are achieved, by comparing the set targets against the delivered outcomes. (uThukela municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

Based on the responses, it is evident that municipalities do not understand nor appreciate M&E as a significant technique and practice to improve performance. This demonstrates that they do not grasp how M&E influences the level at which municipalities perform. Masilo, Masiya and Mathebula (2021: 19) argue that a strong focus on M&E practices in support of annual performance targets with specific interventions implemented can contribute to improved performance. Therefore, proper implementation of M&E contributes immensely to service delivery and accountability through tracking actual performance in relation to performance targets. Majola (2014: 1) adds that successful implementation of M&E allows the government to be coordinated while seeking to achieve operational excellence and that institutions are likely to become more productive and perform well if it is known that performance is being monitored.

5.3.6 Theme 6: Possible M&E alternatives and solutions

In the quest for municipalities to become effective and improve performance, this theme suggests possible methods that municipalities may consider to implement and address issues of M&E to assist them achieve sustainable outcomes of development initiatives in the communities. As illustrated in Figure 5.8, one subtheme was derived from the transcribed data during focus group discussion.

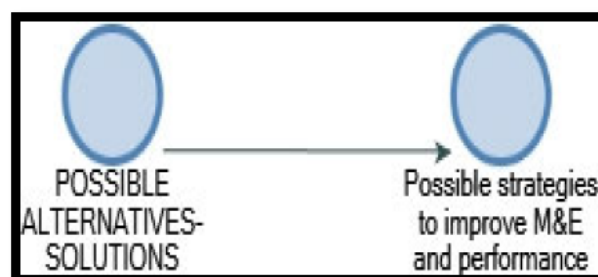


Figure 5.8: Data visualisation of Theme 6 and its subtheme

5.3.6.1 Subtheme 1: Possible strategies to improve M&E and performance

Municipalities are under pressure to provide communities with high-quality services while also meeting their high expectations. Implementing service delivery plans and meeting the targets as described in the IDP shows the public and stakeholders whether the municipality is abiding by its constitutional obligations. Improvements in M&E of municipal operations and service delivery initiatives are thus necessary to improve performance.

Participants commented that:

Monitoring and evaluation can be improved in the municipality by constant regular training of municipal staff to capacitate them in understanding the key and strategic objectives of their roles and responsibilities which affect the wider community. Consequence management should be implemented. (Amajuba municipality, focus group discussion, 2022).

A participant from uMgungundlovu municipality emphasised that a comprehensive M&E unit is necessary to strengthen M&E and enhance municipal performance. This is reflected in the following statement:

It is important for the Municipality to have a proper unit that will focus on the M and E. There must be individuals trained in these issues of M and E and the Municipality must have sufficient staff members to deal with the M and E. Appoint suitably qualified individuals in various departments. Ensure that resources are provided by the Municipality so that services are delivered as planned. Research, M&E units must be established. (uMgungundlovu municipality, focus group discussion, 2022).

Echoing similar sentiments, a participant in uThukela municipality said:

The M&E unit needs to be expanded and divided into units and sub-units. More staff needs to be hired to undertake M&E duties as this is a crucial activity that plays a role in the overall performance of the municipality. Employ more staff members, be equipped with necessary skills and competencies to achieve high standards of service quality and improve processes to meet and exceed customer expectations along the identified attributes. (uThukela municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

Adding to the above, participants suggested that management should continuously practice a culture of motivating staff members who achieve their performance targets exceptionally well. This is to keep staff motivated and productive, consequently leading to improved performance.

Another method could be to incentivise staff members who excel in their roles and will ultimately promote a culture of serving and service delivery excellence. (Amajuba municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

Another critical method suggested by participants is an M&E framework that will apply to all municipalities uniformly, outlining the best way in which municipalities can conduct M&E.

One M&E model must be developed and utilised across the local government Municipalities must use a system that is uniform so that it generates accurate results. Improve data quality, management and reporting. (Amajuba municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

Another notable suggestion presented by participants in uMgungundlovu municipality is that of reinforcing community participation as a way to monitor and evaluate service delivery outputs. This will determine whether the beneficiaries are happy and satisfied with the services rendered. Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan (2014: 39) as outlined in chapter 2, section 2.7, agree that organisations and communities should utilize M&E to assess the effectiveness of service delivery, set benchmarks, and monitor on service quality. Participatory M&E aims to involve members of the public in not only providing feedback but also actively participating in the assessment's planning and implementation, in contrast to traditional approaches, which rely on external experts to evaluate quality and performance against a predetermined set of indicators.

Holdings of monthly meetings with the community to see if they are receiving services in line with their expectation may be one of the best methods municipality can adopt. (uMgungundlovu municipality, focus group discussion, 2022)

The findings indicate that municipal staff need to be capacitated and trained for M&E as it is part of their line of work, direct or indirectly. The findings also revealed that there is a need for an establishment of a designated unit responsible for M&E matters within municipalities either than the available PMS unit that focuses more on human resource performance than M&E. Qualified M&E practitioners must be employed and resources allocated for M&E be fully operational and carry out all necessary M&E

functions. There is also a need for a common policy framework guiding M&E and for punitive measures to be implemented on those who are not complying with the set guidelines.

The above statements are in agreement with Nyamambi (2021: 50) who states that to ensure service delivery, municipalities must build a complete M&E system that allows for ongoing monitoring of their performance and consider adequate institutionalisation of M&E in the municipality. An M&E system will allow a municipality to assess performance in terms of inputs, outputs, outcomes, and impact levels. Moreover, Goldman *et al.* (2018: 28), chapter 2, section 2.8, agree with other studies that organisations may not achieve successful results if their data is inaccurate, putting their limited, available resources at risk. Thus, government entities, especially municipalities, must increase their efforts to seek expert guidance to improve their M&E systems and processes. It will cost more initially but will pay off in the long term (Goldman *et al.*, 2018: 28).

5.4 SUMMARY OF THE THEMES

In summary, this chapter provided an insight into the effect of M&E in the three district municipalities. From the lenses of focus group discussions, 6 themes were identified.

Theme 1 focused on getting a sense of the participants' perception of M&E to determine how well they as professionals understood M&E and its significance in local government municipalities. The findings are that participants are knowledgeable and understand M&E as a concept and its importance in the performance of municipalities.

Theme 2 explored the effects of M&E on local government by looking at the impact and benefits of M&E. It was discovered that accurate information on the progress of municipal operations service delivery initiatives by municipalities can be obtained through conducting M&E. Performance can also be measured by the use of M&E to determine whether a municipality is meeting its set targets or if it is underperforming. M&E assists municipalities to track whether the services delivered achieve the intended and desired results.

Theme 3 identified the models and systems that are currently in place and employed by the municipalities and their effectiveness on municipal performance. It was observed that the three district municipalities use various, complex systems such as logistical and statistical frameworks, periodic surveys, consultants, SDBIP, and reporting. These models are thought to be effective to some extent; however, there are still underlying gaps due to inaccuracies, non-compliance, and other related challenges. This raises concerns about municipalities underperforming and failing to meet their service delivery objectives as expected.

Theme 4 examined challenges associated with M&E within the selected municipalities and measures adopted and utilised in the endeavour to overcome the challenges. Many factors were determined to be impeding the successful implementation of M&E, the main one being because there is no designated unit specialising in M&E, just a PMS unit with one staff person assigned with the responsibility of performance management and M&E. There is noncompliance with existing processes, a lack of skilled and competent employees to deal with M&E issues, and a lack of necessary resources. This indicates that, despite efforts and resources, M&E in local government municipalities is not completely embraced and prioritised as a crucial component to aid municipalities in improving performance.

Theme 5 evaluated the general contributions of M&E towards performance and service delivery. The findings were that M&E ensures responsible and accountable government by indicating progress in terms of where the municipality stands in service delivery, tracking the progress of service delivery activities, and communicating information to relevant structures to make informed decisions. A link between M&E and performance was established, revealing a fine line between the two concepts. However, it was discovered that municipalities do not grasp how M&E influences the level of performance and its impact on the success of development projects in general.

Theme 6 interrogated possible solutions suggested by participants and it was found that M&E must be institutionalised in local government by establishing frameworks and policies that directly address M&E and establish a dedicated unit/department, appoint qualified staff with M&E expertise, allocate resources and encourage participatory M&E which includes community members who are recipients of the basic services.

Community members can provide feedback on the services they receive and express their views on how municipalities can do better.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The findings and responses from the focus group discussions with the selected participants were reported in this chapter. The responses were organized into themes and sub-themes using the Nvivo software program. The goal was to generate themes and sub-themes pertinent to answering the research questions and achieving the study objectives. Participants' responses were cited and presented in the discussions, and they were interpreted in such a manner that the responses provided answers to study questions. Literature was also used to back up the arguments and views of participants.

The following chapter presents the recommendations and conclusion of the research study.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research was to analyse M&E and its effect on the performance of local government municipalities drawing on insight from staff employed in the selected district municipalities, namely, uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu. This chapter summarises the findings in relation to the following study objectives:

- Analyse the effect of M&E on the performance in uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu.
- Examine the M&E models and systems utilised in these district municipalities.
- Explore the challenges associated with M&E in each district municipality.
- Explore the contributions of M&E towards the performance of the municipality and service delivery.
- Recommend M&E alternatives suitable for modern local governance.

Additionally, this chapter provides conclusions and recommendations based on the primary and secondary data that have been analysed and evaluated, and presents a model that municipalities can use to strengthen their M&E practices. It further provides contributions of this research to the body of knowledge and theoretical framework, makes general recommendations for resolving the issues of M&E that have been identified, and highlights areas for future research.

6.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

The research study began by outlining the research problem and examining the role of M&E in government operations and activities, with particular attention to local government in the form of municipalities. As a result of the identified problem, the research questions and objectives were derived, and methodological techniques that were thought to be important for the research study were further laid out in Chapter one.

Chapter two provided a critical assessment and critique of current M&E literature by offering practical knowledge and comprehension of the ideas of monitoring, evaluation, and performance, as well as the relationships between these concepts.

M&E was examined in a larger context, delving into global and regional M&E experiences using various countries as case studies. Furthermore, this chapter provided an overview of M&E in the South African public sector by looking at the legal frameworks guiding M&E, interrogating the importance of M&E in government, challenges associated with M&E and barriers to its successful implementation, highlighting institutional arrangements, and finally looking at M&E and 4IR and their influence. It also demonstrated the relationship between M&E and strategic planning, as well as the overall impact and benefits of M&E on the performance of the organisation.

Chapter three examined theoretical frameworks, which served as the basis of the study and helped in comprehending the phenomena by explaining why the research problem exists.

Chapter four described how the dissertation was carried out by exhibiting the methods and strategies used by the researcher to achieve the ultimate aim of answering research questions and accomplishing research objectives.

Chapter five included the analysis of findings and discussion of the results in which all research questions were answered using descriptive and narrative primary data received from the selected participants and secondary data from existing publications. In other words, the findings reported in this chapter assisted the researcher in addressing the research problem.

Chapter six presents the conclusions and recommendations based on each research objective, as well as how research questions were addressed and research objectives met. The chapter goes on to emphasise the study's contributions to the existing body of knowledge and suggests an integrated M&E model to help municipalities improve their M&E practices.

6.3 ACHIEVEMENT OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This section determines the extent to which the research objectives have been met. This is considered vital since revealing how the research inquiry is measured improves confidence in the findings as being authentic and that they reflect the actual facts about the problem being studied and have inspired the conclusions reached and recommended suggestions.

6.3.1 Objective 1: Analyse the effect of M&E on the service delivery performance in uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu

This objective intended to analyse the effects of M&E on the performance of local government municipalities and how it benefits them in terms of enhancing the level of performance and quality service delivery. The study found that when municipalities implement service delivery projects and programmes aimed at benefiting local communities, it is important to assess whether they achieve the intended purpose and that is where M&E comes into play. M&E has a significant impact on how municipal operations and development initiatives are carried out since it focuses on providing an indicator of task achievement status when assessments are carried out. This is achieved through regular ongoing assessments and reviews to establish whether operations are still proceeding as planned, are within the allocated budget, and whether the project outcomes are in accordance with the set targets outlined in the IDP.

The findings revealed that municipalities have the responsibility for delivering basic services in a variety of domains such as healthcare, education, infrastructure development, and social development. The operational processes and procedures are typically complex and necessitate careful attention; nonetheless, errors and mistakes are unavoidable along the way. M&E can raise an alarm or display a warning sign if an area requires immediate attention or when potential risks are discovered. This is typically evident in situations of budget deviations (where approved municipal budget allocations are spent in a manner that differs from what was approved). Such early warning means that the required corrective steps can be taken timeously.

Furthermore, the study observed that effective service requires collaborative efforts from various individuals, stakeholders and civil society working together to ensure that government priorities are achieved. Decisions must be made and information must be communicated to all persons involved in the processes. Thus, M&E can provide the information that is required for stakeholders to maintain track of project development and overall municipal performance. The M&E process results in generating reports that are presented to the municipal council, relevant management committees, stakeholders, and the general public. This enables management to make informed

decisions about the success and failure of the project based on the evidence provided by M&E reports.

The study found that successful implementation of M&E verifies that the work has been conducted in line with the agreed policies, norms and standards. This informs accountability and responsibility. M&E in local government helps municipalities promote accountability and responsibility as one of the key components of good governance enshrined in the South African constitution. Drawing from the findings, participants revealed that the evaluation outcomes generated through M&E are communicated timeously with relevant stakeholders, which shows that the municipality is accountable for the success or failure of programmes and also minimises community protest actions that may occur due to delays in programme delivery.

It is important to note, nevertheless, that M&E realities in local government are a concern as it has been regularly reported that municipalities are constantly performing below expectations and this is attributed to a variety of barriers that hinder the achievement of municipal targets, including issues of resources, capacity and lack of skills and competencies. This indicates that minimum attention is given to M&E and that municipalities do not realise the importance of it.

Kariuki and Reddy (2017: 5) maintain that a culture of poor performance has developed over the years and has become the norm and is one of the contributing factors to local government's lack of service delivery. To address these inconsistencies, the local government municipalities must establish and strengthen the M&E system as a critical development tool to facilitate policy development and efficient use of public funds. The findings are also consistent with Rossignoli, Coticchia and Mezzasalma (2015: 63) who argue that municipalities require a sense of improved outcomes and impact on their development initiatives in communities. This can be provided by an ongoing and consistent use of M&E to provide feedback on progress towards the attainment of planned goals and objectives.

Overall, the study suggests that municipalities must implement M&E approaches and practices in order to run optimally and provide quality services. M&E may improve the performance of local government communities and lessen the burden on municipalities to manage their performance by carrying out their obligations in an

efficient, effective, and economical manner. As a result, the objective of the study was achieved.

6.3.2 Objective 2: Examine the M&E models and systems utilised in these district municipalities

This objective aimed at evaluating the M&E models and systems that municipalities utilise to assess and evaluate their operations and development activities. The study found that municipalities use a variety of models and systems that are deemed adequate for assessing their functions and how well they perform their duties and provide services. Since municipalities are at the coalface of service delivery, the study noted that each municipality has its own unique dynamics in terms of its service delivery plans and resources, therefore each municipality employs a model and system that is appropriate for its functioning and operations to accommodate these dynamics. As a result, there is no comprehensive M&E system that is adopted across all municipalities to carry out M&E functions and provide standardised assessment results and report the findings.

The findings showed that municipalities periodically monitor and assess their functions using systems such as SDBIP, logical frameworks, periodic surveys and outsource M&E to external consultants. Without diminishing the efforts that have been made by the tools and systems that are now in place, the study identified a gap which is the absence of a proper system that is uniform and centralised for all municipalities to use for their M&E activities and practices. The research also revealed that municipalities use reporting as a normal operating procedure for all units to report on the status of their operations and duties. Although this is the case, it does not prove that the reports offer accurate information or provide proof of the success or failure of the project or programme.

In summary, it can be said that for municipalities to strengthen their M&E and improve their level of performance, there is a dire need for them to implement a comprehensive and structured system that allows for continuous assessment of municipal structures, systems, and processes in accordance with the IDP, budget, operational plans, and service delivery outcomes.

This assertion is supported by Jili and Mthethwa (2016: 106), who argue that a results-based performance feedback system should be used to generate information and evidence required for government institutions to make informed decisions, carry out policy, and hold officials accountable in order to ensure that strategic, tactical, and operational decisions are more relevant. However, it should be highlighted that due to a lack of M&E systems to evaluate programmes, these institutions do not yet take M&E seriously as a performance monitoring mechanism. The objective was attained.

6.3.3 Objective 3: Explore the challenges associated with M&E in each district municipality

This objective sought to explore the challenges that district municipalities are confronted with M&E. These challenges include the absence of an M&E unit within the municipality with full authority and responsibility for M&E matters, insufficient capacity and financial resources to assist the municipality in carrying out the activities related to M&E, and the lack of experts – individuals qualified and competent in the field of M&E – giving rise to municipalities relying heavily on external consultants. In addition, there are problems with non-compliance with the M&E protocols that are already in place, and officials who violate them are not accountable for their actions. Another challenge is poor leadership, since the research discovered that one of the municipalities does not have a permanent municipal manager, the person whose responsibility it is to ensure that all of the municipality's responsibilities and obligations, including M&E, are fulfilled. This is an indication that M&E is not prioritised and embraced as a significant mechanism that can help municipalities to assess the impact of their operations and provision of services.

Mello (2018: 3) concurs that there are an increasing number of issues brought on by the complexity of service delivery as municipalities are under pressure to raise citizens' standards of living and well-being. Municipalities do not recognize the value of M&E. Even if the majority of individuals have their fundamental requirements met, there is still much that has to be done for municipalities to execute services efficiently and effectively such as designing an institutional M&E system that will assist municipalities to minimise non-performance issues.

Although municipalities have made a significant effort to mitigate these issues, some of which include establishing committees tasked with carrying out annual assessments, and designating champions within various units to carry the workload of M&E on top of their other duties and responsibilities, the researchers noted that these are only interim interventions that may not achieve the overall goal of M&E and impede its ability to improve organisational performance. Municipalities thus fail to acknowledge and express the importance of M&E as a mechanism to assist them to run their programmes and development initiatives seamlessly by conducting continuous reviews before, during, and after project implementation, as well as detecting and reporting on issues that may jeopardise service delivery objectives. This objective was realised in the study.

6.3.4 Objective 4: Explore the contributions of M&E towards the performance of the municipality and service delivery

This objective was achieved as it explored the significant contributions of M&E towards improving performance and achieving the primary goal of a municipality which is quality service delivery. The findings revealed that for municipalities to realise the impact of operations towards service delivery and determine how they are doing in terms of accomplishing their strategic goals while meeting annual performance targets, there is a need for oversight assessment activities through M&E, utilising appropriate systems.

The effective utilisation of resources was regarded as one of the most essential aspects of the findings. Governments and municipalities operate with limited resources and must conserve these resources in every way possible to achieve their strategic plans outlined in the IDP. Adequate M&E can minimise irregular budget spending and establish stringent controls on the use of resources. M&E systems can contribute to the municipal budget being utilised in conformity with the allocations, avoiding unwarranted deviations.

The research also found that M&E is evidence-based, therefore, the outcomes obtained through M&E can assist municipalities in determining the effects (positive or negative) of programmes and initiatives by establishing accurate baseline information. M&E further enables management and municipal authorities to make informed policy decisions about their service delivery programmes, and helps them to develop plans

for the future. The findings also suggest that the purpose of M&E is to ensure accountability in how government functions in terms of carrying out necessary tasks for the achievement of its primary goals. Thus, for strategic plans to have the desired effects and outcomes, extensive M&E application is necessary. M&E procedures and practices assist in facilitating the administration of budget, programmes, people, and regulatory compliance. They also aid in enhancing the operations of municipalities and have an impact on good governance. For municipalities to promote and achieve good governance, the degree of compliance must be strengthened.

The study results show that M&E serves as a learning mechanism as it allows management and officials to learn from previous experiences and make changes and improvements to strategic service delivery approaches while generally reinforcing learning from the experience gained from challenges the municipality and key stakeholders encountered in terms of service delivery. The aim is to do better and use resources more effectively and efficiently, to adhere to legal requirements and regulations, and to strive to fulfil the demands of the general public.

The findings confirm Ojok's (2016: 4) contention that the expansion of M&E in South Africa is vital to the promotion of public sector reform. As the government focuses on becoming more effective and responsive to the needs and demands of the people, M&E encompasses the systems and tools required for tracking and assessing the impact of government initiatives, while also increasing accountability, transparency, and a learning culture within the organisation.

In summary, the study noted that effective adoption and implementation of M&E practices can assist municipalities to achieve an increased performance of IDP, service delivery and governance. In addition, the systems and tools can have potential benefits through the provision of solutions to service delivery issues confronting municipalities. A further benefit will be that service delivery protests in which citizens express their dissatisfaction with the non-delivery of essential services can be avoided.

6.3.5 Objective 5: Recommend M&E alternatives suitable for modern local governance

The findings suggest that municipalities should explore adopting a single comprehensive M&E model to be used by all municipalities, as well as expanding their M&E scope and functions by establishing a stand-alone M&E unit. Furthermore, municipalities must emphasise training and capacity building to assist municipal officials in developing an awareness of M&E as a vital aspect in enhancing municipal operations and service delivery. This raises the need for additional municipal employees with specialised M&E duties. These employees must be trained and provided with the required skills and abilities in order to reach a high level of performance.

The study identified a significant level of noncompliance with the existing evaluation systems within municipalities; consequently, municipalities should consider implementing consequence management plans for those persons and units who do not comply with the municipally adopted systems. At the same time, the findings revealed that offering rewards to workers for job completion and excellent performance might assist municipal employees to become more motivated and productive. Participants see this as one of the methods to keep municipal officials active, enthusiastic and committed to executing their tasks in the required manner while improving the overall performance of the municipality.

The findings suggests public involvement as a suitable alternative for modern local governance. The public as recipients of service delivery can be included in M&E processes and in this way the municipality can obtain rich, first-hand knowledge regarding the impact of particular programmes or projects. The input from the beneficiaries of developmental initiatives may have an effective impact on how municipalities can perform better by influencing decision-making, promoting the implementation of effective interventions and resolving emergent concerns. Furthermore, timely feedback from community members and stakeholders can impact municipal planning, policy development and the implementation of best practices in other related programmes in the future.

Jili and Mthethwa (2016: 111), supports the point that local government must create an M&E system that enables municipal officials to evaluate the performance of the inputs, outputs, and outcomes of the municipality and spot weaknesses in the value chain. The process should be carried out in accordance with the municipality's IDP and operational budget plans. However, it should be noted that the implementation of the system will not be without challenges. Therefore, this objective was achieved.

6.4 REFLECTIONS RELATING TO LITERATURE

The insight from the literature indicates that local government is an independent sphere at the forefront of service delivery, charged with delivering basic services to communities to improve their lives, their standard of living, and their socioeconomic standing. The government has made efforts and advances in terms of policy development and service delivery to meet its constitutional mandate since the birth of democracy; yet, there is still a scarcity of basic services for various communities around the country. This has led to communities embarking on numerous mass protest actions, urging the government to address these concerns since the well-being of the people is being jeopardised without essential amenities such as water, housing, electricity, and sanitation. To that end, there is still a growing need for basic service delivery.

The literature emphasises that municipalities need a comprehensive M&E system as a means to address service delivery challenges by monitoring how successful municipalities are in providing services, and their impact on the public. This is an effective mechanism that can help municipalities execute duties better in order to reach their desired objectives. Monitoring and evaluation data can be used by management to identify operational bottlenecks, make policy decisions, uphold accountability and identify areas for in which municipality operations can be improved.

Adding to the above, scholars write that M&E helps organisations to measure how well they perform in terms of ensuring that activities are carried out in accordance with the plans and set targets, while evaluation provides information on the success and failure of the activities, enabling management and stakeholders to make necessary decisions related to municipal planning. Moreover, M&E identifies gaps and strengthens accountability in local government and enforces municipal officials and management to be responsible and account for their activities on service delivery programmes. This

essentially serves as the foundation for this research study, since the goal is to analyse M&E and its influence on the performance of the selected district municipalities.

The literature establishes that M&E has become a common practice globally in government as well as private enterprise circles. The intention is to assess the impact of policies formulated by various ministries of government and their effectiveness in terms of service delivery. In addition, it assists government entities to improve their planning and future policy developments.

As laid out in the literature review (section 2.4), the M&E system directs the formulation, implementation, and improvement of any planned development project from a national to a local level of government. This is done through the formulation of tools and systems that assist in collecting information on a particular project and producing the results and outcomes for government to determine the effectiveness and the impact of the projects, challenges and milestones during the implementation of the programme.

Countries like the US, Canada, and Chile have made substantial attempts to promote M&E. The objective is to identify strategies for enhancing government accountability and performance. As a result, it has been customary for the government to concentrate on the oversight, assessment and evaluation of its own operations. The use of evidence-based results to guide the establishment of pertinent systems and tools as well as important legislative frameworks to address service delivery related concerns has attracted increased interest in M&E from ministries and other government bodies. M&E initiatives have been created in order to guarantee the efficacy of government programmes and operations.

Additionally, according to the literature on global M&E, government bodies have been established with the duty of handling M&E matters internally. For instance, the TBS is the primary agency in Canada responsible for establishing guidelines and evaluating sections within federal ministries, as well as providing them with capacity-building and monitoring mechanisms. The growth of M&E in African countries like Ghana, Kenya, and Rwanda has been noticeable, with a focus on results and solutions to the growing demand for service delivery and accountability. By basing policy and management decisions on evidence of what functions well and poorly in a certain environment, the

government is better positioned to commit funds to initiatives that support communities.

The aforementioned procedures are consistent with what is going on in South Africa, where scholars note that M&E informs municipalities of what is being done and how it is being done by concentrating on the appropriate input of resources, the extent to which objectives are met as planned, and the extent to which the programme makes a difference and benefits the population. Additionally, it assists in assessing project progress, finding problems with planning and execution, and making the required corrections. The government established the DPME as a central entity that is tasked with the responsibility of facilitating and coordinating the M&E of service delivery programmes and to provide support and influence on effective planning and improvement of service delivery outcomes and their impact on society. Moreover, various frameworks have been established to guide and cater for M&E in government such as the GWM&E.

However, M&E is a complicated process with a range of constraints that can lead to poor alignment of M&E with policy planning and budgeting. One of the most prominent constraints is a lack of resources. The government has insufficient resources, which makes it difficult to execute M&E properly. This includes insufficient financial resources for the government to carry out its M&E tasks. Furthermore, there is a shortage of experienced and competent M&E practitioners, which contributes to a lack of knowledge of M&E and its relevance in government responsibilities, particularly in municipalities.

Furthermore, there is a widespread misconception in the South African public sector that M&E is a compliance exercise that is only used to keep track of individuals who perform their duties and those who do not, whereas M&E exists as a system to assist the government in assessing the progress of their development programmes and reporting on it accordingly. As a result, this promotes ignorance of the fact that, above all else, M&E needs to be institutionalised for government to understand that it is an enabling mechanism that generates evidence demonstrating the success or failure of programmes and aids municipalities in achieving their program objectives. Scholars also noticed an insufficient utilisation of technology infrastructure that does not support M&E operations in the public sector, resulting in poor data quality.

The research also suggests that government should recognise the importance of M&E and give it a top priority by taking into account how digital technology may be used to aid in M&E efforts. To generate new ideas and address many of the problems that face municipalities and the government as a whole, government administration must consider the idea of employing technological systems. This is necessary because of the rapidly changing global environment.

6.4.1 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION

Theoretically, the study adopted systems theory, administrative theory and organisational theory as the basis of the study. All three theories contributed to the understanding of the effects of M&E towards the service delivery performance of the district municipalities. According to the literature, the systems theory refers to organisations as systems and encourages them to interact with their surroundings in order to function, ranging from employees who perform their work duties and management to suppliers who supply goods and services, customers who purchase the products, investors, shareholders, and partners. Furthermore, organisations rely on resources, information, systems, processes, and procedures to carry out their operational functions, which can assist in achieving organisational objectives.

Luhmann, Baecker and Gilgen (2013) adds that organisations use the input, process, output, feedback, and method to identify solutions to issues. An organisation receives input from the environment (community needs), processes it institutionally using its available systems and resources (operations and functions), and produces the output (service delivery). Additionally, the organisation anticipates feedback from its environment to assess if the output was successful or unsuccessful (impact evaluation).

This theory helped to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the study and its impact on M&E because it is evident that the uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu district municipalities are organisations that interact with their stakeholders and depend on their resources and systems to execute their duties. Furthermore, these district municipalities have a constitutional obligation to fulfill people's needs by utilising resources, procedures, and systems to provide the necessary services and analyse their impact. To achieve this, the use of M&E is necessary as a means to assess the processes and programmes undertaken by

municipalities aimed at achieving service delivery objectives, review their impact and effectiveness, and provide feedback in the form of reporting to allow municipalities to communicate the results and demonstrate the effectiveness of their development activities, improved performance, challenges, and milestones to attain their strategic goals as outlined in the IDP.

This research study was also influenced by organisational theory. According to this theory, municipalities are groups of two or more individuals who cooperate within predetermined boundaries to accomplish shared goals and objectives. According to O'Leary and Boland (2020: 2), organisations affect practically every aspect of human existence, including birth, development, education, employment, health, and even death. The government is one of the main institutions that is democratically mandated to provide services to citizens and it is governed by the constitution as the highest law of the country. Organisations function in arrangements made up of structures, systems, frameworks, processes, and procedures in order to achieve their strategic goals.

This theory encourages the uThukela, Amajuba and UMgungundlovu district municipalities to work in a structured way and carry out their duties in order to attain the intended results. The implementation of M&E is integral to municipal operations, which are crucial to the success or failure of service delivery projects in municipalities. Success is therefore measured by how many service delivery and development initiatives for community development have been accomplished, with a major part being played by M&E. The municipal structures in these municipalities should collaborate with the support of strategic planning, the use of M&E, and greater awareness of M&E as a crucial element for efficient service delivery, enhanced performance, accountability, and governance.

Administrative theory contributes to a deeper knowledge of this research study by suggesting and explaining how the uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu municipality engage in administrative activities to achieve the intended results of service delivery initiatives. To enhance administrative processes and practices, management must perform administrative responsibilities such as planning, managing, coordinating, regulating, and organising. Furthermore, many roles and responsibilities are shared among personnel in their respective departments in order

to fulfil the common goal of providing municipal services. Thus, M&E is mainly focused on administrative tasks in which employees are responsible for assessing operational processes and procedures in order to execute policy.

Successful administration necessitates delegation of duties and responsibilities. This division of tasks fosters efficiency by allowing municipal employees to operate in a limited area and minimising work overload. This is necessary to make sure that each employee can handle the workload and obligations that have been assigned to them. Edwards (2018: 43) emphasised that a lack of awareness of administrative theory is one of the causes of the inability to achieve organisational goals. Administrative theory is founded on the notion of departmentalisation, which asserts that in order to complete a job efficiently, an organization must be separated and classified into sections and units which each unit performs specific activities aimed at fulfilling the organisation's shared purpose. As a result, the study findings identified M&E as a critical administrative function since it involves carrying out administrative procedures to monitor progress and carry out project assessments to promote efficient service delivery and improve performance.

6.5 PROPOSED INTEGRATED M&E MODEL FOR MUNICIPALITIES

Figure 6.1 shows the proposed integrated M&E model for municipalities which provides guidelines on the best approaches municipalities can adopt in reinforcing the adoption and implementation of M&E. The features of this model are informed and are taken from variety of sources about M&E including publications, research papers, policies, guidelines and the experiences of people working in this field, including the participants that contributed to the findings of this study.

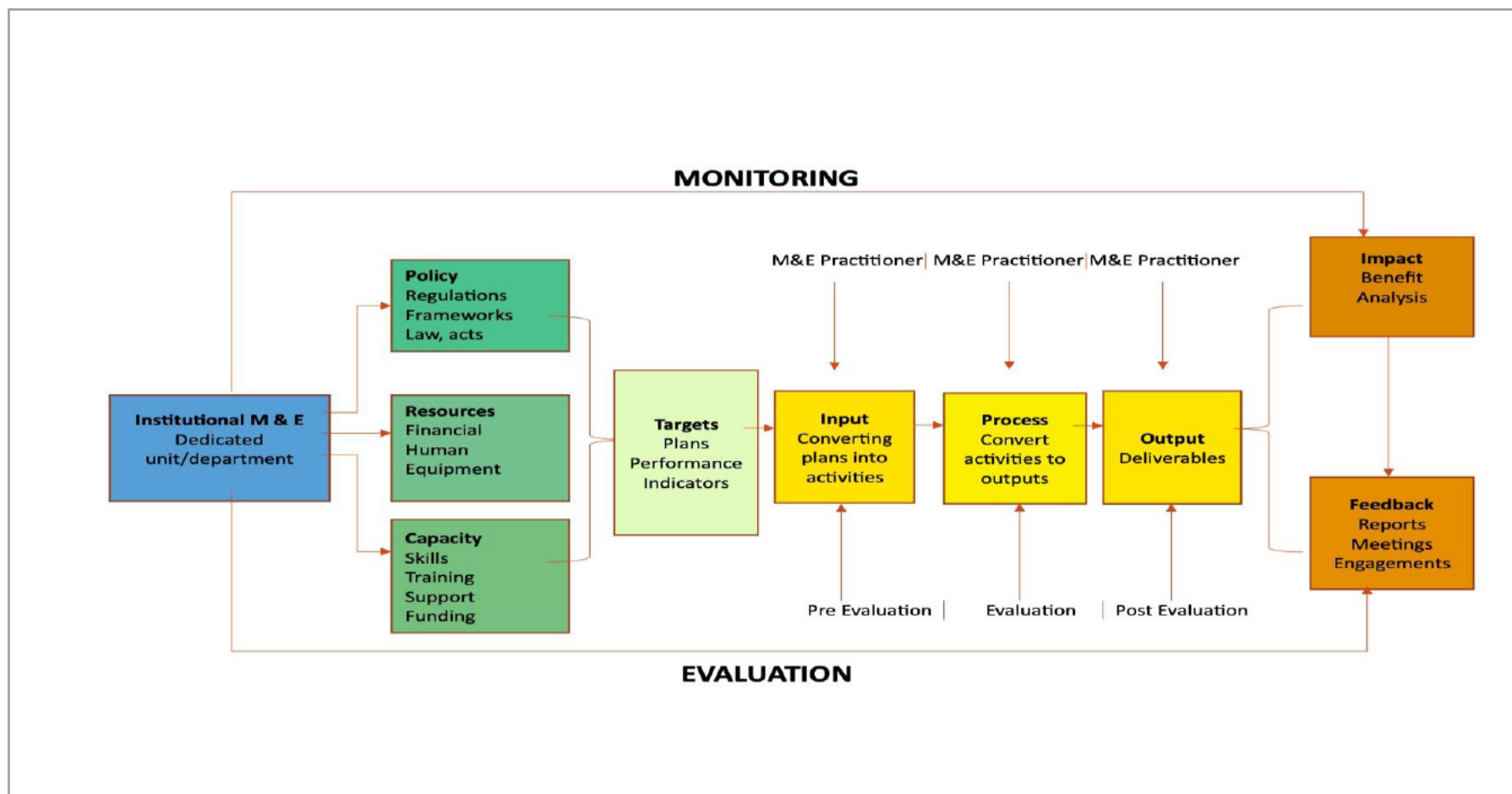


Figure 6.1: Proposed integrated M&E model for municipalities

Source: Researcher

The following section explains the model and its application.

6.5.1 Institutional M&E

Since M&E focuses on the assessment of progress of predetermined objectives of service delivery programmes, the results of the research study showed that municipalities are struggling with M&E because they lack an M&E unit to handle M&E-related issues, and instead rely on external consultants to conduct M&E activities and produce outcomes for their service delivery programmes that are supported by evidence. The model proposes that uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu must establish an M&E unit to facilitate and coordinate the evaluations and assessments of their performance in relation to fulfilling their constitutional obligations.

The literature notes that for the government to improve performance and service delivery, there should be government-wide M&E systems aimed at enabling departments and entities to improve governance while setting specific intervention objectives and impacts to ensure government responds to the needs and demands of citizens. However, at a local government level M&E has been poorly integrated and uncoordinated, thus M&E has not been institutionalised at this level.

The seminal findings by Kimaro, Fourie and Tshoyoyo (2018: 203) support the idea that municipalities should consider institutionalising M&E in the context of managing performance, facilitating evaluation and monitoring of service delivery projects and programmes, reporting progress, and creating performance information. Kariuki and Reddy (2017: 8) add that sustainably institutionalising an M&E system requires that municipal leadership must acknowledge and recognise that the system is a crucial management tool for guiding its performance. This is not the situation at the moment, as evidenced by poor performance and lack of service delivery resulting to a rise in service delivery protests by local communities dissatisfied with the slow pace of basic service provision.

6.5.2 M&E policy formulation

The functions of government in the public sector are guided by policies and frameworks as a foundation for effective management, therefore the model in Figure 6.1 proposes developing and formulating policies that specifically address M&E practices within uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu municipalities, taking into account the municipal setting and dynamics associated with the overall functions and administrative operations of the municipality. The policies need to include M&E principles, guidelines, and standards to raise awareness of M&E

and how its activities are carried out, the structures and responsibilities among municipal staff members and other stakeholders, as well as incorporating principles and guidelines contained in existing policies such as the Municipal Systems Act.

6.5.3 Resource allocation and capacity

The findings of the study also raised the important concern that the three district municipalities do not have enough resources and capacity, which makes it difficult to execute M&E effectively. The first thing to note is that there is widespread misuse of finances and significant levels of corruption in local administration, which can be improved with M&E systems. Secondly, there is a lack of human resources (individuals) with the knowledge, abilities, and capabilities needed to carry out M&E activities. The model urges government entities to help municipalities in whatever manner they can in order to guarantee that they provide high-quality services by strengthening and enforcing their financial resource practices.

Financial accountability, according to Kariuki and Reddy (2017: 10), is an essential factor that is lacking in municipalities. The absence of accountability for official misconduct and the lack of repercussions for offenders are the driving forces behind this. Municipalities should also give officials in charge of M&E functions a higher priority in order to increase the level of demand for M&E information. At the same time, they should work to maintain staff members by providing incentives and internal training programmes that will keep them engaged and motivated to carry out their constitutional obligations.

6.5.4 Input-process-output

Municipal operations depend on the integration of inputs, processes, and outputs for efficient service delivery. This entails gathering precise data that can be used to establish policies and support decision-making, setting goals based on such policies, and translating those objectives into outputs and outcomes of service delivery. The expected impact is to ensure that the services are in accordance with what the public need. The model encourages M&E activities to be carried out from the initial stage of determining the inputs, conversion of the input into activities, and producing output, evaluating the impact of those activities when implementing developmental programmes and initiatives. This will allow uThukela, Amajuba, and uMgungundlovu to determine the effect of M&E and it will assist them in managing their resources, establishing the appropriateness of their policies, and achieving the desired outcomes in accordance with the strategic plan, in this case the IDP.

Okello and Bongomin (2014: 1735) confirm that the process of inputs, outputs, results and impact is critical to good service delivery. This makes it possible to obtain high-quality information to assist with project implementation and policy formation. Hence, the need for effective implementation of M&E systems and practices in local government. According to Ntoyanto (2016: 14) quality service delivery can be ensured through monitoring and evaluating policies, programmes and projects. Additionally, by implementing M&E, public funds can be used efficiently, which may also lead to improved performance, increased accountability, and better and informed decision-making across all levels of government. This supports the research conclusion that M&E should be viewed as an essential instrument for bringing together high-performance processes to improve service delivery in local government.

6.5.5 Impact analysis and feedback

The model suggests that the three district municipalities evaluate the impact and outcomes of service delivery programmes after the stated objectives have been met. By doing this through M&E, the result will indicate if the programmes are successful or unsuccessful and give feedback to the relevant stakeholders and communities, outlining in detail how the project went and whether the planned outcomes are achieved. Consequence management can be put into practice through the development of remedial measures – going back to the drawing board and making new decisions about how the municipalities can operate at their best. This encourages learning from past experiences and challenges so that the municipalities performs better in the future.

6.6 OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS

In the view of the research findings, the researcher proposes the following recommendations.

6.6.1 Prioritise M&E in local government

The study suggests that local governments prioritize and fully adopt M&E as a critical practice to ensure that local government is responsive to the needs and expectations of the residents and to create the circumstances for improvement and sustained excellent performance.

6.6.2 Institutionalize M&E within municipalities

Local government, as an independent sphere, should use its broad powers to encourage growth in its jurisdiction through developing M&E within municipalities. According to the results of this study, municipalities lack a separate M&E unit; the functions are combined with those of

performance management, and only a few people are assigned to that responsibility. As a result, the study recommends that municipalities develop a well-established, fully functional M&E unit to facilitate assessments and reviews of pre-determined levels of performance, tracking the progress of development initiatives, and reporting the results and performance information to relevant stakeholders. The M&E process in municipalities is reduced to a simple checklist exercise if institutionalisation is not achieved. In the end, municipalities' capacity for accountability can be threatened.

6.6.3 Increase monitoring and evaluation capacity

M&E training and skill development workshops are required to provide personnel with knowledge and understanding of the importance of M&E in improving municipal performance and service delivery. To standardise system performance and outputs, municipalities must emphasise hiring experienced and competent practitioners, as well as upskilling and re-skilling their human resources in support of progressive local government. This suggests that M&E operations should be better integrated in order to promote timely and effective decision-making for improved results. Furthermore, it is always vital to invest in systems that will favourably affect municipal operations, productivity, and performance; hence, the research suggests that municipalities engage in M&E by diverting financial resources and include M&E in their strategy and budget plans.

6.6.4 Encourage participatory M&E

The research recommends that municipalities employ community involvement practice as one method of promoting M&E. A public voice can help municipalities improve their operations by identifying issues they are currently facing in their respective communities, providing input on municipal planning, and assisting in providing feedback on services to the municipality so that they know they have provided what the people want, at the expected level, within the allocated budget. Citizens must be active in municipal decisions since they are impacted by them. Once municipal service delivery programmes have been implemented, communities that have benefited from the services can share their opinions on the effects and advantages of the initiatives and if they have achieved their anticipated objective and outcome. Let communities be the ultimate judges of municipal efforts by evaluating the outcomes and outputs of municipal services in the process of delivering value for money.

6.6.5 Consider the use of digital technologies for M&E

The use of digital technologies is on the rise across the world. The study recommends that municipalities consider and advance utilisation of digital systems to bring new ideas of how best they can perform their administration and operational activities including carrying out M&E functions. The value chain of M&E processes involves many people carrying out different tasks. With technological systems in place, the process can be simplified while mitigating risks of tampering or losing performance information and secure storage of information for future reference.

6.7 CONTRIBUTION TO EXISTING KNOWLEDGE

This research study serves as a contribution to the body of knowledge by enhancing general understanding of M&E as a crucial component of public service delivery that can assist municipalities to fulfil the needs and demands of citizens while also ensuring strong governance, accountability, transparency, effectiveness and provision of results-based outcomes while improving their level of performance. Furthermore, this study proposes potential solutions that municipalities can adopt to promote M&E as a means of enhancing municipal performance to show that they really abide by their constitutional obligations. Various studies mention that while the government has made significant and necessary efforts to promote M&E in the public sector and created provisions to build frameworks and regulations for M&E, they are not focused enough on local government as the sphere that is mainly tasked with the development and provision of basic services to the public.

The increasing number of reports of municipal non-performance, service delivery dissatisfaction, and maladministration might be ascribed to the lack of adequate M&E systems. The GWM&E framework, which was put in place to enhance government outputs and effects, has not been properly implemented, resulting in fragmented M&E operations and poor levels of service delivery performance management. This is corroborated by Govender and Reddy (2014b: 184) who maintain that the greatest challenge of government is to improve effective service delivery and maintain its financial resources in a transparent and accountable fashion while responding to the social demands of the people.

Moreover, the current GWM&E framework is not fully operational and it is only visible in the national and provincial sphere of government and this has led to M&E initiatives not being aligned completely to the national policies. Lack of efficient M&E, accountability and performance management systems has resulted in community dissatisfaction with service

delivery, which has a negative impact on governance and government credibility. Additionally, the research will assist uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu district municipalities in fostering a culture that values the role of M&E, and helps in identifying new policy areas and those that need improvement for effective implementation of service delivery and improved overall performance of the municipality.

6.8 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

There is a rising need for additional research and contributions on how government reforms are being implemented and how they are impacting service delivery, which is still a significant problem in South Africa. The researcher recommends further research on the following areas:

- The value of M&E within local government municipalities as one of the strategies to resolve issues of poor performance and issues of ineffective service delivery.
- In-depth research is needed on the factors that impede effective implementation of M&E in municipalities.
- The consideration of the proposed M&E integrated model for municipalities in its functions to explore the effects of M&E on the performance of municipalities.
- Research on the effectiveness of support and capacity by the national, provincial sphere and government entities in addressing issues faced by local government.
- Further research is required to explore the adoption of global systems and practices as a means to strengthen and enhance local government performance.

6.9 CONCLUSION

The concluding chapter of the research study presented a summary of all chapters. The first section of this chapter recalled the research objectives and how they were achieved concerning the research findings. The research study looked into the effects of M&E on the performance of local government with reference to uThukela, Amajuba and uMgungundlovu district municipalities. It presented the findings from the literature which supports the essence of the study which is that the lack of adequate monitoring and evaluation systems within local government compromises operations and effective service delivery, and imposes a detrimental effect on the overall performance of municipalities. The study findings supported by the literature indicated that municipalities view M&E as a tick-box exercise than a practice that will assist them manage their functions for effective service delivery effectively. Amongst many, the results of the study revealed the challenges confronting M&E including absence of a unit for M&E to offer distinct support for the implementation of M&E systems, lack of staff with M&E

expertise, capacity and resources. In addressing these challenges, the research proposed recommendations for municipalities to institutionalize M&E and formulate policies that will speak directly to the M&E standards and practices for local government. It further proposed an integrated model for municipalities to adopt and apply for effective improvement of M&E practices and improved performance. Furthermore, this section outlined the contribution of the research to the body of knowledge. The chapter concluded by highlighting possible areas for further research.

REFERENCES

- Abdulkadir, H.S. 2014. *Challenges of implementing internal control systems in non-governmental organisations (NGO) in Kenya: a case of faith-based Oorganisations (FBO) in Coast Region*. Journal of Business and Management, 16(3): 57-62.
- Amajuba District Municipality. 2022/2023. *Mid-Year performance assessment report, 2022/23 financial year*. Amajuba District Municipality. Government Printer.
- Asiamah, N. Mensah, H.K. and Oteng-Abayie, E.F. 2017. *General, target, and accessible population: demystifying the concepts for effective sampling*. The Qualitative Report, 22(6): 1607-1621.
- Auditor General. 2022. *Consolidated general report on local government audit outcomes: MFMA-2020/2021*. Auditor General. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Bach, T. 2016. *Administrative autonomy of public organisations*. In: Farazmand, A. ed. *Global encyclopedia of public administration, public policy and governance*. Cham: Springer, pp. 1-9.
- Balu, R. Balasubramanian, M. and Suryadevara, N. 2020. *Research methodology*. Delhi: AkiNik Publications
- Barrett, D. and Twycross, A. 2018. *Data collection in qualitative research*. Evidence-Based Nursing, 21(3): 63-64.
- Basheka, B. Lubega, and J.T. Baguma, R. 2016. *Blended-learning approaches and the teaching of monitoring and evaluation programmes in African universities: unmasking the UTAMU approach*. African Journal of Public Affairs, 9(4): 71-88
- Basheka, B.C. and Byamugisha, A.K. 2015. *The state of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as a discipline in Africa: from infancy to adulthood?* African Journal of Public Affairs, 8(3): 75-95.
- Beazley, I. and Rivadeneira, A.M.R. 2021. *Chile: Review of DIPRES'programme evaluation system*. OECD Journal on Budgeting, 21(1).
- Bekele, W.B. and Ago, F.Y. 2022. *Sample size for interview in qualitative research in social sciences: a guide to novice researchers*. Research in Educational Policy and Management, 4(1): 42-50.

- Bierschenk, T. and Olivier De Sardan, J.P.O. 2014. *Ethnographies of public services in Africa: an emerging research paradigm*. In: Bierschenk, T. and Olivier de Sardan J.P. eds. *States at work: dynamics of African bureaucracies*. Boston: Brill. 35-65.
- Boxenbaum, E. and Rouleau, L. 2011. *New knowledge products as bricolage: metaphors and scripts in organisational theory*. *Academy of Management Review*, 36(2): 272-296.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. 2006. *Using thematic analysis in psychology*. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2): 77-101.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. 2012. *Thematic analysis*. In: Cooper, H., Camic, P.M., Long, D.L.A., Panter, T., Rindskopf, D. and Sher, K.J. eds. *APA handbook of research methods in psychology, Vol. 2. Research designs: quantitative, qualitative, neuropsychological, and biological*. American Psychological Association, pp. 57-71.
- Brigitte, S. 2017. *Rigor or reliability and validity in qualitative research: perspectives, strategies, reconceptualization, and recommendations*. *Dimensions of Critical Care Nursing*, 36(4): 253-263.
- Brunsson, N. and Olsen, J.P. 2018. *The reforming organisation: making sense of administrative change*. Milton Park: Routledge.
- Bryson, J.M. Edwards, L.H. and Van Slyke, D.M. 2018. *Getting strategic about strategic planning research*. *Public Management Review*, 20(3): 317-339.
- Carey, G. and Crammond, B. 2015. *What works in joined-up government? An evidence synthesis*. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 38(13-14): 1020-1029.
- Castleberry, A. and Nolen, A. 2018. *Thematic analysis of qualitative research data: is it as easy as it sounds?* *Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning*, 10(6): 807-815.
- Chirau, T.J. Blaser-Mapitsa, C. and Amisi, M.M. 2021. *Policies for evidence: a comparative analysis of Africa's national evaluation policy landscape*. *Evidence & Policy*, 17(3): 535-548.
- Christie, P. and Monyokolo, M. 2018. *Learning about sustainable change in education in South Africa: the Jika iMfundo campaign 2015-2017*. SAIDE: Johannesburg.
- Clark-Kazak, C. 2017. *Ethical considerations: research with people in situations of forced migration*. *Canadian Journal on Refugees*, 33(2): 11-17.

- Creswell, J.W. and Creswell, J.D. 2017. *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* 4th edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Datta, S. 2018. *Concept of sampling methods and different types of sampling*. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/SanjoyDatta/publication/327891202_Sampling_methods/links/5baba0dc92851ca9ed28fdef/Sampling-methods.pdf (Accessed 3 March 2022).
- Depaolo, C.A and Wilkinson, K. 2014. *Get your head into the clouds: using Word clouds for analysing qualitative assessment data*. TechTrends, 58(3): 38–44
- Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME). 2011. *National evaluation policy framework*. Pretoria:Government Printer.
- Department of Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME). 2017. *Using evaluation and other evidence to strengthen South Africa's development outcomes*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA). 2020. *Municipal profile and analysis: district development model*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Dipela, M.P. and Mohapi, B.J. 2021. *Barriers affecting effective monitoring and evaluation of poverty alleviation projects within Waterberg district*. Social Work, 57(3): 287-301.
- Dlamini, N.P. 2017. *Intra-political infighting versus service delivery: assessing the impact of intra-political infighting on service delivery in uMsunduzi local municipality*. Master's dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa.
- Doyle, L. Brady, A.M. and Byrne, G. 2009. *An overview of mixed methods research*. Journal of Research in Nursing, 14(2): 175-185.
- Drack, M. and Pouvreau, D. 2015. *On the history of Ludwig von Bertalanffy's general systemology, and on its relationship to cybernetics—part III: convergences and divergences*. International Journal of General Systems, 44(5): 523-571.
- Dube, M.M. 2018. *Monitoring and evaluation system to enhance service delivery in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Human Settlements*. Master's dissertation, University of KwaZulu Natal, Durban, South Africa.
- Ebenezer, A., Teye, A., Kingsford, L.K., Khotso, T., Hermine, E., Jore, A., Elizabeth, A., Ruth, S., Takunda J, C. and Masego, T. 2019. *Monitoring and evaluation systems in five African*

countries. University of Witswaterand, Johannesburg. Available at: <https://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/server/api/core/bitstreams/9a8edec7-0967-4223-97e6-2f1d0e76a367/content> (Accessed 12 December 2022).

Edwards, R. 2018. *An elaboration of the administrative theory of the 14 principles of management by Henri Fayol*. International Journal for Empirical Education and Research, 1(1): 41-51.

Elkins, C. 2011. *Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) for development in peace-precarious situations*. Prepared for The North-South Divide and International Studies, 47th Annual ISA Convention, San Diego, CA.

Engela, R. and Ajam, T. 2010. *Implementing a government-wide monitoring and evaluation system in South Africa*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Eresia-Eke, C.E. and Boadu, E.S. 2019. *Monitoring and evaluation preparedness of public sector institutions*. Journal of Reviews on Global Economics, 8(1): 1-2.

Estelle, R. 2016. *What difference does good monitoring and evaluation make to World Bank project performance?* Washington, DC: World Bank.

Etikan, I., Musa, S.A. and Alkassim, R.S. 2016. *Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling*. American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics, 5(1): 1-4.

Eyisi, D. 2016. *The usefulness of qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in researching problem-solving ability in science education curriculum*. Journal of Education and Practice, 7(15): 91-100.

Fatile, J.O. 2014. *Performance management systems productivity in the public sector: wither African public administration*. Africa's Public Service Delivery & Performance Review, 2(3): 77-105.

Fiesler, C. 2019. *Ethical considerations for research involving (speculative) public data*. Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction, 3(GROUP):1-13.

Flick, U. 2014. *Challenges for qualitative inquiry as a global endeavour: introduction to the special issue*. Qualitative Inquiry, 20(9): 1059-1063.

- Fuertes, G., Alfaro, M., Vargas, M., Gutierrez, S., Ternero, R. and Sabattin, J. 2020. *Conceptual framework for the strategic management: a literature review-descriptive*. Journal of Engineering, Article ID 6253013.
- Gale, J., Ross, D.B., Thomas, M.G. and Boe, J. 2020. *Considerations, benefits and cautions integrating systems theory with financial therapy*. Contemporary Family Therapy, (42): 84-94.
- Giudice, J.M. 2016. *Through the lens of complex systems theory: why regulators must understand the economy and society as a complex system*. University of Richmond Law Review, (51): 1-7.
- Goldman, I. Byamugisha, A. Gounou, A. Smith, L.R. Ntakumba, S., Lubanga, T. Sossou, D. and Rot-Munstermann, K. 2018. *The emergence of government evaluation systems in Africa: the case of Benin, Uganda and South Africa*. African Evaluation Journal, 6(1): 1-11.
- Goldman, I. Engela, R. Akhalwaya, I. Gasa, N. Leon, B. Mohamed, H. and Phillips, S. 2012. *Establishing M&E system in South Africa*. World Bank PREM Nuts and Bolts of M&E Series, 21. Washington DC: World Bank.
- Govender, I.G. 2011. *Monitoring and evaluation systems enhancing corporate governance in local government: a case study of KwaZulu-Natal*. Doctoral thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa.
- Govender, I.G. and Reddy, P.S. 2014a. *Monitoring and evaluation in municipalities*. Administration Publica, 22(4): 160-177.
- Govender, N. and Reddy, P.S. 2014b. *Performance monitoring and evaluation: the Ethekewini experience, South Africa*. African Journal of Public Affairs, 7(1): 59-62.
- Greffrath, W. and Van der Walldt, G. 2016. *Section 139 interventions in South African local government, 1994-2015*. New Contree, 75, July.
- Guzmán, M. Irarrázaval, I. and De los Rios, B. 2014. *Monitoring and evaluation system: the case of Chile 1990-2014*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Hafsa, N.E. 2019. *Mixed methods research: an overview for beginner researchers*. Journal of Literature, Languages and Linguistics, 58(1): 45-48

- Hasan, N., Rana, R.U., Chowdhury, S., Dola, A.J. and Rony, M.K.K. 2021. *Ethical considerations in research*. Journal of Nursing Research, Patient Safety and Practise, 1(1): 1-4.
- Hatch, M.J. 1997. *Organization Theory: Modern, Symbolic, and Postmodern Perspectives*. OUP-USA,
- Hatry, H.P. 2009. *Performance measurement: getting results*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.
- Honu-Siabi, M.K. 2013. *An analysis of the implementation of a monitoring and evaluation system: the case of the NGO SaveAct*. Master's dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa.
- Hwang, H. 2014. *Building monitoring and evaluation capacity in young systems: the experiences of Rwanda, Vietnam, and Yemen*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Iyayi, O.Z. 2014. *Institutionalising monitoring and evaluation: a study of Canada, Chile and Uganda*. Masters dissertation, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, United Kingdom.
- Jili, N.N. and Mthethwa, R.M. 2016. *Challenges in implementing monitoring and evaluation (M&E): the case of the Mfolozi municipality*. African Journal of Public Affairs, 9(6): 102-113.
- Kabonga, I. 2018. *Principles and practice of monitoring and evaluation: a paraphernalia for effective development*. Africanus: Journal of Development Studies, 48(2): 1-21.
- Kamau, C.G. and Mohamed, H.B. 2015. *Efficacy of monitoring and evaluation function in achieving project success in Kenya: a conceptual framework*. Journal of Business and Management, 3(3): 82-94.
- Kantabutra, S. 2020. *Toward an organisational theory of sustainability vision*. Sustainability, 12(3): 1125.
- Kanyamuna, V. Kotzé, D.A. and Phiri, M. 2019. *Monitoring and evaluation systems: the missing strand in the African transformational development agenda*. World Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities, 5(3): 160-175.
- Karanja, G.M. 2014. *Influence of management practices on sustainability of youth income generating projects in Kangema District, Murang'a County, Kenya*. International Journal of Education and Research, 2(2): 1-12.

- Kariuki, P. and Reddy, P. 2017. *Operationalising an effective monitoring and evaluation system for local government: considerations for best practice*. African Evaluation Journal, 5(2): 1-8.
- Kiger, M.E. and Varpio, L. 2020. *Thematic analysis of qualitative data: AMEE Guide No. 131*. Medical Teacher, 42(8): 846-854.
- Kim, Y. and Warner, M.E. 2016. *Pragmatic municipalism: local government service delivery after the great recession*. Public Administration, 94(3): 789-805.
- Kimaro, J.R. Fourie, D.J. and Tshiyoyo, M. 2018. *Towards an ideal institutionalisation of monitoring and evaluation (M&E)*. Administratio Publica, 26(4): 196-219.
- Kobus, M. 2016. *First steps in research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Kusek, J.Z. and Rist, R.C. 2004. *Ten steps to a results-based monitoring and evaluation system: a handbook for development practitioners*. Washington, DC: World Bank Publications.
- Lahey, R. 2010. *The Canadian M&E system: Lessons learned from 30 years of development*. ECD Working Paper Series. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Lahey, R. 2011. *The Canadian monitoring and evaluation system*. PREM Notes and Special Series on the Nuts and Bolts of Government M&E Systems. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Lahey, R. 2015. *Devising an appropriate strategy for capacity building of a national monitoring and evaluation system: lessons from selected African countries*. World Bank. Washington DC
- Lahey, R. and Nielsen, S.B. 2013. *Rethinking the relationship among monitoring, evaluation, and results-based management: observations from Canada*. New Directions for Evaluation, (137): 45-56.
- Lamidi, K.O. 2015. *Theories of public administration: an anthology of essays*. International Journal of Politics and Good Governance, 6(6.3): 1-35.
- Larson, S. and Williams, L.J. 2009. *Monitoring the success of stakeholder engagement: Literature review*. In: Measham, T.G. and Brake, L. eds. *People, communities and economies of the Lake Eyre Basin*, DKCRC Research Report 45, Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre, Alice Springs. pp. 251–298.
- Lehloha, P. 2016. *The state of basic service delivery in South Africa: In-depth analysis of the community survey 2016 data*. Available at:

<https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report%2003-01-22/Report%2003-01-222016.pdf>

(Accessed 12 December 2022).

Lekoba, M.N. 2017. *Evaluating the impact of monitoring and evaluation on performance in the KwaZulu-Natal Sharks Board*. Master's dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa.

Lelissa, T.B. 2017. *The impact of industry concentration on performance, exploring a comprehensive bank performance model: the case of the Ethiopian banking sector*. Doctoral thesis, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa.

Lindebaum, D. and Ashraf, M. 2021. *The ghost in the machine, or the ghost in organisational theory? A complementary view on the use of machine learning*. *Academy of Management Review*. In press. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2021.0036>

Loquai, C. and Le Bay, S. 2007. *Building capabilities for monitoring and evaluating decentralisation and local governance: experiences, challenges and perspectives*. European Centre for Development Policy Management. Available at: <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/file/8545/download?token=rTLK4s2X> (Accessed 17 December 2022).

Luhmann, N. Baecker, D. and Gilgen, P. 2013. *Introduction to systems theory*. Cambridge Polity.

Maepa, K.L. 2014. *Performance monitoring and evaluation of metropolitan municipalities in Gauteng South Africa*. Doctoral thesis, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

Magagula, B.S. 2019. *An evaluation of the implementation of monitoring and evaluation systems in the office of the Premier, Free State provincial government*. Master's dissertation, Central University of Technology, Bloemfontein, South Africa.

Maguire, M. and Delahunt, B. 2017. *Doing a thematic analysis: a practical, step-by-step guide for learning and teaching scholars*. *Ireland Journal of Higher Education*, 9(3).

Majid, U. 2018. *Research fundamentals: study design, population, and sample size*. *Undergraduate Research in Natural and Clinical Science and Technology Journal*, 2:1-7.

- Majola, M. 2014. *The implementation of the government-wide monitoring and evaluation system in South Africa: a provincial case study of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Economic Development and Tourism*. Honours report, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa.
- Malan, L. 2005. *Intergovernmental relations and co-operative government in South Africa: The ten-year review*. *Politeia*, 24(2): 226-243.
- Mantie, R. and Tan, L. 2019. *A cross-cultural examination of lifelong participation in community wind bands through the lens of organisational theory*. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 67(1): 106-126.
- Maree, K. 2016. *First steps in research* 2nd edition. Braamfontein: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Mark, K. and Pfeiffer, J.R. 2011. *Monitoring and evaluation in the United States Government*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Masilo, M.M. Masiya, T. and Mathebula, N.E. 2021. *Monitoring and evaluation in the public sector: a case of the Department of Home Affairs (South Africa)*. *European Journal of Economics, Law and Social Sciences*, Special issue, 7-21.
- Masuku, N.W. Ijeoma, E.O. 2015. *A global overview of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and its meaning in the local government context of South Africa*. *Africa's Public Service Delivery & Performance Review*, 3(2): 5-25.
- Mashamaite, K. Lethoko, M., 2018. *Role of the South African local government in local economic development*. *International Journal of eBusiness and eGovernment Studies*, 10(1): 114-128.
- Matsiliza, N.S. 2018. *The application of results-based monitoring and evaluation to improve performance in small businesses*. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 7(3): 1-9.
- Matthew, A.O. and Olatunji, O.M. 2016. *Policy issues for improving monitoring and evaluation of agricultural extension programmes in Nigeria*. *African Evaluation Journal*, 4(1): 1-5.
- Mehrad, A. and Zangeneh, M.H.T. 2019. *Comparison between qualitative and quantitative research approaches: social sciences*. *International Journal for Research in Educational Studies*, Iran, 5(7): 1-7.

- Mello, D.M. 2018. *Monitoring and evaluation: the missing link in South African municipalities*. The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa, 14(1): 1-6.
- Merrim, S.B. and Grenier, R.S. 2019. *Qualitative research in practice: examples for discussion and analysis*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Metzenbaum, S. 2010. *Performance improvement guidance: management responsibilities and government performance and results act documents. memorandum for executive departments and agencies*. Washington DC. Executive office of the President.
- Miner, J.B., 2005. *Organisational Behavior: essential theories of motivation and leadership*. Milton Park: Routledge.
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. 2013. *Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN) the annual economic performance report 2013*. Kigali: Government of Rwanda Press.
- Mkhize, N. 2013. *An exploration of the implementation of the individual performance management system within local government: a case study of uMngeni municipality in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa*. Masters dissertation, University of KwaZulu Natal, Durban, South Africa.
- Mle, T.R. 2014. *Potential benefits of monitoring and evaluation as a tool in the South African local government spheres*. Africa's Public Service Delivery & Performance Review, 2(1): 56-68.
- Mohajan, H.K. 2020. *Quantitative research: a successful investigation in natural and social sciences*. Journal of Economic Development, Environment and People, 9(4): 50-79.
- Moji, L. Nhede, N.T. and Masiya, T. 2022. *Factors impeding the implementation of oversight mechanisms in South African municipalities*. Journal of Local Government Research and Innovation, (3): 1-8.
- Mokoele, N.J. Masenya, M.J. and Makalela, K.I. 2018. *Performance management as a mechanism to effective public service delivery in South Africa*. African Journal of Public Affairs, 10(4): 106-118.
- Molepo, A.N. 2011. *Monitoring and evaluation framework for public service*. Pretoria. Government Printer.

- Motingoe, R.S. and Van der Waladt, G. 2013. *A monitoring and evaluation system utilisation model for support to South African municipalities*. Politiea, 32(3): 4-29.
- Motingoe, R.S. 2012. *Monitoring and evaluation system utilisation for municipal support* Doctoral dissertation. North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa.
- Mrosek, T., Balsillie, D. and Schleifenbaum, P. 2006. *Field testing of a criteria and indicators system for sustainable forest management at the local level. Case study results concerning the sustainability of the private forest Haliburton Forest and Wild Life Reserve in Ontario, Canada*. Forest Policy and Economics, 8(6): 593-609.
- Mtshali, Z. 2015. *A review of the monitoring and evaluation system to monitor the implementation of early childhood development within Gauteng Department of Health*. Masters dissertation, Stellenbosch University, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
- Mubangizi, B.C. 2019. *Monitoring and evaluation processes critical to service provision in South Africa's rural-based municipalities*. Journal of Reviews on Global Economics, 8: 555-565.
- Mukuhlan, T. 2014. *Youth empowerment through small business development projects in Zimbabwe: the case of Gweru young people's enterprise*. Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa, 16(5): 138-144.
- Muthoni, K.J., Ong'ang'a, H.O. and Githui, K. 2021. *Monitoring and evaluation for quality service delivery in pre-primary schools in Murang'a County, Kenya*. Open Journal of Social Sciences, 9(5): 409-427.
- Muthwa, E.X. 2021. *An evaluation of customer satisfaction with water service quality in the uMgungundlovu District Municipality*. Doctoral thesis, Durban University of Technology, Durban, South Africa.
- Mviko, V.N. 2016. *Critical analysis of the implementation of government-wide monitoring and evaluation system in Eastern Cape municipalities – case study of Chris Hani District Municipality*. Master's dissertation, University of Fort Hare, Alice, South Africa.
- Myrick, D. 2013. *A logical framework for monitoring and evaluation: a pragmatic approach to M&E*. Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 4(14): 423.
- Naidoo, I.A. 2012. *Management challenges in M&E: thoughts from South Africa*. The Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation, 25(3): 103.

Nalubega, T. and Uwizeyimana, D.E. 2019. Public sector monitoring and evaluation in the fourth industrial revolution: implications for Africa. *Africa's Public Service Delivery and Performance Review*, 7(1): 1-12.

National Planning Commission. 2013. *National development plan Vision 2030*. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Nayak, J.K. and Singh, P. 2021. *Fundamentals of research methodology problems and prospects*. New Delhi: SSDN Publishers & Distributors.

Nchabeleng, M.S. 2021. *The impact of the government wide monitoring and evaluation system on performance in the office of the premier, Limpopo Province, South Africa*. Master's dissertation, University of Limpopo, Polokwane, South Africa.

Ndevu, Z. and Muller, K. 2017. *A conceptual framework for improving service delivery at local government in South Africa*. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 9(7): 13-24.

Nelson, C. 2016. *Exploring monitoring and evaluation within a good governance perspective: a case study of Stellenbosch Municipality*. Master's dissertation, Stellenbosch: Stellenbosch University.

Nkuna, N. 2011. *Realising developmental local government in a developmental state*. *Journal of Public Administration*, 46(1): 622-641.

Nobari, N. 2022. *How strategic entrepreneurship benefits public administration: a potential application of complexity theory*. In: Faghih, N. and Forouharfar, A. eds. *Strategic entrepreneurship: perspectives on dynamics, theories, and practices*. Cham: Springer, pp. 183-204.

Nonyane, C.P. 2019. *Exploring the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation system in local government: a case study of eThekweni Municipality*. Master's dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa.

Ntoyanto, S.S. 2016. *An investigation of the effectiveness of the National Youth Development Agency monitoring and evaluation framework*. Master's dissertation, University of the Western Cape, Bellville, South Africa.

QSR International Pty Ltd. 2020. NVivo 12 (released in March 2020). Available at: <https://www.qsrinternational.com/nvivo-qualitative-data-analysis-software/home> (Accessed 5 December 2022).

Nyamambi, I. 2021. *Challenges faced by municipalities in institutionalizing monitoring and evaluation systems: The case of Chegutu Municipality in Zimbabwe*. Journal of Human Social Science, 2(1): 46-51.

Nyamazana, A. 2019. *Why do organisations fail to fully benefit from monitoring and evaluation?* Available: [Why organizations fail to fully benefit from Monitoring and Evaluation \(linkedin.com\)](#) (Accessed 21 April 2022).

Nyumba, T.O. Wilson, K. Derrick, C.J. and Mukherjee, N. 2018. *The use of focus group discussion methodology: Insights from two decades of application in conservation*. Methods in Ecology and Evolution, 9(1): 20-32.

Ochieng S, O. Rambo, C, M. and Osogo J, A. 2018. *Influence of human capacity for monitoring and evaluation systems on provision of health care services in public health institutions in Migori County, Kenya*. Journal of Business and Management, 20(8).

Office of the Presidency. 2010. Office Management and Budget circular. Available (online) [OMB Circular A-136 \(whitehouse.gov\)](#). Accessed: (21 July 2021)

Ogula, P. A. 2012. *Monitoring and evaluation of educational projects and programmes*. Nairobi. New Kemit Publishers.

Ojok, J. 2016. *Effective role of public sector monitoring and evaluation in promoting good governance in Uganda: implications from the Ministry of Local Government*. Masters dissertation, Uganda Technology and Management University, Kampala, Uganda.

Okello, S.M. and Bongomin, W. 2014. *Effects of monitoring and evaluation frameworks on service delivery in the health sector in Uganda*. International Journal of Science and Research, 3(10): 736-1743.

O'Leary, N. and Boland, P. 2020. *Organisation and system theories in interprofessional research: A scoping review*. Journal of Interprofessional Care, 34(1): 1-19.

- Osanloo, A. and Grant, C. 2016. *Understanding, selecting, and integrating a theoretical framework in dissertation research*. Administrative Issues Journal: Connecting Education, Practice, and Research, 4(2): 12-26.
- Patel, M. and Patel, N. 2019. *Exploring research methodology*. International Journal of Research and Review, 6(3): 48-55.
- Phiri, B., 2015. *Influence of monitoring and evaluation on project performance: A Case of African Virtual University, Kenya*. Master's dissertation, University of Nairobi. Kenya.
- Ponelis, S.R. 2015. *Using interpretive qualitative case studies for exploratory research in doctoral studies: a case of information systems research in small and medium enterprises*. International Journal of Doctoral Studies, 10(2015): 535- 550.
- Porter, S. and Goldman, I. 2013. *A growing demand for monitoring and evaluation in Africa*. African Evaluation Journal, 1(1):1- 9.
- Radebe, J. 2014. *Performance monitoring and evaluation: principles and approach*. Pretoria Government Printer.
- Rahman, M.M. Tabash, M.I. Salamzadeh, A. Abduli, S. and Rahaman, M.S. 2022. *Sampling techniques (probability) for quantitative social science researchers: a conceptual guideline with examples*. SEEU Review, 17(1): 42-51.
- Rahman, M.S. 2017. *The advantages and disadvantages of using qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in language testing and assessment research: a literature review*. Journal of Education and Learning, 6(1): 1-11.
- Ravindran, V. 2019. *Data analysis in qualitative research*. Indian Journal of Continuing Nursing Education, 20(1): 40-41
- Reddy, P.S. 2016. *The politics of service delivery in South Africa: the local government sphere in context*. TD: The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa, 12(1): 1-8.
- Republic of Rwanda. 2013. *Economic development and poverty reduction strategy 2013 – 2018*. Available (online) [Rwanda: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper; IMF Country Report 13/360; 2013-2018](#) (Accessed 23 February 2021).
- Robson, C. and McCartan, K. 2016. *Real world research*, 4th edition. New York, NY: Wiley.

- Roger, E. and Tim, M. 2018. *Official statistics and monitoring and evaluation systems in developing countries*. Paris: Institute of Statistics and Monitoring.
- Rose, J. and Johnson, C.W. 2020. *Contextualizing reliability and validity in qualitative research: toward more rigorous and trustworthy qualitative social science in leisure research*, Journal of Leisure Research, 51(4): 432-451.
- Rosenberg, E. and Kotschy, K. 2020. *Monitoring and evaluation in a changing world: a Southern African perspective on the skills needed for a new approach*. African Evaluation Journal, 8(1): 1-10.
- Rossignoli, S., Coticchia, F. and Mezzasalma, A. 2015. *A critical friend: monitoring and evaluation systems, development cooperation and local government: the case of Tuscany*. Evaluation and Program Planning, 50:63-76.
- Sandada, M., Pooe, D. and Dhurup, M., 2014. *Strategic planning and its relationship with business performance among small and medium enterprises in South Africa*. International Business & Economics Research Journal, 13(3): 659-670.
- Sartorius, K. and Sartorius, B. 2016. *Service delivery inequality in South African municipal areas: a new way to account for inter-jurisdictional differences*. Urban Studies, 53(15): 3336-3355.
- Scott, W.R. and Davis, G.F. 2015. *Organisations and organizing: rational, natural and open systems perspectives*. Milton Park: Routledge.
- Shivambu, P. 2020. *Monitoring and evaluation as an infrastructure enhancement strategy in Vhembe District Municipality of South Africa*. Doctoral thesis, University of Venda, Thohoyandou, South Africa.
- Singh, I. 2019. *Project governance through monitoring and evaluation in the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs*. Master's dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa.
- South Africa. 1996. *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- South Africa. 2000. *The Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- South Africa. 1998. *The White Paper on Local Government 1998*. Pretoria: Government Printer.

- Stahl, N.A. and King, J.R. 2020. *Expanding approaches for research: understanding and using trustworthiness in qualitative research*. Journal of Developmental Education, 44(1): 26-28.
- Statistics South Africa. 2011. *Formal census*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Sundler, A.J., Lindberg, E., Nilsson, C. and Palmér, L. 2019. *Qualitative thematic analysis based on descriptive phenomenology*. Nursing Open, 6(3): 733-739.
- Taherdoost, H. 2016. *Sampling methods in research methodology; how to choose a sampling technique for research. How to choose a sampling technique for research?* International Journal of Academic Research in Management, 5(2). 18-27.
- Tahlil Hassan, A. 2019. *The effect of monitoring and evaluation on organisation Performance: A case study of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in, Mogadishu Somalia*. Master's dissertation, Kampala International University, Kampala, Uganda.
- Thapa, I. 2020. *Local government: concept, roles and importance for contemporary society*. Technical Report, Public Administration, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Nepal.
- Theofanidis, D. and Fountouki, A. 2018. *Limitations and delimitations in the research process*. Perioperative Nursing, 7(3): 155-163
- Thornhill, C. 2016. *South African public administration and management*. Pretoria. Van Schaik Publishers
- Tshishonga, N. 2021. *Prospects and challenges of transforming local government into a learning organisation*. African Journal of Public Affairs, 12(1): 28-45.
- Umlaw, F. and Chitepo, N. 2015. State and use of monitoring and evaluation systems in national and provincial departments. African Evaluation Journal, 3(1): 15.
- UMgungundlovu District Municipality. 2021. *Mid-Year performance report, 2021/22 financial year, UMgungundlovu District Municipality*. Government Printer.
- United States. Government Accountability Office. 1997. *Program performance measures: federal agency collection and use of performance data*. Washington DC: Government Printing Office
- United States. Government Accountability Office. 2004. *Program performance measures: federal agency collection and use of performance data*. Washington DC: Government Printing Office

United States. Government Accountability Office. 2006. *Performance budgeting. PART focuses attention on program performance, but more can be done to engage Congress*. Washington DC: Government Printing Office

UThukela District Municipality. 2021. *Mid-Year performance report, 2021/22 financial year, UThukela District Municipality*. Government Printer.

Uwizeyimana, D.E. and Basheka, B.C. 2017. *The multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary nature of public administration—a methodological challenge?* African Journal of Public Affairs, 9(9): 1-28.

Uwizeyimana, D.E. 2020. *Monitoring and evaluation in a chaotic and complex government interventions environment*. International Journal of Business and Management Studies, 12(1): 1-17.

Van der Walddt, G. 2014. *Municipal management serving the people* 2nd ed. Claremont: Juta and Company Ltd

Van Manen M. 2017. *But is it phenomenology?* Qualitative Health Research Journal 27(6): 775-779

Van-Ess, S.E. 2015. *Monitoring and evaluation tools for sanitation: a comparative study of mobile phone and traditional paper based survey of defecation practices in the Ningo-Prampram District of Ghana*. Doctoral thesis, University of Ghana, Accra, Ghana.

Waithera, S.L. and Wanyoike, D.M. 2015. *Influence of project monitoring and evaluation on performance of youth funded agribusiness projects in Bahati Sub-County, Nakuru, Kenya*. International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management, 3(11): 375.

Wang, Z. 2020. *The balance theory in Chinese administrative law*. The Frontiers of Society, Science and Technology, 2(7).

Whitchurch, G.G. and Constantine, L.L. 2009. Systems theory. In: Boss, P., Doherty, W.J., LaRossa, R., Schumm, W.R. and Steinmetz, S.K. eds. *Sourcebook of family theories and methods*. Boston, MA: Springer.

World Bank. 2014. *World population report*. Available at:
<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.1564.TO> (Accessed 22 March 2021)

- World Economic Forum (WEF). 2017. *Impact of the fourth industrial revolution on supply chains*. Available at: https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Impact_of_the_Fourth_Industrial_Revolution_on_Supply_Chains_.pdf (Accessed 22 April 2021).
- World Health Organisation. 2016a. *Evaluation of the impact of World Health Organisation publications*. Available at: https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/documents/evaluation/brief-evaluation-impact-who-publications.pdf?sfvrsn=e2fef501_2 (Accessed 22 April 2021).
- World Health Organisation. 2016b. *Monitoring and evaluating digital health interventions: a practical guide to conduct research and assessments*. Geneva: World Health Organisation.
- Wotela, K., 2016. *Introduction to South Africa's monitoring and evaluation in government*. Book Review. *Africa's Public Service Delivery & Performance Review*, 4(3): a127
- Wren, D.A., Bedeian, A.G. and Breeze, J.D. 2002. *The foundations of Henri Fayol's administrative theory*. *Management Decision*, 40(9): 906-918.
- Xing, B. Marwala, T. 2017. *Implications of the fourth industrial age on higher education*. *The Thjinker*, 73: 1703-9643.
- Xu, M., David, J.M. and Kim, S.H., 2018. *The fourth industrial revolution: opportunities and challenges*. *International Journal of Financial Research*, 9(2): 90-95.

ANNEXURES

Annexure A: Letter of information



LETTER OF INFORMATION

Title of the Research Study: Monitoring and evaluation on the performance of local government in South Africa: Insight from selected district municipalities in KwaZulu- Natal

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: Hlengiwe Nomzamo Mabizela, Masters Degree: Public Administration (DUT)

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: Dr Z. Zwane, PHD- Public Management (UKZN)

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study: Several municipalities in the South African local government are not performing as expected because of many issues, including monitoring and evaluation systems weaknesses. As a result, municipalities need to strengthen their monitoring and evaluation systems to improve performance as far as service delivery is concerned (Mello, 2018: 1). The purpose of this research study is to analyse the effect of monitoring and evaluation on the performance of uThukela District Municipality, Amajuba District Municipality, and uMgungundlovu District Municipality. The research aims to contribute to the body of knowledge by identifying monitoring and evaluation methods and strategies that the municipalities may adopt and employ in their key functions to better service delivery and performance improvement.

Good day

I am a student at Durban University of Technology (DUT) doing research for my Doctoral Degree in Public Administration within the Department of Public Management, Law & Economics. I would like to invite you to participate in the research study.

Research is a systematic search or enquiry for generalised new knowledge. You are allowed to ask as many questions as you can be regarding this research study and should you no longer wish to participate, you can withdraw by informing the researcher. You are entitled to discuss the research study with your family and friends and know that you are under no obligation to commit at this stage. You are assured that by participating in this

study, there will be no adverse or negative effects. For this purpose, a copy of the letter of information document is given to you to take home.

Outline of the Procedures:

The aim of this study is to analyse the effect of monitoring and evaluation on the performance of municipalities in South Africa, using the uThukela District, Amajuba District, and uMgungundlovu District Municipality as a case study. It seeks to examine the systems and models of monitoring and evaluation utilised by the selected district municipalities, explore challenges associated with monitoring and evaluation and the contribution of monitoring and evaluation towards the performance of municipalities and service delivery. The study will be conducted in uThukela District, Amajuba District, and uMgungundlovu district municipality. The targeted population are municipal employees working under corporate services unit, a number of 20 participants from each municipality will be selected using a purposive sampling technique. Qualitative research approach will be adopted, and focus group discussions will be conducted with potential participants to obtain data. The focus group discussions will be conducted on a face-to-face setting and will be recorded. In the event of Covid19 where face-to-face contact is prohibited, online interviews will be considered using electronic communications tools such as Zoom or MS Teams. The collected data will be analysed using thematic analysis and coded on NVIVO software package.

As a participant, you are required to participate in this research study by answering the interview questions that the researcher prepared in an interview schedule. The interview session will take a maximum time of approximately 20 minutes.

Risks or Discomforts to the Participant: The study and data collection procedures do not pose any risks.

Explain to the participant the reasons he/she may be withdraw from the Study: Participation is voluntary, you are entitled to withdraw from the study at any time and there will be no adverse consequences should you do so.

Benefits: The benefits are that this study will produce results that may contribute to municipal policies and strategic plans and provide ideas and recommendations on methods and approaches that the municipality may adopt in addressing monitoring and evaluation issues.

Remuneration: There will be no remuneration provided.

Costs of the Study: None to you

Confidentiality: You reserve the right to remain anonymous, your identity will be protected by not indicating your personal details to ensure that you are not identifiable to persons not involved in this research study.

Results: The results will be published in an accredited journal and be shared with the municipal employees, particularly those in the planning and performance unit who deal with issues of municipal monitoring and evaluation.

Research-related Injury: No injuries can be sustained through the process of data collection.

Storage of all electronic and hard copies including tape recordings: Data will be stored manually & electronically in the Department of Public Management, Law & Economics- Riverside campus where the research study is conducted and be kept for 5years and dispose of as per the DUT policy. Audio records will be permanently deleted, and hard copies will be shredded.

Persons to contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries: (Supervisor and details) Please contact the researcher Hlengiwe Mabizela (Tel no: 0734501002.), my supervisor Dr Zwelithini Zwane (Tel no: 033 845 8874.) or the Institutional Research Ethics Administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to the Director: Research and Postgraduate Support Dr. L. Linganiso on 031 373 2577 or researchdirector@dut.ac.za

Annexure B: Consent form



CONSENT

Full Title of the Study: Monitoring and evaluation on the performance of local government in South Africa: Insight from selected district municipalities in KwaZulu- Natal

Names of Researcher/s: Hlengiwe Nomzamo Mabizela

Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

☐ I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Hlengiwe Nomzamo Mabizela about the nature, conduct, benefits, and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance

Number: _____,

☐ I have also received, read, and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.

☐ I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.

☐ In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerized system by the researcher.

☐ I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.

☐ I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.

☐ I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

Full Name of Participant

Date

Time

Signature / Right

Thumbprint

I, _____ (Name of researcher) herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

Full Name of Researcher

Date

Signature

Full Name of Witness (If applicable)

Date

Signature

Full Name of Legal Guardian (If applicable)

Date

Signature

Annexure C: Interview Schedule

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE : UTHUKELA, AMAJUBA AND UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

SECTION A- MONITORING AND EVALUATION AND ITS EFFECT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

a. What is your understanding of monitoring and evaluation in local government?

b. How does the municipality monitor and evaluate its service delivery programmes?

c. How does monitoring and evaluation functions link with performances management in the municipality?

d. Describe the current state of municipal performance

e. How does the municipality utilise M&E to improve performance?

SECTION B- MONITORING AND EVALUATION MODELS AND SYSTEMS

a. What systems does the municipality utilise in monitoring and evaluating programmes?

b. Describe the effectiveness of these systems and whether they serve the intended purpose

SECTION C- CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH MONITORING AND EVALUATION

a. What are the challenges of M&E in the municipality?

b. What does the municipality do to address those challenges?

SECTION D- CONTRIBUTIONS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION IN THE MUNICIPALITY

a. In your view, how do monitoring and evaluation contribute towards achieving the strategic goals of the municipality?

b. Describe the impact of monitoring and evaluation in the effective provision of service delivery.

SECTION E- RECOMMEND POSSIBLE METHODS AND INTERVENTIONS TO STRENGTHEN MONITORING AND EVALUATION AND IMPROVE MUNICIPAL PERFORMANCE.

a. How can monitoring and evaluation be improved in the municipality?

b. Recommend methods and possible interventions that would be suitable for the municipality to perform in a manner that is required and offer quality service delivery.

Thank you for taking your precious time to participate in this research study. Your input is valued and greatly appreciated

Annexure D: Gatekeeper letter Umgungundlovu Municipality

Enquiries: Mr B Cele

15 June 2022



Dear Ms. Hlengiwe Mabizela,

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY IN THE UMDM REGARDING MONITORING AND EVALUATION ON PERFORMANCE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

This letter serves to grant Ms. Hlengiwe Mabizela a PhDs student at Durban University of Technology. She has a proposed research project towards her PhD's thesis project on the monitoring and evaluation on the performance of local government in South Africa, particularly UMDM area.

Please note that the purposes of interviewing UMDM officials, they will be approached directly, and participation is on a voluntary basis. The study should be conducted within the ambit good research and ethics as laid down by the University and include confidentiality and anonymity where necessary.

I understand that this project involves accessing information from current and/or former actors within the UMDM and that all such data will be provided to the researcher in a manner, which ensures confidentiality of the participants.

I support the conduct of this research in this organization.

Yours sincerely

DR MRS NGCUBO
MUNICIPAL MANAGER

| |
|--|
| <p>Office of the Municipal Manager PO Box 3235, Pietermaritzburg, 3200 242 Langalibalele Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201</p> <p>Tel: 033 897 6763</p> <p>Fax: 033 394 5512</p> |
|--|

Annexure E: Gatekeeper letter Amajuba Municipality



Amajuba District Municipality, Madadeni, Newcastle 2940

**RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT THE STUDY IN AMAJUBA DISTRICT
MUNICIPALITY**

03 August 2022

To whom it may concern

This letter serves to grant Ms Hlengiwe Mabizela, a student at Durban University of Technology permission to conduct her research study in Amajuba District Municipality.

She has a proposed research project towards her Doctoral Studies on monitoring and evaluation on the performance of local government in South Africa: Insight from selected district municipalities in KwaZulu- Natal. For the purpose of interviews, municipal employees will be approached directly and participation is on a voluntary basis.

The study should be conducted within the ambit good research and ethics as laid down by the University and include confidentiality and anonymity where necessary. I understand that this project involves accessing information from current actors within the Amajuba District Municipality and that all such data will be provided to the researcher in a manner, which ensures confidentiality of the participants.

I support the conduct of this research in this organization.

Regards

[Signature]

Acting Municipal Manager

Annexure F: Gatekeeper letter uThukela Municipality



MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S OFFICE DEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM

Ref. No. : 4/1/2/1

Enquiries: A Nzuza

TO: MS HLENGIWE MABIZELA

FROM: ACTING MUNICIPAL MANAGER

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT THE RESEARCH STUDY AT UTHUKELA DISTRICT

DATE: 22 JUNE 2022

This matter bears reference'

This serves as an approval to your letter dated 11th of May 2021 to conduct the research study within our Municipality (Uthukela District Municipality).

Yours faithfully

M B MNGUNI

ACTING MUNICIPAL MANAGER

Annexure G: Data analysis certificate

Dr. Rookmoney Maleni Thakur

92 Victoria Road, Hillary, Durban, 4094

B. Tech: Journalism, M. Phil: Quality Management

031-4645041 / 078 5442461

Ph.D. Public Management (DUT)

maleni.thakur@gmail.com

DATA ANALYSIS (NVIVO) CERTIFICATE LETTER

Date: 17 March 2023

Re: Hlengiwe Nomzamo Mabizela

Department of Public Management, Law and Economics

Faculty of Management Sciences

Doctoral Degree in Philosophy - Management Sciences Specialising in Public Administration: Monitoring and evaluation on the performance of local government in South Africa: Insight from selected district municipalities in KwaZulu- Natal

I confirm that I consulted and guided the PhD candidate **Hlengiwe Nomzamo Mabizela** on the use of the NVIVO 12 software for her qualitative data analysis.

Sincerely,

Dr. Maleni Thakur

Annexure H: Editing certificate

DR RICHARD STEELE

BA HDE MTech(Hom)

HOMEOPATH

Registration No. A07309 HM

Practice No. 0807524

Freelance academic editor

**Associate member: Professional Editors'
Guild, South Africa**

154 Magenta Place

Gxarha [Morgan Bay]

5292

Eastern Cape

082-928-6208

rsteele@vodamail.co.za

EDITING CERTIFICATE

Re: **Hlengiwe Nomzamo Mabizela**

For editing DUT doctoral thesis: **Monitoring and evaluation on the performance of local government in South Africa: Insight from selected district municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal**

I confirm that I have edited this dissertation and the references for clarity, language and layout. I returned the document to the author with track changes so correct implementation of the changes and clarifications requested in the text and references is the responsibility of the author. The intellectual content of the document is the responsibility of the author. I am a freelance editor specialising in proofreading and editing academic documents. My original tertiary degree which I obtained at the University of Cape Town was a B.A. with English as a major and I went on to complete an H.D.E. (P.G.) Sec. with English as my teaching subject. I was a part-time lecturer in the Department of Homoeopathy at the Durban University of Technology for 13 years and supervised many master's degree dissertations during that period.

Dr Richard Steele

29 March 2023

per email

Annexure I: Turnitin report

M&E on the performance of local government

by Hn Mabizela Thesis

Submission date: 03-Apr-2023 11:40AM (UTC+0200)

Submission ID: 2054477020

File name: TurnItIn_copy.docx (905.42K)

Word count: 43342

Character count: 253012

M&E on the performance of local government

ORIGINALITY REPORT

| | | | |
|------------------|------------------|--------------|----------------|
| 15% | 9% | 1% | 9% |
| SIMILARITY INDEX | INTERNET SOURCES | PUBLICATIONS | STUDENT PAPERS |

PRIMARY SOURCES

| | | |
|----------|--|---------------|
| 1 | Submitted to Durban University of Technology Student Paper | 4% |
| 2 | researchspace.ukzn.ac.za Internet Source | 1% |
| 3 | ir.cut.ac.za Internet Source | 1% |
| 4 | wiredspace.wits.ac.za Internet Source | 1% |
| 5 | Submitted to University of Witwatersrand Student Paper | 1% |
| 6 | hdl.handle.net Internet Source | <1% |
| 7 | apsdpr.org Internet Source | <1% |
| 8 | Submitted to North West University Student Paper | <1% |
| 9 | documents1.worldbank.org Internet Source | <1% |