THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY WORKERS IN PROMOTING SERVICE DELIVERY IN NSIKAZI NORTH, MPUMALANGA

By

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Signature:

DECLARATION

I, Jabulani Phema Mavundhla hereby declare that the study, *"**THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY WORKERS IN PROMOTING SERVICE DELIVERY IN NSIKAZI NORTH, MPUMALANGA.,**"* is my own work in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Durban University of Technology, and has not previously been submitted for assessment or completion of any postgraduate qualification to another university or for another qualification.

Signature: _____

Date: 12/07/2024 _____

ABSTRACT

Municipal IQ, a research organization that collects data on service-delivery-related protests targeting municipalities, found on average, 94 protests per year took place in South Africa between 2004 and 2016, for service delivery perceived as lacking in many South African communities. In an explorative manner, the research seeks to investigate the roles and effectiveness of community workers in improving service delivery in various communities, with special focus on rural areas of Nsikazi North, Mpumalanga province.

The primary research objective is to investigate the effectiveness of community workers in service delivery initiatives in the rural areas of Nsikazi North in the Mpumalanga Province. The study shall follow a qualitative method to collect in-depth details on the topic.

A review of literature will comprise published research relating to community workers as agents of service delivery and challenges faced by different community workers in delivering services in the community. In addition, the literature review provides information on community perception towards community workers.

A semi-structured questionnaire, combined with a semi-structured interview method will be employed to gather the required data. Residents from Nsikazi North will form the sampling frame of the envisaged research, with 12 participants selected for sampling, of which three respondents will be selected for semi-structured interviews using convenience and snowballing methods. The remaining nine respondents shall be chosen through a purposive sampling technique, which will include City of Mbombela councillors, and Community Workers.

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my Father and Mother, and my siblings. You have taught me everything I know. I love you; may God bless you abundantly.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All praise is due to the Almighty for granting me life and good health to achieve this academic ambition and for bestowing His richest blessings upon me, my family and His final Messenger, Muhammad who said: *“He, who does not thank people, does not thank Allah."*

To my supervisor, Dr. Lawrence Mphele Lekhanya, I express my sincere gratitude for believing in my abilities and always motivating me. Thank you for your professional and constructive guidance throughout the duration of this research. Your continued support and remarkable encouragement will forever remain an invaluable measure of this academic journey. Because of you, I will continue to strive to be “the best me.”

I also wish to express my gratitude to the management at Mbombela Local Municipality and its hinterlands, for permitting me to conduct research within their municipality. I also thank the respondents to the questionnaire and focus group interviews and to those who were instrumental in facilitating the distribution of my questionnaires.

Thank you to Helen Richter for your professional editing of my thesis.

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To my dear wife, Thembi Promise Mnisi, my loving daughter, Kamugelo Mavundhla, and my awesome son, Katlego Mavundhla: I thank them for their continuous support and unconditional love as well as for having infinite patience especially when I was not able to devote time to them during my research. I am truly blessed to have such a strong support structure and I pray that we will share many such precious moments together, God willing. I will love you forever.

My gratitude goes to my parents for instilling values in me to be able to make a success of my life. I am who I am because of them. I am equally grateful to both of them for teaching life lessons as different as they may be but equally useful. To those people who were instrumental in my upbringing, thank you. I am forever grateful for your support, affection and encouragement.

Finally, I would like to thank family, friends and colleagues in general who have also given me tremendous support and guidance that enabled me to complete this thesis. I am thankful for their motivation and encouragement, which aided me tremendously throughout this study, including the much-needed coffee breaks!

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CDWs	Community development workers
CDWP	Community Development Workers Programme
CHWS	Community Health Workers
COGTA	Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
CONTRALESA	Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa
DPLG	Department of Provincial and Local Government
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
SA	South Africa

CHAPTER ONE: OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on the impact of non-payment of municipal basic services in Mpumalanga Province, in the case of Nsikazi North within Mbombela Local Municipality, South Africa (SA). This introductory chapter contextualises the study, providing the background, rationale, and problem statement of the research. The primary and secondary research questions, as well as the research objectives that flowed from the problem statement are presented, in addition to an introduction of the concepts and approach towards development of the conceptual framework for the study. Concepts and the use of the literature review are explained, with single-case study research strategy highlighted, and as a precursor, so are the primary and secondary data-collection methods. The study validity and reliability are summarised, while terms frequently used in the proposal are defined and described, providing terminological clarification to avoid misinterpretation. Adherence to the Durban University of Technology (DUT) prescriptions, in terms of ethical considerations, is discussed. The chapter proposal will conclude with an outline of the chapters contained in the study.

1.2 BACKGROUND, CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

According to Smith (2008: 9), the ward committee was introduced as a community structure that acts as an advisory body; ward committees play a critical role in linking and informing municipalities regarding the needs and potential problems that may challenge the community. This means, through ward committees, community members have a platform to raise issues that affect them within their jurisdictional boundaries.

Vries (2008: 98) found the ward committee has a role in linking constituencies and their local council; this occurs when all stakeholders are involved in the integrated development plan (IDP). The democratic local government elections came with the transition of local government systems in SA, to ensure sustainability and accountability of the local sphere, as stated in the SA Constitution, Act 108 of 1996, Chapter 7, section 152(1)(b),153(a) and 155(4), thus ensuring services are provided impartially, fairly and without bias (RSA 1996).

This approach of ward committees demands a fresh developmental orientation, in which all spheres of government work closely with each other to achieve goals. According to the Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000, framework Chapter 4: section 17 (RSA 2000), “it is required for municipalities to set out core principles, mechanisms and processes that empower them to move progressively towards the social and economic upliftment of communities providing best quality basic services to all our people”.

Citizens may, as argued by Masango, (2012: 22), contribute in numerous and flexible ways that require less administrative effort than structured forums, therefore, ward committees become “a valuable structure to create a cohesive relationship between municipal officials and citizens”. This study will explore the role of community development workers (CDWs) in promoting municipal service delivery in Mpumalanga, through the case of Nsikazi North, in ensuring services are being delivered and whether they have capacity to support their mandate. In terms of the Municipal Structures Act, 117 of 1998 (RSA 1998), a ward committee is formed to stabilise communication channels between the municipality and its citizens, regardless of challenges encountered from the community.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Local government in South Africa has undergone significant and far-reaching changes since 1995. In terms of the new mandate conferred in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, local government is no longer only required to render basic services, but also to serve as an agent to promote the social and economic development of communities. These expanded responsibilities coincide with the new status conferred on local government. In a departure from the centralised tier system of government, local government now constitutes an independent sphere, embedded in a context of co-operative government with the national and provincial spheres.

The CDW programme (CDWP) aims to improve service delivery for the people, facilitate community development and work jointly towards sustainable economic and social upliftment. The basis for the CDWP can be found in the preamble of the South African Constitution, namely to “improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person”. The principles of the CDWP reflect the Batho Pele principles and the spirit of Ubuntu. The CDWP occupies a very special place in the South African Public Service (Republic of South Africa (Raga, Taylor and Gogi, 2018: 02).

The initiative is viewed as contributing to a removal of the “development deadlock”, strengthening the “democratic social contract”, advocating for an organised voice for the poor, improving the government-community network and contributing to “joined up” government. According to this initiative, most electoral wards should have a community development worker.

Although the current COGTA 2015 policy on CDW documentation provides a good overview of what is expected of these CDWs, the question is what one can learn from international experience in this regard. Interestingly, although all the COGTA 2015 policy on CDWs clearly stated their roles in the communities, there is still a lack of understanding in communities and local government space regarding the actual roles of CDWs in relation to service delivery.

Goel *et al.* (2014) explain the main focus of the community development approach is on instituting interactive processes that help communities to take autonomous decisions on meeting their needs and addressing issues that affect their life the most. It promotes collective action, rather than an individualised approach.

1.4 RESEARCH AIM

1.4.1 Main aim of this study

To explore “the role of CDWs in promoting municipal service delivery in Mpumalanga Province. A case of Nsikazi north”

1.4.2 Research sub-objectives

Based on the above, the following sub-objectives have been formulated.

- To assess the work of community workers in the rural areas of Nsikazi North in promoting service delivery.
- To explore community perception towards the role of CDWs;
- To identify the factors affecting community workers in promoting service delivery in the rural areas of Nsikazi North, Mpumalanga; and
- To recommend approaches that could be implemented improving community workers’ service delivery.

1.5 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

“To what extent does the role of Community Development Workers (CDWs) affect the promotion of municipal service delivery in Mpumalanga Province?”

1.5.1 Sub-research questions

- What is the work of community workers in the rural areas of Nsikazi North in promoting service delivery?
- To what extent are the community of rural areas of Nsikazi North view Community Workers?
- What are the factors affecting Community Workers’ ability to promote service delivery?
- What are the strategies that can be developed for Community Workers to improve service delivery?

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology can be described as the manner in which the researcher gathers, analyses and presents evidence throughout the research process (Auriacombe and Mouton 2007: 447). Further, O'Sullivan, Rassel and Berner (2007) view research methodology as a process that provides the researcher with the necessary scientific tools to respond to the research problem systematically. This study has utilised a qualitative research approach with a case study design, a literature review, and empirical data to operationalise the research objectives. The empirical survey will be utilised to analyse the knowledge, understanding and perceptions of senior municipal officials, and the community organisation and individual community members within Nsikazi North Circuit, in Mbombela Local Municipality, regarding challenges associated with service delivery.

1.6.1 Research paradigm

Creswell and Creswell (2018:46) states that while philosophical ideas remain hidden in research, they heavily influence the whole research process by providing the basis on which research approaches (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods) are built, and as such, they should be identified. Therefore, it is against this backdrop that this study was underpinned by the constructivist worldview, which assumes that there is

no single reality and that reality is always subjective and socially constructed (Creswell & Creswell 2018:48).

1.6.2 Research design

According to De Vaus (2001:9) research design is a logical structure of enquiry, specific procedure that is used to select, process, and identify information on a proposed research topic. In this regard, research design is another con¬cept of paramount importance in research, because it demonstrates the nature of a study, be it explanatory, exploratory, or case study. A research design is the set of methods and procedures used to collect and analyse measures of the variables specified in the problem research (Labaree 2009:26). A research design is the arrangement of condi¬tions for the collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy and procedure (Gupta & Gupta 2011:31). In the current study, a case study design of Nsikazi North was adopted.

1.6.3 Population and sampling

Wiid and Diggines (2021:216) define population in research “as a group of people who, as a result of their common identity, behaviour, norms, values and characteristics, are able to provide the necessary information required for the research study”. In determining the population, the study considered common observable characteristics of the population such as their role and influence in the management of the youth development academies. In relating to qualitative research, to establish target population, Bryman (2016:416) is of the view that one of the difficulties is to establish how many people will be interviewed. A number smaller than 20 research participants, enhances the chances of the researcher to be actively involved with the participants during the interview-based studies and allows an opportunity to generate detailed data.

1.6.3.1 Sampling

Methods of qualitative research are not prescriptive, are in-depth in approach and can be confined to a certain study and its context. Wagner et al. (2012:88) are of the view that in qualitative research, the researcher focuses on rich data through a small sample and the sample should not be too small that it is challenging to accomplish saturation of data. In line with Bryman (2016:408) a qualitative sampling provides the researcher with several principles of purposive sampling on which to draw a sample.

1.6.3.2 Sampling method

In qualitative research studies, the researcher intentionally selects a sample with familiarity with the study topic to ensure their data is more meaningful. Equally important, intentionally choosing these groups is about gathering the broader perspectives, which offer contrary evidence on the study goals (Yin 2011:88). In Wagner et al. (2012:89) views probability sampling allows all research participants to have an equal opportunity to be part of the sample and the researcher can randomly choose the number required for the study sample. Additionally, non-probability sampling can be used when it is not feasible to access the whole study population and it is different from probability sampling.

In the non-probability sampling, not all population units will have an equal opportunity to be selected for the study (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis & Bezuidenhout 2014:137) and it is this reasons that for the qualitative method of this study, the researcher chose purposive sampling, which allowed the researcher to get rich data and broader perspectives on the research questions. The strategic choice for certain research participants in this study is largely informed by the principles of the purposive sampling method.

1.6.4 Data collection methods

The study adopted a qualitative approach, and the various instruments and tools that were used to collect data are discussed below:

1.6.4.1 Literature and document review

A comprehensive literature review on the study's key constructs: CDWs, capacity, and governance. The study analysed the theories related to capacity and institutional governance. The purpose of the literature review is to generate arguments heading to hypotheses and research questions. Additionally, literature provides an opportunity to review and synthesise to advance a new perspective. Overall, a literature review is about establishing the context of the topic or rationalising the significance of the problem and theory applications of the study (McEwan 2018:2 & Tight, 2019:5).

Gross (2018:2) believes that all types of documents can help the researcher uncover insights, develop theory, and understand the topic of study. It is important to remember that all documents exist within the context of their creation, and, meaning as well as

contribute towards a depiction of the construct being studied. Documents, in the form of published or unpublished documents can be found in the public or private sector.

1.6.4.2 Qualitative data collection instruments

Moser and Korstjens, (2017:1) state that the qualitative method's choice is to gather perspectives, experiences, and interpretations of the phenomenon under investigation. The aim is to obtain a rich and detailed understanding and interpretation of CDWS, communities and community organisations and academics regarding the impact of CDWS on service delivery. Data collection was done through semi-structured interviews with all the mentioned. This method of data collection allows the researcher to have greater freedom and flexibility of the interaction with the participants. The participants' role and understanding inform their selection to study the process of this department.

1.6.5 Data analysis

Roulston (2014:311) states that qualitative analysis uses various methods to characterise data and themes with direct quotations from transcripts. The study should capture narratives that represent participants' experiences and perspectives. The interview transcripts were coded and issues arising from them were aligned to thematic areas arising from the literature review and research questions.

Data was analysed through Thematic Content Analysis (TCA). Braun and Clarke (2006:2) define TCA as a method used for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns in the data. TCA proceeds by breaking down the information collected into themes. The researcher identified trends and patterns that developed from the data collected. The patterns were then coded and classified into different categories that were used to analyse the findings of the study.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The main contribution of this study is the development of a municipal functionality strategy for municipal services. This study is, therefore, an attempt to make a scholarly contribution in narrowing the literature gap on municipal service delivery, and to a new strategic framework at an empirical and theoretical level, for sustainable local governance and performance in municipalities. The absence of a valid, reliable, and relevant service delivery of municipal services strategy by the municipality makes it very difficult for municipalities and some key oversight institutions to provide proactive,

yet targeted responses to performance delivery challenges within Nsikazi North Circuit. The proposed strategy has the potential to curb non-delivery of municipal services to the community of Nsikazi in Mbombela Local Community.

1.8 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In reality, delimitations are specific boundaries the researcher imposes, which in this study, has been delimited to Nsikazi Circuit in Mbombela Local Municipality. Delimitations of the study focus on the ideas the investigators plan to use to define the parameters or boundaries of their inquiry, so the goals and objectives of the study will not be too challenging to achieve. In terms of the study context, Nsikazi Circuit in Mpumalanga Province, in SA, was selected because the municipality is under-performing and is still failing to deliver on its constitutional mandate.

The literature review considered in this study is biased towards dysfunctionality of municipal service delivery within the municipality. Moreover, a qualitative method approach was adopted to present a clear picture of the nexus that exists between municipal functionality and good governance. As such, the selection of a qualitative method is meant to present a comprehensive analysis based on the qualitative method. It is important to mention a respondent sample representative of the municipality was used in the study. In addition, the study also used secondary data gathering and analysis to crosscheck the information gathered from the primary data sources for validity and authenticity, in an effort to reduce proximity and collecting data from every source available.

The proposed recommendations suggested can, however, be transferred to other municipalities experiencing distress. Furthermore, service delivery is a broad concept, delimited into basic service delivery as stipulated on schedule 4 of the 1996 constitution that specifically deals with functional areas of concurrent national and provincial legislative competencies, which presented limitations on the results obtained. Last, the study utilised only a sample of the targeted population and secondary data sources.

1.9 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter provided the introduction to the study, comprising the background to the study, the problem statement, research aim, and objectives, as well as the research questions, significance and study delimitations, along with a preliminary literature review, research methodology details, chapter outline and conclusion.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter consists of a summation of the literature reviewed for the study. In addition, the conceptual, theoretical and legislative framework underpinning the study is examined. An empirical related literature review on the phenomenon under study will also be presented in this chapter.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

A detailed report of how the research will be carried out, including aspects such as data collection techniques and sampling, will be the area of focus in this chapter.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation, analysis and discussion

The chapter shows the data gathered after it was condensed, analysed and interpreted, including the methods used.

Chapter 5: Summary of findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Attention will be directed to the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the researcher in chapter five.

1.0 CONCLUSION

The first chapter of the study offered a detailed discussion on the introduction and background. The study background was researched to provide a foundation for the research goal, problem statement, priorities, and questions. The next chapter focuses on the review of literature, theoretical underpinnings, legal and policy frameworks pertaining to CDWs and service delivery (in the provision of basic services) in SA.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Despite a growing body of research on the effect of decentralised governance and public service delivery, the current literature has predominantly focused on public service quality and outcomes and has, therefore, not sufficiently answered the research questions outlined in chapter one. Thus, little is known regarding how the role of CDWs promotes service delivery in rural community society, in specific. Moreover, researchers have not yet systematically examined and tested the understanding and lack thereof, where the roles played by different agents of service delivery and various stakeholders are concerned. Furthermore, most studies that dealt with service delivery focused on its impact on society and the value chain of the economy. The chapter will be as follows: importance of service delivery and its agents; legislative framework on service delivery; and different agencies of service delivery.

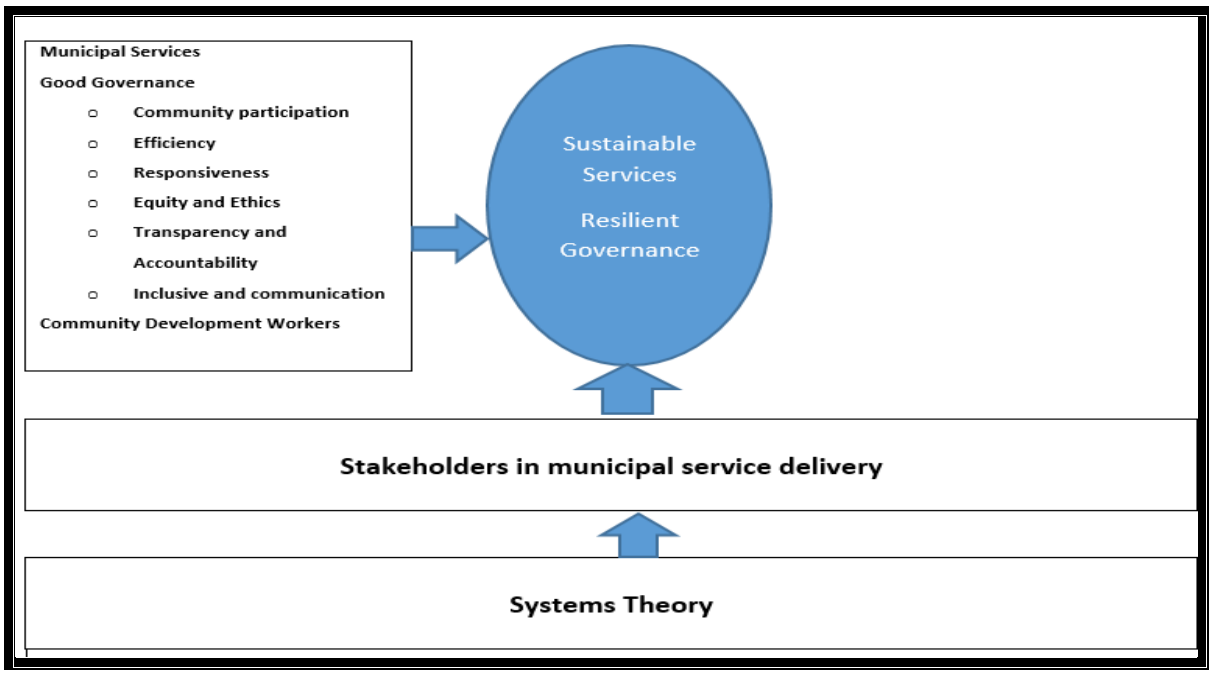
2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This section explores the concepts of water governance and social equity in the provision of water services at a local level. Moreover, other concepts such as social values, governance, governance principles and their relationship are explored to better understand how they influence the achievement of equitable water governance. This approach is consistent with Jarabeen (2009), who defined the conceptual framework as "a network or a system of interconnected and correlated concepts that together convey a holistic appreciation of a specific phenomenon" as cited in Chakunda (2017: 44).

CDWs are participatory change agents who work in the communities where they live, and to whom they have to answer for their activities (Department of Provincial and Local Government, 2005. They are required to help people in communities improve their own lives and change their circumstances. To do this, CDWs are expected to help community members understand how they can participate in the plans for development in their communities. CDWs are expected to facilitate community participation in policy-making and implementation, and in service delivery. CDWs provide community members with information and help to empower individuals and communities. One of the main roles of the CDW is to guide and support community members working in

community-based projects, such as small business development, assisting people to generate an income, or projects that develop local assets and resources.

Fig 2.1 Relationship of variables in municipal service delivery



Source: The researcher (2022)

2.2.1 Municipal Services

Reddy (2016) states local government is a part of government closer to citizens, mandated to develop and provide municipal goods and services to the benefit and satisfaction of the public, to improve their quality of life. Local governments are there to give effective and sustainable service delivery to the residents.

Municipal duties as stated in Schedule Part B of the South African Constitution (1996) states that provision of water, sanitation, transport services, and electrical power, as well as education, good health services, and housing in a non-threatening environment to all citizens, on condition the endowment is practical and maintainable. Moreover, the Municipal Systems Amendment Act (No.32 of 2000) regulates the responsibilities for all municipalities.

These include prioritising the needs of local citizens; enhancing the growth of local communities and guaranteeing all local citizens are able access the minimum primary services. Municipal services are, however, not completely well-defined; rather the Constitution and its new laws (Municipal Systems Act, 2000 and Municipal Structures

Act, 1998) decide what is deemed basic municipal services. Section 73 of the Systems Act explains the basic municipal service as a kind of municipal service essential in ensuring a standard and sensible quality of life that when not rendered, is a danger to public safety, health and or the environment. Mbombela Local Municipality must make efforts to ensure citizens access basic services as stipulated in the constitution.

Municipal services are defined as those services mainly or completely funded by taxation. As such, they can differ markedly from commercial private-sector services in several ways (Ferguson 2019). Public service exists to provide the necessary service to the public at lower or no cost at all; these services are essential for the survival of the public, such as water, electricity, healthcare service, and general protection of lives and properties. One important factor in this level, is the value of service provided to citizens (Kolawole 2020).

In essence, service delivery refers to the distribution of basic services such as safe water supply, electricity, health services, and roads, along with street lighting, traffic controls, refuse collection, and sewage disposal and maintenance, as well as municipal parks and recreation. The importance of service delivery falls on municipalities, as they are directly responsible for maintaining healthy living conditions and improving quality of life for communities (Development bank of Southern Africa 2022).

Efficient and effective public service delivery is a necessity for local communities within the municipality well-being (Armah-Attoh 2015). Nonetheless, in Africa, access to quality public services remains a challenge. According to the Mo Ibrahim Foundation index report (2018: 17), “the average African public service displays a lack of capacity, with higher costs than in other regions and large country disparities”. According to Nkomo (2017), numerous demonstrations and protests, often violent, have highlighted popular perceptions that local governments have not kept campaign promises of good service delivery – most fundamentally, Nelson Mandela’s 1994 promise of “a better life for all”. Municipal IQ (2017), a research organization that collects data on service-delivery-related protests targeting municipalities, found on average, 94 protests per year took place in SA between 2004 and 2016 – suggesting accountability for service delivery is perceived as lacking in many South African communities.

2.2.2 Governance

The theme of governance has become a part of current public policy management and administration trends. It has also been emphasised that the government is not synonymous with governance (Tortajada 2010; Ribeiro and Johnsson 2018). The concept of governance has also brought a paradigm shift in government styles. Governance systems have shifted from being centralised and using top-down approaches, to embracing the ideals of inclusivity, transitioning to decentralisation and being more inclined to utilising bottom-up ways, thereby bringing up a shared responsibility aspect in society (Funke *et al*. 2008; Schulz *et al*. 2016; Ribeiro and Johnsson 2018). In terms of public policy and administration, governance was created to allow for state reforms in response to criticisms of the previous model of public administration, which was connected with Fordist ideas. It, therefore, opposes the outdated and inefficient bureaucratic and rigid forms of interaction between state and society (Schulz *et al*. 2016: 242)

Therefore, the concept of governance involves various arrays, ranging from processes, institutions, and mechanisms such as laws and regulations, both formal and informal. It involves the influential networks involved, government action, local initiatives, and the international market, as well as the private sector, and the civil sector (Ribeiro and Johnsson 2018: 4). In addition, Ribeiro and Johnsson (2018) further contend governance is how society itself and the individuals that comprise it, regulate all the different aspects of their collective life; it is not what the state does for society. In the context of this study, governance is thus viewed as “a precondition for attaining constitutional objectives for local government, particularly basic services, ranging from providing service delivery to guaranteeing safety and healthy communities, among other goals” (Sutcliffe and Bannister 2020: 13).

2.2.3 Community participation

Community participation, that is, the direct involvement or engagement of ordinary people in the affairs of planning, governance and overall development programmes at local or grassroots level, has become an integral part of democratic practice in recent years (Madzivhandila & Asha 2012). In SA for example, the Constitution of the Republic, 1996, provides that the final form of local government should be developmental. The White Paper on Local Government (1998) established the mechanism by which developmental local government could be achieved.

Community participation is found to be a valid mechanism to promote such a developmental mandate in higher prominence as it hold strong appeal for multiple actors such as communities and civil societies (Burde 2004; Williams 2006). In the past, there has been a tendency to respond to the gap that exists between citizens and state institutions in one or two ways. First, attention has been made to strengthen the process of participation, in that the poor people exercise their voice through new forms of inclusion, consultation or mobilisation, designed to inform and influence institutions and policies. Second, growing attention has been paid to how to strengthen the accountability and responsiveness of those institutions and policies through changes in institutional design and a focus on the enabling structures or good governance (Cornwall & Gaventa 2001).

2.2.4 Community Development Workers (CDWs)

According to the Community Development Handbook (2007: 14) “CDWs are participatory change agents who work in the communities where they live, and to whom they have to answer for their activities”. As the definition stated they are change agents, their functions are thus required to help people in communities improve their own lives and change their circumstances. To do this, CDWs are expected to help community members understand how they can participate in development plans for their communities. Their functions are expected to facilitate community participation in policy-making and implementation, and in service delivery, as well as provide community members with information and help empower individuals and communities. One of the main roles of the CDW is to guide and support community members working in community-based projects, for example small business development, assistance in generating income, or developing local assets and resources.

2.3 Theoretical framework

The study is founded on theoretical foundations such as Systems Theory, based on the findings of Bruce, Friedman, and Allen (cited in Brandell 2011: 36), who state systems theory was created to better explain "how societies were organized and how they preserved cohesion or group identity across time". Given the lack of clear direction on the various municipal institutions' cooperation and collaboration approaches, the researcher believes systems theory will aid efforts to overcome the fragmentation within South African waste management processes. Incorporating systems theory, the study advances the premise that changing the interaction between local municipalities

and local communities will boost trust in local government, while also allowing local government to better understand the requirements of communities.

In the same vein, to improve inter-governmental relations (IGR) and cooperative governance amongst various state organs, a study using systems theory as part of the analytical framework and alternative perspective is being conducted. Government officials and the municipality are examples of organizations built up of interdependent parts and systems (Clark and Werder 2007: 526). Systems theory is used to better understand the interface between executive, legislative, judicial, and civic supervision on municipal actions in this study. Based on these explanations, the researcher believes theory is a useful tool for developing an ideal framework for enhancing the operation of South African towns, following an intervention.

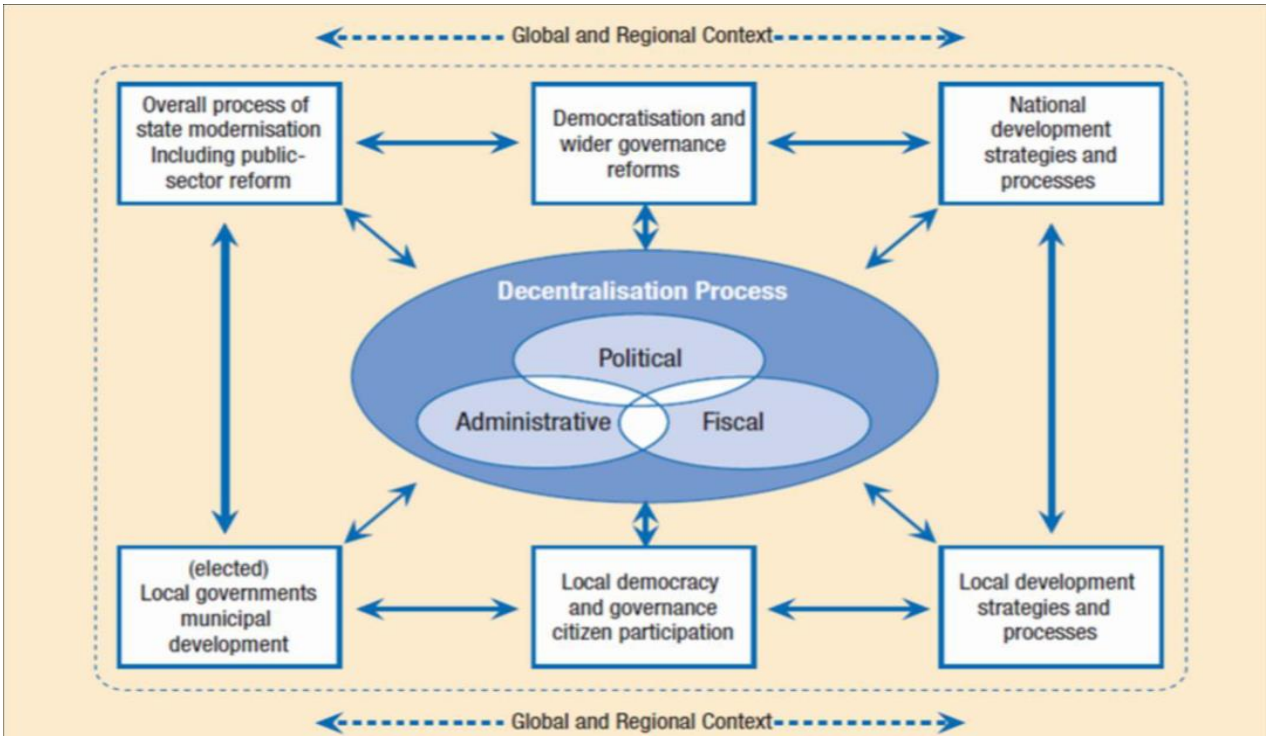


Figure 2.1: Systems Theory and approach to Public Governance

Source: EuropeAid (2007)

2.4 COMMUNITY DEVELOMNET WORKs AS AGENTS OF SERVICE DELIVERY

In 2003, the South African Government introduced the provincially administered CDW system; however, it was operated in municipalities, according to geographic ward demarcation. CDWs are appointed public servants governed by the Public Service Act 1994 (Act 103 of 1994). According to the former SA Minister of Public Service and Administration, Minister Fraser-Moleketi CDWs are a fundamental building block of the

public service, registering an important step forward in the country's developmental agenda. CDWs can be defined as participatory change agents who work in the communities where they live, and to whom they answer for their activities (Community Development Handbook 2007: 14). CDWs are expected to help community members understand how they can participate in development plans for their communities, as well as facilitate community participation in policy-making and implementation, and in service delivery (Ministry for Public Service and Administration 2007).

Disoloane and Lekonyane (2011) assert the 2009-2010 public service delivery protests emanating from local community members in SA have raised questions with regard to the effective functioning of CDWs. The Community Development Workers Programme (CDWP) has been introduced and collectively overseen by the Department of Public Service and Administration and the Department of Provincial Local Government (DPLG), with the objective of accelerating service delivery. Tshishonga (2018 543) state in SA, the functioning of the different spheres of government is stipulated in the 1996 Constitution and consolidated through the notion of IGR. More importantly, IGR are aimed at promoting good and co-operative governance across national, provincial and local level government, including the smooth operations between and among existing public departments within the public sector.

It is expected CDWs are knowledgeable regarding services provided by various departments in all the spheres of government. Furthermore, it is essential all spheres of government cooperate to provide citizens with a complete package of services that will improve their conditions (The Ministry for Public Service and Administration 2007: 8). By law, CDWs are expected to regularly communicate, among others, government initiatives in a way that is easily accessible to community members.

Literature shows CDWs make community concerns known regarding national and provincial government service issues, as well as local government (Mokoena and Moeti 2017). These authors further state well-trained CDWs will help enrich the quality of government services for communities by identifying new programmes and creating linkages and coordination with other community stakeholders. For example, CDWs will help people access information and services to set up community-based projects such as small business development projects.

The CDWP is based on the following objectives, as identified by the Ministry for Public Service and Administration (2007: 9), with the aim to:

- Deepen democracy;
- Contribute to citizen education;
- Ensure integration and coordinated function of government at all spheres and between departments;
- Raise skills levels within local government;
- Improve dissemination of information to all sectors of society.

2.4.1 Roles and functions of CDWs in SA

The Ministry for Public Service and Administration (2007) describes the roles of CDWs as follows:

- To assist in smooth service delivery by identifying and removing obstacles;
- To strengthen the social contract between government and communities;
- To link communities with government services;
- To pass on community concerns and problems to government structures;
- To support and nurture the increased exchange of information;
- To improve government–community networks.

The above serve to emphasise the significance of government working together with local communities. In essence, CDWs are formed to bridge the gap between government and citizens in great need of services provided by it. It is a complementary structure to existing structures in municipalities. Research conducted by Mokoena and Moeti (2017) determined the CDWs coordinate teams of volunteers in community projects, as well as teams employed on public works programmes, while also assisting communities to develop and submit proposals for inclusion in IDPs to municipalities, and other spheres of government or to donors. Community participation is a key concept, where communities should make decisions on the type of service delivery they are expecting. Therefore, CDWs are tasked to strengthen the link between government and the people (COGTA Mpumalanga 2009).

2.4.2 Overview of CDWs in Nsikazi North

In the overview of CDWs in “The Handbook on Community Development Workers (CDWs) of South Africa”, the DPLG stated:

> "[…] they are community-based resource persons who collaborate with other community activists to help fellow community members to obtain information and resources from service providers with the aim of learning how to progressively meet their needs, achieve goals, realize their aspirations and maintain their well-being"
> (DPLG 2005: 14).

Established after the state of the nation address presented by President Mbeki, in 2003, CDWs were introduced in order to act as the direct link between the government and communities to promote democracy, social and economic integration, and social justice. The CDWP was meant to be an effort by government to deepen democracy at local community level and intended to provide citizens of the country with direct access to government in a people-centred way. It was hoped this people-centred approach would bring government to the doorstep of individual citizens, in keeping with the principles of Batho Pele ("People First") (DPLG 2005: 13).

This explains the need to have CDWs living in the communities they serve, so they will have first-hand knowledge in addressing issues that matter to the community. It was not a political misguide to decide to have such people in the communities, though there could be political shifts and contrasting opinions regarding the programmes under consideration. Some may view this as a political tactic of the ruling party to strengthen their hegemony. While that could be correct in certain instances, as long as the people engage their CDWs to their benefit, it will not be the case. It was also not a political fallacy to implement the CDWP, though some members of the institution may well be use them for their personal and political gain since CDWP are working closer to the communities, they can be used for political campaigning.

There are, indeed, cases recorded where the efforts of CDWs have resulted in the realisation of improvements in certain communities, while there is still much to done by others so the people of SA can reap the benefits of living under a democratic government. The CDWP is a government effort to re-engineer service delivery, particularly in the rural areas, where service delivery has traditionally been slow and suffering (DPLG 2005: 8).

Should the public and the municipal workers have had a properly established working relationship (meaning the developmental promises of the government had already

been established), the creation of the CDW would have not been necessary, as communities would already have had access to the government provided services without problems. The aim and timing of establishing the CDW corps was good, though at some point in time, the programme will have to be reviewed.

The following are the functions of the CDW as specified in "The Handbook for CDWs" (DPLG 2005: 17-18):

- "Disseminate government and other information to community members in a timely and equitable manner.
- Supervise work teams of volunteers or community members involved in community projects, such as those employed on public works programmes.
- Assist communities in understanding, developing and submitting IDPs to municipalities and other spheres of government or donors.
- Coordinate inter-departmental programmes and encourage improved integration.
- Maintain ongoing liaison and collaboration with various community-based organisations and other cadres of community-based workers;
- Promote the principle of Batho Pele and community participation.
- Alert communities and other service providers to problems and delays in the delivery of basic services.
- Assist in the implementation of government programmes and projects.
- Liaise and advocate on behalf of communities with government, parastatals, NGO and private sector donors.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of developmental government projects and programmes on communities and submit a report to the relevant structures of government; and
- Help government in its efforts to realize the People's Contract of a better life for all."

In summary, the duty of the CDW is to bring government closer to the people. They are expected to coordinate the inputs of all stakeholders, such as Community Based Organisations (CBOs), Non-government Organisations (NGOs), and government departments to support a common purpose, which is a better life for all people. That is the reason former President Mbeki recommended an echelon that is multi-skilled and able to execute those responsibilities.

According to the Local Government Bulletin (May 2011), the CDWP is a strategic government initiative aimed at bridging the gap between government and the community they serve, thereby also creating a critical link in terms of public participation. The Offices of the Premiers in each province of SA is responsible for the co-ordination of the programmes, while provincial local government departments provide the administrative and logistical support.

In short, the CDWs are within communities to strengthen participatory democracy through capacitating, educating and encouraging public participation. The individuals employed to fill these positions need to be truly multi-skilled; preferably people who have, for example, a background of developmental studies and not merely comrades within the communities. These are the kind of bureaucrats that must disseminate government projects, programmes and other information to community members in a timely and equitable manner and assist communities in understanding, developing and submitting IDPs to municipalities and other spheres of government or donors.

Should the provincial government department have appointed people who have the necessary credentials to fill these positions, the possibility exists the community strike actions that negatively affected certain municipalities, including Nsikazi North within Mbombela Local Municipality, could have been avoided (Sowetan 2010: 3). It should also be stated the CDWs have thus far failed to reduce the nationwide service delivery protests of rural communities. It is, therefore, high time for a milestone review to be conducted on the role of the CDWs, to implement improvements and make adjustments on their operations.

It cannot be denied some are not skilled and competent to hold their positions. This is the reason they are not fulfilling the mandate handed to them, and their communities are suffering, as they do not execute their functions. This is supported by the Independent Democrats, when they state the CDWs were draining the fiscus while doing nothing (Sowetan 2010: 1). Indeed, the CDWs will be subjected to contradictory views that are politically charged because some do not deliver or execute their tasks. Though there are some CDWs that have displayed a sterling contribution to their communities, others have not contributed anything toward changing the lives of the people in their neighborhoods for the better.

In such instances, action needs to be taken because, in general, South African communities need development; therefore, individuals who do not perform should not hold them back. In other words, those who do not do their duties must either improve their record of accomplishment or find their way out of the system. The creation of CDWs is viewed as a very important initiative to bring government nearer to the people, enabling it to respond to real community needs. After the entrance of the democratic government in 1994, the pace of addressing the developmental backlog presented many challenges, hence, CDWs were brought in to fast-track the addressing of service delivery issues (DPLG 2005: 8).

It needs to be emphasised this kind of individual should be selfless, who will work tirelessly in focusing on helping their community fight poverty. They also should be individuals that reside in the ward where they operate, to better understand the challenges their neighborhood experiences.

2.4.3 Challenges and Failures of CDWP

During the latter decades of the twentieth century, the United Kingdom (UK) local government faced a crisis of public confidence in accountability of systems, calibre of councillors and officers and ability to deliver high quality services. This crisis had been developing since the 1960s, with the local state increasingly viewed as “excessively bureaucratic. In response, various New Right reforms were introduced during the 1980’s and 1990’s, including internal markets, privatisation and systems for consumer feedback, as part of a broader ‘new public management’ programme (Clarke *et al*. 2000). Arguably, these reforms further weakened local authorities by reducing their control over delivery, whilst also presenting challenges to the roles of elected councillors (Wilkinson and Craig 2002). With the election of New Labour in 1997, ‘modernisation’ of local government was seen as a priority, within a broader project of modernising public services (Department of the Environment, Transport and the Region, 1998a, b).

According to Newman (2000: 47), “political agenda is characterised by an uneasy mix of broad social goals (such as tackling social exclusion) with the economic goal of curtailing public spending”. It is about transforming the relationship between the states, market and civil society as part of New Labour’s ‘Third Way’ (Giddens 1998). As such, it creates inherent tensions and contradictions between the old and new agendas, and

between fundamentally different models of the relationship between the state and the individual, depending on whether the individual is seen as citizen or consumer.

2.4.4 Progress of the CDWP

Given the limited ability of municipalities to supervise workers, as noted by Marais and Botes (2006), not to mention the severe hardship experienced by poor communities in SA, even the most enthusiastic CDW would be hard-pressed to persevere amid the institutional confusion in implementation of the CDWP. The challenge was compounded not only by the apathy of communities that are mistrustful of the government but also their suspicion of these new 'government spies', as they saw them. Nurturing a culture of participation is a huge challenge, even in the most promising situations, but is especially difficult for those involved in top-down, state-led community development programmes.

A recent study by the Foundation for Contemporary Research, which monitors the implementation of the CDWP in the Western Cape Province, found the focus groups involving 53 CDWs, iterated their relationship with key stakeholders – councillors and ward committee members, most of whom were voluntary workers – was tenuous at best (Mackay and Davids 2006). There was an overwhelming lack of understanding regarding CDW roles and responsibilities, with mounting tension as the CDWP progressed. The CDW brief was broad and the work environment was politically charged, with power issues exacerbated by confusion as to who oversaw these workers and to whom they were accountable; this led to dysfunctional relationships and a lack of cooperation (Gray and Mabungizi 2009).

On the one hand, local government officials and councillors felt threatened by the CDWs' direct line of reporting to the DPLG, regarded them with suspicion and were afraid lest they usurp their role. The CDWs, on the other hand, felt undervalued, unappreciated and underestimated. They expressed concern that local government officials and councillors used them as a buffer between themselves and disgruntled communities, thus putting their lives at risk. Councillors, on the other hand, felt undermined by these 'loose cannons', as they referred to them, who refused to take instructions from them and who completely lacked accountability (Mackay and Davids 2006).

Tensions arose between CDWs and ward committee members, as most committee members were voluntary, while CDWs were paid employees. The absence of a change management system to usher in the CDWP had effectively placed the burden of infrastructural and logistical arrangements on councillors and ward committees, who had not been consulted on the implementation of the CDW training programme, or on discussions on the CDW roles and functions and who, most importantly, were ill equipped for this role. While CDWs reported to the provincial government, there was very little guidance or support, as DPLG officials promised (Gray and Mabungizi 2009).

It is further argued CDWs too were not a homogenous group and a great deal of infighting took place between the various training cohorts, with many remaining unemployed. Those who were employed performed diverse tasks and responsibilities with limited resources. However, Gray and Mabungizi (2009) also state it was unclear who was responsible for the CDWs. Most were under the impression it was the municipality's responsibility, while municipalities believed it was the DPLG's responsibility. Hence, there has been a great deal of uncertainty, confusion and negativity about the CDWP, leaving all involved deeply frustrated and disillusioned, with many predicting yet another failed programme. Clearly, there are major issues facing CDWs in SA, not the least the clash of community and government interests, in a context where the neoliberal economic agenda is at odds with the goals of social development.

The poorly developed infrastructure and ongoing poverty makes the strengthening of civil society, as well as empowerment and capacity-building of local communities, an arduous task. It is particularly challenging in rural areas – where community development is most needed – despite the Integrated Rural Development Strategy (IRDS). What infrastructure there is, remains uncoordinated with diverse agencies – government, non-government and community-based organizations and private companies – involved in the implementation of community development programmes. Many of these agencies have to compete for scarce resources; consequently, they operate in silos and work at cross-purposes with one another.

As noted by Bhattacharyya (2004), community organizations need to form powerful collaborative networks for community development to be effective. Isolated local community development projects are not equal to the task. However, the will of local communities – and theory of self-determination – seems to run counter to effective

coordinated strategies. This is partly the result of resistance to externally imposed community development programmes without negotiation with beneficiaries, “or careful thinking through their potential effects on the poor” (Ruiters 2007: 491). Local community drives for autonomy militate against a broader coordinated change strategy.

2.4.5 The Crisis in Implementation of Community Development Programmes

Local authorities are finding it increasingly difficult to meet ever-rising demands for high quality, yet cost-effective, services (Pollitt 2000). The new public management techniques developed in response to these demands (seen through programmes such as ‘Best Value’) have led to further policy and practice changes, building on consumerist market principles (Clarke *et al*. 2000). The adoption of individualistic mechanisms, such as complaint and suggestion schemes, performance management and target setting, is quite prevalent, with the widespread use of mechanisms, such as public meetings and area forums, as a way for local authorities to consult with people from local areas (Office of Deputy Prime Minister 2002). This has resulted in “an inevitable tension between the centralising logic of managerialism and the decentralising strategy of governance” (Not in refs: 24).

2.4.6 Funding of projects for CDW

Mkhatshwa-Ngwenya and Khumalo (2020: 272) assert local governments are viewed as custodians of public funds, they need supplementary financial advantage to be sustainable. Local governments should actually be operated similar to entrepreneurs and not be dependent on grants only from other spheres of government. Reddy (2010: 82) affirms the demarcation process has resulted in some municipalities neither having an economic base nor being financially viable. Local government needs more resources and continuous capacity-building to enable meaningful oversight of government's multi-billion development programmes.

According to Mosha (2010: 13), most municipalities do not have the right calibre of both managerial and technical staff to plan and implement projects successfully. Professionals such as engineers, valuators, architects, and quantity surveyors and others, who are not offered attractive salaries, inform this. In Kenya, the level of capacity is mixed, hence community-based participatory planning is used to deliver services, plan and implement projects. In Nigeria, the situation is highly variable, while in Uganda, most decentralisation projects undertaken have included capacity-building

components. In Malawi, Rwanda, and Botswana, the system has been weak due to historical central government control.

Most African local governments experienced challenges in finance due to mismanagement of funds, attributable to lack of administrators' managerial skills, and mismanagement of resources allocated for development and corrupt practices. Some projects were not implemented and others were started but funds were siphoned by corrupt officials (either alone or conniving with people in the private sector) (Mosha 2010). Zybrands (2012) argues unfunded or very little funded mandates such as housing, library services, tourism, and welfare services, along with support for the Commission, negatively affect service delivery.

Mosha (2010) further asserts it is obvious municipal government in Africa needs substantial help and guidance in developing an adequate local revenue system. In SA, some municipalities do have collection procedures or strategies in place but these are, unfortunately, either not implemented accordingly or interrupted by other spheres of government such as electricity cut-offs.

2.4.7 Recognition of 'wicked issues'

The increasing awareness of the complexity of social issues, specifically the inter-related ('wicked') nature of issues such as poverty, social exclusion and crime, has led to a pronounced policy emphasis on partnership working between agencies and sectors at all levels (Glendinning. 2002). These partnership approaches endeavour to address previous criticisms of agencies for dealing with individual aspects of issues in isolation, with limited effectiveness (Audit Commission 2001).

In the case of SA, local community development initiatives are prone to failure, because most municipalities do not have the capacity, skills or leadership to implement developmental local government policy. It is a terrain marked by 'institutional confusion' (Marais and Botes 2006: 384), not the least in relation to the CDWP. As Marais and Botes (2006) noted, the Constitution (RSA 1996) makes local government responsible for the social and economic development of communities. This and other policies, such as the White Paper on Local Government (RSA 1998) and the Municipal Systems Act 32 (RSA 2000), set the scene for the government's positive disposition towards social and community development.

Marais and Botes (2006) have described the LED programme through the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) and its failure to create sustainable community enterprises beyond the grant-driven phase of projects. In this study, we examine the progress of a recent programme, the CDWP, also intended to enhance community development at local government level.

2.5 CITIZENS' ATTITUDE AND PERSPECTIVE TOWARDS MUNICIPAL SERVICE

From a global perspective, individuals tend to identify needs in their communities that government departments are neither designed nor able to meet, because of scarce resources, as witnessed in most developing countries (Zihindula *et al*. 2019). The 2018 Afro barometer survey asked South Africans how well or badly they think their local government was dealing with five service-delivery tasks. Half or more of the respondents said their municipalities were performing "fairly badly" or "very badly" at maintaining local roads (56 percent) and marketplaces (55 percent), managing the use of land (54 percent), and maintaining health standards, such as in restaurants and food stalls (50 percent). Only on one task, keeping the community clean, did a slim majority (52 percent) assess their local government's performance as "fairly" or "very" good (Nkomo 2017).

Many developing countries face service delivery challenges with public protest having resulted in many of these countries (Alexander *et al*. 2018; Morudu 2017). It is in this context many regions in SA have observed service delivery protests characterised by increased violence in the past decade. Several scholars have, on the one hand, argued these protests can be attributed to organizational failure to provide satisfactory basic services (Peyper 2016; Nkomo 2017). On the other hand, other scholars hold citizen satisfaction is also an expectation of government performance (Mangai 2016).

Pursuant to government efforts to improve service delivery, South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) data from 2003 to 2016 revealed variations in citizen satisfaction, with a broad range of service delivery including water, electricity, healthcare, and refuse collection, as well as housing. However, it can be revealed service delivery satisfaction levels differ based on numerous factors (Mangai 2016). However, dissatisfaction is not always related to actual living conditions (Moore 2015). According to Statistics SA (StatsSA 2016), the unemployment rate is currently at 26.6 percent. The expanded definition reflects unemployment at 36.4 percent.

SASAS data revealed the poor primarily comprises unemployed persons with a primary education. In addition, the poor who experience higher levels of inadequate service delivery earn either inadequate or no income whatsoever. The labour movement argues dissatisfaction is linked to poverty; moreover, if everyone earned a minimum wage, discontent and protests among poor communities could decline (Moore 2015). Masuku and Jili (2019) conclude for service delivery to be effective in all local spheres of government, officials should understand their powers, distinctive responsibilities, and acknowledge they have different roles, compelling them to cooperate to be effective and perform their duties as required. Another aspect mentioned is that politicians should not abuse their powers, more especially with regard to recruitment. Should all local municipal officials be employed according to merit principles, service delivery in SA would improve.

Councillor performance and accountability to voters appear to matter more where management of land use is concerned, than for other services. While the data do not speak directly to this difference, it may, in part, reflect the difficulties of negotiating the procedural complexities involved in obtaining land for homes, agriculture, or business (Nkomo 2017: 9). It might also reflect perceptions that some cities are dealing with inner-city gentrification by moving residents to new settlements on the city outskirts; this recalls apartheid-era practices and exacerbates racial and class divisions (Hogg 2016).

A study conducted by Nkomo (2017) found, for a relatively small proportion of the overall population, dissatisfaction with government performance calls for a more forceful response. Approximately one in nine respondents (11 percent) said they had participated in at least one demonstration or protest march during the preceding year, including five percent who said they had done so often or several times. Black South Africans were far more likely to join protests than other racial groups, which may reflect continuing deficits in high-quality services in predominantly black areas of the country. A three-quarter white (76 percent) and Indian (74 percent) South Africans said they “would never” participate in a protest, compared to 54 percent black and 65 percent Coloured citizens.

2.6 DECENTRALISATION OF PUBLIC SERVICES AND ITS IMPACT ON MUNICIPALITIES

Local governments and their role in service delivery is seen to improve citizen satisfaction with public services, primarily through improved transparency, accountability, and governance, facilitated by easier and increased access for citizens (Diaz-Serrano and Rodríguez-Pose 2015). Shin and Jhee (2021) also suggest citizen satisfaction with public services improves trust in government; broadly relevant for institutionalising democratic systems. These studies, thus, suggest it is possible to enhance democracy through decentralisation that improves citizen experiences with or perceptions of public service delivery and performance.

Beyond economic outcomes, empirical studies suggest decentralisation improves water delivery and sanitation systems, in the cases of Kenya and Mexico (Rowles III *et al*. 2018). At the cross-sectional level, studies also suggest educational outcomes are negatively associated with more decentralised parties (Ponce-Rodríguez *et al*. 2018). Jeong *et al*. (2017) found the level of decentralisation is positively associated with student performance in Korea, with some studies also examining the economic effects of decentralisation in the country. Bae and Kim (2019) indicate higher regional decentralisation leads to the efficiency of resource allocation, thereby improving economic outcomes in Korea. However, Park *et al*. (2019) discovered the positive impact of decentralisation on economic growth is significant at the provincial level, but only from a revenue decentralisation perspective.

Despite the successful establishment of liberal democracy since the democratisation movement in 1987, increasing political-ideological polarisation and confrontation between central and local authorities in Korea have led many to view the country's democratic development with scepticism (Han and Shim 2018; Koo and Kim 2018; Yoo 2018). Furthermore, the relatively limited functional discretion of local authorities, compared to other highly democratised countries, has caused some to criticise the quality of Korea's democracy. The country is also widely perceived as a highly centralised state. Hierarchical political orders, in which local politicians are subordinate to national politicians and party headquarters, have not changed in Korea (Jhee 2016; Lim 2018). Moreover, local governments are heavily dependent on financial transfers from the Korean national government.

While empirical findings regarding the effects of decentralisation on public service delivery remain controversial, a strong theoretical expectation exists that "'in democratically decentralized systems, subnational governments are elected by their citizens, ensuring the accountability mechanisms necessary to incentivize the provision of desired public goods" (Ponce-Rodríguez *et al.* 2018: 524). Many public policy and management studies suggest high-quality public services do not necessarily increase satisfaction with service provision, because levels of trust and the capacities of public institutions greatly affect citizen perceptions of public service delivery (Diaz-Serrano and Rodríguez-Pose 2015).

Despite a growing body of research on the effect of decentralised governance and public service delivery, current literature has predominantly focused on public service quality and outcomes and has, therefore, not sufficiently answered the questions regarding community workers and the role they play in service delivery (Shin and Jhee 2021). Decentralisation can help ensure public resources are properly allocated and the services delivered meet the needs of people living in the decentralised regions and remote locations. As part of this devolution of powers, efforts must be made to assist traditionally excluded or marginalised groups to participate in the governance process (Asian Development Bank 2017). One such solution is to build the capacity of participants to allow their inclusion.

Capacity-building: It is referred to as the development of knowledge, attitude, and skills of the workforce, enhancing their abilities to achieve short- and long-term goals on organizational as well as personal levels (Millar and Doherty 2016). In the same vein, Monson-Rosen (2021) describes capacity-building as the process of developing an organization's strength and sustainability. More than merely important, capacity-building is essential for any NPO's health and longevity. Capacity-building enables you to focus on your mission—not simply on survival, positively impacting employee performance, along with external factors significantly examined (Ahmad, Farrukh and Nazir 2015). In general, capacity-building improves effectiveness at organizational level.

Atkinson and Willis (2020) affirm building the capacity of communities to deal with their own problems and development has become an important aspect of the work performed by a range of government and housing departments. The importance of broadening the scope of housing agencies to help tenants and sustain the communities

they live in has become widely recognised among social housing providers in Australia and globally. Sometimes, this may mean offering advice services, providing small resources to communities to kick-start community-led initiatives, or facilitating the bringing-together of expertise and experience in the community to deal with particular problems. All of this can be employed to promote the skills and capacities of communities and their members, so they may better deal with the type of problems they could face.

Capacity development is, furthermore, crucial for the first 10-year plan for any African country and for Agenda 2063 overall. Increased competence needs large financial resources beyond the capacity of any single organization (or groups), when interventions are managed centrally at continental and regional levels. Essentially, capacity-building concerns pursuing three key goals to: enhance skills of individuals and groups; enhance or improve enabling environments to get things done; and design or improve systems, processes, institutional structures, and modes of operation to achieve better outcomes and effectiveness (African capacity building foundation 2016).

2.7 IMPORTANCE OF CAPACITY-BUILDING AND MANAGERIAL SUPPORT

Without capacity-building, there is the risk of focusing all energy and attention on providing services and expanding projects. This lack of a strong foundation may lead to organizational instability, which might become apparent in old and deteriorating equipment, poor communication between leadership and staff, and "mission drift" or a loss of focus on the NPO's founding principles (Monson-Rosen 2021). Capacity-building and training are also required to elevate members of disadvantaged groups into positions of power, decision-making and influence. However, inclusive governance requires greater transparency and public awareness of existing governance structures and processes; whether there is any lack of inclusion in government; the occurrence of discrimination and inequality; and the availability of information.

Transparency and access to information can lead to greater participation by the community in decision-making (United Nations E-Government Survey 2016). Capacity-building, in addition, equips disadvantaged groups with the skills to not only participate, but also influence those in positions of power in their decision-making, with regard to service delivery within the community (Monson-Rosen 2021). The following are the benefits of capacity-building the University of Memphis (2019) outlined:

- Approaches that use capacity-building purposefully minimise an over-reliance on outside experts as sources of knowledge, resources, and solutions to community issues. By preventing a dependency relationship on outsiders from forming, capacity-building encourages local people to action local issues themselves.
- Capacity-building fosters a sense of ownership and empowerment, so that community partners gain greater control over their own future development.
- Strengthened confidence, skills, knowledge, and resources that increase from capacity-building efforts on one project, may enhance a community partner's ability to envision and act on other projects.
- - Capacity-building efforts are sensitive to the particularities of local culture and context, and, as a result, often lead to more feasible and appropriate community solutions than approaches that lack a capacity-building focus.
- Capacity-building approaches to community work acknowledge growth, learning, and change occur reciprocally; that is, both you and your community partner are expected to be different at the end of your collaborative community work. Ideally, your community partner will be more effective and successful in addressing community issues, and you will learn about working with community partners more effectively and respectfully.

(University of Memphis 2019).

2.8 ROLE OF TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP IN SERVICE DELIVERY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Kings and Chiefs to whom we refer as “traditional leaders” led during pre-colonial South African governance. Traditional leadership permeated almost all spheres of their subjects’ lives, from politics, economic development, safety and security, to health, judicial administration, as well cultural and religious spheres (Ntsebeza 2003: 32-33). During British rule, traditional leadership was seen by the British as a critical link between themselves and the people. They saw traditional leadership as an instrument for legitimising their cause (Khanyisa 2010: 31). Traditional leaders were expected to act as the eyes and ears of the colonial government. A gulf was therefore created between traditional leaders and their people, as the leaders were now accounting to the colonial government and not to their people (Ntsebeza 2003: 38).

The new system eventually created room for some traditional leaders to abuse their power, and fertilised the ground for corruption to grow, since these actions would not

threaten traditional leaders' positions, as long as they did not fall out of step with the colonial government (Ayittey 1991: 41). After the British colonial rule came the apartheid regime (1948 to 1994), with Mamdani (1996: 90) pointing out the two regimes created two types of citizenship.

The first type referred to the people who resided in urban areas, regarded as true citizens, and the second type referred to the people who resided in rural areas, regarded as subjects of traditional leadership (Mamdani 1996: 90). From 1976 to 1981, four homelands were created, an action that denationalised nine million Black Africans (Rebirth 2000), and the apartheid government realised the institution of traditional leadership was better positioned to provide leaders in these homelands to facilitate the achievement of its goals.

It is for this reason the Bantu Authorities Act, 1951 (Act 68 of 1951) provided for the homeland governments to be led mainly by Chiefs, with a few elected members. Thus, the dominance of traditional leaders was tactically arranged for the apartheid government to be able to control the homelands (Ntsebeza 2006: 82). The launch of the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (CONTRALESA) in 1987, however, initiated the shaping and transformation of the institution of traditional leadership in SA (Klopper 1998: 130). Traditional leaders, particularly those in CONTRALESA, were party to the adoption of Resolution 34 of the National Negotiating Council, unanimously adopted in December 1993. In terms of this resolution, the following points were agreed upon:

a) Traditional authorities shall continue to exercise their functions in terms of indigenous law as prescribed and regulated by enabling legislation.
b) There shall be an elected local government, which shall take political responsibility for the provision of services in its area of jurisdiction.
c) The (hereditary) traditional leaders within the area of jurisdiction of a local authority shall be ex-officio members of local government.
d) The chairperson of any local government shall be elected from amongst all the members of the local government
(Ntsebeza 2006: 270).

2.9 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORKS FOR TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

The ANC-led government enacted several pieces of legislation aimed at transforming the institution of traditional leadership in SA. These include the Constitution of the RSA of 1996 (Act 108 of 1996), the National House of Traditional Leaders Act of 1997 (Act 10 of 1997), the Municipal Structures Act of 1998 (Act 117 of 1998), the Municipal Systems Act of 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), the White Paper on Traditional Leadership and Governance of 2003, and the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act of 2003 (Act 41 of 2003). These pieces of legislation are explained briefly.

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 (Act 108 Of 1996)

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 (Act 108 of 1996) recognises and respects the cultural positions of traditional leaders. Section 211 of the Constitution provides for the existence of the institution, as well as the status and role of traditional leadership, and states traditional authority may observe a system of customary law, which must not be in conflict with any applicable legislation and customs, including amendments. The section makes provision for courts to apply customary law when applicable, subject to the Constitution, and any legislation that specifically deals with customary law. Section 212 provides a role for the institution of traditional leadership on matters affecting local communities.

CONTRALESA states it represents 90 percent of the country's traditional leaders. The place and role traditional leaders hold in SA's new democratic political system have not been clearly defined in the Constitution. A better effort could have been made to try to accommodate traditional leaders in the country's Constitution. As it stands, the Constitution leaves traditional leaders in the dark regarding their powers and future role.

Local Government: Municipal Structures Act of 1998 (Act 117 of 1998)

The Municipal Structures Act of 1998 (Section 81) regulates, albeit in a limited manner, the participation of traditional authorities on the municipal council. It declares before a municipal council takes a decision on any matter, directly affecting the area of a traditional authority, the council must give the leader of that authority the opportunity to express a view on that matter. Thus, the Act provides an opportunity for municipalities and traditional leaders to work together in the spirit of co-operative governance.

Local Government: Municipal Systems Act of 2000 (Act 32 of 2000)

The Municipal Systems Act of 2000 (Section 17(2) (d)) states those consultative sessions with locally recognised community organisations and, where appropriate, traditional authorities, must be held. It is further emphasised a municipality must develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government, with a system of participatory governance.

White Paper on Traditional Leadership and Governance of 2003

The White Paper on Traditional Leadership and Governance of 2003 set out a framework that would inform legislation on the definition of, the place, and role, the institution of traditional leadership holds within the new system of democratic governance. Chapter one of the White Paper assesses how certain African countries, including SA, have handled the issue of traditional leadership. Chapter two of the White Paper maps out the vision of the South African government for the transformation of the institution of traditional leadership, as well as the principles guiding this transformation.

Chapter three highlights governance and development challenges facing the institution. The chapter also addresses the issue of traditional leadership and participation in politics as well as traditional leadership institutions in relation to municipal and provincial boundaries. Chapter four focuses on institutional issues internal to the institution of traditional leadership, including succession, and addresses the different challenges pertaining to the institution. Finally, the White Paper consolidates government's view that traditional leaders should act as custodians of tradition and culture, playing a complementary, supportive and advisory role to government.

2.9.1 Relationship between traditional leaders and municipal council

According to Van der Waldt *et al.* (2007: 16), the traditional leaders believed the new local councils would usurp their powers and functions, were particularly incensed by the boundaries of the new council that cut across the old tribal authority and feared their authority would be challenged. Atkinson and Reitzes (1998: 108) further explain traditional leaders may recognise the authority of the council, but are antagonistic towards ward councillors and do not recognise them. Traditional leaders regard the provision of services or infrastructure without their involvement, as undermining their

power base. They often feel councillors only consult them when they experience problems and require the traditional leaders to intervene.

The allocation of land by traditional leaders, within certain areas, without the involvement of ward councillors, also gives rise to conflict (Atkinson and Reitzes, 1998: 109). On the one hand, Bekke, Toonen and Perry (1996: 125) state poor relationships between traditional leaders and municipal councils are due to the degree of representation, with respect to societal opinions and the degree of interest representation. Botes *et al.* (1996: 113), on the other hand, posit tribal authorities are indeed an essential part of the political, social and traditional activities in clearly defined communities. The problem lies between institutions claiming different kinds of legitimacy, with overlapping functions and competing for recognition within the same communities. When the problem of legitimacy cannot be solved, the separation of roles must be clearly spelt out (Atkinson and Reitzes 1998: 109). The Independent Project Trust (IPT) (2000: 1) argues the legitimacy of traditional leaders has been challenged by civic organisations, political parties and others, who argue any system of inherited rule by traditional leaders is illegitimate, undemocratic, feudal and unnecessary.

According to Kanyane (2007: 318), traditional leaders claim stewardship powers over municipalities as custodians of African traditions in some areas. This paradox of power relations is a potential cause for concern because, at times, the developmental focus of local government is obstructed, as municipal and tribal councils do not always agree, whilst service delivery is desperately expected by the communities they serve. The author further states traditional leaders are solely concerned with regard to the way municipal councils conduct themselves in the approach to community development.

To the traditional leaders, municipal councils encroach on their traditional affairs by implementing developmental plans in their areas, without their consultation. The two often view each other with distrust (Kanyane 2007: 319). However, the main role of traditional leadership should be to serve as the building blocks of local government, for effective local economic development. Thus, traditional leaders need to work in partnership with municipal councils, in as far as governance and economic development in local municipalities is concerned.

2.10 COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS (CHWs)

The CDW concept is related to community development, which is not a new concept within the South African political landscape. “A community development worker works collectively with a particular community or communities to bring about social change and improvement in the quality of life” (Gerber and Mothlake 2008: 3, cited in Mashaba 2011: 51). In addition, the authors add CDWs work “together with individuals, families and/or whole communities to empower them to identify their needs, opportunities, rights, and responsibilities; to assist them in planning what they want to achieve and take appropriate action to achieve those objectives and, lastly, develop activities and services to improve their quality of life”.

The Health and Wellness SETA (HWSETA 2021), on its website, explains becoming a community worker means being involved in community development initiatives and solutions within a community, in order to address needs and various issues. This could be concerning health, housing, employment, and recreation, as well as other social services matters. Community work is multi-faceted and focuses on community upliftment and helping communities. It focuses on work tasks that uplift and support communities, and can include looking after orphans or vulnerable children, helping sick people, assisting teachers in schools, as well as looking after children of working parents and even working with the local police to improve safety and reduce crime.

Other community workers (Table 2.1) are outlined in the CDW Handbook (2007: 28), with CHWs expanded on in the sections that follow.

Table 2.1: Community-based workers

Other Community-based Workers	
Department	**Community-based worker**
Health	Community care givers
	Community health workers
Social Development	Child and youth care workers
	Youth workers
	Community development practitioners
	Early childhood development practitioners
Sports and Recreation	Community sports workers
Agriculture	Community extension officers
Public Works	Community liaison officers
Housing	People's housing project liaison officers

2.10.1 Roles, responsibilities and challenges of CHWs

Sherrif *et al*. (2019) assert the term Community Health Worker (CHW) can apply to a wide range of individuals providing health services and support for diverse populations. Very little is known regarding the role of CHWs in Europe who work in non-clinical settings and who promote sexual health and prevent HIV/STI among gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (MSM). CHWs had their origins in China in the 1920s and were precursors to the "barefoot doctor" programme; a movement in the 1950s (Xu 2017; Xu, Gorsky and Mills 2019).

CHWs have been defined as "a diverse group of health workers whose common characteristic is their work outside of health facilities directly with people in their homes, neighbourhoods, communities and other non-clinical spaces where health and disease are produced" (Perry, Zulliger and Rogers 2014: 68). In the 1960s, CHW programmes emerged in Indonesia, India, Tanzania and Venezuela. In addition, CHWs present a diverse workforce in Europe, so far without a professional identity and/or recognition (Deogan *et al*. 2018). Furthermore, CHWs can play vital roles in increasing the cover-age of basic health services.

Evidence from a study conducted in Liverpool, in the UK, suggests the presence of CHWs can complement an over-stretched health workforce and may be key to

increasing the availability of, and access to, basic health services, particularly in hard-to-reach areas, thereby bridging the health equity gap (Olaniran *et al*. 2017). Although it remains difficult to define across countries who they are and what they do, a core characteristic of CHWs is their proximity to the community they serve, are part of, or have an in-depth understanding of (Lorente *et al*. 2021).

The Ebola outbreak in West Africa in 2014 illustrates the critical role of CHWs in identifying and stemming health emergencies. In addition to Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, where most Ebola transmission occurred, the disease also spread to Senegal, where it was quickly contained, in large degree due to the actions of the country's substantial community health workforce. Community workers focused on polio eradication played a similarly important part in implementing Ebola prevention measures in Nigeria and averting a potentially devastating outbreak in the African continent's most populous country (Global Health Estimates 2016).

At present, CHW programmes exist within the territories of almost every African Union (AU) member state. In Kenya, a growing multi-tier cadre of 64 000 CHWs (estimated) contribute to health care delivery in the country, under the supervision and governance of voluntary community health committees (Global Health Estimates 2016). In SA, CHWs are defined as health workers who receive "standardized training outside the formal nursing or medical curricula to deliver a range of basic health, promotional, educational, and outreach services, and who [have] a defined role within the community system and larger health system" (Naimoli *et al.* 2014: 3). Moreover, CHWs have played a central role in mitigating the AIDS epidemic through task shifting (Schneider, Okello, and Lehmann 2016).

In the last decade, there has been a notable increase in the number of CHWs in SSA. CHW is an umbrella term used for all the lay health workers in the health system in the context of the SA health sector (Mhlongo and Lutge 2019). Efforts to introduce universal health insurance (National Health Insurance [NHI]) previously stalled (Harris 2017); while there have also been severe problems with leadership and accountability in managing the public health sector (Rispel 2016). In the wake of changes in leadership, pilot implementation of the NHI resumed (Plagerson *et al.* 2019), with CHWs envisaged to play central roles in primary health care (RSA 2017; Schneider *et al.* 2015).

The following are the roles and responsibilities of the CHW:

- Create a voice for the people
- Serve as a bridge between patient, communities and the health system
- Act as lay counsellors
- Fulfil identity-related needs
- Run campaign programmes to mobilise communities' members for health services
- Target households' coverage for health care service (Mhlongo and Lutge 2019).

CHW programmes face various challenges in their service delivery quest to communities, despite growing momentum to build stronger large-scale CHW programmes (George *et al*. 2016, 2018). Angwenyi *et al*. (2018) and Kok *et al*. (2015) have consensus in describing the challenges to include lack of adequate funding; fragmented programming because of multiple external donors, each with a specific disease focus; inadequate supervision; and lack of continuous performance assessments and improvements. These challenges affect the quality and sustainability of services delivered by CHWs.

Kahn *et al.* (2017) affirm CHW programmes are implemented in many low- and middle-income countries such as Brazil to increase access to and quality of care for underserved populations. On the one hand, CHW programmes have been found to improve certain indicators of health, yet, few studies have investigated the daily work of CHWs, their perspectives on what both helps and hinders them from fulfilling their roles, and ways their effectiveness and job satisfaction could be increased. On the other hand, Glenton *et al*. (2021) suggest planners should address challenges with CHW roles by assessing whether the recommended roles and tasks are considered acceptable and appropriate by their target population, the CHWs themselves, and those who support them. The process of designing roles and tasks should be guided by research evidence and global experience, as well as by the experiences, needs, and concerns of local communities and health workers. Other factors highlighted by Glenton *et al*. (2021) to be considered, include the qualifications required and the training and continuing education needed to ensure quality performance and safe practices.

In their paper on “Planning, Coordination, and Partnerships”, Afzal *et al*. (2021) note many CHW programmes are not well integrated and synchronised with local health systems and local health needs. This is partly attributed to such programmers often centred on individual projects, and implemented as vertical programmes with separate funding mechanisms. This situation has frequently led to gaps and fragmentation in service delivery. The location of CHW programmes at the interface between the health system and communities presents a series of special challenges.

Lewin *et al*. (2021), in discussing “Programmed Governance”, note governance may be a challenge, since CHW programmes involve a wide range of stakeholders with diverse interests and power. Furthermore, CHW programmes often lack comprehensive policy guidance, regulations and laws, as well as governance structures, and clarity with regard to who will implement decisions. With a few notable exceptions, CHWs in Africa are underpaid, under-utilised and poorly integrated in health systems. Several factors have prevented broad, rapid uptake of reforms (AU 2017).

2.11 SOCIAL WORKERS AS AGENTS OF SERVICE DELIVERY

For many social workers the arena of economics and economic policy is of less concern, as they are overwhelmed by the daily challenges of their practice. Furthermore, while social policy and legislation form a cornerstone of the profession, economic argument and theory remain academic and distant concerns (Ornellas and Engelbrecht 2020). In addition, with the profession deemed an essential service in the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic on global and local levels, the day-to-day tasks of social workers amid the devastation of the pandemic are centred on people's survival. This generally depends on the economic policies governing bodies implement, which affect the communities, families and individuals served by social workers (Ornellas *et al.* 2020).

The discourse driving a country's economic decision-making is now, more than ever, cutting to the very core of the social work profession. Furthermore, the profession needs to understand current and future challenges, not only for civil well-being in general, but for social service delivery in particular (Ornellas and Engelbrecht 2020) which stems from the ruling economic theory of our time. In the wake of this pandemic in countries such as SA, social work has been declared an essential service and has

been one of the professions on the frontline of mitigating the socioeconomic and psychosocial impact of the disease (News 24 2020).

2.12 LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES AND BASIC SERVICE DELIVERY

Chapter Seven of the SA Constitution deals with Local Government and embodies the core principles that inform the basis for developmental local government in the country. Section 152 of the Constitution sets out the overall objectives of local government, which are:

- To provide democratic and accountable government for local communities; to ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner;
- To promote social and economic development;
- To promote a safe and healthy environment; and
- To encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matter of local government.

(RSA 1996)

As described by the South African Local Government Association (SALGA 2016), municipalities are the core institutions within the sphere of local government. Municipalities are organs of state that consist of the political structures and administration of the municipality and the community within (residents inhabiting) the municipal area. A municipal council is a body consisting of directly or indirectly elected councillors/members. A municipal council is thus one of the political structures of a municipality. This means the term “Municipality” is a much broader concept and a more inclusive collection of institutions or structures than a municipal council. Furthermore, a municipality and its council are not synonymous (SALGA 2016). Lehohla (2016) states municipalities are the most basic units of government, tasked with providing basic services and fostering development in the regions they control.

SA is a constitutional democracy with a three-tiered system of government (national, provincial and local) that functions in an ‘interdependent and interrelated’ fashion. Local municipalities, as the lowest tier, have the right to govern the affairs of local communities, subject to provincial and national legislation (Lehohla 2016). The boundaries of local and district municipalities are determined by the Municipal Demarcation Board, set up by the Municipal Demarcation Act (Act No. 27 of 1998). The demarcation process considers the demographic, social and economic

characteristics of areas, as well as linkages between constituent units to create boundaries that facilitate development planning. These boundaries are continually reassessed and neither the historical boundaries, nor the number of demarcated municipalities stays constant over time, as areas are amalgamated or split.

A total of 286 municipalities existed in the entire country when the 2016 Community Survey was conducted. Chapter 7 of the SA constitution divides the local sphere of government into three categories, namely metropolitan (Category A), district (Category C) and local municipalities (Category B) (RSA 1996).

Metropolitan municipalities are located in large, densely populated areas, with strong, complex and diverse economies and municipalities have exclusive municipal executive and legislative authority in their respective areas (StatsSA 2017. District municipalities (Category C) are tasked with the responsibility to coordinate with other spheres of government and with planning and resource allocation across their constituent local municipalities. Local municipalities (Category B) share municipal executive and legislative authority in its area with the Category C municipality within whose area it falls (StatsSA 2016).

The Municipal Infrastructure Investment Framework (MIIF) classifies local municipalities into four sub-categories, namely B1, B2, B3 and B4. The B1 category comprises secondary cities and local municipalities with the largest budgets; the B2 category refers to local municipalities with a large town as its core; and the B3 category defines local municipalities with small towns, with relatively small populations and significant proportions of urban population but with no large town at its core. Finally, the B4 category is made up of local, mainly rural municipalities with communal tenure and, at most, one or two small towns in their area. In addition, the MIIF classifies district municipalities into two categories, namely C1, which refers to district municipalities that are not water services authorities, and C2, which defines district municipalities that are water services authorities (Municipal Demarcation Board 2012).

Local government is the sphere of government closest to people and is responsible for development and provision of municipal goods, benefits, activities and satisfactions deemed public, to enhance the quality of life in local jurisdictions (Reddy 2016). Basic services are the fundamental building blocks of improved quality of life, where adequate supplies of safe water and acceptable sanitation are necessary for life, well-

being and human dignity. However, the accessibility of basic services is closely related to social inclusion and social capital, and the failure of municipalities to deliver services can have a detrimental impact on social and economic development (IDASA 2010).

Providing sustainable and effective municipal services to residents is the main reason for the existence of local governments, directed to provide water, sanitation, transportation facilities, and electricity, along with primary health services, education, housing and security, within a safe and healthy environment to all residents, provided its provision is practical and sustainable (Lehohla 2016). Beyer (2016) argues the main challenge in this regard, is the lack of relevant infrastructure, more so in rural municipalities. In urban areas, municipalities are better able to deliver services, as most have infrastructure in place in the form of sanitation, electricity, water and waste management facilities.

2.13 POLITICAL LEADERSHIP (COUNCILLOR) ROLE TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY

The Centre for Policy Studies completed a study on the role of elected local councillors; particularly ward councillors, in SA service delivery. The study concluded that the public do not currently see local councillors playing an active role in service delivery (Repo and Richards 2020). Rolland (2018) shares the sentiments that service delivery at local government level is experiencing difficulties, attributed to the different philosophies between the political and administrative interface that have attributed to confusion in terms of their roles.

The politicisation of the public service is a government activity where the appointment and career of those in the service are subjected to political will (Madumo 2016). In addition, Masuku and Jili (2019) argue Municipal managers (MMs) are also elected according to political factions. As a result, service delivery is affected, because they may have the skills or knowledge suited to the post, or not, and are the ones to implement councillor resolutions, together with the officials within the municipality. In other instances, public projects are left uncompleted, or poor-quality services are delivered to the people, such as failure to complete tarred roads or even should it be completed, it is of poor quality (Masuku and Jili 2019). Further noted, is the effectiveness of ward committees is constrained by limitations of members' levels of education, skills, and expertise.

2.14 WARD COMMITTEES AND WARD COUNCILLORS

COGTA local government assessment sought to identify the main causes of poor service delivery in municipalities across the country. The results revealed a number of problems within municipalities, but, most importantly, they demonstrated not all the problems experienced by communities are applicable to all municipalities (Edwards 2015). Modimowabarwa (2014) identified incapacity of municipalities as one of the major challenges in delivering services to communities. Conflicts between politicians and municipal senior administrative office bearers are common in SA. The confusion of duties and functions usually occurs between the offices of the Mayor and the MM, regardless of the many pieces of legislation in place that clarify such official roles and the fact the MM is officially the accounting officer of the municipality (Beyer 2016).

The importance of service delivery protests, as Modimowabarwa (2014) explains, is it uses common strategies (either good or bad) to express dissatisfaction with the state. The number of protest activities in various parts of SA suggests a substantive level of impatience and dissatisfaction, as already alluded to earlier in this discussion. Despite SA being accepted by the world as a democracy with a good constitution, democratic elections and parliamentary oversight, there are many instances of deplorable and slow-paced service delivery. Reddy (2016) explained municipalities whose councils have a scarcity of skills in political and administrative components, consequently, negatively impact governance and service delivery.

SA is at a high risk in terms of the ruling party (ANC) selecting and deploying cadres within municipalities; a signal of politicians abusing their powers. The level of risk in local government is high because they do not involve a merit system in the selection of employment (Masuku and Jili 2019:5). Supply chain management (SCM) procedures for the provision of municipal goods and services have provided ample opportunities for self-enrichment, patronage and the favouring of family members and friends (Tshishonga 2015).

Reddy (2016) explicitly stated having ‘struggle credentials’ is not good enough, as ANC ‘deployees’ will be playing a pivotal role in formulating and implementing policies relative to service delivery and development. Such delivery is the essence of developmental local government and a constitutional imperative. In the final analysis, there should be a radical shift from the policy of ‘cadre deployment’ and political patronage, as it violates the essential principles of good local governance.

Political infighting and related clashes between the political and management components in SA local government have also adversely affected municipal service delivery (Reddy 2016). Conflicts between politicians and municipal senior administrative office bearers are common in the country, with confusion of duties and functions though to be the most common cause. Disputes commonly occur between the offices of the Mayor and the MM, where the latter is acknowledged as the official municipal accounting officer, notwithstanding legislation, which clarifies such official roles. Further research on this question is of paramount importance.

Table 2.2: Roles and responsibilities of councillors, ward committees and CDWs

Councillors	Ward committees	CDWs
Politically elected representatives who live in and service the wards The ward councillor: • Chairs the ward committee • Convenes the constituency meeting to elect ward committee members • Calls committee meetings • Ensures a schedule of meetings is prepared, including ward committee and constituency meetings • Works with the ward committee to draw up an annual plan of activities • Handles queries and complaints • Resolves disputes and refers unresolved disputes to the municipality • Should be fully involved in all	Up to 10 community or sectoral representatives elected at a ward general meeting to represent sectoral interests. The committee is the centre of local development A ward committee: • Takes issues of local concern to the councillor, who in turn takes these to council • Has a direct say in the planning, decision making and project implementation that has an impact on their ward • Increases the participation of local residents in municipal decision making • Is not politically aligned • Should be involved in matters such as the integrated development planning process,	Appointed public servants governed by the Public Service Act 1994 The CDW is expected to: • Regularly communicate government and other information to communities in an accessible way • Pass concerns and issues on to service providers • Coordinate teams of volunteers in community projects • Coordinate teams employed on public works programmes • Help communities develop and submit proposals for inclusion in integrated development plans to municipalities, other spheres of government or donors • Coordinate inter-departmental programmes and encourage integration

The table above (Table 2.2) summarises the roles and responsibilities of councillors, ward committees and CDWs, as explained in the CDW Handbook (2007: 23)

2.14.1 Roles and responsibilities of ward committees

Mokoena and Moeti (2017: 348) state the CDWs are shown in literature to “forward concerns and issues on the service provided by national and provincial government in general, and local government to be specific”. The authors, furthermore, acknowledge, “CDWs share the working space with Ward Committees who have a direct say in the

planning, decision-making and project implementation that have impact on their respective wards".

Membership of ward committees

Section (72) 3 of the Municipal Structures Act (RSA 1998) provides that a Ward Committee consists of a Municipal Councillor representing that ward in the council, who must also be chairperson of the committee, along with not more than ten other persons who must be resident in the ward.

Main functions of ward committees

A ward committee, as an advisory forum, may make recommendations on any matter affecting its ward to the ward committee councillor or through the ward councillor to the municipal council. The ward committee is regarded as the statutory structure recognised by the municipal council as its consultative body and channel on matters affecting the ward (Mbhele 2017: 40).

Challenges facing ward committees

Ward committees are well known for communicating citizen needs to the authorities, functioning as the voice of their needs and expectations to the municipal council. Nonetheless, Tshishonga (2018: 44) highlighted "the power of the structure is tamed and function efficiently weakened the role on service delivery". The failure could be ascribed to various reasons, including:

- Ward committees lack credibility to influence decision-making;
- Ward committees lack commitment endeavours;
- Ward committees tend to be more political orientated, not for community participation;
- Power relations and lack of proper training

  (DPLG 2005).

2.15 NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS (NGOs) IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

According to Gooding (2017), there has been growing interest in the contribution of NGOs to international health research. However, there is little empirical evidence on research agendas within NGOs, to assess whether their service delivery experience does lead to relevant research or conditions that affect this. NGOs are important health service providers in Malawi, where they have been part of initiatives to prioritise health research (Cole 2016), and NGOs are recognised as stakeholders within national

research policies. Globally, NGOs are viewed by many agencies and policy-makers as being more efficient and cost-effective service providers than the government, particularly in reaching the poor (Mlambo *et al*. 2021).

Mlambo *et al*. (2021) confirm NGOs have, for a long time, provided services the government is responsible for, lacking due to unavailability of required resources. In SA, the shift from apartheid rule to democracy brought with it a radical transformation in the nature and organisation of development planning. After decades of apartheid rule and 27 years into democracy, SA remains one of the most unequal societies in the world (Mariotti and Fourie 2014). Furthermore, NGOs sometimes address social needs not normally a concern for the government. However, in some cases, the needs addressed by NGOs are generally those that should be addressed by the government (Mlambo *et al*. 2021).

2.16 COMMUNITY POLICE

Community policing (CP) is a philosophy and practice that treats police–community interaction and communication as a main basis for reductions in crime and fear of crime. CP efforts include the hiring and training of police officers to prevent crime and "solve" community problems instead of solely responding after crimes have occurred (Cossyleon 2019). The US justice department's office of community oriented policing services (COPS) defines CP as "a philosophy that promotes organisational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime" (COPS 2014: 1).

Dlamini (2020) adopts the definition that CP is a partnership between the communities and their local police stations. The community must take ownership of what is happening in their community and together with their local police station, must form a partnership. In this way, we all look out for the interests and safety of the people in our community; however, general community members do not understand the notion of CP, they expect everything to be done by the police alone. Research on CP on the African continent tends to refer to it as state-led initiatives, while other initiatives driven by community members are labelled as forms of citizen-based security provision (Ruteere 2017; Pendle 2015).

The adoption of ambitious CP initiatives in Rio de Janeiro and Salvador over the last decade inspired hope among many police reformers that a new, more democratic paradigm of state-society relations might finally emerge in Brazil. Such was the allure of CP, a citizen-oriented policing philosophy that had been embraced in much of the Global North more than a decade earlier, it was now becoming entrenched in Latin America. As the form of CP was modified to fit the socio-political context of the Brazilian slum, however, it took on characteristics more similar to counter-insurgency and peace keeping (Wolff 2018).

Community-based crime prevention can also include programme implementation, particularly programmes to help educate the youth with regard to the risks of drug-use and gangs (Cossyleon 2019). A proactive police participation approach aims to incorporate police into communities, beyond responding to criminal complaints, as a means to build relationships with residents and community members, advising whether they are breaking the law (Tyler, Jackson and Mentovich 2015: 60). Designed to strengthen the police, while simultaneously building trust and confidence, CP encourages greater collaboration between citizens and police. Through community meetings and foot patrols, police officers can, theoretically, respond to community concerns more effectively than they could on their own (Blair, Weinstein and Christia 2021).

CP comprises three key components:

Community Partnerships

Collaborative partnerships between the law enforcement agency and the individuals and organizations they serve, to develop solutions to problems and increase trust in police.

Organizational Transformation

The alignment of organizational management, structure, personnel, and information systems to support community partnerships and proactive problem solving.

Problem Solving

The process of engaging in the proactive and systematic examination of identified problems to develop and evaluate effective responses (COPS 2014).

In Rwanda, CP is done through community policing committees (CPCs), school anti-crime clubs and Community liaison officers (CLOs) that identify issues within the

community before they escalate into violent conflicts. (2017) states inadequate financial resources and deficiency in security personnel services are among the key factors that limit state capacity to extend security services across the entire territory in Kenya and several African countries. Furthermore, the quality of CP in local communities is an important research topic in the fields of criminological and police studies and requires special competencies (Dlamini 2020).

2.16.1 Community Policing in South Africa

SA remains one of the country's worst affected by crime. As at 2016, South Africa is ranked third on the global crime index. Further to this, according to an online collaborative database, Numbeo (2017), Durban is one of the top three cities highly affected by crime, after Pietermaritzburg and Johannesburg. The damaging impact of crime on the safety and security of communities, peace and stability in SA, as well the country's reputation, is well documented. Together, these affect the social and economic well-being and the general quality of life of ordinary citizens. Owing to the historical legacy of apartheid, which created economic, social and structural imbalances in societies, SA remains generally a dual economy, characterised by two opposite extremes of the richness and poverty in plush white suburbs and poor black townships, respectively.

2.16.2 Quality of community police forums (CPFs)

Section 18 (1) of the South African Police Service Act 68 of 1995, clearly outlines the purpose of the CPFs as follows:

- Establish and strengthen the partnership between the community and the police.
- Improve the delivery of police service to the community.
- Promote cooperation between the police service and the community in fulfilling community needs for policing.
- Promote joint problem identification and problem solving.
- Ensure police accountability and transparency.
- Ensure consultation and proper communication between the police and their clients.

The CP Strategy, through the "Community in Blue" programme, aims to operationalise the concept of CP with a view to stimulate active citizenry and citizen participation in the fight against crime. The CP strategy is thus a strategic policy platform to motivate

all communities to become involved in the fight against crime. Nevertheless, to efficiently reduce crime, it is necessary to transform and reorganise government and facilitate real community participation. This is, therefore, an approach that focuses on police establishing partnerships and enhancing working relations with community members, to ensure our men and women in blue inherit a proactive policing approach in addressing public safety concerns (South African Police News 2018).

In addition, integrated in the CP philosophy is the concept of sector policing, which directs the policing area be divided into smaller, manageable sectors, which involves assignment of police officers to a particular sector; this encourages regular patrols and increased interaction with members of local communities. The CP strategy thus aims to mobilise all communities in SA to join the fight against crime. Furthermore, it also seeks to encourage communities to actively participate in endeavours to prevent, combat and fight crime (South African Police News 2018).

With active participation of all communities across the country, the CP strategy will be implemented with the aim of maximising citizen involvement in the fight against crime. The Community in Blue programme, which falls under the CP strategy, further emphasises the importance of involving the community in safety and policing related matters through the assistance of community patrollers. Community in Blue patrollers will be more involved in structured community safety initiatives/structures/projects, a formal police-community partnership, and utilised in the following capacities:

- Participate in social crime prevention initiatives;
- Support crime prevention through environmental design initiatives;
- Institutionalise community participation within situational and developmental crime prevention;
- Advocate for community involvement in ensuring safety and security needs within the Justice Crime Prevention and Security cluster;
- Collaborate with the SAPS in increasing visibility and operational capacity; and
- Enhancing community-based intelligence
  (South African Police News 2018).

2.16.3 Challenges confronting CPFs in crime reduction

Most people believe the police to be abusive and that police personnel misuse their power in order to bring order to society. This leads to an automatic problem of less

coordination, with the police finding it improbable to perform their functions. Newham (2015: 43) argues gangs have indeed taken over some of the established CPFs. The most obvious local implications of CPFs are the development of many fundamentally unselected local structures of CPFs. It was also established local communities often wish to hold the police responsible for previous wrongdoings (Williams 2016: 133).

2.17 INFLUENCE OF STATE AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE

International literature and research show the existence of several challenges facing basic municipal service provision in developing countries. These challenges usually range from capacity, to infrastructure required by local authorities to provide services. This view is confirmed by a study showing, similar to other developing countries (Garmendia, Smits and Foster 2008), poor infrastructure maintenance and inability by these municipalities to deal with water wastage are responsible for growing water bill arrears in the top five South African local municipalities (mainly rural municipalities), owed to the Department of Water and Sanitation (Fengu 2017).

In another, predominately rural municipality of Polokwane (Limpopo Province, SA), loss of water through leakages was attributed to both poor infrastructural maintenance and ageing water infrastructure (Ntema and Venter 2016). It should, thus, not come as a surprise to have a national community survey showing poor municipal service delivery, poor maintenance of existing infrastructure and inability of poverty-stricken households to pay for services are, in the main, contributing factors towards inadequate access to drinking water, electricity and refuse removal (StatsSA 2017).

As with the city of Polokwane and Polokwane Local Municipality, the city of Masvingo and Masvingo Local Municipality in Zimbabwe is struggling with efficient and effective provision of drinking water, due to the growing challenge of ageing and poor water infrastructure (Mapfumo and Madesha 2014). Likewise, one of the factors contributing to lack of sanitation and water supply in Bolivia is, amongst others, backlog in development of new infrastructure and maintenance of existing infrastructure (World Bank 2015).

2.18 INFLUENCE OF POLITICAL WILL IN SERVICE DELIVERY

The dysfunctionality of local government in the South African context has assumed several different forms, notably, the lack of political and management will to make sound appointments, acting decisively on contentious issues, the failure to pass municipal budgets, and the inability to gain qualified audits, as well as the failure to communicate with local communities and address their needs. There has also been a question mark placed on the quality of local government representation and the perceived accountability of councillors as part of the local citizen interface (Booysen 2012: 5). In the past decade, there have been several interventions by national and provincial governments to address this dysfunctionality in local government; however, there has not been any substantial service delivery improvement (Reddy 2015a).

Municipalities have, in terms of Schedules 4 and 5 of the Constitution, explicitly detailed functions. Since their establishment, they have been discharging their functions with limited funds at their disposal. However, they have not maximised their sources of revenue, collected all revenues due or been creative about additional sources of revenue (Reddy 2016). Zybrands (2012) also highlighted several other challenges that have negatively affected service delivery, since the ushering in of the post-1994 local government dispensation, namely:

- Unfunded mandates, where municipalities are not funded or receive very little funding for services such as housing, library services, tourism, welfare services and support for the Local Government Service Commission (LGSC).
- Financial viability: the demarcation process has resulted in some municipalities not having an economic base and being financially viable (Reddy 2010: 82); they are dependent on grants from other spheres of government.
- Legal compliance: there is a compliance-driven governmental approach, as opposed to a service delivery one. Quite often, there are First World standards and Third World competencies, resources and needs. It has been difficult for municipalities to comply with prescripts.
- Sound fiscal discipline is not compatible with deficient political leadership. As long as ‘cadre deployment’ is practiced and municipalities forced to practice financial discipline, the financial future of municipalities will remain bleak.

- Guiding LED to address unemployment and poverty alleviation: there is no money for LED projects and additional work should be channelled to emerging service providers through the SCM system (Reddy and Wallis 2015b).
- Establishing an investment-friendly environment: through cheap land, concessionary tariffs and tax holidays (Zybrands 2012).

These challenges have been high on the municipal agenda for over a decade and the SA Government has attempted to respond to these issues but with limited success. It requires firm commitment, a certain level of seriousness and passion by the key role players to, more specifically; address the latter points (Reddy 2016).

2.18.1 Challenges of political influence in local government

At the Commonwealth Local Government Conference, De Visser (2009) stated inappropriate political interference in administration has created serious challenges for South African municipalities that are difficult to deal with. The strained relationship between politicians and administration officials appears to be the norm. Rolland (2018) attested that South African municipalities are continuously vulnerable to potential regime changes, because of introducing new political leadership with new ideologies and strategies. Any new political leadership could, therefore, institute unanticipated changes where administrative structures of municipalities are concerned. In most cases, the lack of separation of powers between legislature and executive authority at local government level is blamed for this.

Paradza, Mokwena, and Richards (2010) shared similar sentiments when they indicated confusion in terms of their roles were attributed to the different philosophies between the political and administrative interface, resulting in service delivery at local government level experiencing difficulties. Masuku and Jili (2019) strongly argued political affiliation to the ruling party is the basis of being nominated and becoming a candidate. Nonetheless, the community also elects councillors based on their political affiliation, because the ideology guiding that particular party is known and understood.

In addition, MMs should be appointed based on their competences, skills and experience and should be independent from the municipal council. The council should, moreover, not recommend who will be the head of the administration. Furthermore, local government ought to appoint experts independent of political affiliation, specifically for appointment of the MM. These experts should include all dominating

parties within that municipality to interview the candidates, verify their qualifications, and work together with the legal and monitoring team. Personnel management should also be independent from politics, enabling employment of relevant candidates based on competency and not political affiliation.

In other instances, public projects are left uncompleted, or a poor quality of services is delivered to the people, such as failure to complete tarred roads or even if it is completed, it is not of good quality. Failure to deliver those projects undermines the citizen's welfare, and leads to the loss of billons of rands. It has been revealed that the extent of these failures varies within and across the country, driving national and global inequalities (Bobby, 2014).

Moreover, the Good Governance Learning Network (2008) revealed public perceptions on local government are negative; results show the level of trust in local government is in the minority at 48.1 percent This indicates citizens have lost their trust in local government and the results are substantially lower than those in provincial government, which is 59.5 percent, while the national government is at 64.3 percent. Citizens thus trust national government more than their local government.

The political administration interface has become a weak and vulnerable trait of many municipalities, with no doubt that members of municipal executives, officials and councillors are struggling to define their clear roles. In addition, there is growing concern around the inappropriate relationship between regional party structures and municipalities (De Visser 2010).

2.19 POLICY INCOHERENCE

Policy incoherence forms a second category of constraint to service delivery. This is broadly defined as contradictions (both within and across sectors) in policy design, structure and roles; which means some part or the entirety of policy design becomes un-implementable or unimplemented. A broad definition of policy is adopted in the process to include not just strategy but organisational mandates, funding flows and implementation capacity (adapted from Booth 2010). It may include aspects of poor coordination but also broader contradictions within the policy framework, which act as barriers to implementation.

Policy incoherence can be manifested horizontally, with overlapping mandates and confused responsibilities among co-providers and other public bodies, or vertically,

where policies do not have clear implementation plans or funding, or do not take account of existing informal practices. Where political market imperfections are present, they can often reinforce forms of policy incoherence (Wild *et al*. 2012).

Several examples exist of how horizontal incoherence can result in confused responsibilities for service provision. This includes experiences of horizontal incoherence in Cameroon's health sector, where the process of decentralisation did not ensure the alignment of health district and territorial administrative boundaries (Gruénais *et al.* 2009). In practice, this meant a single health district served several administrative districts, resulting in unclear supervision lines. In other cases, 'health areas' were located in more than one health district and/or more than one administrative unit (Gruénais *et al*. 2009).

In the Kenyan water sector, horizontal coordination was reportedly 'very weak', with 11 ministries sharing some responsibility for water (Rampa 2011). In the Tanzanian water sector, there have been examples of fragmented planning and management, horizontally and vertically (Maganga 2003), reinforced by the country's pluralistic legal system, whereby land and water resources were regulated by a range of institutions, including statutory law, customary laws, Islamic law, and so on. The introduction of various reforms (such as water user associations) reportedly did little to address this fragmentation and incoherence, and ultimately, the reforms were not implemented in full (Sokile and van Koppen 2004).

Vertical incoherence can signal weaknesses in capacity and capability to effectively implement policies. In this regard, breakdowns in vertical coherence are evident in the Ugandan education sector, where the presidential announcement of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997 became seen as a populist, election-focused measure. It was an uncoated and unfunded policy, eventually implemented using parallel government systems under the presidency, rather than the education ministry. While the measure led to increased enrolment, the quality of education declined and there was a subsequent reliance on donor funding.

Policy incoherence may also be triggered by a confused overall policy framework, often linked to populist, 'clientelistic' or donor-driven policy decisions made in inconsistent ways, the effects of which are discussed by Therkildsen (2008). Malawi has several examples of this kind of policy incoherence. At local levels, it has been reinforced by

the suspension of local elections, the disbanding of local councils and limited decentralisation, which has created a vacuum at local levels and uncoordinated sector boundaries for health, education and water/sanitation, as well as weak monitoring and management processes (Wild and Harris 2012).

2.20 CONCLUSION

The above reviewed literature provided more information on the roles and challenges different role players face in the value chain of service delivery. Furthermore, the literature reflected on factors that affect service delivery. Using the consulted literature one can affirm the view held by Muthwa (2016) that it is saddening to observe the interface between public servants and citizens remains characterised by un-empathetic public servants and disempowered citizens.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The theoretical and empirical literature review was covered in the preceding chapter in relation to the general application to explore the role of CDWs in promoting municipal service delivery in Mpumalanga province, in the case of Nsikazi North. The justification of the qualitative research methodology and data collection approach used in this study are discussed further in this chapter. The procedures and particular techniques for data collection, analysis, and interpretation are also explained in detail. These techniques were utilised to collect data, address a particular research question, and accomplish the research objectives.

The research population and sampling strategy used in the study are discussed first, after which the research instrument design and accompanying pilot test are then briefly covered. The chapter also describes the data collection process and the methodology used for data analysis in this study. The discussion then concentrates on the steps taken to guarantee the validity and reliability of the research instrument, with the chapter also identifying the methodology shortcomings, prior to describing the ethical research considerations. Finally, the systematic merit employed during data analysis is presented while promoting the integrity and accuracy of the data collected and the findings presented. Figure 3.1 below presents a summary of the entire research process adopted for this study.

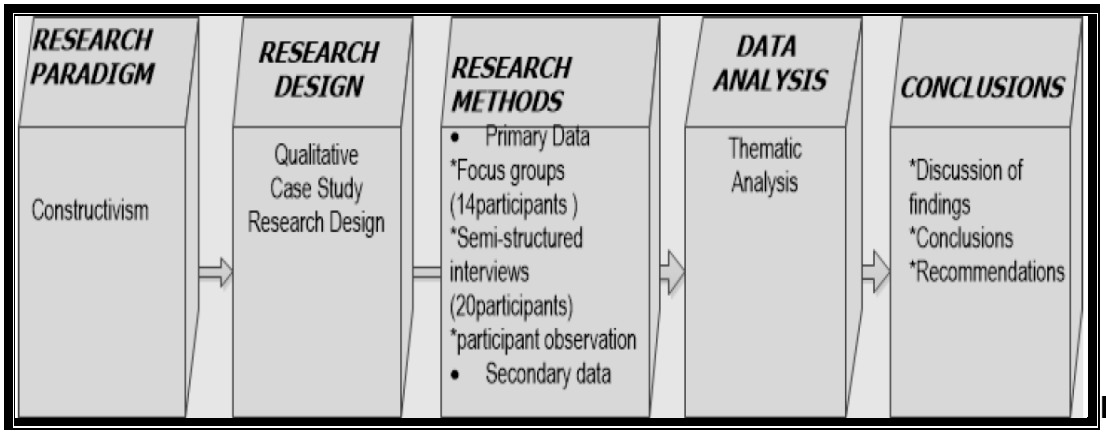


Figure 3.1: Research flow chart

Source: Researcher (2023)

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the study's research methodology and design that encompasses the approach systematically undertaken by an enquiry informed by the problem. According to (Leedy 2018: 91) “methodology refers to the operational framework within which facts are given meaning”. Brynard and Hanekom (2022: 25), offer a more detailed explanation of research methodology as a mechanism of action, described as broad and complete but not confined to research methodologies. Research methodology entails the following: the research approach, design, population, and sampling, as well as sample, data collection methods, and data analysis.

3.2.1 Research paradigm

Creswell and Creswell (2018) state while philosophical ideas remain hidden in the study, they heavily influence the entire research process by providing the basis on which research approaches (qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods) are built, and as such, should be identified (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 46). Therefore, against this backdrop, this study was underpinned by a qualitative research approach, which enabled the researcher to gain in-depth information, as well as obtaining the total number of respondents (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 48).

3.2.2 Research Design

Research designs are types of inquiry within research approaches (qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods) guided by the selected worldview. They provide specific direction for procedures to be followed in the research process (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 53). Therefore, a descriptive qualitative case study research design was adopted for this study. According to O'Sullivan *et al*. (2017: 48), this design provides a wealth of information, easy to understand and interpret. It is effective in identifying problems, and in some cases, suggesting solutions. Van Thiel (2014: 85) further elaborates its applied nature allows concrete solutions for real-life problems, since it depicts real-life settings and day-to-day issues. Therefore, in this particular study, case study research design enabled identification of inequities and inequalities within Mbombela Local Municipality that, subsequently, aided in the development of a framework to reduce these disparities.

A case study research design, therefore, provided the best design to address the research questions, since it is based on situated knowledge (Ngulube 2015: 4).

Furthermore, unlike quantitative research designs that mainly focus on numeric data (O'Sullivan *et al*. 2017: 63), and other qualitative research designs such as narrative and phenomenology (knowledge of lived experience) as well as ethnography (good when learning a broad culture-sharing behaviour of groups or individuals) (Ngulube 2015; O'Sullivan *et al*. 2017; Creswell and Creswell 2018), case study research designs are effective in exploring processes and events, in addition to activities, incorporating unique factors to individual cases and information regarding the context that is often ignored by quantitative designs (O'Sullivan *et al*. 2017: 63).

3.2.3 Target Population

Population refers to the total set of units the investigator will be interested in (O'Sullivan *et al*. 2017: 170); the set from which a sample is drawn to generalise the units not studied or to make inferences of the larger population (Lune and Berg 2017: 39). For this study, the target population mainly comprised different actors involved in the Mbombela Local Municipality service delivery governance. As O'Sullivan *et al*. (2017) pointed out, defining the target population requires the researcher to further specify the study population (that is, the units the researcher will be able to access), and in this study, it is those involved in decision-making regarding service delivery related issues (they are: City of Mbombela Municipality municipal officials, local municipality officials, civil society, the private sector, and academics). Identifying the study population made it clearer who was included and excluded from the study population (O'Sullivan *et al*. 2017: 170).

3.2.4 Sampling

Van Thiel (2014: 45) contends it is difficult to include the entire target population in the study; because of size, accessibility, and time constraints, amongst other issues. For these reasons, a sample was drawn from the target population using a purposive sampling method (a non-probability sampling technique). This method required the researcher to gather data from knowledgeable people and, in this case, people who provided valuable and relevant data (O'Sullivan *et al*. 2017: 189) regarding service delivery issues within Nsikazi North. While this method has some serious limitations, such as the lack of generalisability, Lune and Berg (2017: 39) suggest purposive samples are typically beneficial to researchers, especially when using a qualitative case study research design.

a) Criteria used for sampling

A total sample of 34 participants (n=34) was used for the study. Of the 34 participants, 20 participants were engaged in semi-structured interviews (n=20). These participants were purposefully selected for their knowledge, role/responsibility, and direct/indirect involvement in municipal service delivery. The remaining 14 participants (n=14) were engaged in two focus group discussions of seven participants each (one group from each of the two selected local municipalities). Participants selected for focus group discussions were community members, selected through a purposive sampling method, enabling the research to obtain in-depth information regarding their experience as end-users and stakeholders in water service provision. In addition to purposive sampling, the researcher also applied a convenience sampling method (a non-probability sampling method that selects participants who are available) (O'Sullivan *et al.* 2017) in selecting these focus group participants.

Table 3.1: Designation of respondents

Designation of Respondents	**Targeted respondents**	**Instrument**	**Analysis**
Senior Municipal officials	5	Semi-structured interview	Thematic Analysis
Business Communities	5	Semi-structured interview	Thematic Analysis
Government Officials (Nurses, Teachers, and Police)	6	Semi-structured interview	Thematic Analysis
Councillors	4	Semi-structured interview	Thematic Analysis
Community Members	14	Semi-structured interview	Thematic Analysis
Total = 34			

Source: The Researcher (2023)

b) Sampling size

While it is true to say a large (representative) sample ensures reliability and validity (Lune and Berg 2017), Creswell and Creswell (2018: 306) indicated there is no fixed rule in determining sample size in qualitative research.

3.2.5 Sources of qualitative data and data collection methods

The study is underpinned by a constructivist world view that believes in understanding research experiences, the subjectivity of realities, feelings, perceptions, and emotions during the research process. It is for these reasons primary data were used (Focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and non-participant observation). In addition, secondary data (document analysis) sources were also utilised to ensure credibility and authentication of data through triangulation. Most importantly, the researcher found it necessary to clarify the meaning of the research methods for this study.

a) Focus groups (n=14)

The study used focus group discussions to collect data. The technique involved the use of groups of people with similar interests or experiences, to discuss the subject under study (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 306). The researcher deemed it important to utilise focus group discussion specifically in collecting data from the community members of Nsikazi North, as these would allow an array of discussions allowing participants to agree and or disagree on raised issues and reveal inconsistencies and variations that exist within the community beliefs and experiences. Broadening the views of the researcher, the focus group discussions aided in ensuring the credibility of data collected as various opinions, ideas, agreements, and disagreements were raised.

As such, the researcher conducted two focus group interviews (seven participants each) with community members from the area. These focus groups included community members in order to provide reflections on community involvement and understand the level of service delivery, which was crucial in answering the research question. The focus groups included male and female participants with a varied age range and income.

Before the discussion, participants signed an informed consent form, agreeing to participate without force or coercion (Appendix F: Informed Consent Sheet). Giving their consent to record, the researcher alerted the group when recording began and

stopped. Furthermore, the group was informed of the research goals and objectives, which included that it is for academic purposes. The ethical considerations observed were consistent with Atkins and Wallace (2012: 30, cited in Govender 2017: 188), who asserted an ethical approach should permeate and inform the entire study, from planning, data collection and analysis, as well as reporting, and should not be a “mere recognition of anonymity or consent”.

The researcher also used a semi-structured interview guide during the discussions, to control and remain relevant to the discussion related to the phenomenon under study (Appendix E: Semi-Structured Interview Guide). The focus group discussions took an average time of 60 minutes each and were carried out at agreed locations in the respective communities. While it is true that the presence of the researcher may have led to bias in responses during the discussions, these focus groups provided a platform for discussions and participation; they widened the way of thinking and provided new insights through different views and ideas regarding the phenomenon under study (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 306).

Focus groups also enabled the researcher to observe and record reactions, feelings, and emotions expressed during the discussions regarding how participants feel about Mbombela Municipality service delivery governance dynamics. Furthermore, the researcher's thoughts, impressions and feelings, observations and experiences were jotted down in a diary throughout the research process to reduce researcher bias.

b) Participant observation

The study adopted participant observation as another way to collect data. The researcher resides in close vicinity to the study area and gathered data easily. With the assistance of municipal officials and staff, the researcher also visited one of the major areas to observe inadequate delivery of services. Field visits also provided information on local realities and confirmed some theoretical assumptions and issues raised in the policy debates and service delivery-related matters.

Creswell and Creswell (2018) asserted being a participant observer allows the researcher to observe (emotions, body language) and experience the environment under study, enabling them to be in the shoes of the participants and understand their day-to-day activities, while corroborating information gathered through primary data (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 306) as suggested by the constructivists. The researcher

took notes and recorded all observations, feelings, emotions, and experiences in a journal, with personal thoughts recorded separately. With permission from the responsible authorities, the researcher also photographed the related phenomenon under study (protecting the identities of those involved).

c) Semi-structured interviews (n=20)

The study also utilised interviews as another way to collect data. Interviews were simply referred to as a conversation with the purpose of collecting information with the interviewer asking questions and the respondent providing the answers (Lune and Berg 2017). While the study adopted a semi-structured type of interview, there are other types of interviews such as structured or formal (standardised) interviews and the informal or non-formal interview (unstandardised) interview (Lune and Berg 2017). Unlike formal (rigid, no deviations from questions) and informal interviews (no set wording and order to questions), semi-structured interviews were chosen because they provided room for reordering of the questions, allowed flexibility in, for example, language adjustment and allowed more probing with the researcher guiding and having control of the process (Lune and Berg 2017).

The researcher carried out semi-structured interviews with twenty **(n=20)** participants from different sectors involved in the governance of municipal service delivery in Mbombela Local Municipality (one participant from the municipality, nine officials in management positions at district level, six councillors and four participants from academia). Prior to the interviews, each participant signed an informed consent form agreeing to indicate voluntary participation (Appendix F: Informed Consent Sheet), without force or coercion.

Confidentiality was assured by explaining participant names and identities would not be mentioned but kept anonymous during and after the study. The purpose of the research was disclosed to be for academic purposes. These interviews lasted between 45-60 minutes and were held face-to-face; for those who could not use the application, telephonic interviews were done. During the semi-structured interviews, an interview guide (Appendix E: Interview Guide) was used as a parameter for the interview, enabling the researcher to gather certain aspects relevant to the study (van Thiel 2014: 94).

Most importantly, semi-structured interviews created room for probing, enabling an in-depth understanding (not short answers) and gave room for participants to express their opinions, ideas, and perceptions (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 306), which were important in establishing both procedural and distributive justice. While it is true these interviews may have been associated with researcher bias, due to the presence of the researcher and that some people may not be able to equally articulate their views, semi-structured interviews also enabled the researcher to have control over the line of questioning and allowed participants to provide historical information (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 306), critical in answering the research questions. For those participants in managerial positions, semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to understand their underlying reasons for their decisions in water governance.

d) Secondary data sources - Document analysis

Secondary data sources were also used to augment the primary data collected. Primary and secondary sources of existing data (Creswell and Creswell 2018) were used to ensure all available relevant data are exhausted (thick and rich descriptions). In terms of the definition, secondary data are referred to as existing data sources that contain information “created for a reason other than research but can be used or re-used to this end” (van Thiel 2014: 105). Moreover, secondary data allowed triangulation of data and sources of data, promoting the credibility and accuracy of data collected from primary sources. Similar to when using primary data sources, the researcher thoroughly prepared during the data collection process.

Considering which material, subject, and sources were suitable for inclusion in the study was vital (van Thiel 2014: 105). Documents utilised enabled the researcher to obtain the language and words of the participants; accessed at a convenient time, saving time and costs for the researcher. Secondary data are, nevertheless, not without limitations, and can be difficult to obtain, may be highly protected with information inaccessible to the public and private access, might not be authentic and may provide incomplete information (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 308). However, the researcher exhausted as many documents as possible and triangulated these with primary data for authenticity and credibility.

3.3 DATA ANALYSIS

Creswell and Creswell (2018) contend the processes of data collection and data analysis in qualitative research happen simultaneously, unlike in quantitative studies. This process (qualitative data analysis) is aimed at establishing and examining the contents of qualitative data (experiences, perceptions, symbols, and meaning, as well as feelings), with the intent of making sense of the text and images (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 311). The study, therefore, adopted thematic analysis as a technique of data analysis.

Being considered the foundational approach to qualitative data analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006), the thematic analysis technique refers to a "method of identifying themes and patterns of meaning across a dataset concerning a research question…." (Ngulube 2015: 10). On the same note, JVR (2016:13) added "thematic analysis is the go-to method in most qualitative research" and "a thematic analysis also provides an easily concise description of the emergent themes and patterns which are easily interpretable within a data set". More so, it forms the basis and foundation phase for interpretation (JVR 2016).

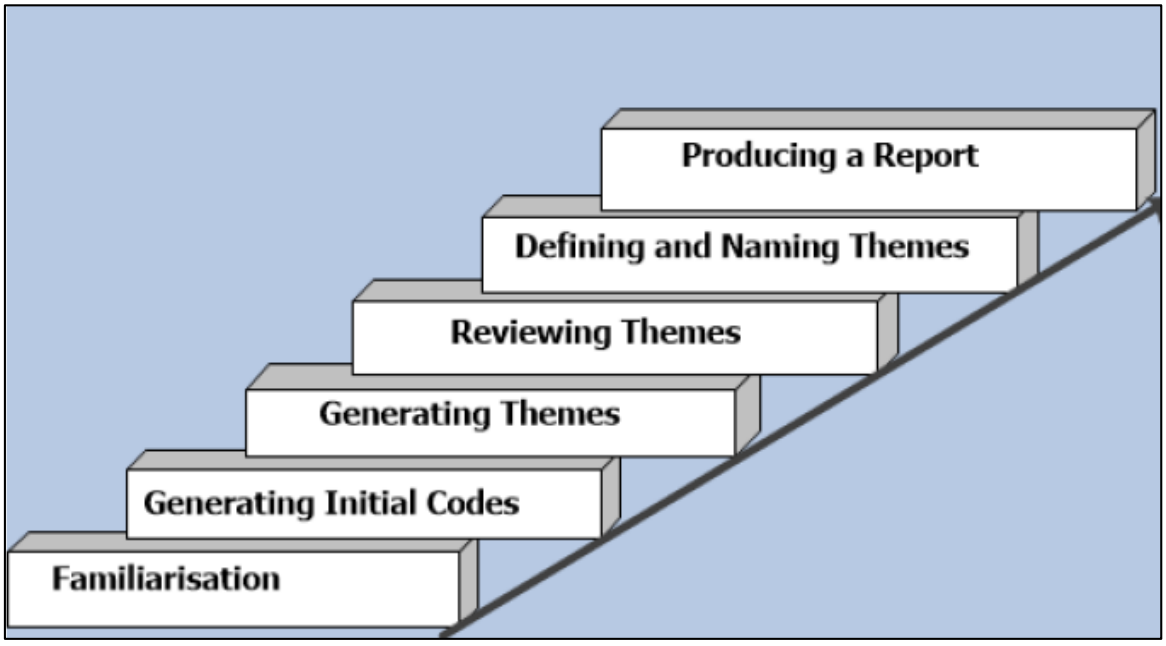


Figure 3.2: Six steps to thematic analysis *Source: Braun and Clarke (2006)*

Among its core advantages, a thematic analysis provided the core skill useful for conducting other forms of qualitative analysis. Furthermore, through its theoretical freedom, the technique also provided a flexible and useful research tool, allowing a rich and thick, yet complex account of data (Braun and Clarke 2006). It is a useful

method for examining the perspectives of different participants, highlighting similarities and differences and generating unanticipated insights (Braun and Clarke 2006; JVR, 2016; Nowell *et al.* 2017).

Its ability and usefulness in summarising key features of a large data set forces the researcher to take a well-structured approach to manage data, helping to produce a clear and organised final report (Nowell *et al.* 2017: 2) that cannot be undermined. While the technique poses many advantages, the researcher acknowledges its limitations, such as its flexibility, inconsistency, and lack of coherence when developing themes derived from the research data (Nowell *et al.* 2017: 2). However, this was addressed by applying and making explicit the epistemological positions that coherently underpinned the study's empirical claims (Braun and Clarke 2006; Nowell *et al.* 2017). To perfect the process of thematic analysis, the researcher adopted Braun and Clarke's (2006) most widely used steps for conducting a thematic analysis. The process entails six steps, described below.

Step 1: Familiarisation

At the initial data analysis stage, the researcher familiarised herself with the collected data (Caulfield 2020). As expressed by Nowell *et al.* (2017: 5), data collected came in various forms, which included recorded interviews, policy documents, observations (recorded during the interviews), images, as well as recorded observations from participant observations and field notes (recorded during the field trip). Data were organised and grouped in preparation for the analysis. Columns, markers (at the margins), tables and memos were used in grouping and arranging data. During this stage, interviews were transcribed, notes typed, materials printed and scanned (where necessary), and collected data sorted and arranged according to data sources (focus groups, interviews, observations, and secondary data).

The researcher examined and re-examined the data, read, and reread it, providing a thorough and deep analytical lens on the grouped data. As noted by Braun and Clarke (2006, cited in Nowel *et al.* 2017: 5), during this process, the researcher immersed herself with the data to familiarise herself with the depth and breadth of the content. Intensive reading allowed the researcher to be familiar with the patterns of the collected data. Furthermore, qualitative research also implies thick and rich descriptions to ensure trustworthiness (van Thiel 2014: 140), and as such, huge volumes of data were gathered. At this point, a filtering technique was used to filter any irrelevant data without

distortion. The process is also referred to as "winnowing the data" by Creswell and Creswell (2018: 313). The remaining relevant material (to the phenomenon under study) was arranged and categorised, starting with coding.

Step 2: Generating Initial Codes

After familiarising with the data, the researcher engaged in the second stage of identifying preliminary codes. This coding stage refers to data organising by text or image segments and writing a word representing a category at the margins (van Thiel 2014; Creswell and Creswell 2018). More so, Nowell *et al.* (2017: 6) defined qualitative coding as a process of reflection and as a way of interacting with and thinking about data. Codes assigned (summary of the contents of certain concepts) reflected the actual language of the participants and allowed the researcher to simplify and focus on specific data characteristics. Furthermore, according to Lune and Berg (2017: 182), it is the coded form of data that is analysed; thus, this is a significant stage in qualitative data analysis. Finally, the researcher immersed herself in the investigation, using more analytical codes and categories derived from existing theories and explanations relevant to the research focus. Every transcript and interview were thoroughly interrogated and coded accordingly.

Step 3: Generating themes

The third stage began when all data were initially coded, and a list of the different codes identified across the data set was developed (Braun and Clarke 2006; Nowell *et al.* 2017). The researcher then identified patterns among the codes and generated themes. In their definition of themes, Nowell *et al.* (2017: 8) refer to a theme as "an abstract entity that brings meaning and identifies a recurrent experience and its variant manifestation". Thus, a theme captures and unifies the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful story. More so, it is important to note themes are broader than codes, and at this stage, several codes were combined to generate themes. Identified themes also displayed multiple participant perspectives, supported by the specific evidence, thereby giving authenticity to the findings and conclusion reached (van Thiel 2014: 110). Most importantly, this stage ensured the researcher's thought process referred to the relationship between codes, subthemes, and themes (JVR 2016).

Step 4: Reviewing themes

Braun and Clarke's (2006) step four of thematic analysis states a set of themes would have been devised at this stage. The set must first be refined to guarantee the resulting themes are both useful and accurate representations of data. The researcher, therefore, compared the generated themes to ensure a fair representation of data. As a result, some themes were split, some combined and some discarded, ensuring the remaining themes were more accurate, relevant, and useful. More importantly, the researcher ensured the other themes are thematically connected, while maintaining a distinct and distinguishable distinction between them (JVR 2016).

Step 5: Defining and naming themes

This stage entailed the naming and defining of each theme. As asserted by Nowell *et al.* (2017: 10), defining a theme involves formulating what each theme means and figuring out how it helps us understand the data. This process entailed coming up with more simple names and themes that were easy to understand. At this point, data was woven into a single narrative (JVR 2016) and ample time was spent developing themes to improve the credibility of the findings, as noted by Lincoln and Guba (1985, cited in Nowell *et al.* 2017).

Step 6: Producing a Report

Once the researcher fully established the themes and was ready for the final analysis, the final stage of the reporting stage began. This stage involved writing up the data analysis, which included a clear introduction, establishing the research question, aims and approaches taken (Braun and Clarke 2006; Nowell *et al.* 2017). Following that, a methodology was written, outlining how data was collected, and the thematic analysis carried out. Each theme was addressed in the findings and results section, starting with how it came about, its meaning, and how it answers the research questions. The researcher ensured analysis of the results convinces the reader of the rigour and merit of the findings (Nowell *et al.* 2017: 11). The researcher also ensured the write up went beyond a mere description of the themes but, rather, offered a portrayal of the analysis, supported with empirical evidence that address the research questions.

This process was further supported by King (2004, cited in Nowell *et al.* 2017), who asserted direct quotations from participants should be included, as they are an essential component of the final report. Furthermore, Nowell *et al.* (2017) argued raw data extracts should be inserted at this point, within the analytical narrative, to explain

the complete story of the data, which goes beyond a summary of the data and convinces the reader of the validity and merit of the study (Braun and Clarke 2006; Nowell *et al.* 2017; Caulfield 2020). To maintain accuracy, the researcher revisited the reflective journal to see whether observations and conclusions had been presented correctly and whether the literature validated the findings. Furthermore, the researcher examined the related findings, including those that were unexpected.

3.4 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF QUALITATIVE DATA

This study focused on ensuring rigour and trustworthiness, because of its qualitative nature. This narrative was further elaborated by Creswell and Creswell (2018), who argued it is crucial to ensure findings in a qualitative study are accurate and consistent with the researcher's standpoint, the participant, or other readers (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 322). The researcher, therefore, adopted various strategies to ensure they were trustworthy. Most importantly, it should be noted this validation process of findings occurred throughout the entire research process.

The researcher used several strategies during data collection to ensure the study's credibility, confirming conclusions are legitimate, accurate, and right, so they can be trusted, such as triangulating multiple sources to validate data (van Thiel 2014: 140). In this study, data collected from interviews (focus groups and semi-structured interviews) were cross-checked with supporting documents (such as municipal reports and published and unpublished reports by other bodies such as StatsSA, the Auditor General of SA (AGSA) to ensure a true representation of data collected.

Furthermore, data collected from municipal reports and interviews were cross-referenced with data from the focus group discussions to provide a clearer view of the reality in the communities, for instance, the level of community involvement in service delivery decisions within the municipality. This process enabled authentication of the data and assisted in building a coherent justification of themes, thereby ensuring credibility. The researcher also used member checking to ensure the credibility of findings (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 322).

Researcher bias was clarified through reflexivity, clarifying how the researcher's background, opinions and perception shaped the interpretation of findings, for instance, the mere fact the researcher has been a resident of the municipal jurisdiction. A detailed description of the entire research process was provided, allowing

transparency to the reader and participants to understand the study direction, enabling them to trace the steps and verify collected data and findings reached regarding services. The researcher also recorded the interviews (with participant consent) to promote accuracy when analysing data. Most importantly, attention was paid to certain aspects during the selection and compilation of data, such as who collected the data, why, where, and how it was analysed and for what purpose, which all affected the study's credibility (van Thiel 2014: 105).

While Creswell and Creswell (2018: 324) argued qualitative studies are not meant to be generalised, they agree their findings can be applied in other contexts with similar cases and the same settings; this ensured the study is trusted. Furthermore, to ensure this is possible, the researcher provided comprehensive documentation of the entire research process, in order that the reader can apply findings of the Nsikazi North case study in their municipalities, should they have the same settings (such as the same historical background and reasons that have led to the development of these social inequities in basic water provision).

A clear and step-by-step documentation process allowed the study to be consistent and dependable, thereby ensuring the study is trusted. Furthermore, documents were cross-checked to avoid obvious mistakes, and during coding, the researcher ensured the codes do not drift, through data comparison (by writing memos and their definitions) (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 323). Adopting all these strategies ensured the study's accuracy, consistency, and replicability, allowing rigour and for the study to be trusted.

3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Studies that involve humans require establishment of a special relationship between researchers and participants. Therefore, researchers require cooperation from their subjects, and in turn, participants expect protection and are safeguarded from any harm or risk that may occur because of their cooperation (O' Sullivan I. 2017: 309). Against this backdrop, the researcher reduced the risk, protected, and safeguarded the subjects, through ethical practices. In this study, these ethical practices were considered in five phases.

Prior to the study, various ethical considerations were observed. The Durban University of Technology (DUT) code of ethics was thoroughly read to understand ethical implications and considerations. The researcher also chose a site for the study,

which did not raise power dynamics issues, as asserted by Creswell and Creswell (2018: 174). A research proposal was submitted to the Departmental Research Higher Degrees Committee (DRHDC) and School Research Higher Degrees Committee (SRHDC) of the DUT for approval. Permission and approval were sought from gatekeepers. The researcher applied for and obtained an ethical clearance certificate from the DUT Research Ethics Committee (**Appendices B and C**: Requisition letter to undertake the study). These bodies assisted in reviewing the potential risks associated with the study and helped protect human rights (Creswell and Creswell, 2018:170).

Approval granting permission to undertake the study were granted by Mbombela Local Municipality (**Appendix D:** Approval Letter to Conduct Research by Mbombela Local Municipality). As the study commenced, the researcher identified a problem that needed to be addressed and would be beneficial to the communities (persistent inequities that need to be addressed by developing a service delivery framework for the municipality). Furthermore, the study objective and motivation were clearly stated as the completion of a master's degree in administration (Public Administration).

The data collection process entailed thorough research regarding the norms, values, and charters of indigenous cultures in the municipality to avoid violations and maintain respect for these factors, which included gender, culture, religion, and other different issues encountered during the study. The data collection phase was the most critical part, as this involved human interaction and disclosure of information. Strong moral-ethical consideration was consciously observed to avoid harm to the participants. The researcher encouraged transparency and avoided deception; a situation where participants understand one purpose of this study, but the researcher has a different purpose in mind (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 172).

The process was done through a debrief on the aims and reasons for undertaking the study, with clarification regarding the publishing and reporting of results extended to the respondents, who were assured the data collected were only for academic purposes. The participants were asked to complete the consent forms (Lune and Berg 2017; Creswell and Creswell 2018) at their own will. The researcher abstained from coercion and blackmail in the signing of consent forms, instead, voluntary participation was encouraged. Consent was also sought when recording the interviews (**Appendix E: Informed Consent Sheet**). Participants were alerted when the recording started

and when it ended, as this assisted in building trust and credibility of the study and avoiding deception to the participants.

The researcher also ensured anonymity and confidentiality (Lune and Berg 2017: 57) to protect participant identities from any harm and risks. The process entailed ensuring participant names were not disclosed and the data collected were kept in a safe place. Most importantly, the researcher avoided collecting harmful information by sticking to the questions and avoiding sensitive information. However, the researcher acknowledged it is difficult to anticipate sensitive or harmful information during data collection. To address this concern, the researcher abided with the ethical code for researchers, in which the privacy and confidentiality of information revealed are to be protected at all costs (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 174).

Power imbalances were respected, particularly in this qualitative study, where semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. Considering how sensitive the interview was, whether participants have a say in how their responses are interpreted, how the interview will improve the situation in the municipality, and how critically respondents are questioned, as well as the consequence after the research were stated in some of the questions underpinning the process. Therefore, the researcher respected the power imbalances (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 172). Additionally, the researcher provided equal treatment and was consistent in how data collection was done.

The sites where data collection took place were respected, adhering to the agreed times as per the municipality research guidance. Any disruptions and disturbances to the normal functioning of its operations were avoided. Finally, the sponsorship and research interests were clarified during data collection as this helped establish the study's trust and credibility. During data analysis, the researcher still observed ethical considerations, ensuring an accurate interpretation of the data collected.

This process entailed having an objective analysis, refraining from bias, avoid focusing on the negative and only disclosing the positive data (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 175). As a result, the true findings were presented despite the feelings and personal interests of the researcher. Most importantly, participant privacy was protected and respected, as explained during the data collection process. Therefore, confidentiality and anonymity were maintained, ensuring the privacy of participants. In summary,

when reporting, sharing, and storing the findings, ethical obligations were also considered. The researcher acknowledged citations acquired from all secondary data to avoid plagiarism (Lune and Berg 2017: 2002).

3.6 CONCLUSION

The chapter has provided an extended overview of the research methodology detailing the worldview, research design, targeted population, and sampling techniques, as well as sample size adopted by the researcher and provide reasons why these were chosen. Furthermore, the chapter specified the data collection methods and analysis used and how rigour and trustworthiness were ensured in the study. In conclusion, it presented how the researcher upheld the ethical considerations, as these are vital in every study undertaken. The next chapter is a presentation of the data collected and findings derived from this chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR:
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented a detailed description of the research methodology applied in this study. In addition, it elaborated on the data collection methods employed and specified the techniques adopted during data analysis. Meanwhile, this chapter focuses on the data presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data collected, to achieve the main research objective of developing a service delivery framework for South African municipalities. The study developed the following sub-objectives to achieve this main objective:

- To assess the work of community workers in the rural areas of Nsikazi North in promoting service delivery.
- To explore community perception towards the role of CDWs;
- To identify the factors affecting community workers in promoting service delivery in the rural areas of Nsikazi North; and
- To recommend the approaches that could be implemented to improve community worker service delivery.

4.2 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Primary data were gathered using semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observation, while secondary data were collected through document analysis. The response rates are shown (Table 4.1) below.

1) Semi-structured interviews

Table 4.1: Semi-Structured Interviews Response Rate 68%

Participant	Sample	Response	Percentage
Top officials in MLM/management position	6	4	67
Councillors	4	3	75
Academia	4	2	50
Local Municipality Representatives	2	2	100
Total	16	11	68

Source: Researcher (2023)

2) Participant observation

The researcher carried out field visits in one of the Nsikazi North within Mbombela Local Municipality, to understand the local realities regarding municipal service provision. During the field visit, various sites such as service delivery were visited like local clinics, photographs taken with permission of the responsible authorities, and notes jotted down. During this tour, the researcher was a participant observer. Data collected enabled the triangulation of data collected from other sources to establish rigour in the research.

4.3 DATA ANALYSIS

The six-step thematic analysis process propounded by Braun and Clarke (2006) was adopted in the analysis of data. This process started with familiarisation and preparation of data for analysis through transcription. Two focus group discussion recordings and 13 audio recordings from the semi-structured interviews were repeatedly listened to, translated, and transcribed. As a result, all data collected were directly translated into English by both the translator and researcher. Following this, initial codes were generated, enabling the researcher to align data collected to the research questions, as well as the theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

The process was followed by combining the codes into overarching themes for accurate data depiction, allowing the researcher to identify missing links and draw meaning from the themes generated. The researcher then examined how to support data by reviewing themes, followed by creating and naming themes, allowing the researcher to conduct a thorough and systematic study of the themes' contributions to data understanding. Last, as discussed below, the researcher drew a report and presented the findings.

4.4 FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Lune and Berg (2017) noted the terms “findings” and “results” are often used synonymously, although they have a slight difference in their meaning. In defining the terms, they argued findings refer to “what data says” while results offer interpretations, meaning and analysis of the data (Lune and Berg 2017: 209). Furthermore, Lune and Berg (2017: 209) noted qualitative reports are often organised according to conceptual headings. However, the study followed the train of thought by Edmonds and Kennedy (2017: 328), who purport the research findings are “usually organised by research

questions or by themes", and advised such themes may be presented as sections, with relevant subsections.

With the thick and rich description occupying the focus of the findings, the study adopted a narrative and descriptive form to present the findings, which is in line with Creswell (2009), who established narrative texts are the most frequent form used in displaying qualitative data (Creswell 2009: 200). This approach concurs with Edmonds and Kennedy (2017: 327), who argued qualitative inquiry should use some quantitative data "if it helps to provide context and support to the findings".

The researcher also used direct quotations to illustrate key points and ensure trustworthiness (Govender 2017:56) in reporting the findings. This was consistent with Edmonds and Kennedy's (2017: 78) opinion, who asserted evidence presented in research findings should "include but is not limited to quotations from interviews and experts from observations and documents". Additionally, the research findings were linked to the theoretical and conceptual framework directing the themes to the conclusions of the study.

Four super-ordinate themes emerged from the data analysis, and these included: theoretical and conceptual constructs that form the building blocks for a service delivery framework, inequities in services provision in Mbombela Local Municipality, factors affecting service delivery governance in Mbombela Local Municipality and their influence on basic service provision, and measures to improve municipal governance in Mbombela Local Municipality. Each of the superordinate themes was examined, along with the sub-themes which emerged.

4.4.1 To identify the factors affecting community workers in promoting service delivery in the rural areas of Nsikazi North

Theme 1: Planning in the form of IDP (Integrated Development Plan). Alignment of municipal planning.

While municipal services knowledge by municipal officials should inform planning, it should not be restricted to services amounts and volumes or the quantity of services supplied, according to the municipal Integrated Development Planning's (Mbombela IDP, 2020). Rather planning should encompass various differentiating features such as roles, causes, and gaps in municipal services governance. Consequentially, this

alignment ensures that disparities and municipal services inequities are identified earlier and that strategies to remedy the disparities can be adopted.

Based on the officials engaged during the interviews, the study revealed that Mbombela Local Municipality engages in an Integrated Development Planning process, developing an Integrated Development Plan (IDP). In terms of the Municipal Systems Act (Act No 32 of 2000), the Integrated Development Plan is considered as a planning tool to ensure that municipalities achieve the objectives of local government and developmental goals as prescribed by Section 152 and 153 of the Constitution. Most importantly, Section 23(c) of the Municipal Systems Act (Act No 32 of 2000) further clarifies that the Integrated Development Plan is meant to ensure the progressive realisation of Sections 24, 25, 26, 27 and 29 of the Constitution and among these fundamental rights is the right to sufficient water services.

Majority of the municipal officials interviewed highlighted that the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) guide municipal operations and decision-making processes and that those plans are reviewed every year as prescribed by the Municipal Systems Act (Act No 32 of 2000).

Interviewed officials further indicated that:

"….. the Integrated Development Plan process of the municipality is done as a consultative process that not only involves other organs of state, but also ensures the inclusiveness and consultation of local communities to ensure that their needs and priorities are heard as prescribed by Section 29(b) of the MSA (Act No 32 of 2000)…"

This has been further echoed in the following sentiments below by one of the officials in the focus group who highlighted that:

"they engage yearly in an Integrated Development Planning process, and we consult our communities through roadshows that are held in each local municipality. All community needs are considered. However, not every community need will be implemented because of budget limitations, so we take the most serious issues first, and they become our priority".

This approach is also in line with the Human Rights-Based Approach, which contends that planning should take into account all aspects of a right, including availability,

participation, accountability, sustainability, and information, in addition to the quantity and quality of services supplied (Masango, 2019:18).

Furthermore, this approach is enshrined in section 152(e) of the 1996 constitution e advocates that the adopted projects should seek to realise narrow outcomes associated directly with the activity itself and realise the outcomes that support the realisation of human rights. Projects adopted should address the needs of the most vulnerable and focus on the disadvantaged groups, and as such, stakeholder engagement should ensure meaningful participation and sustainability throughout the long-term outcomes (RSA, 1996).

Theme 2: Alignment of government funding and municipal financial management in addressing municipal services

It is important to note that poorly designed and inadequately implemented policies fuel community protest and access to municipal services, and in addition, the inefficient and improper use of financial resources has dire consequences. Thus, policies must be backed by sufficient funding, supported by the adoption of sound financial management to ensure the realisation of the right to municipal services.

In determining the alignment of government funding in addressing the persistent inequalities in municipal services governance, the study established that Mbombela Local Municipality is a grant-dependent municipality. Therefore, the municipality receives the Equitable Share Grant (Non-Conditional) in terms of the Division of Revenue Act (DORA), giving effect to Chapter 13 of the Constitution. In return, the municipality provides free basic water Service to those who fall under the indigent policy, there by addressing affordability concerns. In an interview with municipal officials, they have this to say:

“We get the Equitable Share. However, it’s not enough. 80% of it goes to salaries, and the remaining is not enough for operation and maintenance”.

The finding was further confirmed by the Municipal Money (2020) report, which recorded an over-expenditure (81.1% overspent) of the operations budget in the year 2018/2019 (Municipal Money, 2020). The study further revealed that the municipality also receives other conditional grants such as the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) and the Rural Household Infrastructure Grant (RHIG). These grants are meant to fast-track the delivery of municipal services to the communities without access to municipal

services and provide sanitation services for the Nsikazi North households where piped infrastructure are not possible, respectively (Oosthuizen and Thornhill, 2017:7).

In an interview with municipal officials commented that:

“Apart from the Equitable Share, we also receive other grants such as the Municipal Infrastructure Grant and the Rural Household Infrastructure Grant. They do, however, come with conditions, and if those terms are not met, the money cannot be utilized; otherwise, the audit report would show some unlawful, wasteful, or irregular expenditure.”

Another official highlighted that:

The municipality received some other funding from the Department of Water and Sanitation; however, its framework for how to use the funds is heavily regulated; for example, if we are doing water sampling and notice a broken pipe, we are not allowed to repair it because it will be recorded as operation and maintenance, and you will see that testing the water without repairing the pipe could result in compromised results”.

Challenges imposed by the above-mentioned conditional grants were further confirmed by Municipal Money (2020) which reported an under expenditure (minus 121.2% underspent) of the capital budget in the financial year 2018/2019 (Municipal Money, 2020). Therefore, the study discovered that, despite the municipality's dire need for funds, it fails to properly utilise its capital budget, which is attributable to funding conditions. Conditional grants, such as the Municipal Infrastructure Grants (MIG), are distributed to certain municipalities based on a formula and are intended to supplement the Equitable Share Grant.

This finding resonates with a study by Sutcliffe and Bannister (2020), which indicated that most of the municipalities failed to spend approximately 14% of their Municipal Infrastructure Grant (R9.9billion of their MIG budget) (Sutcliffe and Bannister, 2020). As a result, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) then established the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agency (MISA), which served the main purpose of addressing capacity challenges through assisting municipalities in planning, management, and other technical expertise to roll out infrastructure more efficiently and effectively. However, despite the measures taken to assist municipalities, there are still obstacles in utilising the grants, as demonstrated by the case of Mbombela Local Municipality.

Apart from government funding, the study established that the municipality also generates its own revenue through the adoption of a fixed rate for other services like water services and rates across the municipalities. This is reflected in the sentiment echoed below by one of the officials who said that:

"We have a fixed rate across the municipality, and once you exhaust the free basic services like water, and electricity you are then billed for the services you have used".

While the above findings were mostly related to the municipality's financial sources, the study also indicated that the municipality's expenditures are guided by the framework such as the MFMA (Act No 56 of 2003), which stipulates that the management of the municipal finances. The study also indicated that processes are in place to guarantee municipal service deliveries structures are responsive and responsible and that they create accountability and transparency, which is consistent with the principles of good governance. In an interview with municipal officials stated that:

"…the MFMA advises us officials on how to spend the money; for example, we have Supply Chain Management and budgeting standards that we follow..."

"…there are processes to be followed when we fail to fully utilise our capital budget, we have to apply for the rollover of funds from the National Treasury, and it takes time as they also follow a certain framework on whether to roll over the fund or not…"

While it is true that there has been a lack of some principles of good governance like accountability and responsibility and the high rise of corruption in local municipalities (Sutcliffe and Bannister, 2020) and further other principle of good governance like transparency, accountability, procedural justice, policy and legislation must be flexible and administratively enforceable. Moeti, (2022: 56) further warned that excessive regulation and rigid conformity to formal rules, which tend to coincide with bureaucratic inertia, can increase transaction costs, discourage investments, and potentially derail or hinder water management reforms. Thus, rigid and overly legalistic legislations and regulations in water governance are self-defeating.

The study observed that the South African government has set aside funding which is meant to address the disparities in municipal services like water governance, and over time this (local government transfers) have grown more than ten-fold in real terms throughout 1998/99 to 2017/18, totalling over an R120billion (Sutcliffe and Bannister,

2020:43). Sutcliffe and Bannister (2020) further argued that combined with its revenues, total revenue for the local government now compromises 25% of the total government expenditure. While this constitutes a substantial commitment to decentralisation, the findings presented indicated that the inadequacy of the central government funding in ensuring the realisation of the right to municipal services like water and sanitation should not be undermined. Finally, funding should be accompanied by capacity investments to ensure that the municipalities can utilise the funding effectively and efficiently to establish procedural justice and ensure that everyone has access to basic municipal services.

Theme 3: Capacitation of communities to address municipal services disparities

Local communities and their community organisations including Non-Governmental organisations (NGO) plays a crucial role in addressing municipal services in local communities that are most affected. It is therefore important to ensure capacity investment in the communities to ensure justice water distribution. It is upon this premise that the study established that the municipality has stopped engaging in educational and awareness campaigns due to financial constraints. Munzhedzi, 2019; Van der Waldt, (2023) argues that the local community capacities should be strengthened, and the right to municipal services should be promoted.

In an interview with municipal noted that:

"….the municipality used to hold these campaigns twice a year. It was done through visiting schools and doing save water campaigns, among other activities. However, these programs have been side-lined because of the financial status of the municipality, and we are prioritizing service delivery over other things; hence they have not been done…"

Another official commented that:

"…we used to go to schools and do save water campaigns and educational programs, for example, sanitary disposal education; however, we are no longer doing that because of limited funding…"

On the same note, the focus groups discussions held in the municipal offices indicated that they have never witnessed nor attended any awareness campaigns in their communities, and this is highlighted below:

*" …we have never experienced anything of that sought…". (*Focus group participant)

All participants from both the academia, focus groups, and officials agreed that there is a need to engage in these community investments to make communities aware of the importance of municipal infrastructure including water infrastructure and the consequences in access of these services by other communities.

This is reflected in the following excerpts below by of the officials who commented that:

"….I think we need to improve and invest in that area more…"

"…it is true, more needs to be done, and there is still room for improvement in that area by the municipality…"

Theme 4: Institutional capacity and governance factors

The study established that institutional capacity and governance failures remain among the major concerns affecting service provision in South Africa. Citing the Parliamentary Monitoring Group conducted on July 27, 2012, the Auditor-General [South Africa] conclusions ascribed poor municipal performance to a lack of political will among the leadership to address the situation, no sanctions for non-performance, and a lack of requisite skills in municipalities (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2012). While this data appears to be a little out of date, it covers a critical moment in South African water governance and provides some insight into current water governance discussions in Water Service Authorities. According to empirical data from the Mbombela Local Municipality, these difficulties are still present in South African municipalities, and they continue to have a significant impact on the accomplishment of social equity in basic water provision.

i) Political interference

Participants interviewed identified political interference as one of the factors crippling water governance, especially in decision-making processes, thereby making the institutions vulnerable. This is articulated in the following excerpt below, where one of the officials commented:

"…in as much as we try competitive bidding to ensure that the process of awarding of tenders is flawless, there is always political interference in the final decision on who gets the tender…"

The finding confirms Adon and Simatele's (2021:516) observation that South African water institutions are highly associated with a lack of independence from political interference with ill-equipped resources and poorly defined or overlapping authorities. They further argue that these water institutions are not proactive in dealing with water challenges; rather, they are stuck in the conventional strategies of managing water resources and are manipulated by politicians (Adom and Simatele, 2021). Furthermore, Karodia and Weston (2002) in Adom and Simatele (2021:516) argued while water management plays a role, political and personal interests have controlled the daily operation in water institutions. Empirical evidence collected further confirms these assertions by revealing that there are various substandard and unfinished projects in Mbombela Local Municipality, which may be a product of political interference in awarding tenders. Therefore, the study established that political interference hinders successful project implementation, resulting in some areas failing to access water services.

ii) Lack of policy implementation

All participants interviewed highlighted that while the district municipality and South Africa have established a strong policy to guide water institutions and processes, the difficulty now is to fully implement the policies that are already in place. This was further noted by Bakker (2004) in Furlong (2012), who observed that reregulation is a highly contingent, constantly evolving process, involving" institutional learning" and "mediation", meanwhile Sancton (2009) in Furlong (2012:2725), argued that "regulation is in not a fait accompli: it is iterative and takes time for organisations to understand it and apply it to their advantage". In reaction to these assertions, one participant commented that:

"…..our policy is ok; we have managed to set up good by-laws and regulations. However, we do not have the financial capacity to implement them. For example, we are not able to deal with illegal connections through our by-laws, and as a result, another policy was created to legalize the illegal connections through the Rural House-Hold Connection Policy, but it's been a year now, and it has not been implemented…"

The finding contradicts Adom and Simatele's (2021:517) conclusions that South African policies are fragmented, uncoordinated and unclear and silent on the administrative challenges worsening water quality and the steps needed to tackle

these". They further challenged that the policies are focused on areas that are already recognised and are silent on the more critical problems of confronting these challenges (Adom and Simatele, 2021). However, both studies point out the challenge in policy implementation. More so, participants further highlighted that the municipality fails to implement consequence management in the institution, compromising service delivery as highlighted below:

"…*The consequence management is not being implemented and imagine what that does in terms of accountability issues*…"

The finding confirms Sutcliffe and Bannister's (2020) report, which argued that while South Africa has enabling legislation (with about 40 pieces of municipal foundation legislation showing that good governance frameworks are in place), however, the main challenge remains with the poor implementation and role players, councillors and administrators who are often not readily accessible to the communities they serve (Sutcliffe and Bannister, 2020). It is, therefore, crucial to note that the effectiveness of a policy only lies in its implementation. Furthermore, Hudson *et al.,* (2019) argued that policies do not fail on their own, but rather progress is highly dependent upon the process of implementation (Hudson *et al.,* 2019).

Officials further attributed poor policy implementation to a lack of political will and a lack of financial capacity. These assertions were also supported by Furlong's (2012:2726) observation that adjusting to regulation and the capacity to comply with it is highly affected by locally specific cultural and governance issues. Furthermore, the finding supports Adom and Simatele's (2021:513) findings that the post-Apartheid policies and strategies lack a clear direction of funding and financing of water projects and that most of the population is unwilling to pay for water services, and yet funding sources are very limited as expressed in the following excerpt below:

"*…there is a lack of political will to implement policy, which has led to cadre deployment*…"

This finding also supports Enqvist and Ziervogel's (2019) assertion that addressing inequality in water governance is not only a matter of finding new technical solutions for piping water into the deprived areas and vulnerable groups but more broadly about political priorities which have catered for some groups over others. The study observed that lack of political will had harmed Mbombela Local Municipality municipal services

governance, greatly affecting the level of policy implementation, which in turn affects the level of development and service delivery. This is iterated by participants in the following excerpts below:

"…m*ost of the policies are not being successfully implemented because there is lack of political will to ensure that everyone has access to water especially rural areas…"*

Furthermore, political interference and lack of political will lead to disastrous effects in water governance resulting in the widening gap between the "haves" and the "have nots". The realisation of the right to municipal services like water and sanitation and achieving equitable services governance should not be limited to the availability of social policies that promote social equity but should extend to the full implementation of these policies to achieve the policy objectives. Failure of policy implementation by water institutions will always fuel the disparities in water service provision, and it is the poor and vulnerable who will continue to suffer and lack access.

iii) Structural challenge and skills deficit

During the Parliamentary Session held on the 13th of April 2021 between CoGTA and Mbombela Local Municipality, one of the main issues raised was the bloated organogram. The municipality's 2014 organogram had more staff at the top than at the bottom, and in 2017, restructuring was done to allowing more staff to be dispersed at the ground to ensure actual service delivery. However, fifty percent of the officials interviewed indicated that there is still insufficient staff at the ground and more people in the administration. Furthermore, thirty percent added lack of competencies as an issue in both the staff and the council as highlighted below:

"…there are so many people in the administration and support services and few people on the ground to do the actual service delivery and to fulfil our main goal, which is providing water and sanitation…"

The finding is consistent with Adom and Simatele's (2021:514) study, which revealed that the water sector lacks people with professional skills and expertise despite overstaffing in the departments. The impact of such a situation on water service cannot be understated, as it necessitates hands-on work with personnel in the field 24/7 to ensure that water treatment plants are operational and that water is available on a daily basis. Furthermore, all of the participants interviewed highlighted that the municipality has skilled staff; however they are not sufficient to ensure that effective and efficient

water governance has resulted in high levels of consultancy. The finding further confirms Sutcliffe and Bannister's (2020:9) report, which noted that the first local government administration after the 2000 election lacked staff with competent skills and had limited capacity to implement the raft of laws defining what should be done. Unfortunately, when the Municipal Demarcation Board reviewed the general competency of the personnel according to the minimum competency requirements set by National Treasure, eighteen (18) years later, they were still determined to be insufficient. One of the officials commented that:

"…we have skilled staff, but we cannot do it on our own. There is a need for more consultancy when implementing projects as water and sanitation require various skills and competencies…"

Another official commented that:

"*…we have skilled staff; however, we do not have the right skills at the right levels…*"

While another official commented that:

"*…we have to do a lot of consultation before and during our interventions…*"

The finding also confirms Romano and Akhmouch's (2019:6) assertion that many cities cannot manage water properly due to a lack of technical and human resources and OECD (2016) findings that the shortage of staff and managerial competencies remain the biggest source (65%) of the capacity gap. Furthermore, while the former is concerned with planning, accurate data, monitoring, and assessment, the latter is concerned with personnel, expertise, and managerial competencies. Therefore, water management in cities necessitates interdisciplinary skills as well as the ability to respond to emergencies. For example, establishing disaster-prevention measures and performing routine activities, all of which must be carried out per people's demands and in coordination with other policies and sectors.

Insufficient human resources and the requisite skills in the right positions within municipality has been attributed to the status of the municipality (Category B servicing rural areas mostly in its jurisdiction). More so, economic and political constraints have also made it difficult to attract qualified personnel in such settings. As a result, there will be insufficient staff in the institutions and procedures that make water provision

decisions (Mudombi and Montmasson-clair, 2020:11), resulting in inequities in water availability.

B: To explore community perception towards the role of CDWs

Theme1: Consistency in municipal services like water service provision (Quality)

Consistency in quality municipal service provision is also important within a municipality and its community. Johnson and Svara (2011), who refer to this as quality, which also relates to processing equity, also noted this assertion. Johnson and Svara (2011) further noted that process or quality of services calls for a level of consistency to be upheld regarding the quality of services provided to communities regardless of the distributional criteria used (Johnson and Svara, 2011:21).

In determining quality equity, the researcher explored the consistency of services within the Nsikazi North sources and interventions employed by the municipality. The focus groups conducted reflected that some local boreholes in water harvesting have been the main water sources in Nsikazi North; however, drought has challenged these sources.

One focus group participant highlighted that:

"….in terms of water, we fetch water from the boreholes, except for those who believe it is unclean, risky, or too far away, in which case we utilize other methods such as water harvesting by putting oil drums around the house, although boreholes are used by the majority. However, the challenge is that there has been drought and the water levels are low, and it has become a challenge again to have access to water….".

Figure 4.1 Water Harvesting Boreholes installed and challenged by drought

Source: The Researcher

The municipality has intervened by building boreholes within communities without water through water carting, according to participants in the focus group discussions. However, indications were made that there was no consistency in doing so, particularly in the Nsikazi North areas, and sometimes the municipality is using water tanks that are bought by individuals from the local hardware's to be filled by delivery trucks meant for water delivery and this is echoed in the following sentiment below by one focus group participant who commented that:

"…the municipality uses water trucks to feel the household tanks, the problem with this approach is that tanks are not filled consistently, and they can go for weeks and months without being filled, especially when there is drought…."

One of the councillors interviewed blamed the lack of uniformity on insufficient equipment and a shortage of water carting trucks to assure service reliability and consistency.

This is highlighted in the following excerpt below:

"…In our local municipality, there are only four water carting vehicles that must serve 23 wards. Therefore, one truck must serve approximately six wards, limiting the impact of service delivery…"

While water provision levels are limited in rural areas, empirical evidence from urban areas indicated otherwise. Participants from focus groups and the officials interviewed indicated consistency in quality and processes in water service provision in urban areas. Indications made highlighted that water interruptions in urban areas were minimum coupled with constant timely communication in case of interruptions. More so, tanks were always filled because of better water service provision in these formal towns as they were rarely used.

One focus group participant commented that:

"….there is always municipal services like water in our municipality, and if there is going to be some interruption, they inform us on time so that we prepare. We rarely utilize water from the tanks in some cases as there is always running water on the taps…"

While one of the officials highlighted that:

"….the level of municipal interruption is limited in urban areas, and the municipality always makes sure that there is a communication when services is going to be interrupted, and this is easy because of the urban setup as compared to the rural areas…"

Therefore, the study concluded that municipality disparities continue to be a problem, with those living in Nsikazi North areas being the most vulnerable due to a variety of issues limiting basic services availability in their areas. Variations in municipal services provision consistency between urban and rural areas further highlight the persistent social inequities and the ever-present rural-urban gap in basic water service provision.

4.5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The key research findings presented in Chapter Four provided the basis for these significant conclusions to be reached. Furthermore, the conclusions drawn paved the way for actionable and tangible recommendations to be proffered to ensure municipal functionality in South African municipalities.

4.5.1 To assess the work of community workers in rural areas of Nsikazi North

It is important to note that the key findings reveal a positive stance on the training of the majority community workers, particularly ward councillors, health workers and CPFs. This finding aligns with the definition of training as given by Majeed and Shakeel, where “training is giving to the employee for the specific purpose and task. Training is giving for the short period of time. It is an act to increase the skills and knowledge of the employee for the required purpose or task” (2017: 498). Government has done well in training and preparing various agents of community development with knowledge and skills.

4.5.2 To explore community perception towards the role of CDWs

It is necessary to note an imbalance between community workers understanding what is expected of them, vis a vie the delivery of services to communities. Most community members and non-profit organisations (NPOs) have very sharply criticised the lack of service delivery in the community. Communities are not receiving the services they are expecting from various community workers, with poor service delivery contributing to protests and disorder in communities.

4.5.3 To identify factors affecting community workers in promoting service delivery in rural areas of Nsikazi North

One critical perspective uncovered during the research project was that of violent community protests in municipalities. Protests over service delivery are, to a reasonable extent, caused inter alia by the non-involvement of residents in municipal affairs but, in the main, community members are always ready and available to protest over the lack of service delivery.

4.5.4 Lack of support in addressing challenges affecting community workers

This study identified a number of challenges community workers are faced with, ranging from administrative to infrastructure challenges. For example, health workers and NPOs pointed out communities are inaccessible due to the condition of the road

infrastructure. Roads in various wards within the municipality are dilapidated and not maintained, therefore, making it difficult for ambulances to respond to emergencies. Community police forums do not have equipment and resources to help them deal with crime and other criminal activities in communities. Generally, according to the results of the study, there is lack of commitment from government to support the work of community workers.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The study's main research objective was to develop a service delivery framework for social equity for South African municipalities, and this is fully answered in this section. The section presents the proposed framework intended to assist and guide policymakers in ensuring municipal functionality. The developed framework has been discussed in Chapter Two. The framework was also shaped and heavily influenced by the empirical results and findings captured in Chapter Four and the conclusions drawn in this Chapter.

Furthermore, the researcher argued good governance is critical in ensuring better services, and as such, it was of utmost importance the framework is not only equitable but also perceived as equitable by diverse stakeholders in municipal functionality. Hence, the presentation and communication of the framework aimed to do better justice to its scientific and ethical foundations. In addition, the researcher ensured the framework presented is easily understood by a diverse audience, whose concerns the framework should address, be reliably translated into operational terms, as well as reflect widely accepted values and procedural principles, and most importantly, does not perpetuate discrimination and inequities in municipal service delivery. Conclusions and recommendations of the study, the significance of the findings in Public Administration and areas of future research are presented in the next and final chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided the key research findings, which formed the basis of this study. Following the presentation of the findings, this chapter provides a conclusion for the entire study by presenting a summary of all chapters, highlighting the extent to which the study's primary purpose has been achieved. Furthermore, the chapter draws significant conclusions emanating from an ultimate synthesis of the key research findings obtained from empirical data, while proffering tangible and actionable recommendations. Lastly, the chapter shows the broader application and significance of the findings and suggest imperatives for future research emanating from this specific study.

5.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

At the onset, the researcher professed that despite the enacted government policies in basic water service provision, South African municipalities still struggle to achieve their constitutional mandate. Consequently, persistent social inequities remain prevalent, and the gap between the "haves" and the "have nots" remains high. The researcher further found an analysis of basic services, such as water provision in South African municipalities, revealed a practical limitation anchored on the absence of a water governance framework to enhance social equity at the local level; hence, a gap this study sought to address. In order to do so, the study engaged with theories and research that confirmed the prioritisation of municipal services might be the key to achieve universal access, realise the right to services, and most importantly, achieve equitable basic services as captured in Chapter Two. However, such analysis revealed a lack of a well-defined municipal functionality framework to be utilised in basic services provision at the local level, specifically in Nsikazi North within Mbombela Local Municipality, Mpumalanga Province.

The researcher further engaged in a data collection process to address the identified problem through focus group discussions, participant observations, semi-structured interviews, and secondary sources, as detailed in Chapter Three. Key research findings and interpretations presented from data analysis presented in Chapter Four indicate the research questions and research sub-objectives have been fully answered and achieved, respectively. Most importantly, the key research findings presented in

Chapter Four provided the basis for developing the proposed service delivery framework for municipal functionality in this Chapter, thereby answering the main research objective, which focused on the development of a municipal functionality framework for service delivery for South African municipalities.

Lastly, the research supports indications in the literature that prioritising the municipal functionality pillar will ensure efficiency and sustainability in service delivery governance. As a result, this enabled the drawing of significant research conclusions and recommendations, as presented below.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3.1 To assess the work of community workers in rural areas of Nsikazi North

The organization's effectiveness is increased due to training and development because, when employees attend the training and development session, they are able to attain the goals and objectives of the organization effectively. Therefore, this study recommends government should grow from where it is at present, in terms of providing training and skills to its employees, necessarily because training plays a significant part in the growth of employee performance and trained employees ensure a helpful office.

All CDWs who have not completed their learnership programme must register with Local Government Seta (LG-Seta) to complete their learnership training, within agreed time-frames. The CDW learnership was introduced under the Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority in 2004 to enable CDWs to gain theoretical and practical skills while gaining work experience and a nationally recognised qualification.

5.3.2. To explore community perception towards the role of CDWs

It is recommended the municipality should not only train community workers but the City of Mbombela municipality should also distribute adequate resources to community workers. For example, the study found ward councillors unable to efficiently respond to community challenges such as the provision of water and fixing of potholes, because the municipality does not have resources that are readily available, such as water tankers and grading machinery.

In addition, it is important for the municipality to engage in proper planning and resource allocations. As a crucial responsibility of government and government

institutions such as hospitals and schools, the public service should deliver services a society requires to maintain and improve its welfare. For government to remain viable, efficient and effective in responding to the dynamic needs of its citizens, it has to embrace strategies that can enhance improved productivity and the quality of services delivered.

5.3.3 To identify factors affecting community workers in promoting service delivery in rural areas of Nsikazi North

Community workers are a front-line structure for the municipality that should be supported both through skills development and provision of resources. Community workers play an active role in building a rapport between citizens and various government institutions. Further to this, regular capacity-building programmes should be offered to NGOs and CPFs, to carry out tasks and roles meaningfully and effectively. Seitlholo (2016) suggested there must be harnessed capacity, as this will further contribute radically to the development of Mbombela Municipality and encourage coordination in participation.

Ineffective advancement of citizen participation at local government level and inefficiency are caused by, among other aspects, the lack of skills and less capacity with incentives; these play a major role to define their mandate. It goes without saying the goals set for community workers are achievable, when resources are provided. Lack of proper infrastructure and facilities contributes immensely to poor service delivery; for example, some community workers are not provided resources such as data to access the internet, having neither office space nor computers to finish their tasks.

It is suggested the municipality should channel resources towards the development of a study to investigate mechanisms to ensure efficient involvement of residents in municipal affairs. Communities engage in protest because they are unhappy with service delivery; this kind of participation from the public is not recommended for a progressive relationship between the municipality and its clients.

The municipality needs to, therefore, focus resources towards researching what programmes need to be implemented to improve relations with citizens, the research should further assist in identifying the priorities of each ward. Critically, public involvement is of great value to decision-making in the municipality; after all,

participation promotes democratic ideals, where maximum involvement by residents promotes democracy in the local sphere of government.

5.4 DISCUSSION OF THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE STUDY FINDINGS

The study findings above were heavily influenced by the methodological framework adopted for this study. The approaches taken, such as adopting a constructivism approach and qualitative research, enabled a deeper understanding of the issues raised regarding water inequities. Factors identified as major concerns, resulting in high levels of disparities, were a result of the in-depth conversations undertaken during the semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and observations done during the study. The worldview and research methods adopted played a crucial role in reaching the conclusion that SA and other countries across the world need to achieve a sustainable agenda and universal access to municipal services.

The study adopted Systems theory as the main theoretical consideration underpinning the study. In relation to the study findings, the researcher indicated Systems theory is used to better understand the interface between executive, legislative, judicial, and civic supervision on municipal actions in this study. Based on these explanations, the researcher believes the theory is a useful tool for developing an ideal framework for enhancing the operation of South African towns, following an intervention. As such, the recommended framework, when adopted and fully implemented, will bridge the gap between policy and reality.

5.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF FINDINGS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Public Management seeks to ensure community needs are served efficiently, effectively, and equitably, as prescribed by Chapter 10 of the South African Constitution. In terms of international conventions, Public Management is aimed at ensuring international obligations, such as realisation of the human right to municipal services, are upheld. Therefore, in recommending the adoption of this municipal functionality framework, the researcher is completely confident full consideration of each key area would assist in realisation of the outcome in South African municipalities. Furthermore, embracing this framework, implementing, and monitoring it with commitment and cooperation from all stakeholders, will result in equitable, efficient and sustainable service delivery. Hence, this proposed framework should be perceived as a tool to assist municipalities in achieving their Constitutional mandate.

Furthermore, the key research findings in this study have contributed to the body of knowledge for Public Management in understanding the implications of good governance as a pillar of municipal services. In addition, when public administration is viewed as an activity, the recommendations offered when properly implemented, will lead to improved water service provision, particularly to those areas that have been disadvantaged and lack access. As a result, the functional activities of public administration would have been fulfilled. In terms of the political perspective of public administration, the framework proposed will assist in policy-making by the political structures and assist in decision-making and implementation by the administrative structures. In summary, the study paved the way for achieving the Constitutional objectives for local government.

5.6 AREAS OF FUTURE RESEARCH

Considering the recommendations proffered, the researcher argues a need for the proposed framework to be tested in the real world and evaluate its effectiveness and impact in addressing social inequities in water governance. Furthermore, the study found social inequities in water provision should be considered not only in terms of water quantity and quality, but also in terms of costs incurred as a result of the lack of access to water services, such as time spent waiting in queues and long distances travelled to fetch water. Therefore, this study has laid out a platform for future research to be carried out in South African municipalities regarding more detailed costs resulting from a lack of access to water services.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter of Information

LETTER OF INFORMATION

Title of the Research Study: The role of community workers in promoting service delivery, in Nsikazi North, Mpumalanga.

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: Mr Jabulani Phema Mavundhla

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: Dr Lawrence M. Lekhanya

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study:

Greeting Good morning, I hope you are doing well today, it is a great pleasure to have you here.

Introduce yourself to the participant: I am post graduate student at DUT doing research for my master degree in Public management.

Invitation to the potential participant: I would like to invite you to participate in the research.

What is Research (Research is a systematic search or enquiry for generalized new knowledge)

This research is solely for the fulfillment of my masters at DUT, hence I would appreciate if you participant in this study so that new knowledge is development and the study makes a meaning contribution to the body of knowledge. You are hereby allowed to ask any questions for the purposes of clarity and clear understanding. In addition, you are entitled to discuss the study with your family and friends are under no obligation to commit at this stage.

Outline of the Procedures: The primary objective of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of the community workers in service delivery initiatives in the rural arears of Nsikazi North, Mpumalanga province. the researcher shall employ a qualitative method to collect the in-depth details on the topic. You are invited to partake in answering semi-structured questionnaire and interview which will be conducted at a conducive venue, preference given to a venue that would be chosen by you. The convenient and snowballing methods will be used to identify participants. It is also important that I indicate to you that this data collection process will take 30 to 45 minutes of your time. The only expectation from you is your availability, you are expected to be available as of when an appointment has been made on time. There are no risks associated with this study.

Explain to the participant the reasons he/she may be withdraw from the Study: You are entitled to withdraw from the study at any time should they wish to do so and will still continue to receive the appropriate standard of care; Explain to the potential participant that the research may be terminated

early in particular circumstances. You are also informed that under certain circumstances, I may decide to withdraw the you from the study and this shall be done by politely informing you on time and reasons will be furnished to you if any decision to discontinue your participation is taken.

Benefits: There is no benefits that will be due to you for participating in this study. The research is conducted for academic purpose and the final product will be kept at the university library for future reference.

Remuneration: There will be no remuneration for participating in this study. Participating in this study is voluntary and free of charge.

Costs of the Study: Should there be any costs that arises from participating in this study, like transportation, you shall be compensated accordingly. Otherwise, there are no foreseen costs for this study during data collection.

Confidentiality: This research shall adopt confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Your name will not be disclosed to people or parties that are not part of the research. Only myself as a researcher and the supervisor will have access to the data during the collection period.

Results: The research is for academic purposes, it shall be stored at the University library and be used for future references. In the event of any significant new findings developed during the course of the research, the University will communicate to you in writing.

Research-related Injury: Due to its nature, there is no research-related injuries or reaction associated with this research.

Storage of all electronic and hard copies including tape recordings: All research materials including soft and hard copies shall be stored at the university library for a period of five years, thereafter it will be properly destroyed.

Persons to contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:(Supervisor and details) Please contact the researcher (072 971 0702), my supervisor (031 373 5835) 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

Appendix B: Informed Consent

DUT
DURBAN
UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY

CONSENT

Full Title of the Study: The role of community workers in improving services delivery in Nsikazi North, Mpumalanga

Names of Researcher/s: Jabulani P. Mavundhla

Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been_informed by the researcher,Jabulani Phema Mavundhlla about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study.
- Research Ethics Clearance Number: 094/22
- 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** **Right Thumbprint /**
Time **Signature**

I, MR Jabulani Phema Mavundhla herewith confirm the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

MR labulani Phema Mavundhla 07/02/2022

_____ _____

Full Name of Researcher **Date**

_____	_____	_____
Full Name of Witness (If applicable)	**Date**	**Signature**
_____	_____	_____
Full Name of Legal Guardian (If applicable)	**Date**	**Signature**

Appendix C: Research questionnaire

Focus Areas	Examples of questions and probes
Study and participant introduction	
Role of participants.	What do you understand about service delivery? What is your role in the community? What is your understanding of about community workers?
Interactions with service delivery.	What can be done to improve the service delivery by Community Workers? What do you think are the challenges faced by community workers? Have you ever been involved in a service delivery protest?
Perceptions of current and past service delivery Issues and community workers.	What does working for the community mean to you? What is your view on community workers?

Appendix D: Research Ethics Clearance

Institutional Research Ethics Committee
Research and Postgraduate Support Directorate
2nd Floor, Berwom Court
Gate 1, Steve Biko Campus
Durban University of Technology

P O Box 1334, Durban, South Africa, 4001

Tel: 031 373 2375
Email: irecchair@dut.ac.za
http://www.dut.ac.za/research/institutional_research_ethics

www.dut.ac.za

19 September 2022

Mr J P Mavundhla
P.O. Box 3800
White River
1240

Dear Mr Mavundhla

The role of community workers in promoting service delivery in Nsikazi North, Mpumalanga
Ethical Clearance Number: 094/22

The Institutional Research Ethics Committee acknowledges receipt of your gatekeeper permission letter.

Please note that FULL APPROVAL is granted to your research proposal. You may proceed with data collection.

Any adverse events [serious or minor] which occur in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration must be reported to the DUT-IREC according to the DUT-IREC Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's).

Please note that any deviations from the approved proposal require the approval of the DUT-IREC as outlined in the DUT-IREC SOP's.

Yours Sincerely

Prof J K Adam
Chairperson: DUT-IREC

Appendix E: Research Ethics Training

TRREE

Zertifikat
Certificat
Certificado
Certificate

Promouvoir les plus hauts standards éthiques dans la protection des participants à la recherche biomédicale
Promoting the highest ethical standards in the protection of biomedical research participants

Clinical Trials Centre
The University of Hong Kong

Certificat de formation - Training Certificate

Ce document atteste que - this document certifies that

Jabulani mavundla

a complété avec succès - has successfully completed

Introduction to Research Ethics

du programme de formation TRREE en évaluation éthique de la recherche
of the TRREE training programme in research ethics evaluation

Release Date: 2021/08/16

Professeur Dominique Sprumont
Coordinateur TRREE Coordinator

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[REV : 20170310]

Appendix F: Gatekeeper's Letter

Appendix G: Turnitin Report

Appendix H: Editor's Letter

Helen Richter
Advanced Editing, Proofreading
& Copy writing

editassist2023@gmail.com
072 9227221

09 July 2023

To whom it may concern:

CERTIFICATE OF EDITING & AUTHENTICATION

I have proofread and language edited the Master's dissertation titled:

"THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY WORKERS IN PROMOTING SERVICE DELIVERY IN NSIKAZI NORTH, MPUMALANGA"
by

Jabulani Phema Mavundhla

The work is the author's own work, to the best of my knowledge, and is free of spelling, grammar, and structural and stylistic errors.

With thanks.

H. S. Richter (Ms)