



**A prototype integrated change management
model for enhancing sustainable
administrative effectiveness in KwaZulu-
Natal municipalities**

submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy in Business and
Information Management**

in the

Faculty of Accounting and Informatics

at the

Durban University of Technology

by

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Date Submitted: 21 August 2024

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DECLARATION

I, **Busisiwe Audrey Sibisi**, declare that this thesis is a representation of my work in conception and execution. This work has not been submitted in any form for another degree at any university or institution of higher learning. All information cited from published or unpublished works has been acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

Significant changes within the local sphere of government continue to confront South African municipalities. These changes adversely impact organisational structures and policy approaches, contributing to the poor performance of some municipalities. Models aimed at addressing change management tend to be overly simplistic and change management research specific to South African municipalities is limited. The aim of this study was to discover and examine critical factors that affect the effective management of change in selected municipalities in KZN and to suggest the adoption of a prototype integrated change management model for implementation by these municipalities to enhance sustainable administrative effectiveness. A qualitative methodology, employing the grounded theory approach, underpins this study. This study selected three KZN municipalities for the sample size using the purposive sampling technique. This investigation adopted thematic data analysis.

The study's findings highlight that current change management practices in the local government sphere have led to the instability and ineffectiveness of South Africa's municipalities. These practices include shortcomings in strategic planning, stakeholder involvement, managerial support, ineffective communication, and inadequate staff development. The study argues that these key factors influence the adoption of change management for sustainable administrative effectiveness in municipalities. The study, drawing from comprehensive literature on various change management models and empirical research, proposes that municipalities adopt an integrated change management model to effectively manage change, navigate political transitions, and enhance administrative sustainability amid environmental challenges. This study fills knowledge gaps in South African municipal governance and advances the conversation on change management and sustainable administrative effectiveness in local government, which benefits both local and national policymakers. In the end, the suggested model is an attempt to encourage municipalities to navigate change for better service quality, guaranteeing more dependable and adaptable governance.

Key words: Local government, Change management, Municipal performance, Sustainability, Administrative effectiveness and Service quality.

DEDICATION

In loving memory of my mother,

Mrs Makhosazana Octavia Sibisi

Your unwavering love, boundless encouragement, and steadfast belief in my dreams continue to inspire me every day. Though you are no longer here with me, your spirit lives on in every achievement, every challenge overcome, and every moment of strength I find within myself. This thesis is a testament to the values you instilled in me and the sacrifices you made so that I could pursue knowledge and reach for the stars.

I dedicate this work to you, my guiding light and eternal source of inspiration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who supported me throughout my PhD journey. Your encouragement, guidance, and unwavering belief in me have been invaluable.

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Celani Nyide, my doctoral thesis supervisor, for all of his guidance and assistance. I greatly appreciate his guidance and support throughout the study process. I would particularly like to express my gratitude to all municipal employees who participated in this study. Your contribution was incomparable.

For their unwavering encouragement and support, I am appreciative of my brother, Dr. M.E. Sibisi; my sister, Ms. N. Sibisi; and my nephews, Mr. O. Sibisi and Mr. N. Sibisi. I sincerely thank my friends, Ms. N. Buthelezi, Ms. Z. Moleme, Mr R. Mbhele, Ms. N. Banda, Ms T. Kweyama, Ms Salukazana, Ms P. Vilakazi and Ms N. Mkhonza for all of their support and advice as I studied for my doctorate. Your understanding and support have really made a significant difference in my path.

Last but not least, I acknowledge with gratitude the grace of God for making this journey possible and for His continuous blessings. Thank you all once again for being part of my journey and for your invaluable contributions to my success.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

South African local government encounters challenges in implementing change management, leading to the adoption of unsustainable and inefficient practices. Change management practices in the local government sphere have led to the instability and ineffectiveness of South Africa's municipalities. The report of the Auditor General of South Africa (AGSA) (2020) on the three-year audit results for local government in South Africa reveals a decline, primarily attributed to leadership instability. This chapter, therefore, provides an overview of the study and outlines its goals, research questions, and importance. This chapter also provides a concise analysis of the research methodology and thesis organisation. The aim of this study is to identify and analyse key factors that influence the successful management of change in specific municipalities in KZN. Additionally, it aims to propose the implementation of a prototype integrated change management model that also ensures sustainable and effective administrative practices for these municipalities.

1.2 Background of the study

1.2 Background of the study

Change management is an unavoidable aspect of organisational dynamics, driven by internal decisions, changes in leadership, external pressures, political influences, and technological advancements (Errida and Lotfi, 2021: 3). It is increasingly recognised as a critical factor for organisational success (Errida and Lotfi, 2021: 1; Asikhia, Nneji, Olafenwa and Owoeye, 2021: 70). Effective change management is essential for organisations to adapt to evolving environments and achieve their goals (Asikhia *et al.*, 2021: 68; Jouany and Matric, 2020: 1). In South African local government, change management is particularly challenging due to the five-year election cycle. Each election often results in shifts in political parties, leadership, senior administration, processes, strategies, objectives, and goals. These frequent changes create

discrepancies between actual and desired performance levels, leading to significant administrative challenges (Khaile, Davids and Khaile, 2021: 169).

The amalgamation of municipalities has further exacerbated these problems, increasing the risk of dysfunction and inefficiency in local government. Local governments in South Africa have historically struggled with change management, resulting in unsustainable and ineffective administration. Khaile, Davids and Khaile (2021: 169) highlight critical challenges in delivering basic services, administrative capacity, organisational performance, and the implementation of government policies and community programs. Tshishonga (2021: 32) observes that the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) implemented change management practices to address these challenges. CoGTA introduced the Local Government Turnaround Strategy as a change management practice aimed at renewing local government's vision and strengthening effective administration and professionalism in municipalities. Despite these efforts, South African municipalities continue to face significant challenges. The AGSA report (2020) indicates a regression in audit outcomes over three years, primarily due to leadership instability. Implementing successful change programmes remains fraught with difficulties, and the change management process is still highly problematic (Asikhia *et al.*, 2021: 69; Errida and Lofti, 2021: 6).

In the context of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) municipalities, this study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of change management issues in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) municipalities and offer insights into improving administrative effectiveness. By examining factors affecting the implementation of change processes and identifying dimensions contributing to sustainability, the study sought to recommend a prototype integrated change management model. This model is intended to enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of administrative practices in local government. The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights for policymakers and administrators in KwaZulu-Natal, offering a structured approach to managing change and improving municipal performance.

1.3 Research problem

South African municipalities continue to confront significant changes within the local sphere of government (Rolland, 2018: 1; Khaile, Roman and Davids, 2021: 14). These changes adversely impact organisational structures and policy approaches, contributing to the poor performance of some municipalities (Nel-Gagiano, 2018: 95; Rolland, 2018: 2; Thusi, 2023: 689). The five-year local government election cycle often results in shifts in political leadership (Rolland, 2018: 1), leaving municipalities vulnerable to instability (Mehlape, 2018: 326). Legoabe (2021: 7) emphasises that frequent administrative changes and tensions between political and administrative leadership lead to radical changes in administrative structures, strategies, ideologies and objectives, resulting in poor organisational design. The administrative strength of any organisation lies in its ability to manage change, yet the public sector's ongoing transformation often leads to misalignment in administrative systems and capacity constraints, ultimately hindering service delivery to citizens (Nel-Gagiano, 2018: 18; Khaile *et al.*, 2021: 10). Existing research on change management challenges in South African municipalities inadequately addresses the issues of political and administrative instability and sustainable administrative effectiveness (Ndevu and Muller, 2017: 16; Kumarasinghe and Dil, 2021: 49; Nel-Gagiano, 2018: 95; Rolland, 2018: 1). Models aimed at addressing change management tend to be overly simplistic (Kumarasinghe and Dilan, 2021: 49), and attention to change management research specific to South African municipalities is limited (Gcora and Chigona, 2019: 1; Kumarasinghe and Dilan, 2021: 52).

1.4 Research aim, objectives and questions

The aim of this study was to discover and examine critical factors that affect the effective management of change in selected municipalities in KZN and to suggest the adoption of a prototype integrated change management model for implementation by these municipalities to enhance sustainable administrative effectiveness.

1.4.1 Objectives

In order to address the aforementioned aim of this study, the following objectives were developed:

Objective 1: To identify change management practices currently adopted by selected municipalities in KwaZulu Natal,

Objective 2: To examine change management dimensions that need to be considered in order to ensure sustainable administrative effectiveness in selected municipalities in KwaZulu Natal,

Objective 3: To explore factors that affect change management practices aimed at sustainable administrative effectiveness in selected municipalities in KwaZulu Natal,

Objective 4: To develop a prototype change management model that the selected KwaZulu Natal municipalities can use to enhance sustainable administrative effectiveness.

1.4.2 Research questions

Question 1: What change management practices are currently adopted by selected municipalities in KwaZulu Natal?

Question 2: What are the change management dimensions that need to be considered in order to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of administration in selected municipalities in KwaZulu Natal?

Question 3: What are the factors that affect change management practices aimed at sustainable administrative effectiveness in the selected KwaZulu Natal municipalities?

Question 4: Which change management model can municipalities use to enable sustainable administrative effectiveness?

1.5 Rationale and significance of the study

The rationale for this study is grounded in the persistent challenges faced by South African municipalities due to frequent changes in political and administrative leadership. These changes often lead to instability, misalignment in administrative systems, and capacity constraints, which in turn hinder the effective delivery of services to citizens. Despite numerous attempts to address these issues, existing change management models have proven inadequate, often being overly simplistic and not tailored to the unique context of South African local government. Therefore,

there is a pressing need to develop a comprehensive, integrated change management model that can help municipalities achieve sustainable administrative effectiveness.

The study aims to provide a robust framework that municipalities can adopt to manage change more effectively. This will lead to improved organisational performance, stability, and the ability to meet mandatory service delivery goals as expected by the South African Constitution. Additionally, by identifying the factors and dimensions that contribute to sustainable administrative effectiveness, the study seeks to help municipalities build stronger administrative capacities. This will enable them to handle changes in political and administrative leadership without significant disruptions to their operations. Moreover, the findings of this study offer valuable insights for policymakers at both local and national levels. A well-designed change management model can inform future policies and strategies aimed at strengthening local governance and ensuring more consistent and effective administration.

This study also fills existing research gaps by providing a detailed analysis of change management challenges specific to South African municipalities. It also contributes to the academic discourse on public administration and change management, offering a model that addresses the complexities and unique needs of the local government sector in South Africa. The proposed change management model has practical applications for municipal managers and administrators. It serves as a guide to navigate the intricacies of change, allowing for smoother transitions and more resilient municipal structures. Ultimately, the study aims to improve the quality of public service delivery. By enhancing the administrative effectiveness of municipalities, communities will benefit from more reliable, efficient, and responsive local government services.

1.6 Research design

The research design facilitates the process of addressing the research question or examining the hypothesis (Pawar, 2020: 46). This is the overarching approach you select to effectively and persuasively incorporate the different study elements. It functions as a manual for gathering, quantifying, and examining data (Thakur, 2021: 1; Sileyew, 2019: 2). According to Jilcha (2019: 2), the purpose of research design is to create the most effective structure for the study. Moreover, it gathers pertinent data

and facilitates the seamless expansion of diverse research endeavours, thereby maximising the acquisition of information (Pawar, 2020: 46).

1.7 Qualitative approach

This study utilised the qualitative approach by implementing multiple case studies. This methodology aims to understand a complex reality and the significance of an activity within a specific context (Queiros *et al.*, 2017: 369; Anas and Ishaq, 2022: 90). The qualitative research approach enables researchers to utilise texts to make discoveries, assess the quality of subjects, and provide a comprehensive understanding from the researcher's perspective (Pawar, 2020: 46). The grounded theory approach has been utilised to provide a concise and systematic set of instructions for gathering and analysing research data. Grounded theory is a method of developing theoretical frameworks that explain observed facts. It involves systematic and inductive data collection and analysis, following established principles. (Charmaz and Thornberg, 2020: 1).

1.8 Target population

According to Wellman, Kruger, and Mitchel (2007: 126), the target population refers to the specific group of people that the researcher aims to apply the findings to in a broader context. According to the South African Government's Provincial and Local Government Directory for KwaZulu Natal (2021), KwaZulu Natal has 54 municipalities. There are a total of ten district municipalities, forty-three local municipalities, and one metro municipality, and all of these formed the target population for this study.

1.9 Sampling strategy and sample size

This study used the purposive sampling technique. Alkassim and Tran (2016: 2) consider purposive sampling to be a non-random technique that does not set a number of participants and does not require underlying theories from the participant. The sample size comprised three KZN municipalities: one with clean or unqualified audit reports for the past two years, one with qualified audit reports, and one with a disclaimer. This will allow the researcher to compare effective change management strategies with ineffective ones in a select few towns. In order for their administration

to be sustainable and efficient, the selected towns had to implement change management. The sample size for this study consisted of three municipal managers, three corporate services managers, three performance management support managers, and three operational staff members from the aforementioned sections. It was expected of these individuals, given their important positions in the municipality, to possess knowledge of strategic change management methodologies. On the basis of the selected municipality, twelve participants were interviewed from three municipalities.

1.10 Data collection and analysis

The primary data was obtained by one-on-one semi-structured interviews employing direct contact in this study. A recording of the interview was made. The investigation employed thematic data analysis to identify patterns in data from participants' daily experiences, ideas and viewpoints, behaviours, and practices (Clarke and Braun, 2016: 297). Data acquired during the interview was analysed to achieve the study's objective by reviewing all the information that was gathered from a variety of sources.

1.11 Pretesting

In order to guarantee that the study's objectives were not compromised by errors, pretesting was implemented. Hilton (2017: 21) defines pretesting as the process of ensuring that questions function as intended and are comprehensible to those who are likely to respond to them. The pretesting was conducted with three individuals who were not included in the study's sample size. The interview schedule was pretested to ensure its dependability, sensitivity, practicality, and validity prior to its implementation in the actual data collection process.

1.12 Rigour, reliability, and validity in qualitative research

In the grounded theory qualitative study, rigour, reliability, and validity had to be ensured, as alluded to (Maher, Hadfield, Hutchings, and Eyto, 2018). This study implemented rigorous measures to ensure the trustworthiness of the developed grounded theory. Credibility was established through triangulation of data sources, including interviews, observational data, and member checking to validate

interpretations with participants. Peer debriefing sessions were conducted regularly to challenge emerging themes and interpretations, enhancing the depth and accuracy of the findings.

1.12.1 Rigour

During the sample and data collection stages, this study employed member checking, establishing data saturation, and integrating ethics into the research design. These are considered best practices and are known for increasing the rigour and reliability of qualitative research (Johnson *et al.*, 2020: 141). Furthermore, trustworthiness is more important in evaluating qualitative research, Ahmed (2024) suggests four criteria to ensure that the process is trustworthy in the research. Those criteria are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. A review track, which rigorously documented all decisions made during the research process, from the beginning of data collection to final theory creation, was established in order to ensure reliability. This openness guarantees the consistency and dependability of the results and permits the study to be replicated. Through reflexive journaling and team conversations to identify and resolve any biases, confirmability was guaranteed. Validity and reliability, or trustworthiness, are fundamental issues in scientific research, whether qualitative, quantitative, or mixed (Arslan, 2022). Constant comparison approaches were employed to support validity, whereby new data was regularly compared with emerging categories and concepts to improve and validate theoretical insights. Comprehensive data gathering was utilised to attain theoretical saturation, guaranteeing that the generated theory encompassed the intricacies and subtleties of the phenomenon being studied. In summary, by adhering to these rigorous methods, this study maintains high standards of rigour, reliability, and validity, ensuring robustness and trustworthiness in the grounded theory developed.

1.12.2 Reliability

Reliability is the extent to which measurements are repeatable when different people perform them on different occasions and under different conditions with supposedly alternative instruments that measure the same thing (Arslan, 2022). To ensure the reliability of the data collected, the study participants were asked the same interview

questions. Additionally, for structured interviews, data was collected from multiple sources, such as analyses of local government documents, policies, and regulations.

1.12.3 Validity

According to Phil (2022: 2042), validity in qualitative research means the extent to which the data is plausible, credible, and trustworthy and, thus, can be defended when challenged. This study enhanced its validity by taking detailed field notes and meticulously transcribing the data from the recording devices (Natow, 2020: 162). As previously indicated, data was also collected from multiple sources to ensure validity and trustworthiness.

1.13 Structure of the thesis

Chapter one

Chapter one provides a detailed overview of the research, including the research problem statement, research aim, objectives, and questions. This chapter also includes the rationale and significance of the study. It also provides a brief overview of the research design underpinning this study.

Chapter two

This chapter presents a discussion of the literature on the overview of South African local government in the context of change management. This chapter discusses the various spheres of government and their roles and functions in accordance with legislation and regulations. Moreover, the review of literature for this section of the study highlights the current state of the local government in South Africa.

Chapter three

This chapter presents previous theories and models on the subject. Additionally, this section compares existing theories and models from various authors in order to provide guidance for the creation of a prototype integrated change management model for the long-term administrative performance of South African municipalities.

Chapter four

Chapter four provides a literature review on the change management concept. It shares the previous theories and existing models on change management that can assist in determining the challenges, factors, and impact of change management within local government and administrative effectiveness. This chapter also presents the prototype integrated change management model that was developed in order to ascertain practical insights and methods to enhance administrative effectiveness and support successful change initiatives in local government contexts.

Chapter five

This chapter delves deeper into the research concept and methodology, as well as the specific methodologies utilised to collect data for a critical evaluation of the change management model used in constructing the model for municipalities in KwaZulu Natal.

Chapter six

Chapter six presents the analysis of the data that was gathered. The primary outcome of the research consists of in-depth interviews conducted with specific managers from each of the selected municipalities.

Chapter seven

This chapter is the feedback and discussion on the findings of the study done in selected municipalities in KZN on the integrated change management model and factors affecting change management adoption that aimed at sustainability and effectiveness of administrative.

Chapter eight

Chapter eight is about understanding whether the objectives of the study have been achieved and having recommendations after taking all the theory, findings, and discussion into consideration.

1.14 Summary of the chapter

This chapter sets the stage for the entire research endeavour by presenting a clear and comprehensive overview of the research context, problem, objectives, questions, rationale, significance, and design. It provides readers with a foundational understanding of what the study aims to achieve and why it is valuable.

CHAPTER TWO

A SYNOPSIS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of the literature on the overview of South African local government in the context of change management. This chapter discusses the various spheres of government and their roles and functions in accordance with legislation and regulations. Moreover, the review of literature for this section of the study highlights the current state of the local government in South Africa.

2.2 An overview of the South African local government

As per the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), the South African government consists of three spheres, namely, national government, provincial government, and local government. These spheres of government are described in the Constitution as interdependent, interrelated, and distinctive (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996; Nel and Minnie, 2022: 40). In South Africa, the multi-sphere of government is a cooperative government that is responsible for rendering essential services to the community and society at large (Makoti and Oduke, 2021: 43). As stated by Nel and Minnie (2022: 40), local government is mandated to promote democracy, implement national and provincial policies, develop social and economic development, and provide services essential to the people. Cooperate governance requires “national government, provincial government, and local government” to work together with a common goal to achieve the constitutional mandate for the citizens of the country at large (Makoti and Oduke 2021: 44). Section 154(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) states that national and provincial governments must strengthen support by equipping municipalities with legislation. This allows municipalities to exercise their powers in managing and performing their functions (Mkhatshwa-Ngenya and Khumalo 2020: 270). The local government is commonly referred to as a municipality (Zerihun and Mashigo 2022: 2), a sphere of government

that allows the local authorities to issue acts and adjust governance decisions (Thapa 2020: 4). According to Zerihun and Mashigo (2022: 2), municipalities are the source of basic service delivery and are close to the communities. The Local Government Handbook (South Africa 2021: 20) mentioned that prior to the 2016 local government elections, there were 278 municipalities in South Africa. Then, after the 2016 elections, changes were made through demarcation, reducing the number of local municipalities to 257.

2.2.1 The Role of Local Government

Municipalities are administrative bodies for geographic areas that are small, such as states, countries, towns, and cities (Thaba 2020: 1). Madumo and Koma (2019: 582) characterise a municipality as the government sector responsible for interacting with people and ensuring service delivery within a jurisdiction. According to Nel and Minnie (2022: 40), the primary vision for municipalities was to provide water, electricity, sanitation, and improved road infrastructure, working in conjunction with communities to fulfil their needs. Hermanus *et al.* (2022: 9) assert that municipalities are also responsible for the facilitation of local economic development (LED), infrastructure, local planning and service delivery. The aforementioned authors highlighted the disintegration of governance within municipalities and between the other two spheres of government, resulting in sub-optimal service delivery. Section 152(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, outlines the objectives of the local government sphere, which include providing a democratic government accountable to local communities and ensuring sustainable service delivery to all citizens (Madumo and Koma 2019: 582; Masiya *et al.*, 2021: 98). Municipalities are required to lead in achieving sustainable goals by identifying and assessing the need for resources, as well as implementing necessary policies and relevant projects for the community (Masuda 2022:1). Furthermore, the local government encourages social and economic growth, promotes health and a safe environment, and fosters the community's participation in local government matters. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) emphasises that municipalities should strive to achieve their objectives with financial support and "administrative capacity"..

2.2.2 Types of municipalities

Municipalities in South Africa fall into three categories: Category A (metropolitan), B (local municipalities), and C (district municipalities) (Madumo and Koma 2019: 583; Nel and Minnie 2022: 41; Hermanus *et al.*, 2022: 1; Dube 2022: 11). Different types of municipalities, as defined by Masuda *et al.* (2022: 4), encompass local governments that operate at the community level, varying in population size across cities, villages, and towns, as well as regional-level governments.

- **Metropolitan municipalities (Category A)**

Metropolitan local governments have legislative authority and exclusive executive power in their areas. In South Africa, there are 8 metropolitan municipalities (category A). As mentioned by Hermanus *et al.* (2022: 1) and Dube (2022: 11), these municipalities have select executives in their administration and governmental power in their zone. Metropolitan municipalities are divided into district and local municipalities (Nel and Minnie 2020: 42). The country's land is divided into local or metropolitan municipalities. The Local Government Handbook (South Africa 2021: 12) guides the establishment of metropolitan municipalities in South Africa for the administration of urban areas.

- **Local Municipality (Category B)**

There are 205 category B local municipalities. These municipalities share municipal supervisory authority with district municipalities (category C) in their area (Letlape and Dube 2020: 10). Nel and Minnie (2022: 41) describe local municipalities as wide, combined with large rural areas and numerous towns.

- **District Municipality (Category C)**

In accordance with Letlape and Dube (2020: 2) and Jeeva and Cilliers (2021: 83), South Africa has 44 district municipalities (category C), which share the governmental authority and executives in a location that includes more than one municipality. As mentioned by Nel and Minnie (2022: 42), a district municipality consists of five local municipalities, and the provision of bulk and regional services is one of its main functions. The Department of Cooperative Governance (2021), the Municipal

Structures Act (2000), and Masiya *et al.* (2021: 98) highlighted the transformation of district municipalities into providers and coordinators of bulk services to end-users, including water, wastewater, electricity, sewage system disposal, and health services. However, if the district municipality lacks the capacity to perform its functions, the national minister of provincial and local government has the authority to transfer those functions to local municipalities.

2.2.3 Powers and functions of municipalities

The “powers and functions” of the municipalities are stipulated in the constitution (Republic of South Africa 1996: 76; Moji, Nhede and Msiya 2022: 2; Makoti and Odeku 2021: 47), Section 156 (1), as municipalities are to perform as administrators in implementing authorities set upon local government (a) the municipal issues listed in Part B of Schedule 4 and Part B of Schedule 5 and (b) all matters allocated to local government by “national or provincial legislation”. Thapa (2020: 1) defines a municipality as an elected system of representatives responsible for providing services and administrative services in a specific public area.

The report (Department of Cooperate Governance 2021; Dube, 2020: 10) outlines the list of functional areas as per Part B schedules 4 and 5 as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Constitutional allocation of local government functions

Part B of Schedule 4	Part B of Schedule 5
Air pollution	Beaches and amusement facilities
Buildings regulation	Billboards and display of advertisement in public places
Childcare facilities	Cemeteries, funeral parlours, and crematoria
Electricity and gas reticulation	Cleansing
Firefighting services	Control of public nuisances
Local tourism	Control of undertakings that sell liquor to the public
Municipal airports	Facilities for the accommodation, care and burial of animals
Municipal planning	Fencing and fences
Municipal health services	Licensing of dogs
Municipal public transport	Licensing and control of undertakings that sell food to the public
Municipal public work	Local amenities
Pontoons, ferries, jetties, and harbours	Local sport facilities
Storm water management systems in built-up areas	Markets
Trading regulations	Municipal abattoirs

Part B of Schedule 4	Part B of Schedule 5
Water and sanitation services	Municipal parks and recreation
	Municipal roads
	Noise pollution
	Pounds
	Refuse removal, refuse dumps and solid waste disposal
	Street trading
	Street lighting
	Traffic and parking

Source: Department of Cooperate Governance (2021)

As per Nel and Masilela (2020: 42), the practice and the principle of “open governance” normally differ around the country as a result of different social, political, cultural, economic and technological factors. Government institutions around the world must relook at and redefine responsibilities, roles, and functions in the context of rendering efficient and effective services to the people. As mentioned by Makoti and Oduke (2021: 47), the local government exercises the “powers and functions” under the supervision of the national and provincial governments. Thabo (2020: 13) asserts that the constitution grants municipalities the authority to generate revenue through the charging of community services. However, other spheres of government provide financial support through transfers and revenue grants. The Division of Revenue Bill (2022:2) provides an equitable allocation of revenue to all three categories of local government. Furthermore, Chapter 5, Section 28(1) of the Division of Revenue Bill outlines the municipality's duties in addition to the Municipal Finance Management Act requirements. The district municipality's accounting officer must submit the local municipality's budget to the National Treasury under the same jurisdiction. The budget needs to allocate an equitable share and other conditional grants for capital projects such as water, sanitation, electricity, and the rest of the services rendered by the municipality. Matala (2022: 56) specifies that organisations need to have ethical commitment, have legal control, and focus on improving the life quality of the people and their communities at large. Moreover, parties have a right to receive funding, and communities should distribute it fairly.

2.2.4 Elections and structures of the council

Local government consists of two structures known as the council and administration (Makwetu 2021: 3). The council is made up of political officials, elected directly by the citizenry through proportional-based representation. The Municipal Structures Acts (1998) stipulate that the municipality elects its political wing for a period of five years. Individual councillors are selected by the community in this process, and political parties select proportional representatives that will be responsible for community affairs (Makwetu 2021: 3). According to Mkhathshwa-Ngwenya and Khumalo (2020: 268), councillors are expected to execute their allocated duties as regulated by the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, which includes providing fundamental services in consultation with citizens. The Local Government Handbook (South Africa 2021: 20) states that South African residents above 18 years of age qualify to vote during elections. The Republic of South Africa Constitution (1996), Section 190(1), requires the appointment of a commission that manages the process of national, provincial, and local elections according to the national legislature. The commission ensures that elections are fair and free and that election results are published within the stipulated short period as prescribed by the legislation. The Municipal Structures Acts of 1998 mandates the election of municipal councils every five years (Makwetu, 2021: 3). These changes in leadership require the collaboration of leaders and organisations with beliefs as well as the mindsets to assist people in improving behaviour and practices when it comes to adapting to change (Mansaray 2019: 18). Thabo (2020: 48) and Understanding Local Government (2021) delineate that a mayor, an executive committee or mayoral committee, and a speaker, who chairs council meetings, head the council structure. Glasser and Wright (2020: 418) identify the municipal council as the municipality's governing body, primarily responsible and accountable for the municipality's performance and governance. Councillors are key when making decisions about supplying services to the public (Sorensen 2023: 164). As alluded to by Thabo (2022: 48), the municipal council has the authority to determine internal procedures and has executive and legislative roles to play. However, the council does not make all decisions in the municipality. The Constitution allows the municipality to delegate its functions to office-bearers and other structures.

2.3 Legal and regulatory context of South African municipalities

The "Constitution of the Republic of South Africa" governs "South African local government," according to Local Government Legislation (2021). Chapter 7 of the Constitution outlines the legal foundation in detail. Besides the constitution, additional legislation, policy, and regulation documents (Dube 2022: 10; Letlape and Dube 2020: 2; Mishi, Mbaleki, and Mushonga, 2022: 2) aim to enhance the quality of life for South African citizens. Local Government Legislation (2021) outlines that municipalities are governed by pieces of legislation that guide the change management process of the local government. If the municipality wishes to implement change, it is imperative to consider the legislation. Some of those laws are the country's Constitution, the "Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998," the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, the Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003, the White Paper on Local Government (1998), and the Integrated Development Plan.

2.3.1 Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998

The Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 seeks to provide guidance on the establishment of municipalities and related categories of local government. This Act promotes good governance in all categories of municipalities by segregating "functions and powers". The Municipal Structures Act governs the structure of the office and internal systems. This Act extensively deals with the election of the municipal councillors, office councillors' removal, and internal proceedings for disbanding the council (Manqele 2021: 20).

2.3.2 Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000

The Local Government Municipality Systems Act (2000) intends to uplift the economy and advance the social well-being of the local communities by ensuring that there is worldwide access to services that are essential to all at an affordable rate. The Systems Act provides the mechanisms, principles, and processes necessary to enable municipalities to progressively move towards providing essential services. This Act establishes the legal status of the local community within the municipal area, working in partnership with the municipality's political and administrative officials. The Municipal Systems Act sets the standards for the functions and powers of the local government. Nel and Minnie (2022: 40) noted that, among other things, the Municipal

Systems Act (2000) endorsed legislation for the transformation of local government, which established the integrated development plan (IDP) as a core component of municipal development. Furthermore, the framework for the performance and support of the local government in communities is provided, and the legal issues relating to local government are set by the Municipal Systems Act (2000).

2.3.3 Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003

The Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) 56 of 2003 protects municipalities' financial status by thoroughly safeguarding and managing all categories of local government sustainably. According to Glasser and Wright (2020: 423), municipalities need to reduce expenditures to an available revenue source and transfers from the national government. Section 65 of the MFMA states that the municipality must have expenditure systems in place to ensure effective control over fund movement approval in the municipal bank account (Moji, Nhede, and Masiya 2022: 2). MFMA establishes the local sphere of government treasury norms and standards, or any matters related thereto. According to Mathiba (2021: 572), the objective of the MFMA is to guarantee accountability and transparency and provide a legal framework for the supply chain management implementation process in municipalities.

2.4 The state of local government in South Africa

The state of the local government in South Africa can be better understood in the context of detailed reports by the AGSA. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Chapter 9, grants an AGSA the authority to audit and report on all municipalities and other entities mandated by national or provincial legislation. The Auditor General of South Africa (2022) emphasises the role played by AGSA in strengthening the constitutional democracy that aims to improve South African citizens' quality of life. The auditing of local government accomplishes this, providing insight into the failures, challenges, and successes within municipalities, as well as those providing support at the national and provincial levels. AGSA (2021) points out that about 64 municipalities were dysfunctional due to poor service delivery, poor governance, political instability, corruption, poor financial management, and weak institutional capacity. The System of Capacity Building for Local Government (2022) reported that to address the municipality's performance, it is important to focus on prioritising skilled human

resources and the interface of administration and politicians. One of the factors affecting the performance of municipalities is the insufficiency of human resources (Moji, Nhede, and Masiya 2022: 3). In February 2022, 33 municipalities were placed under provincial intervention or administration (Nel and Minnie, 2022: 40; Maluleke, 2022: 1). According to Makoti and Odeku (2021: 47), Section 139 of the constitution allows the provincial executive to intervene in the municipality's affairs when it is unable to achieve its obligations and constitutional mandates of rendering services to the people. The provincial government initiates interventions when the municipality fails to meet its financial obligations and approve the budget (Glasser and Wright 2020: 425).

The 2022 AGSA report and the Local Government Handbook (2021) outline that the audit outcomes are based on the quality of the annual financial statements, performance reports and compliance with legislation. Audit outcomes can be categorised as (a) a financially unqualified opinion with no finding, which is a clean audit that means the municipality has produced a quality set of financial statements that is free from material misstatements (free from errors, omissions that can lead to affecting "the credibility and reliability of the financial statements"); the municipality that produces a quality performance report that measures performance in a reliable and useful manner in compliance with legislation; (b) a financially unqualified opinion with findings means a municipality had been able to produce quality financial statements but failed to produce "quality performance reports and to comply with key legislation"; (c) a financially qualified opinion with findings means the "financial statements contained material misstatements that were not corrected before the financial statement were published"; (d) an adverse opinion with findings includes many "material misstatements, which means that the auditor general disagreed with virtually all the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements"; and (e) a disclaimer opinion with findings is when municipality could not provide the auditor general with evidence for a lot of amounts and disclosure in the financial statement and auditor was unable to conclude and express an opinion on the credibility of the financial statement.

AGSA (2022) reported the local government's status based on their audit findings. AGSA revealed that in the 2020–2021 financial year, 41 (16%) of the 257

municipalities in South Africa received an unqualified report with no findings (Mishi, Mbaleki and Mushonga 2022: 2). In other words, clean audit opinion shows a slight increase in the number of clean audits when compared with 32 (12%) in the prior year (2019-2020). Municipalities received unqualified findings in 100 cases (38%), qualified findings in 78 cases (30%), adverse findings in 4 cases (2%), disclaimers in 25 cases (10%), and outstanding results in 9 cases (4%). As per Kaywood (2021: 56), the municipalities rendered service delivery to a number of communities. However, there are also indications that other communities are still expecting basic services from municipalities. Municipalities struggle with governance and political leadership instability, which are the main reasons for their failure to deliver services to communities (Masuku and Jili, 2019: 2). The latest audit reports confirm that municipalities are in the worst position (Nel and Minnie 2022: 43). (AGSA, 2020: 9; Nel and Minnie, 2020: 43) reported that the majority of municipalities struggle to pay for essential services such as electricity and water, struggle to collect revenue, incur irregular, unauthorised, fruitless, and wasteful expenditures, and rely heavily on grants from the national government.

2.4.1 Provision of Service Delivery

The Republic of South Africa's Constitution, Section (152) mandates the local government to provide sustainable public services to the country's citizens (Masiya *et al.*, 2021: 96; Zerihun and Mashigo, 2022: 2). Mkhathshwa-Ngwenya and Khumalo (2020: 271) define public service as the provision of services by the government, financed by the public sector, to communities living within their jurisdiction. Nkedishu (2022:3) explains that it is difficult to measure the production output of a public entity. However, the services the municipality provides to the communities serve as a key indicator of its productivity. Monamela (2021: 274) and Nama *et al.* (2022: 42) contend that South Africa continues to confront challenges in service delivery, despite its accountability to a democratic society. Kalonda and Govender (2021: 2), Manqe (2021: 4), and Mkhathsha-Ngwenya (2020: 268) assert that dysfunctional governance systems, poor management performance, poor leadership, misappropriation of council funds, high levels of corruption, failure to implement policies during the recruitment process, and poor planning primarily contribute to the lack of service delivery. Lack of

consequence management and accountability has a negative impact on municipalities' good governance, increasing the risk of not rendering basic services to the community. (Thusi and Selepe 2023: 688). Nama *et al.* (2022: 43) categorize local government as an institution characterized by maladministration, unskilled employees, and a lack of financial accountability.

According to Kaywood (2021: 56), Masuku and Jili (2019: 2), and Ntusi (2019: 16), the South African government's delay in rendering basic services and fulfilling their promises to the community often leads to protests for service delivery by frustrated community members. The delays in the provision of services to communities create socio-political problems, which are then elevated to a national crisis (Thusi and Selepe 2023: 689). The slow pace of providing services forces the public to protest when dissatisfied with the service rendered to them (Masuku and Jili 2019: 2; Zerihun and Mashigo 2022: 3) because of corruption, manipulation of politicians, and a lack of accountability. The municipality's inadequate service rendering appears to be the cause of the increasingly frequent protests by South African citizens (Zerihun and Mashego 2022: 3). Political interference with public administrators' duties causes delays in service delivery (Masuku and Jili 2019: 2; Nel and Masilela 2020: 37). Politicians elected as office bearers are reportedly more focused on how they are going to retain their positions at the expense of performance on service delivery (Makoti and Odeku 2021: 45). Instead of allocating time to serving the community, they focus on litigation disputes and conflicts about the municipality's political leadership. Manqele (2021: 4) asserts that the dysfunction of local ward committees and IDP forums characterises municipalities as an institutional vacuum. The aforementioned author insists that for the municipality to be able to efficiently provide the service required by the public, the public must be involved in decision-making. As per the Department of National School of Government (2022: 4), President Ramaphosa emphasised that bureaucrats should meticulously implement the political directives set out by the party and voters. The South Africa Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, Munzhedzi (2020: 98), states that municipalities should have community participation on service delivery issues through committees in section wards. A shift in conventional and traditional service delivery practices requires a review and restructuring of existing service delivery mechanisms, along with innovative

approaches to enhance the performance of public institutions, all while making the most of limited personnel in a cost-effective manner. (Nel and Masilela 2020: 37).

2.4.2 Political instability

Political instability and corruption are frequently determined by the country's level of development (Watabaji and Shumetie 2022: 907). Less developed countries are more likely to be politically unstable and corrupt (Watabaji and Shumetie 2022: 907). Literature shows that instability in politics leads to negative growth with different approaches to econometrics and different political instability measures (Matta, Bleaney, and Appleton, 2021: 254; Jundi, Shuhaiber, and Al-Emara, 2022: 169). Furthermore, political instability and weak public organisational structure lead to a harmful impact on the economic development process (Lonardo and Tyson, 2022: 191; Al-Jundi, Shuhaiber, and Al-Emara, 2022: 169). Political and financial stability are the main prognosticators for the success of the economy (Ashraf 2022: 1114; Bitterncourt *et al.* 2022: 2). The aforementioned authors argue that macro-economic factors such as inflation, interest rates, investment, and employment have weakened the certainty of political insecurity. Ashraf (2022: 1115) indicates that financial and political stability emerge as very crucial concerns for sustainable development. Changes in leadership can impact the growth rate and result in permanent losses, such as unusual recessions or currency crises (Matta, Bleaney, and Appleton 2021: 254). Service restraints are mainly based on political administration tension and weak management capacity (Mkhatshwa-Ngwenya and Khumalo 2020: 268). The instability of the environment, economy, and politics makes it challenging to retain, motivate, and attract high-quality employees from other countries (Moji, Nhede, and Masiya 2022: 4). The South African President mentioned that (A national framework towards the professionalisation of the public sector 2022: 1; Dempsey *et al.*, 2022: 85) an organisation with stable leadership tends to have positive audit outcomes and can be able to account for public funds, but there is frequently administrative commotion where there is more turnover of leadership. Furthermore, the President encouraged professionalism in order to maintain stability in the public sector, particularly in senior positions.

2.4.3 Poor financial management and corruption

Globally, corruption is a major barrier to economic development (Al-Jundi, Shuhaiber, and Al-Emara 2021: 168). Watabaji and Shumetie (2022: 908) distinguish between grand and petty corruption. The aforementioned authors explain grand corruption as a manipulation of the state mechanism, abuse of policies, and extraction of public resources for personal gain by government employees. In contrast, petty corruption is the daily misuse of delegated power by employees at a subordinate level during the process of rendering services to the community (Moji, Nhede, and Masiya 2022: 4). Mkhathshwa-Ngwenya and Khumalo (2020: 272) and Mishi, Mbaleki, and Mushonga (2022: 2) assert that mismanagement, corruption, and maladministration within government entities pose significant challenges to the South African government's ability to accelerate development. Due to residents not paying for services, a declining economic base, and internal corruption, most municipalities experience financial distress, leading to a shortage of basic services. Moji, Nhedi, and Masiya (2022: 2) assert that fraudulent financial corruption plagues the municipality, hindering the provision of basic services. Poor service delivery in the majority of municipalities is widespread, resulting from corruption, skills deficits, and political support (Zerihun and Mashigo 2022: 3). Municipalities' senior management faces criticism for their inability to manage the consequences of using funds for irregular, unauthorised, fruitless, and wasteful expenses (Moji, Nhedi, and Masiya 2022: 4). According to the aforementioned authors, most municipalities neglect to investigate those responsible for unauthorised, irregular, fruitless, and wasteful expenditures, thereby failing to hold them accountable or recover funds as mandated by MFMA Section 32. Municipalities face financial distress as a result of residents not paying for their services, a declining economic base, and instances of corruption by officials and councillors (Nel and Minnie, 2022: 40). As per Glasser and Wright (2020: 417; Nel and Minnie, 2022: 40), poor financial management, dysfunctional political leadership, under-collection of revenue, and failure to control expenditure are internal problems in municipalities. Munzhedzi (2020: 97) outlines that there are perpetrators of fraud, maladministration, corruption, and a lack of commitment. However, there are no consequences for management to prevent such incidents in the future. Moji, Nhedi, and Masiya (2022:

2) stated that officials and the council of the municipality are not held responsible and accountable for financial management.

De Visser *et al.* (2020:8) reinforce the assertion that municipalities are at high risk of officials violating any regulations and laws if there are no internal controls in place. Makwetu (2021:5) mentioned that between 2012 and 2020, about 33 000 whistleblower reports were received from the corruption watch. A total of 5 094 (16%) corruption complaints are from municipalities. Khaile, Davids, and Khaile (2021: 176) point out that municipal officials have a habit of not complying with the legislation governing the municipality's finances. Nel and Minnie (2022: 46) alluded to the fact that it is very unclear how to address corruption faced by municipalities, especially with the current political arrangement whereby councillors account for political affiliation instead of their community. De Visser *et al.* (2020:9) point out that there are challenges when municipalities conduct disciplinary proceedings against the staff involved in corruption allegations. This is due to the fragmented and cumbersome nature of the law, the fact that the time to complete the case is too short (a 90-day period), the whistleblowers' unwillingness to testify, and the municipality's weak internal investigative capacity. Political influences divert the fighting corruption mandate of agencies such as law enforcement and key institutions to the anti-corruption mandate, according to Mathiba (2021: 562). Politicians influence these agencies fighting corruption (Mathiba 2021: 562).

2.4.4 Institutional capacity and performance

The key factors that affect municipal performance are stability and institutional capacity. The report by CoGTA (2021) stresses the fact that some of the municipalities are faced with problems, such as dealing with issues of establishment. Managers lack mechanisms to hold themselves accountable for their poor performance, and they fail to sign performance agreements. The report further mentioned that municipalities are poor at rendering reliable service delivery due to common labour disputes. As per De Visser *et al.* (2020: 8) and Munzhedzi (2020: 97), internal fights between politicians and administrative officials, a lack of capacity, and an inefficient ward committee system increase the chances of not developing and implanting the policies of the municipalities. The institutional capacity is undermined by the lack of critical skills in

professional positions such as senior management and technician, especially in rural areas (Madumo and Kamo 2019: 585). It is difficult for municipalities to acquire and retain those skilled professionals. Mkhathshwa-Ngwenya and Khumalo (2020: 269) and Nel and Minnie (2020: 46) mentioned that effective governance performance needs to be effectively managed by recruiting the right employees for the job and managing time and public funds during the execution process of the policy. The authors posited that strengthening organisational development through capacity building can lead to the development of institutional capacity. Nama *et al.* (2022: 42) mentioned that municipalities do not put enough effort into training staff as well as developing them, which leads to poor service delivery to citizens. Masiya *et al.* (2021: 103) mentioned that the other factors that impact the performance of municipal development are insufficient funds, outdated infrastructure and other equipment resources, information and communication technology shortages, frequent organisational change, resistance to change by the workforce, and a lack of skilled management. The National Treasury provides support for institutional capacity building and system improvement through grants "such as Municipal Systems Improvement Grants (MSIG) and Financial Management Grants (FMG)" (explanatory memorandum to the division of revenue 2022).

As stated by Mahlangeni (2020: 2), for the municipality to be adequately capacitated to provide the essential basic services to the community, the Constitution has provisions that allow the national and provincial governments to provide support and oversight roles. Section 154(1) of the Constitution mandates national and provincial governments to strengthen and support co-operative government, enabling municipalities to exercise their functions and powers in managing and controlling their own affairs. (Madumo and Koma 2019: 588). The municipalities should recruit experienced and qualified officials with relevant capacity and skills to implement regulations and policies (Munzhedzi 2020: 102; Mkhathshwa-Ngwenya and Khumalo 2020: 270). Section 155(6) of the Constitution states that the provincial government must establish municipalities in their province, provide support, and monitor the capacity of the municipality to perform its functions. Provincial governments monitor the municipality's performance to identify early warnings of poor performance and incapacity issues, as well as areas that require support (Mahlangane 2020: 09).

2.4.5 Leadership and management

Leadership and management are critical to the functioning of local government in South Africa, where effective governance directly impacts millions of people's livelihoods. Leadership is what determines the effectiveness of the local government. If there is a lack of leadership, municipal governance and support end up having a negative impact (Moji, Nhedi, and Masiya 2022: 5). Leadership within local government is not merely about direction-setting but also about fostering accountability, transparency, and responsiveness to community needs. In South Africa, where issues like service delivery, infrastructure development, and socio-economic equity are pressing, strong leadership becomes indispensable. Effective leaders in local government must navigate complex political landscapes, adhere to legal frameworks, and manage diverse stakeholder interests while promoting inclusive decision-making. They are essential in allocating resources efficiently and implementing policies effectively to tackle local challenges like unemployment, housing shortages, and sanitation issues. Moreover, effective management complements leadership by translating vision into action, ensuring that day-to-day operations run smoothly, and managing resources responsibly. Management in local government requires expertise in financial oversight, project management, and fostering a productive work environment for municipal employees. By fostering a culture of collaboration and innovation, local government leaders and managers can cultivate trust among citizens and stakeholders alike, thereby enhancing the overall quality of governance and service delivery.

2.5 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter provides a synopsis of the South African local government. The reviewed literature covered the role, powers, and functions of the local government and explained how municipalities integrate with other spheres of government. This chapter also delves into the legal and regulatory context of South African municipalities. Additionally, it provided a discussion on the state of local government in South Africa.

The following chapter unpacks the theoretical framework that underlies this study.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE EFFECTIVENESS WITHIN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

In order to help in determining the reasons, procedures, and effects of change management on the effectiveness of administrative processes, this chapter presents previous theories and models on the subject. Additionally, this section compares existing theories and models from various authors in order to provide guidance for the creation of a prototype integrated change management model for the long-term administrative performance of South African municipalities.

3.2 Theoretical framework for change management

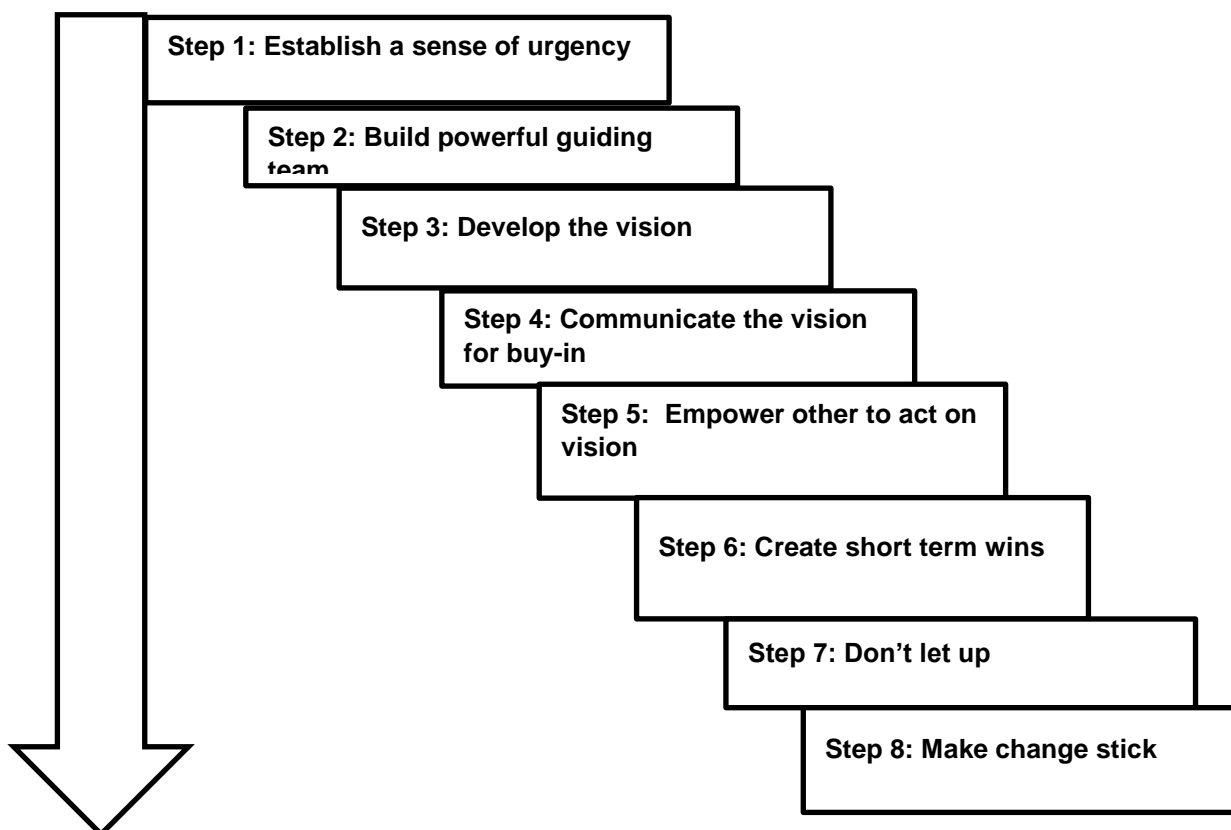
Theoretical framework for change management and administrative effectiveness within the local government context involves integrating theories and concepts that are relevant to understanding how change processes can be effectively managed to enhance administrative performance. Here is the change management model structured approach to constructing such a framework:

3.2.1 Kotter's eight-step change management model

Kotter's eight-step change management model outlines how to manage change successfully and stay away from the pitfalls that lead to change implementation failures (Kumarasinghe and Dilan 2021: 49; Mauss *et al.* 2023: 1000). This model is founded on common mistakes that lead to the failure of change implementation. These mistakes include failing to establish a strong sense of urgency, failing to build a strong enough guiding coalition, lacking a clear vision, under communicating the vision, failing to remove barriers to the new vision, failing to systematically plan for and create short

term wins, declaring victory too soon, and failing to firmly root changes in the organisation's culture (Kok and Siripipatthanakul, 2023: 13). Furthermore, Kotter's change management model demonstrated that approximately seventy percent of organisational reform initiatives failed (Abocejo 2021: 35; Laig *et al.* 2021: 35). According to Mauss *et al.* (2023: 1000), Kotter's eight-step change management model process for fundamentally creating change is one of the most well-known and widely used approaches to organisational transformation. By strengthening their capacity for change, organisations can increase the likelihood that change will be successful (Laig *et al.*, 2021: 35). The successful shifting world of the organisation is a result of implementing Kotter's eight-step change management model while leading transformation (Laig *et al.*, 2021: 25; Abocejo, 2021: 35). Considering this, the Kotter eight-step change management model has served as the foundation for this study. Figure 3.1 describes Kotter's eight change management steps.

Figure 1: Kotter's eight change management steps



Source: Kumarasingheand Dilan (2022).

Step 1: Establish a sense of urgency

The first step is to create a sense of urgency by explaining to the staff why the change is important and necessary (Base and Gupta 2021: 488). When there is no urgency, it is difficult to convince employees to participate in the change process (Kumarasinghe and Dilan 2021: 53). Mauss *et al.* (2023: 1000) refer to this process as unfreezing and activating the organisation, which involves creating a compelling justification for the anticipated changes. Mansaray (2019: 26) emphasises the importance of thoroughly examining any ongoing or potential organisational opportunities at this point. This is the point at which the identification, expression, and communication of the urgency of change are taken into consideration (Kok and Siripipatthanakul 2023: 13). In order for the project to advance, it is necessary to recognise the necessity of the change as well as the advantages of quick action (Ravi *et al.*, 2022: 2). According to Hamdo (2021: 6) and Base and Gupta (2021: 488), managers should initially instil a sense of urgency for change among all stakeholders, focusing more of their efforts on the more influential stakeholders, such as senior and middle managers, to help them sell the idea of change to other workers.

Step 2: Create a guiding coalition

Assembling a cross-functional team with the influence and power to drive change is what Mauss *et al.* (2023: 1000) characterise as the creation of a guiding coalition. All levels should consider the diversity of team members, irrespective of their level, function, location, tenure, or ideas (Kok and Siripipatthanakul 2023: 13; Mansaray 2019: 26). The aforementioned author asserts that the establishment of diversity occurs when individuals are prepared to work diligently and respectfully. The task develops the correct vision and direction of the change team (Abocejo 2021: 35). At this point, commitment to the change begins. Managers put together a team of employees that can advocate for change across the organisation's departments (Base and Gupta 2021: 488). Additionally, this action is important since most employees must support the change too.

Step 3: Develop a vision and strategy

The third step involves creating a guiding process in the form of a strategic plan and generating or establishing a vision of what needs to change and why change is

inevitable (Mauss *et al.*, 2023: 1000). According to Base and Gupta (2021: 488) and Mansaray (2019: 26), this step entails creating a strategy and vision that must be accomplished when the change is implemented. The vision must be clear in order to avoid confusing and misleading the stakeholders and be able to explain how the future differs from the past (Laig and Abocejo 2021: 35).

Step 4: Communicate the vision

In this stage, Mauss *et al.* (2023: 1000) outline the implementation of a communication plan that provides ongoing education on the what, why, and how of the modifications. The importance of communication for change management includes messaging, negotiation, and networking (Phillips and Klein 2023: 194; Bose and Gupta 2021: 488). According to the aforementioned writers, all frameworks and models advise change managers to communicate with employees about organisational transformation. Hye *et al.* (2020: 124) describe effective communication as conveying change messages to all levels of an organisation. Additionally, the importance of a clearly expressed common vision for change lies in its ability to provide a framework and guide the development of specific strategies necessary for a public organisation.

Step 5: Empower broad-based action

Creating awareness about inevitable change is important for all stakeholders and employees of the organisation (Hamdo 2021: 4). The management should highlight the benefits of implementing the change and encourage employees to embrace it by outlining the potential consequences of not doing so. As mentioned by Laig *et al.* (2021: 36), this step focuses on removing as many impediments as possible and freeing up the personnel in the organisation to perform to their highest potential. Keep encouraging risk-taking with problem solving (Mauss *et al.*, 2023: 1000).

Step 6: Generate short-term wins

To maintain efficiency and involvement in improvement, create rewards for contributors and participants (Mauss *et al.* 2023: 1000). According to Bose and Gupta (2021: 488; Laig and Abocejo (2021: 36), this stage recognises accomplishments and rewards individuals who work hard to achieve long-term objectives in order to maintain

their motivation moving forward. However, there are situations where quick victories clash with the overall transition process's success for the personnel. It must be made very apparent that the current successes are short-term gains, not culture-changing ones (Laig and Abocejo 2021: 36).

Step 7: Consolidate gains and produce more change

Utilise the credibility of short-term successes to create momentum that leads to additional changes (Mauss *et al.* 2023: 1000; Errida and Lofti 2021: 2). This stage involves promoting the change and, if necessary, hiring and training new employees (Bose and Gupta 2021: 488).

Step 8: Institutionalise or anchor new approaches in the culture

To prevent organisational relapses, integrate change into a new culture by highlighting the connections between new behaviours, procedures, and successes (Mauss *et al.*, 2023: 1000; Bose and Gupta, 2021: 488). For change to be successful, the organisation's culture must be altered (Kumarasinghe and Dilan 2021: 55). The most important factor in maintaining the new norms and displacing the outdated practices (Kok and Siripatthanakul 2023: 13).

3.2.1.1 Advantages of Kotter's change management model

Despite being from the 1990s, Kotter's change management approach is still useful for organisational change (Jain 2023: 5). The following advantages define the applicability of Kotter's model:

Kotter's model is easy to implement.

The eight steps of Kotter's change management model offer a precise step-by-step breakdown of the complete change process (Jain 2023: 5). The complete plan to manage change is included in this change management model (Hamdo 2021: 9).

Focus on buy-in from various stakeholders across the organisation.

The focus of this change management methodology is on the staff's acceptance and participation through securing and establishing an organisational coalition that will

serve as a guiding coalition for the change initiative's success (Jain 2023: 5). As pointed out by Banerjee *et al.* (2019: 5), defining the change effort focusses on the change's objective and identifies the major role actors, including strategists, implementers, and stakeholders or recipients. Strategists are in charge of the first work, which includes determining the need for change, creating a vision of the desired outcome, determining what is feasible, and determining who can support and defend it (Errida and Lofti 2021: 4; Banerjee *et al.* 2019: 6). Successful progress in the change process is shaped, organised, and empowered by implementers. Stakeholders, or recipients, speak for the group of people who must adjust to the change.

It highlights the importance of creating a sense of urgency.

The success of the organisational change is determined by the drafted change vision since it fosters a sense of urgency (Jain 2023: 5). The approach of Kotter's change management model stressed the significance of developing a clear vision and communicating it to employees (Hamdo 2021: 10).

3.2.1.2 Principles of Kotter's change management model

Kotter's eight steps of the change management model should be implemented in an ongoing manner, incorporating key change management principles simultaneously throughout the process. (Jain 2023: 6). Simultaneous implementation of the eight stages accelerates change, particularly when there is widespread support at all levels.

Leadership and management

For the programme to be successful, managers must support the change that the administration needs (Jain 2023: 6). To properly manage the transition, managers should adopt the right leadership style (Hamdo 2021: 10).

Head and heart

Making the new change more enticing, desired, or even better can be achieved by explaining the advantages and how an individual will benefit from the change (Jain 2023: 6). People need inspiration to adopt the new organisational transformation process.

Select a few and diverse many.

A core group of supporters with a range of employment experiences and hierarchical levels is required (Jain 2023: 6). The hiring process is planned by all management levels and regular employees whose jobs are affected by transformation and who work closely together. In accordance with this idea, an implementation plan is created to begin the change (Errida and Lofti 2021: 3; Banerjee *et al.* 2019: 6). The implementation plan needs to clearly define the goals for stakeholders, implementers, and strategists, as well as who is in charge of what duties (Banerjee *et al.* 2019: 6). It is vital to have a framework for each participant in the plan. Several people from various organisational levels must be involved for change to occur. Each person must be aware of their role as it is defined in the plan.

I have to and want to

Transitions go more swiftly and smoothly when people who may be affected by them want them to change. If no one is prepared to take part, no change is conceivable. Regardless of whether the change is for the better or worse, implementers typically encounter opposition (Banerjee *et al.* 2019: 8; Naidoo *et al.* 2020: 10). This is primarily because people are comfortable with the familiar, and the uncertainty that comes with change can create stress for those affected by it.

3.2.1.3 Weaknesses of Kotter's change management model

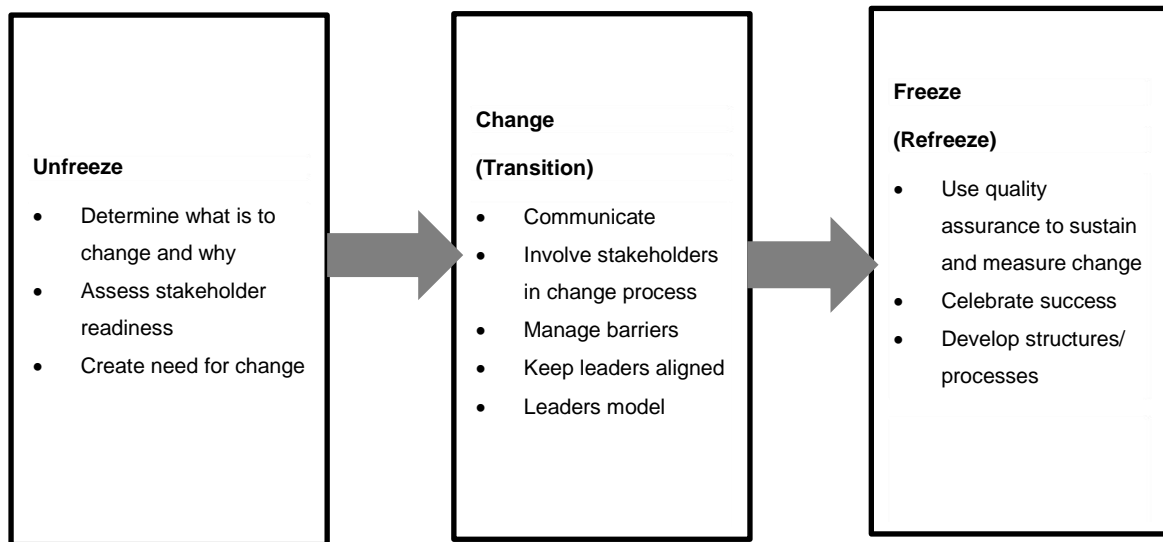
The larger group of individuals and organisation are the main focus of Kotter's change management approach rather than the individual (Sedmak 2021: 2). Since this approach concentrates on top-down information flow, there are not many opportunities for bottom-up or two-way communication. Moreover, it does not take into account internal stakeholder engagement or a preliminary assessment of change readiness (Sedmak 2021: 2).

3.2.2 Lewin's change management model

Lewin contends that transitions and misunderstandings typically occur throughout the process of change for an organisation or an individual, making it a very difficult and complicated journey until equilibrium or stability is reached. The existence of three

stages in the organisational change process has been noted by Panenkov *et al.* (2021: 5) and Mansaray (2019: 26). The process may involve unfreezing the current state, progressing toward a new state, and then stabilizing and refreezing in that new state. According to Lewin, a successful transformation project consists of three key steps, as illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Lewin's Change Management Model



Source: Cone and Unni (2020: 1713)

Lewin's change management model can be utilised as a tool to process and carry out the change (Humdo 2021: 5). Change is never easy for an organisation or an individual, and it frequently includes numerous stages of transition and misunderstanding before arriving at or passing through the stage of equilibrium or stability (Burnes 2020: 36). For large enterprises, this model offers three simple phases that are appealing and simple to apply (Lufti 2021: 5). A successful transformation project involves the following three processes, according to Jain (2023: 1), who claims that the Lewin change model is accurate.

Step 1: Unfreeze

The first step in the unfreeze process is for the organisation to carefully assess the processes that need to be modified since they are ineffective (Cone and Unni 2020: 1716). The process of unfreezing is defined as destabilizing an existing quasi-

stationary equilibrium (Burnes 2020: 47). One of the most important phases in the overall change management process is the initial step of transition (Kumarasinghe and Dilan 2021: 52). It involves increasing people's readiness and willingness to change by encouraging them to transition from their current comfort zone to a transformed condition (Errida and Lofti 2021: 2; Kumarasinghe and Dilan 2021: 57). Making people aware of the need for change and increasing their motivation to accept new working methods for improved results are both components of unfreeze (Errida and Lofti 2021: 2; Junnaid et al. 2020: 3). Establishing the change vision and outlining the necessary changes is essential before a change can be implemented (Banerjee et al. 2019: 4; Naidoo et al. 2020: 10). The organisation is now aware of its condition and prepared to implement the defined vision. During this phase, effective communication is critical for gaining the necessary buy-in and participation of the populace in the transformation process (Kumarasinghe and Dilan 2021: 57).

Step 2: Change

Step two focuses on bringing about change. Mansaray (2019: 26) refers to this phase as either the transitional phase or the real implementation phase of change. It entails direct involvement, openness, and communication from people driving change (Cone and Unni 2020: 1716). Additionally, it entails the desire for the future state and the acceptance of new methods of doing things (Errida and Lofti 2021: 2). People start to come out of their shells at this point, and real change begins to happen. At this stage, careful planning, effective communication, and encouraging people to participate in the change are required (Kumarasinghe and Dilan 2021: 57). This stage of transition is considered difficult due to uncertainties or people's concerns about the outcomes of implementing a change process.

Stage 3: Freeze (refreezing)

The third step, refreeze, addresses a component of quality assurance in order to maintain the status quo and ensure that it does not revert to the previous status quo (Cone and Unni 2020: 1716). During this phase, the populace transitions from the stage of change (transition) to something considerably more stable, or what we can refer to as the equilibrium state. The final stage of accepting or internalising new

relationships is called refreezing. New behaviours, practices, or cultural shifts are being strengthened and reinforced (Errida and Lofti, 2021: 2). As stated by Kumarasinghe and Dilan (2021: 58), the employees should receive rewards, recognition, and positive reinforcement. Supporting policies or structures can also aid in reinforcing the modified ways of functioning.

3.2.2.1 Benefits of Lewin's change management model

Lewin's approach primarily serves as a useful transition management method, actively combating opposition (Aktas 2021: 5). This change model practices proactive change management. Using this concept, an organisation can develop a culture of change that lasts. This change approach can help individuals perceive change as beneficial to the organisation rather than a necessity (Aktas 2021: 5; Channel 2021: 4). If a team clearly benefits from the modification once it is finalised, they are more likely to make it again when the time comes (Channel 2021: 4). This model framework has stood the test of time and continues to be a crucial tool for businesses trying to navigate change, as noted by Jain (2023: 6).

3.2.2.2 Weaknesses of Lewin's change management model

Lewin's change management model's fundamental flaw is that it does not comprehend how challenging organisational changes may be (Salama 2023: 3). Real-world change is rarely a straightforward process; it is almost always chaotic and unpredictable. The three-step model plan may be too condensed to address all the variables that may influence whether a change is successful or not (Salama 2023: 3). This model may also take a while to reveal results. Due to the model's emphasis on the value of consulting stakeholders and implementing changes quickly, leaders who want to see transformation may find the process frustrating because it can take longer than other change models (Salama 2023: 3).

3.3 Change management model for municipalities

This study recommended the use of both Kotter's and Lewin's change management models after reviewing the relevant literature. These models include the key phases of change management, both models' stages interact with one another's theories of change management. Combining Kotter's eight-step change management model and

Lewin's change management model can provide municipalities with a solid foundation for ensuring long-term administrative performance in the context of sustainability challenges and political changes. Integrating Kotter's and Lewin's models gives municipalities a comprehensive and adaptable approach to change management, allowing them to overcome environmental challenges and political transitions while ensuring long-term administrative effectiveness.

- **Kotter's Eight-Step Change Management Model**

This model offers a structured approach to successful change management, with a focus on creating a sense of urgency, forming a guiding coalition, developing a vision and strategy, communicating the vision, empowering action, generating short-term wins, consolidating gains, and institutionalising new approaches in the culture. The advantages thereof include ease of implementation, a focus on stakeholder buy-in, and a push for urgency. However, flaws such as top-down communication and inadequate consideration of individual needs exist.

- **Lewin's Change Management Model**

Lewin's methodology emphasises unfreezing the current state, making changes, and refreezing to stabilise the new state (Lutfi 2021: 4). It vigorously combats resistance and promotes a culture of change within the organisation. Benefits include proactive change management and the potential for long-term cultural transformations. However, its flaws include a simplified change process and significant delays in achieving results. Table 2 illustrates the connection between these models.

Table 2: Connection between Lewin's model and Kotter's model

Lewin's model	Kotter's model
Unfreeze	Urgency of change
	Effective coalition
	Change vision

Change	Vision sharing
	Empowerment
	Short run wins
Refreeze	Establish on change
	Make change stable

Source: (Hamdo 2021)

Similar to a more in-depth version of Lewin's model, Kotter's model for unfreezing contains the need for change now, a strong coalition, and a change vision (Hamdo 2021: 8).

Combining these models allows municipalities to reap the benefit:

Comprehensive Approach: Kotter's model provides an organised approach for change implementation, while Lewin's model focuses on overcoming opposition and creating long-term change. Together, they offer a more holistic approach to change management, addressing both strategic planning and cultural transformation.

Balanced Focus: Kotter's model emphasises stakeholder buy-in and strategic planning, while Lewin's model focuses on overcoming resistance and achieving long-term change. Integrating both models allows a balanced approach to both the strategic and cultural dimensions of transformation.

Flexibility: Each model has advantages and disadvantages, but by combining them, communities can tailor the approach to their own needs and circumstances. They can employ Kotter's step-by-step process for strategic planning and Lewin's emphasis on cultural transformation to overcome resistance and assure sustainability.

3. 4 Change management models for sustainable administrative effectiveness

Change management procedures and models enhance the success of environmental challenges through the implementation of new change plans (Kumarasinghe and Dilan 2021: 49). Hamdo (2021:3) emphasises that change management is a process that involves creating perceptions that alter to produce good results. The quality, quantity, and structure of this change management process can be interpreted at all levels as reform, innovation, and revolution (Le et al. 2020: 560). Changes to local government in South Africa have an ongoing effect on prospective regime shifts that lead to the introduction of new political leadership with different ideologies and policies (Masuku and Jili 2019: 4). Additionally, the administrative structure of the impacted municipalities has undergone unexpected changes as a result of the new political leadership. Rolland (2018: 1) states that municipalities have made administrative adjustments and delayed the implementation of responses to structural changes. Municipalities require a model that will facilitate the effective implementation of change management and guarantee administrative sustainability. The choice of an appropriate change model depends on who is driving the change, how much training and preparation a group or an individual has received, and how much support the employee will need during the change process (Junnaid et al. 2020: 9). The applicable model for municipalities will be determined with the help of the current theories of change management. As a result, a few of the various models of change will be examined, specifically.

3.4. Summary of the chapter

This chapter discusses the theoretical literature for administrative effectiveness and change management in local government. This chapter recognises and covers the change management models of McKensey, Kotter, and Lewin. The change management models developed by Lewin and Kotter's were utilised in this study because of their potency and methodical approach to change management.

The following chapter presents an analysis of change management and administrative effectiveness in local government.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE EFFECTIVENESS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

4.1 Introduction

This section provides a literature review on the change management concept. It shares the previous theories and existing models on change management that can assist in determining the challenges, factors, and impact of change management within local government and administrative effectiveness. The theoretical point of departure for the concept of change management, the sustainability of the administration, and its effectiveness in local government are established in detail in this chapter. Furthermore, this section unpacks the change management challenges confronting South African municipalities and explores the adoption of change management practices in this sphere of government.

4.2 Conceptualisation of change management

Change management is a structural approach for transitioning an organisation, teams, and individuals from the current state to a future state desired to fulfil the organisation's vision and strategy (Kumarasinghe and Dilan, 2021: 52; Laveneziana, 2021: 7). Onuche (2021: 269) explains change management as an essential plan for how to effect change in an organisation without disrupting day-to-day activities. Hye, Miraz, and Habib (2020: 123), Teczke et al. (2017: 195), and Fusch et al. (2020: 167) characterize change management as a "structured process" that guides individuals towards change and the achievement of anticipated results. Fusch et al. (2020: 167) state that it is a developed tool and system to manage employees' side of change to achieve the required outcome for the organisation. As supported by Ali and Hassan (2022: 494), change management is regarded as a tool planned by an organisation to switch the current state of the business, individual, and group of employees to a desired future state. Zainol et al. (2021: 3) and Gichuhi (2017: 69) add that change management is the effective administration that leaders and employers work towards

to effectively implement the necessary processes of organisational change. The performance of the organisation changes significantly as a result of change management (Ali and Hassan, 2022: 494). Furthermore, change can be successful when it is linked with effective people, skilled leaders, job satisfaction, and productivity within an organisation (Zainol et al., 2021: 3; Aljohani, 2016: 319). Effective change management can result in greater productivity, higher work-life quality, and improved readiness for future changes.

4.3 Types of Organisational Change

Organisational change is significant for an organisation considering changes in the improvement of services provided or the addition of a new product (Kumarasinghe and Dilan 2021: 50). Organisational change always balances with the alignment of organisational goals and planned strategies (Junnaid, Miralam, and Jeet 2020: 2). Change in an organisation can take diverse forms, from a minor administrative change in a section or department to an extensive change in the whole organisation (Mansaray 2019: 20). Fusch et al. (2020: 168) explain that organisational change needs leadership to work together with employees for the initiation of change to be successful. Employee readiness, willingness, and change in behaviour and attitude are critical factors that are required for a successful change management outcome (Ali and Hassan, 2022: 494; Zainol et al., 2021: 3). Aljohani (2016: 320) and Kho et al. (2020: 4) argue that there are four types of changes within municipalities: operational, strategic, cultural, and political.

4.3.1 Operational Changes

Operational changes refer to modifications that can impact the current methods of conducting organisational operations, which may involve automation in certain business areas. Kumarasinghe and Dilan (2021: 50) describe operational change as a major rightsizing, collaboration, and restructuring of an organisation. Operational change focuses more on new systems, technologies, procedures, and structures that have an impact on an organisation during work arrangements (Ntusi 2019: 8).

4.3.2 Strategic changes

Strategic change takes place when the organisation's strategy and business direction are affected. As mentioned by Ntusi (2019: 8), strategic change focuses on long-term issues such as the philosophy of the organisation, mission, and strategic vision. An example of a change strategy is when an organisation changes its business growth to sustain its market share. Nel and Masilela (2020: 36) mentioned that public organisations implement changes to develop, implement, and monitor encouraging policies as a cost-effective strategy for improving service delivery to the public.

4.3.3 Cultural change

The cultural change includes transformational change and fundamental changes that can arise from organisational structure change (Kumarasinghe and Dilan, 2021: 50); this is more of a business re-engineering process. Cultural changes affect business philosophies, for example, implementing continuous quality improvement (Zainol et al., 2021: 3; Aljohan, 2016: 320). Donald and Chukwamaobi (2022: 102) mentioned that leaders should be able to establish values that can restructure the institution and have employees trust their guidance.

4.3.4 Political change

This change was caused by a political shift in government. These various changes typically impact other organisational levels, particularly those in the firing line (Ali and Hassan, 2022: 497). Workers on the upper levels might not see the signs of change, which causes more stress for the people who are trying to implement change. On the other hand, the higher-level structure of the organisation primarily experiences the effects of political change. Lower and middle management can implement change after receiving approval from political principles and senior management (Ali and Hassan 2022: 497).

4.4 Change management dimensions

Five dimensions of change management need to be considered to ensure effective organisational innovation (Haftor and Costa, 2023: 4). These five dimensions of change provide a detailed outline of each stage of change, highlighting their intimate interlinking within the successful method of organisational change management.

Tamunomiebi and Lawrence (2020: 159) explain that the dimensions of change are a depicted model that reinforces the change management process cyclically within the organisation. According to Dempsey et al. (2022: 85); Lausier et al. (2020: 859) and Haftor and Costa (2023: 4), change management is a continuous process of renewing the structure, direction, and organisational capacity to maintain the internal and external changing requirements of customers. Dealing with change management necessitates an understanding of the scope of the overall change management process. This study considered the change management dimension to determine the extent to which the local government can effectively administer the segregation task during the change management process for a sustainable outcome. These dimensions can be described as follows:

4.4.1 Direct

Direct is the one that ensures the overall direction of the purpose, vision, mission, and values of the organisation in an articulated and appropriate manner. Fusch et al. (2020: 169) mentioned that managing change in an organisation requires consistency in approach and consistency in purpose, and this can only be achieved with clear direction. Furthermore, the plan needs to be developed with objectives that will give direction to the process of achieving the anticipated outcome (Donald and Chukwumaobi 2022: 101). This dimension provides the context and foundation for the other dimensions (Soomro et al., 2021: 89). It clearly states the desired wishes of the organisation and how it should function when the purpose is achieved. The organisation decides to excel in customer service through the internal employee's performance and the interface with the external customers (Haftor and Costa 2023: 4). The direct model process, which is the initial step in defining the business's philosophy and purpose, aids in developing and crafting the strategy to attain the desired behavior. Managing organisational change requires a consistent purpose and approach to achieve a clear direction. The first dimension is important to the success of the organisational change management process.

4.4.2 Describe

"Describe," as a second dimension, interprets the vision and direction into operating strategies and enabling strategies. As mentioned by Laveneziana (2020: 9), operating

strategies are the functional plans as well as the approaches adopted by each expert in their section to deliver their expected functions in the organisational strategy. A high level of consistency is expected to facilitate the vision and direction facilitated by the enabling strategy (Willie 2023: 5). Enabling strategies are those organisational strategies that describe and define the essential operation of the organisation when the management of people is concerned and excel in operating strategies (Laveneziana 2020: 9). The aforementioned authors concluded with four principles of enabling strategies, which ensure and promote the alignment necessary to achieve the constancy of the purpose and the consistency of the approach.

Resource strategy

The resource strategy covers personnel recruiting and retention, training, development philosophy and practices, and advancement management (Sepahvand and Khodashahri 2021: 440).

Performance management strategy

A performance management strategy streams the organisation's strategic and operational objectives, ensuring that every team and individual understands their responsibilities and roles within the organisation. As stated by Madhani (2020: 47), management needs to implement quality service internally. Practices and policies that are orientated towards enhancing the performance of the organisation are also critical for implementation. Furthermore, performance strategy consists of all processes and activities that are fundamental to targeted operational strategy through communication, the formulation of the performance appraisal system, and the organisational framework.

Reward strategy

This strategy is important when it comes to staff management; it includes the elements of pay structure, deployment of benefits, and bonus packages. Rewards are psychological and material payoffs for the well-being of employees in the working environment (Madhani 2020: 41). The organisations need to ensure that the payment structure is such that the employees decide to work for them rather than choosing their

competitors (Madhani 2020: 41; Junnaid, Miralam, and Jeet 2020: 2). Employees tend to look for better career prospects, opportunities for development, an appropriate rewards structure that suits their current lifestyle, and a culture of the organisation that is congruent with their personal lifestyle. Employers need to consider these elements as part of their recruitment packages and create a psychological environment instead of only focussing on the financial employment contract.

Communication strategy

This strategy consists of both internal and external communication, and there should be a level of resemblance between these two (Ntusi 2019: 24). The way in which an organisation communicates with its staff is very important, as is how it manages the internal communication approach to what is communicated externally to the media and public. Employees are likely to believe the media, so if the organisation is doing internal and external media briefings, they should be similar, as this will have an impact on employees.

4.4.3 Define

Define, as the operational dimension consists of business processes, policies, and procedures that ensure business strategies are implemented and objectives are achieved. According to Tamunomeibi and Lawrence (2022: 160), individuals are increasingly engaged in operations due to their strategic role. The aforementioned authors define it as an operational dimension, which is concerned with practically implementing the strategies that were developed during the direct and descriptive dimensions and consistently achieving the objectives. The implementation looks into the integration of tool proposals with people and the technical side to achieve this dimension. This methodology is more important because, without processes, the organisation will not achieve its strategic objectives.

4.4.4 Deliver

Deliver ensures that the processes and procedures are fully implemented in such a way that the vision and value are consistent. Sakib (2021: 9) mentions that change management employs processes and tools to manage organisational changes. Deliver is more concerned with the actual delivery of the organisational strategies (Hye

et al. 2020: 125). When it comes to change management, it is crucial for the leadership and management to consistently exhibit good behavior. If there are inconsistencies between the leadership's behaviour and words, it could potentially lead to exploitation by those who do not support the change process.

4.4.5 Develop

This dimension involves ongoing process review and monitoring when strategies and objectives are met (Donald and Chukwumaobi 2022: 98) and more often when the organisation's contingent circumstances change and the strategy needs to be reviewed.

4.5 Change management challenges facing municipalities

President Cyril Ramaphosa declared a State of Disaster in March 2020, expecting the municipalities to fulfil their responsibilities to the local community (John, John, and Lavhelani 2022: 59), despite the numerous challenges facing South Africa. As stated in the Constitution, municipal councils are required to render sustainable municipal services to their residents. However, most municipalities are faced with challenges resulting from socioeconomic issues such as poor leadership, corruption, and public fund mismanagement (Zerihun and Mashigo 2022: 4; Madumo and Koma 2019: 584). Onuche (2021: 268) outlines that change management challenges facing municipalities stem from a lack of management knowledge, a lack of training and development, a deficiency in talent promotion, and poor organisational learning. The discussion below expands on these challenges.

4.5.1 Leadership

Leadership poses a significant change management challenge in municipalities for various reasons. Firstly, as pointed out by Mansaray (2019: 26), effective leadership is crucial in directing policies and plans and restructuring the organisation during times of change. Without strong and capable leadership, municipalities struggle to implement necessary changes and adapt to evolving circumstances (Musaigwa 2023: 2). Moreover, leaders play a pivotal role in setting an example during change management processes. Creating a positive work environment that can be sustained throughout the transformation is vital, as highlighted by Junnaid, Miralam, and Jeet

(2020: 4). This requires leaders to be adept at communication, motivating employees, and fostering collaboration to overcome resistance to change. A significant challenge for municipal leaders is dealing with change in a reactive and ad hoc manner (Awoke, 2020: 67). Such an approach indicates a lack of structured change management processes, hindering successful leadership execution and organisational adaptation. The reported leadership crises in municipalities, including concerns about corrupt and unqualified leaders (Mbandlwa, Dorsamy, and Fagbadebo 2020: 1644), further exacerbate the challenges. Incompetent leadership can lead to mismanagement of change initiatives, resulting in inefficiencies, wasted resources, and decreased public trust.

4.5.2 Corruption

Corruption poses a significant change management challenge in municipalities, impeding the effective provision of services and hindering progress. One of the major consequences of corruption is the misallocation of funds (Tshishonga, 2020: 32). When corruption infiltrates the municipal administration, funds that should be directed to essential services and development projects end up being syphoned off for personal gain or used inefficiently. This mismanagement of resources hinders the municipality's ability to implement necessary changes and improvements. Municipalities are legally obligated to collect money and assets related to corruption (Visser *et al.*, 2020: 10). However, recovering losses from corruption can be a challenging task, as the hidden nature of corrupt practises makes it difficult to identify and prosecute offenders effectively. This lack of accountability and consequence for corrupt actions can perpetuate a culture of corruption and undermine change initiatives (Amanquandor 2024: 4). Furthermore, corruption is not only limited to external actors but also involves internal stakeholders. Councillors, with their positions of authority, covertly engage in corrupt practices, as mentioned by Visser *et al.* (2020: 10). This includes using their power to manipulate hiring processes and paperwork to benefit themselves or their associates. Such actions hinder efforts to improve transparency and efficiency during change management processes. Another critical aspect highlighted by Mbandlwa *et al.* (2020: 1649) is the role of politicians in administrative matters. When politicians interfere in the day-to-day operations of municipalities, it can lead to favouritism,

nepotism, and a compromised decision-making process. This interference disrupts the implementation of effective changes and undermines the efforts of genuine change agents within the organisation.

4.5.3 Public fund mismanagement

The issue of financial management is brought on by the challenges municipalities face managing change (Glasser and Wright 2020: 414). According to Tshishonga (2020: 32), some municipalities have trouble making ends meet and are unable to generate revenue on their own. Certain municipalities face the challenge of having leaders who lack ethical standards and who misuse public finances (Mbandlwa *et al.*, 2020: 1648).

4.5.4 Lack of management knowledge

Some municipalities have difficulties with incompetent staff members as a result of poor deployment and change management which ultimately leads to subpar strategic operations (Tshishonga 2020: 32). Inequalities in leadership, differences in change processes, indicators of change, the effectiveness of strategic initiatives, and employee careers are the challenges to managing change in organisations at the stage of scientific progress (Rudnev 2020: 33). This prevents the provision of services to the general public that are of high quality and can be maintained. "Poor service delivery" is the consequence of unethical political leadership and personnel brought by change management, as stated by Mbandlwa *et al.* (2020: 1648). Conflicted employees may become fearful and vulnerable as a result of change management, which may cause them to vent their frustration on one another (Setyanto *et al.* 2019: 3823). As indicated by Zerihun and Mashigo (2022: 3) that there is lack of accountability for the service delivery in South African communities. As to the aforementioned authors, local governments are still having trouble meeting their goals despite having been handed authority by managers and local authorities. Service delivery protests have increased as a result of the poor pace of service delivery. In South Africa, there is still a lot of popular dissatisfaction with how municipal services are provided.

4.5.5 Lack of training and development

Organisations provide training and development to help personnel and modify rules, policies, and processes (Mansaray 2019: 26). Top municipal officials must possess the required qualifications, power, and knowledge to carry out their duties (Madumo and Koma 2019: 584). The authors who have already been mentioned emphasise that senior officials' incapacity affects the municipality's capacity to deliver services as stipulated by the constitution. Senior officials who lack the necessary skills impact the municipality's capacity to offer services as mandated by the constitution (Madumo and Koma 2019: 584). Poor performance and a lack of staff growth are issues caused by a lack of employee training (Al-Aghbari 2019: 2). Another significant issue is the lack of adequate training and skill-development programs for council members, which need immediate attention in order to allow council members to properly carry out their obligations (Taamneh, Almaaitah, and Alqdhha 2020: 403).

4.5.6 Limited resources

Lack of financial resources inhibits local development, which municipalities rely on (Taamneh et al. 2020: 403). This has an effect on the local government's autonomy and the delivery of services to the community. The exploitation of public resources and corruption in the country are major problems, instead of emphasising offering services to the broader public (Mbandlwa et al., 2020: 1649).

4.5.7 Stakeholder engagement

Municipalities need public involvement because it acts as a link between the populace and the government. Public participation gives people a sense of dignity and importance while they are deciding on local government activities and formulating policies, as noted by Taamneh et al. (2020: 403). However, with change management, engaging stakeholders can have deleterious effects on society and organisations due to destructive goals, unchallenged stakeholders, or unresolvable stakeholder conflicts (Kujala et al., 2022: 1165).

4.5.8 Poor maintenance of infrastructure

The condition of the "nation's physical infrastructure" provides a clue as to the health of the global economy (Patience and Nel, 2021: 5). A strong economy also plays a key

role in the efficient operation of systems; for instance, investments in cities and nations that provide social infrastructure services are made in the fields of energy, transport, sanitation, waste management, and water. According to Patience and Nel (2021: 4), Mazele and Amoah (2021: 195), Dithebe, Aigbavboa, and Thwala (2019: 554), and Mazele and Amoah (2021: 195), change management led to difficulties in many municipalities due to their aging and degrading infrastructure and a lack of funding for its renewal and upkeep. The aforementioned writers also stated that municipalities' technical divisions face capacity and funding shortages, in addition to maintenance and management difficulties emanating from change management. The provision of infrastructure assets to the public, which causes a delay in development, is one of the issues faced by the public sector resulting from change management, according to Dithebe, Aigbavboa, and Thwala (2019: 554). Tshishonga (2021: 34) admits that change management leads to most municipalities having backlogs, which prevents them from fulfilling their constitutional duties. The author previously cited goes on to say that many municipalities struggle with local development, are unable to execute impoverished policies, and are unable to pay off municipal debt. As a result of their inability to account for their assets and the fact that these assets do not adhere to General Recognised Accounting Practice (GRAP) 17 (Patience and Nel 2021: 2), several municipalities are failing to obtain the unqualified audit opinion report from the Auditor General (AG).

4.5.9 Organisational culture and resistance to change

Employee resistance to change hinders the transition and negatively impacts change management (Damawan and Azizah 2020: 49). Additionally, it hinders the organisation's ability to continue existing and flourish. Risk factors for public sector innovation include a lack of an innovation culture, opposition to change, and a lack of sufficient resources (Nel and Masilela 2020: 38). Social researchers with experience in change management identify the phenomenon of resistance to changes as a challenge and characterise employee conduct when changes are implemented (Rudnev 2020: 333). Cultural change and resistance to change are related to the challenges that develop during the transition process (Willie 2023: 1). However, managing change resistance and organisational cultural transformation challenges should heavily rely on proactive leadership.

4.6 Benefits of change management

Change management in the context of municipalities is essential for fostering an agile and responsive organisation. Municipalities of the 21st century should be well equipped to navigate the complexities of a rapidly changing world and be able to deliver high-quality services to their citizens. Managing change is more meaningful when it is planned and managed in such a way that the organisation has very little control over the response to change (Tamunomeibi and Lawrence, 2020: 160). The essence of change management is that it has a positive impact on the performance of the organisation and ensures that there are effective operations (Onuche 2021: 267). To achieve a positive result as a manager, it is important to interact with the processes of planning and implementation. However, Mkhathswa-Ngwenya and Khumalo (2020: 269) have noted that municipalities still face with the challenge of poor planning.

The main benefits of change management in the context of municipalities are:

4.6.1 Effective implementation of policies and change

The policy must be well executed to accomplish its goals (Mubarok, Zauhar, and Suryadi 2020: 33). The management as well as the entire organisation benefit when change management is conducted correctly (Kumarasingle and Dilan 2021: 58). As the organisation becomes more familiar, problems that call for a change plan are easy to spot. The organisation is constantly adaptable and simple to change when it occurs, regardless of the demands of change management. It is possible to implement change management in an organisation without having an impact on regular operations. If those who implement change and policies are aware of what to do and understand it (Mubarok et al. 2020: 33), the advantages of management knowing how to evaluate change's consequences before they occur are beneficial to an organisation (Kumarasingle and Dilan 2021: 58).

4.6.2 Enhanced employee engagement and morale

Tamunomeibi and Lawrence (2020: 160) assert that change management is impossible without personnel who can easily combine their knowledge, change awareness, and responsibilities with change. Once fully understood, the approach to

change management improves employee and organisational performance. The company is adept at anticipating and overcoming problems and obstacles quickly and effectively.

4.6.3 Improved Service Delivery

Improved service delivery is one of the significant benefits of change management in municipalities. By analysing and restructuring the current service delivery mechanisms, as emphasised by Nel and Masilela (2020), municipalities can adapt to new challenges and opportunities. Change management allows municipalities to identify inefficiencies and bottlenecks in their service delivery processes, leading to more effective and streamlined operations. Through change management, municipalities can identify areas for improvement and develop novel service delivery techniques, as mentioned by Nel and Masilela (2020). Municipalities can design these new approaches to enhance performance and optimise the use of limited resources, thereby addressing the constraints they face in providing services to their constituents.

4.6.4 Financial Efficiency

Change management can help a municipality cut costs, lessen resource, time, and effort waste, and boost return on investment (Tamunomeibi and Lawrence 2020: 160). Management can create opportunities for the development and enhancement of procedures, leadership, and the team.

4.7 Common change management practices

According to Section 152 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), the local government is responsible for making sure that any changes implemented within the municipality are in line with the goals of the Constitution. The effectiveness of South African municipal governments is affected by the change management practices of their political and administrative components (Ncube and Monnakgotla, 2016: 91). The latest public management system adopted to manage and restructure municipal government in South Africa includes performance management in local government as one of the required management instruments (Ndevu and Muller, 2017: 14). Financial viability arguments, as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery, were cited in support of municipal amalgamation (Letlape and Dube 2020: 4;

Dube 2022: 6). However, the amalgamation of municipalities has exacerbated the problem of local government, increasing the risk of dysfunction. Tshishonga (2021: 32) alluded to the fact that local governments face severe difficulties in areas such as providing basic services in a way that is both efficient and sustainable, improving administrative capacity and organisational effectiveness, and putting into practice government policies and community-orientated programs that actually have an impact. The aforementioned author implies that the South African local government has adopted change management practices as an intervention to address the problems that have arisen. Tshishonga (2021: 32) stated that the CoGTA justified the local government turnaround strategy as a change management practice to revitalise the local government's vision and enhance the efficiency and competence of municipal administration.

According to strategic practices, the three stages of change management are planning for a change, managing a change, and reinforcing a change (Kho et al. 2020: 7; Mansaray 2019: 25).

4.7.1 Preparing for a Change

Preparing for change management is the planning stage of a project that includes human resources and all other resources (Hye et al. 2020: 125). At this stage, procedures and tasks with required resources are documented as the roadmap for the change. Kho et al. (2020: 7) add that this is an important strategic practice during the planning phase as it sets a clear vision and objective that need to be accomplished from the change management perspective. This is where the plan is established through meetings with the involvement of the management, staff, key stakeholders, and implementers of the change (Kho et al., 2020: 8; Awoke, 2020: 65). Obtaining leadership with management support and commitment is a dynamic factor for sustainable and successful change in an organisation. Ntusi (2019: 14) outlines that planning change is crucial since it creates concern for employees and uncertainty. Attah, Obera, and Isaac (2017: 39) and Awoke (2020: 65) emphasised the need for planned, proactive change that focuses on shaping the future of the organisation. The management identifies champions with enthusiasm for change and selects key staff members willing to participate actively in change management projects (Kho et al.,

2020: 8; Kumarasingle and Dilani, 2021: 60). Change implementation is much easier when people are closer to the change model (Awoke 2020: 65). The aforementioned author further stated that determining readiness for a change is another way of sensitising the organisation for a change, identifying gaps between the current state and the desired future state, and transmitting positive change expectations.

4.7.2 Managing change

Managerial responsibility is to be directly involved in a change management process (Hye et al. 2020: 125). Management plays a significant role in training and educating the staff on work protocol, as well as in promoting and developing abilities and knowledge related to change. Managing change, thus, requires managerial skills, which are defined by Manafa (2020: 46) as the required competency for efficient and effective staffing, planning, coordinating, controlling, organising, and making decisions. Managers form part of the internal system of the organisation as they are change agents associated with people (Awoke 2020: 68). To successfully manage change, rules, operating procedures, workflow processes, and protocols must be well communicated (Kho et al. 2020: 10). Managers are classified by their ability to bring about change, and they must exert enough pressure to get people excited about the prospect of change (Awoke, 2020: 68). Leadership needs to share information with employees to allow them to have input in making decisions for the organisation (Awoke 2020: 68; Ntusi 2019: 25).

The organisation that needs to implement and manage change effectively needs to consider the transition from the current state or system into the desired future state while ensuring that resources are maximised while costs are minimised (Awoke, 2020: 68). The author further highlights the crucial aspects to take into account for a successful implementation of change:

- **Change readiness assessment**

To effectively address the issue, it's crucial to accurately identify the problem and assess the urgency for change. This assessment should be based on a clear understanding of the organisation's current situation and the specific type of change needed to resolve the recognised problem (Kumarasingle and Dilan 2021: 53).

- **Communication and engagement**

Create a realistic, ideal vision of the organisation's future after implementing change, and make sure to effectively communicate this vision to those involved in the change. Formulate an effective mechanism to facilitate the smooth transition from the old state to the new one (Errida and Lofti 2021: 6). This change process requires consistent alignment to ensure that it remains in line with the organisation's goals and objectives.

- **Stakeholders analysis**

Change implementation should be systematic and in good order. The allocation of resources should be considered for an effective and efficient change transition (Errida and Lofti 2021: 6). People should be allocated responsibilities, and the planned change should be coordinated from top management to the lowest level in the organisation. Management should initiate change in an organisation with enthusiasm and be role models in the change process.

This is a strategic practice that encourages the continuous engagement of partners and stakeholders throughout the process of change (Kho, Gillespie, and Khan, 2020: 10). The interim report should outline the progress and be presented at meetings. To ensure the sustainability of the change, ongoing feedback and evaluation of the change should be maintained and be flexible.

4.8 Change management and administrative effectiveness

According to Maktabi and Hanifi (2013: 320), an organisation can effectively implement change management if it adheres to the planning, designing, managing, and all other activities associated with the change process. Manafa (2020: 48) states that management or leadership are interpersonal influences exerted in a situation and directed by using communication systems to achieve administrative effectiveness. In municipalities, political leadership and administrative leadership play an important role when it comes to change management and administrative effectiveness. Nkedishu (2022: 3) explains that effective administration commences with the creation of a mission statement, followed by the formulation of a strategy, which the organisation then interprets into an action plan. Surji (2015: 163) further clarifies that the initiative

of change management and administrative effectiveness in an organisation is to successfully implement methods and strategies for implementing change and assist employees to adapt and accept the change. The implementation of change management effectively and efficiently leads to sustainable administrative effectiveness. As alluded to by Asikhia et al. (2021: 68), change management is the process of continuously reinventing direction, capacity, and structure to assist in meeting the changing needs of internal and external clients as well as the environment.

Ereh, Ogechi, and Andelehe (2019: 320) define administrative effectiveness as the extent to which direction, control, and management exercises can yield acceptable results. Nkedishu (2022: 4) describes administrative effectiveness as technical skills and efforts aimed at achieving organisational goals. The smooth running of every organisation relies on the effectiveness of the administration with the required skills. Attah, Obera, and Isaac (2017: 37) and Manafa (2020: 46) are of the view that leaders are the people who shape the organisation and the country by influencing and giving directives on the beliefs, values, and styles of people outside and inside the organisation. The main factor in bringing about change in an organisation is leadership (Attah et al. 2017: 37; Ereh, Ogechi, and Andeleh 2019: 316). They corroborate this argument by adding that administrative effectiveness is the responsibility of leadership due to their potential influence to motivate staff and inspire employees to adapt to the objectives and goals of the organisation. Ngwane (2019: 1) posits that an organisation's success is mostly determined by the efficiency and effectiveness of its administrative management. It can, thus, be emphasised that effective and efficient administration of the organisation depends on the functioning of the leadership.

4.9 Factors affecting the adoption of change management in municipalities

Change management practices in the local government sphere have led to the instability and ineffectiveness of municipalities in South Africa. However, municipalities are required to monitor their internal and external environments when effecting change towards achieving their goals (Enwereji and Uwizeyimana 2019: 3). In the process of

effecting changes, there are factors that influence the adoption of change management and also directly affect the organisational objectives (Ntusi 2019: 14). Junnaid, Miralam, and Jeet (2020: 1); Chowdhury and Shil (2022: 30) assert that these factors are internal and external drivers of change management.

4.9.1 Internal factors influencing change management

Internal drivers include internal policies and regulations, technologies, performance, change in operations, an urgent call for modernisation, and changes in management decisions (Junnaid et al. 2020: 1; Chowdhury and Shil 2022: 30).

- **Policies and regulations**

Policy change can be a driving force for improvement within an organisation, as highlighted by Tamunomeibi and Lawrence (2020). When policies are well-designed and effectively implemented, they can lead to positive transformations that enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and overall performance. In government institutions, the administration's function is to implement policies to meet the community's needs, as Masuku and Jili (2019) explain. Political parties often set a country's developmental and political agenda, influencing the direction of change initiatives. However, for policies to be successful, they must align with the citizens' needs and aspirations to avoid resistance and conflicts. If policies are perceived as not serving the best interests of the people, they may face opposition, making change management more challenging. The implementation of policies is a critical aspect of change management, as described by Ajulor (2018). Policy implementation is the process of translating policy changes into practical actions and operational guidelines. It serves as the cornerstone of the entire policy process. Effective implementation ensures that policies are executed as intended and produce the desired outcomes. Conversely, poor implementation can lead to failures in achieving the desired change objectives. Change management efforts can be influenced positively or negatively by policies and regulations. Well-designed policies that consider the needs of stakeholders and are effectively implemented can foster a supportive environment for change initiatives. On the other hand, poorly conceived or inadequately executed policies may create barriers, resistance, and even conflicts during the change process.

- **Technology**

Technology is an internal force that originates from inside the organisation and encourages organisational change (Mansaray 2019: 19; Gibber 2022: 1). For an organisation to survive and maintain success these days, it is always advisable to prepare for now and the coming future (Gibber 2022: 1). Technology change improves facilities and equipment, as well as productivity and competitiveness in organisations (Mansaray 2019: 19). Hamdo (2021:3) points out that changes in technology are more complex as computers and industrial robots become rapid solutions to complex problems. Moreover, in management and production support, it improves quality while reducing cost. Tapia and Menger (2019: 13) express that most innovations need designs and development, which are constructed by technological solutions. As mentioned by Hey, Miraz, and Habib (2020: 122), there are several failures resulting from public organisations' lack of adoption of technology. Another reason for failing to implement technological change is the management of change within the organisation. Therefore, an organisation needs to implement change in technology in consultation with the relevant people.

- **Performance**

The organisation can enhance its performance by ensuring the management of change is planned and implemented continuously (Mansaray 2019: 19; Asikhia et al. 2021: 68). The aforementioned authors continue to state that this role is acknowledged and played by skilled leadership at the strategic level of change management to achieve their goals. The dynamic and complex increase in the business environment is striving for continuous change in an organisation (Errida and Lotfi 2021: 1; Hey, Miraz, and Habib 2020: 124), which indicates that every organisation requires a plan for implementing changes when there is a need. According to Cone and Unni (2020: 1712), it is important to ascertain priorities from the top management for appropriate strategies to be introduced for the improvement of the organisation's morale and performance. Municipalities face poor performance challenges, leading to frustration among residents (Enwereji and Uwizeyimana 2019: 4). Tamunomeibi and Lawrence (2020: 158) state that for an organisation to improve performance, innovation, and stakeholder value, it is vitally important to share knowledge and manage information

effectively. Asikhia et al. (2021: 75) argue that change impacts the performance of an organisation, especially when implemented successfully.

- **Changes in management decisions**

Change in management decisions is a planned change that optimises operations, and it is the key to successful operations in an organisation, claim Aronsson, Huusko, and Wansulin (2021: 8). Changes can have a variety of outcomes; they can have devastating effects on outcomes and performance in an organisation (Aronsson, Huusko, and Wansulin, 2021: 8). Zainol et al. (2021: 2) mentioned that leaders should be able to quickly make decisions, be up-to-date with technology, have outstanding communication skills, and be able to get followers to support organisational change. According to Chowdhury and Shil (2022: 31), large organisations use structural change to reduce operating unit size and counteract bureaucratic tendencies. Asikhia et al. (2021:74) noted that change remains essential if an organisation is committed to adapting to new developments, responding to competition, and meeting customer needs.

4.9.2 External factors that lead to change management

External factors also have an influence on change management. These factors include political and social conditions, increasing demand from globalisation, and competitions between companies in the industry that affect the goals and objectives of the organisation (Chowdhury and Shil, 2022: 30; Errida and Lofti, 2021: 6; Junnaid et al., 2020: 2).

- **Political change and social conditions**

The political connection is regarded as the factor that is necessary for influencing how public institutions should perform and affect employment decisions in the public sector (Masuku and Jili, 2019: 2). As affirmed by Mkhathshwa-Ngwenya and Khumalo (2020: 270), infighting between politicians and management in municipalities in South Africa affects service delivery. The interference by politicians in administration destroys the opportunity for efficient administration (Masuku and Jili, 2019: 2). Administrators should have clear objectives to develop efficient and effective administration functions,

which is why they separate the policymaking function from administration activities. The relationship between administration employees and politicians seems to be the norm, and that has caused challenges in South African municipalities (Masuku and Jili, 2019: 4; Mehlapo, 2018: 329). The above-mentioned researchers further state that South African municipalities are commonly vulnerable to government changes that result in the selection of new political leadership with their new strategies and ideologies. New leadership in politics leads to changes in the administrative structure of municipalities. Masuku and Jili (2019: 1) add that the political interface affects the effective and efficient administration of local government. As mentioned by Galli (2022: 3), the culture of the organisation is a collection of values and norms shared by people and groups; it controls the way each other interacts with stakeholders outside the organisation. Those values and norms are easily assessed by outsiders as a form of sustainable administrative effectiveness in every organisation.

- **Increasing demand for globalisation**

The effects of global warming and climate change are becoming more severe, and that challenges the governments of different countries (Mansaray 2019: 18). Organisations must address a variety of environmental issues, such as soil erosion, air and water pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, nuclear waste, energy conservation, ozone depletion, and more.

Rosas and Ballsteros (2021: 2) mentioned that globalisation has challenges that are considered to increase with complexity in the surrounding business environment. Globalisation is constantly cumulative in the world (Asikhia et al., 2021: 68); hence, change management is important in an organisation. Today's globalisation within the economy and constant environmental change in businesses present a challenge for managers (Ali-Khaled and Chung 2020: 7). As stated by Tamunomeibi and Lawrence (2020: 160), the process of change management is an organisational response to the environment that it operates in to sustain its relevance and expand in its service to society.

- **Competitions between organisations**

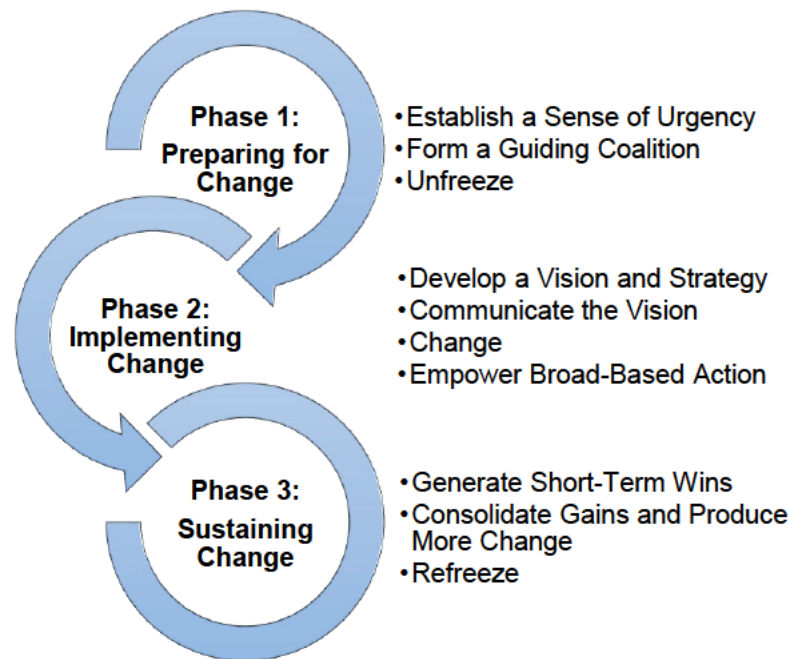
For the business to survive in the business environment, it needs to have a system that can detect changes early and be able to respond accordingly (Rosas and Ballsteros, 2021: 1). Management of the organisation is recognised through their staff achieving a competitive lead in the business environment (Junnaid, Miralam, and Jeet 2020: 5). Al-Khaled and Chung (2020: 3) contend that an effective leadership style determines a strong foundation for sustainable competitive advantage and growth within management. Galloway, Kuhn, and Collins-Williams (2019: 3) mentioned that once the organisation doubts future prediction due to a lack of knowledge and a competitive environment, then uncertainty increases. The business or organisation needs to understand its strategic value and its competitors and should have the appropriate tools to achieve its goal (Rosas and Ballesteros, 2021: 1). Tamunomeibi and Lawrence (2020: 160) outline that the organisation has a greater advantage over its competitors if the change is managed effectively. The aforementioned authors maintain that the survival of an organisation in a competitive market depends on an information market system that is reliable, effective, and flexible. According to Hamdo (2021: 3), the marketing competition between companies puts pressure on the business budget. However, competition is safeguarded in a situation where stability is supported and all resources are in place (Galloway, Kuhn, and Collins-Williams 2019: 3). For the organisation to be able to continue competing with other competitors, it is necessary to implement change management. As mentioned by Asikhia et al. (2021: 75), organisational performance that consists of competitive advantage, employee confidence, and growth in an organisation has a positive impact on change.

4.10 Proposed Integrated Change Management Model for Municipalities

Figure 4.1 presents a proposed integrated change management (ICM) model tailored for adoption by municipalities. Drawing from comprehensive literature on various change management models, the study advocates for a model adept at effectively managing change, navigating political transitions, and enhancing administrative sustainability amid environmental challenges. This model delineates three cohesive

phases and ten actionable steps, synthesising insights from seminal works (Kumarasinghe and Dilan, 2021; Cone and Unni, 2020: 1713).

Figure 3: Integrated Change Management model



Source: Self-generated

Phase 1: Preparing for Change

The first stage of preparing for change, according to the ICM paradigm, starts with creating an awareness of urgency (Hiatt, 2021; Prosci, 2023). Taking this key step is required to gain the necessary momentum and support from stakeholders. Drawing attention to the contemporary environmental issues and political shifts that demand adaptation is one way to educate stakeholders about the need for change (IPCC, 2021; World Bank, 2022). In order to proceed, stakeholders must be made aware of the urgent need for change. Key elements emphasise the importance of adaptability in response to political shifts and environmental challenges. Stakeholders are encouraged to embrace change by being made aware of the possible hazards involved in preserving the status quo. Highlighting the potential consequences of not adapting, such as operational inefficiencies, relevance loss, or missed opportunities,

further reinforces the significance of action (IPCC, 2021; World Economic Forum, 2023).

Establishing a steering coalition is the next crucial action. This entails putting together a broad group of powerful stakeholders from different municipal departments. These stakeholders are chosen based on their capacity for effective leadership and change management. The coalition is being given the ability and authority to advance the initiative for change, guaranteeing commitment and alignment throughout the municipality. The coalition's diversity guarantees the consideration of various viewpoints, enhancing the comprehensiveness and inclusivity of the transformation endeavor. It is crucial to empower this coalition with the authority and resources to lead the transformation process in the municipality, to take the lead and make critical decisions that will steer the transformation; this is a mandate that they require (Kotter, 2021; World Economic Forum, 2023)

Unfreezing the present state is the last step in this phase. This entails a detailed analysis of current administrative practices to pinpoint inefficiencies and areas in need of development (Smith, 2022). Knowing the situation as it is now, is crucial to figuring out what needs to change (Jones and Brown, 2021). By outlining the need for change, stakeholders can become more emotionally and psychologically ready for the impending changes (Johnson et al., 2020). Outlining the reasons why change is required can lessen resistance and establish a more accepting atmosphere for change (Adams, 2023).

Together, these stages create a structured approach to preparing the organisation for change, emphasising awareness, leadership alignment, and readiness among stakeholders. This sets the stage for the successful implementation of subsequent phases of the change process.

Phase 2: Implementing Change

The second phase, implementing change, begins with developing a vision and strategy (Smith, 2022). Creating a clear and appealing vision for long-term administrative effectiveness and political change is essential for any organisation seeking to thrive in today's complex and competitive environment (Johnson, 2021;

Brown, 2023). Creating a clear and appealing vision for long-term administrative effectiveness entails integrating purpose and values (Robinson, 2020), involving stakeholders (Davis, 2024), setting measurable goals (White, 2022), encouraging adaptability, and demonstrating leadership commitment (Thomas, 2023). The municipality realises the vision by delineating strategic objectives and feasible measures that ensure congruence with its priorities and goals. This vision acts as a guiding beacon, propelling the organisation towards long-term success and resilience in a changing environment. Municipal governments must adapt to political and environmental changes in order to successfully serve the citizens they serve and ensure long-term growth (United Nation, 2021). Municipalities can create comprehensive environmental policies and regulations that anticipate and address sustainability challenges such as climate change, resource scarcity, and pollution (Environmental Protection Agency, 2020). This includes establishing targets for decreasing carbon emissions, boosting renewable energy sources, and implementing green infrastructure projects (International Energy Agency, 2019).

Effective communication of the vision is essential. The vision must be conveyed regularly at all levels of the municipality to ensure that everyone knows the direction and reasons for the changes. Encouraging open avenues for feedback and communication helps to address problems while also building understanding and buy-in among all stakeholders. Addressing concerns and fostering open dialogue helps ensure that the vision is understood and embraced by stakeholders, gaining their buy-in and commitment. Working with various levels of government, community organisations, environmental groups, and corporations promotes collaboration and shared responsibility in addressing environmental issues. Always explain the vision to all levels of the municipality.

The actual implementation of planned changes should be systematic, with an emphasis on transparency and inclusivity. This guarantees that everyone agrees with the changes. It is critical to support stakeholders during this change by providing them with the required training, tools, and communication. Educating communities about environmental issues and promoting sustainable behaviours through campaigns, workshops, and educational programs can help increase community involvement and

support for environmental efforts. This helps to reduce resistance and increase confidence in the new practices.

Encouraging municipal employees to take charge of the reform process entails empowering broad-based action. Developing a sense of responsibility and commitment among employees is critical to the success of the change program. Furthermore, fostering an environment of innovation and adaptation motivates employees to adopt new techniques and actively participate in the change process.

Phase 3: Sustaining Change

The final phase, sustaining change, begins with generating short-term gains. Recognising and celebrating early wins and milestones helps to retain momentum and motivation among stakeholders (Cameron and Green, 2020). Demonstrating the clear advantages of improvements to stakeholders strengthens the value of the transition and fosters ongoing support (Jones and Karsten, 2021). Creating a long-term vision for sustainability and resilience helps municipalities navigate political and environmental risks (Brown and Green, 2023). Strategic planning ensures that short-term decisions are consistent with long-term objectives, promoting stability and advancement (Roberts, 2020). Building on earlier successes to incorporate more changes ensures that the change process is ongoing and changing (Burnes and Cooke, 2022). Consolidating gains and achieving further change entails building on early accomplishments to create further changes (Moran and Brightman, 2023). Addressing any lingering resistance is critical for improving strategies and ensuring successful implementation (Johnson, 2020).

Refreezing the new state is the final step in sustaining change. This entails integrating new practices and behaviours into the municipal culture to guarantee that the improvements are long-lasting. Establishing policies and processes that promote long-term sustainability and adaptability helps to preserve the benefits of the changes while also preparing the municipality for future challenges.

This prototype ICM model combines Kotter's structured approach with Lewin's focus on cultural transformation, addressing strategic planning and resistance management. It emphasises stakeholder buy-in as per Kotter's model and long-term cultural change in the Lewin model, ensuring both strategic and cultural dimensions are addressed.

Additionally, it is adaptable to varying municipal needs and circumstances, allowing for tailored implementation strategies. It is envisaged that this model will address resistance through continuous communication and stakeholder involvement. It seeks to ensure that changes become ingrained in municipal practices and are not just temporary fixes. Furthermore, this model endeavours to ascertain the proper allocation of resources for training, support, and infrastructure improvements.

By integrating Kotter's and Lewin's models, municipalities can effectively manage change, navigate political shifts, and enhance administrative sustainability amidst environmental challenges. This approach provides a structured yet flexible framework to guide municipalities through complex change initiatives.

4.11 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter discussed the literature review of the change management conceptualisation in detail, including types of organisational change. The dimensions of change management have been identified as stages of change, and each stage intimately interlinks with the successful method of organisational change management. The challenges facing municipalities and how to manage change have been discussed in this chapter. This chapter also addresses the adoption of change management practices and the effective implementation of change management by municipal administration. The internal and external factors affecting and influencing the adoption of change management in municipalities have been outlined. The ICM model, consisting of three steps, has been developed in this chapter.

The next chapter presents the research methodology for this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5. Introduction

This chapter delves deeper into the research concept and methodology, along with the specific methodologies used to collect data for a critical evaluation of Lewin's and Kotter's change management model, which was used to construct the model for municipalities in KwaZulu Natal. In this study, the researcher explains the scientific rationale behind using the case study and the embedded unit approach. The methods used to acquire and analyse data will also be discussed.

5.1 Research paradigm

Park, Konge, and Artino (2020: 690) propose that research paradigms are often recognized in scientific research, primarily because they serve as philosophical frameworks that influence scientific advancements (Park et al., 2020: 689; Kamal, 2019: 1388). According to Kamal (2019: 1388), a paradigm is described as a collection of beliefs about how specific problems exist and a consensus on how these issues should be studied. This suggests that each researcher possesses a worldview that informs how data is interpreted (Khatri, 2020: 1436). Therefore, it can be argued that a research paradigm provides guidance to the researcher throughout the entire investigative process, while considering the chosen research methodology.

The constructivist paradigm is explained by Kamal (2019:1389) in terms of the three pillars of research philosophy *viz* methodology, ontology, and epistemology. The aforementioned author continues to explain that ontology is primarily concerned with the nature of reality or existence, epistemology being with the types of knowledge that are sufficient and legitimate, and methodology is the process by which the research is conducted. It is clear from the research question and the literature review that the epistemological paradigm serves as the primary philosophical viewpoint in this study. This approach is consistent with other research that addresses issues related to belief, knowledge, justification, and the nature of truth. Based on an epistemological

perspective, knowledge is usually seen as justified true belief (Asmawi and Alam, 2024:4).

5.2 Research design

The research design aids in answering the research question or testing the hypothesis (Pawar 2020: 46). This is the general strategy you pick for logically and convincingly integrating the various study components. It serves as a guidebook for data collection, measurement, and analysis (Thakur 2021: 1; Sileyew 2019: 2). In the opinion of Jilcha (2019: 2), the goal of research design is to develop the optimal framework for the study. Furthermore, it is used to collect relevant data and is a technique to allow the smooth scaling of various research activities, providing maximum information (Pawar 2020: 46). As defined by Osaugwu (2020: 48), research design is the plan or programme that guides the researcher through the process of gathering, interpreting, and analysing information and data. The strategy that generates decisions must be considered in clarifying and sorting organisational or national challenges (Osaugwu 2020: 48). It provides an overview and highlights of the methods used in the study.

5.2.1 Qualitative Method

This study employed the qualitative method in the form of multiple case studies. This methodology tries to comprehend a difficult reality as well as the importance of an activity in a particular context (Queiros et al. 2017: 369; Anas and Ishaq 2022: 90). The qualitative research approach enables the researcher to utilise texts for discoveries, subject quality, and to provide a unique perspective from the researcher's point of view (Pawar 2020: 46). This study employed a qualitative method to explore and elucidate the dynamics of social relations, as it addresses aspects of reality that are not measurable (Queiros et al. 2017: 369; Pawar 2020: 46). As Pillai and Kaushal (2020:3) mention, qualitative research is dependent on the written word, emotions, sentiments, noises, and other non-numerical and unquantifiable components. It has been emphasised that information is considered qualitative if it cannot be analysed mathematically (Pillai and Kaushal 2020: 3; Anas and Ishaq 2022: 90). Furthermore, this study was founded on explanatory notions with the goal of explaining events based on participants' perspectives, realities, meanings, attitudes, and motivations that underpin their social behaviour (Wylle, 2019: 5).

5.2.2 Grounded theory

Grounded theory is the process of developing middle-range theoretical frameworks that explain the obtained facts, using systematic inductive principles for data collection and analysis (Charmaz and Thornberg 2020: 1; Belgrave and Seide 2019: 1). The grounded theory methodology is widely applied and has a wide range of application options, as noted by Belgrave and Seide (2019:1). In grounded theory, the researcher's analytical emphasis develops as the investigation proceeds rather than being decided beforehand (Charmaz and Thornberg 2020: 1). The grounded theory approach is employed in numerous domains and offers a wide range of application options, as noted by Belgrave and Seide (2019: 1). In order to properly explain experimental data from the community setting where the inefficiencies exist, grounded theory principles can be applied (Abdellah 2016: 8). Following adjustment, the methodology ought to be more adaptable and widely used to accept the outside world as truth (Pawar 2020: 49). The approach of grounded theory has been employed to offer a clear, progressive set of guidelines for the collection and analysis of study data. This chapter delves deeper into the research concept and methodology, as well as the specific methodologies utilised to collect data for a critical evaluation of the Lewin's and Kotter's change management model used in constructing the model for municipalities in KwaZulu Natal. The researcher addressed the scientific reason for employing the case study with embedded units' approach in this study. The methods used to acquire and analyse data will also be discussed.

5.2.3 Case study method

As defined by Devi (2020: 3) and Rashid et al. (2020: 5), a case study is an in-depth analysis of a social unit, such as an individual, a family, an organisation, a community, or a group of people. Frequently, it focuses on a person's psychological issues and limitations. Rashid et al. (2020: 5) and Pawar (2020: 48) hint that a case study is an extensive investigation that often incorporates empirical data collected over time from a well-defined example to provide an explanation of the background and mechanisms underlying the phenomenon. Researchers use case studies to gain a comprehensive understanding of a complex problem in a real-world context (Pawar 2020: 48). The researcher can analyse complicated events in their surroundings using a qualitative

case study approach (Rashid et al. 2019: 2). As stated by Yin (2018: 9), the case study method may be used in the following situations: a) the researcher is unable to control how the study's participants behave; b) the study aims to address how-and-why questions; c) the research's limitations are not as great between the context and the phenomenon; or d) the researcher is willing to record background information deemed pertinent to the phenomenon under investigation. The present investigation employed a case study methodology to ascertain the change management model that municipalities employ to maintain administrative effectiveness, as the researcher did not modify the participants' behaviours (Yin, 2009: 9). This study will also address how and why the change management model is required for long-term, efficient administration. Given the lack of previous research, the case study approach will help provide context and data for investigating the factors influencing the adoption of change management strategies aimed at achieving long-term administrative effectiveness.

5.2.4 Type of the case study

Descriptive case studies were employed in this research since the primary goal of the study is to present reliable and accurate data from the pertinent study questions. Devi (2020: 4) asserts that the gathered information consists of psychological descriptions of the processes and occurrences within the given context. As alluded to by Pillai and Kaushal (2020: 3), descriptive research primarily focusses on describing the current condition of affairs and lacks control over variables. The first step in such a description is close observation (Jackson 2014: 22). It is a way for people to express their thoughts, feelings, or performances. This study ascertained the attitudes and opinions of the workforce regarding change management procedures and the performance that follows from them. As defined by Pather (2020: 48), a descriptive case study is a kind of case study that can be used to explain an intervention or occurrence along with the actual setting in which it occurred. As an intervention, an integrated change management model will be created and implemented by a chosen number of towns to maintain administrative efficacy.

5.3 Population of the study

In accordance with Wellman, Kruger, and Mitchel (2007: 126), the target population is the group to which the researcher hopes to generalise the findings. This study's population consisted of 54 municipalities located in the province of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa (South African Government's Provincial and Local Government Directory for KwaZulu Natal, 2021). This included ten district municipalities, forty-three local municipalities, and one metro municipality.

5.4 Sampling strategy and sample size

This investigation used the purposive sampling approach. Purposive sampling is considered a non-random technique by Alkassim and Tran (2016: 2) because it requires no underlying theories from the participants and does not impose a participant number. The sample size consisted of three KwaZulu Natal municipalities: one had obtained clean or unqualified audit reports for the previous two years, one had received qualified audit reports, and one had received a disclaimer. This enabled the researcher to contrast change management strategies that worked and those that didn't in a few chosen towns. For their administration to be sustainable and efficient, the chosen towns had put change management into practice. Individuals, however, were the analytical unit. Three municipal managers, three corporate services managers, three performance management support managers, and three operational staff members from the aforementioned sections made up the sample size for this study. Since these individuals held significant roles in the municipality, it was anticipated that they had an understanding of strategic change management approaches. The participants were chosen based on their ability to supply pertinent information due to their positions of management within the chosen municipalities and their expertise. These local authorities ascertained the manner in which their various municipalities had implemented change management strategies. Additionally, individuals in positions that consistently appeared on the municipality's organogram and aligned with the study's objectives were chosen as participants using the purposive sampling approach. These individuals worked in the three selected municipalities in KwaZulu Natal *viz*, UMkhanyakude District Municipality, UPhongolo Local Municipality and UMfolozi Local Municipality where they were frequently

impacted by the change management phenomenon. Earlier researchers who conducted similar studies employed small sample sizes. Therefore, even if we included all KwaZulu Natal municipalities in this study, we would have reached the saturation point after 12 participants.

5.5 Data collection and analysis

Raw facts or unprocessed information can be referred to as data (Osuagwu 2020: 49). It may take the form of a word, number, picture, measurement, or observation of a group of variables. Facts gathered by observation, experience, or experimentation are commonly referred to as data (Osuagwu 2020: 49). Through direct communication and one-on-one interviews with pertinent participants, this study gathered its primary data. The interaction with the participants in the municipal offices was requested through a proper process. The interviewer requested permission to speak with the employees by sending a formal letter outlining the study's goals to municipal officials. The participant signed a formal informed consent form. The interview process was recorded and documented. Interviews were conducted in October and December of 2023. The interviews lasted between forty and sixty minutes, which was sufficient time to cover all the questions. The researcher ensured the participant's privacy and confidentiality. The participants were made aware that the combined findings would not identify them.

Thematic data analysis was employed in this investigation. According to Clie (2016: 34), analysis is "an approach for the extraction of meanings and concepts from data that includes pinpointing, examining, and recording patterns". All of the information or data that was gathered from different sources was examined in order to analyse the data. A constructivist approach to research involves developing themes or interpretations based on the subjective views and experiences reflected in the data collected from participants or sources (Kampira, 2021). In this study, the researcher employed a constructivist methodology to gather qualitative data through participant interviews. Through the use of these techniques, participants were able to voice their subjective opinions on their own terms and in their own settings.

5.6 Pretesting

Hilton (2017: 21) explains that pretesting involves ensuring that questions function as intended and are understandable to those who are likely to respond to them. Pretesting was carried out to ensure that there were no errors that could taint the results of the study. Three individuals who did not make up the study's sample size took part in the pretest. The interview schedule was pretested to ascertain its validity, practicality, dependability, and sensitivity before being used in the real data collection process. This tool looked over and tested the grammar, spelling, and content of the interview schedule. Pretesting was also conducted to ensure that none of the questions were unclear to the participants or caused them discomfort (Pan 2021).

5.7 Rigour in qualitative research

As mentioned by Maher, Hadfield, Hutchings, and Eyto (2018: 3), rigour must be shown in the grounded theory qualitative investigation. During the sample and data collection stages, specific best practice procedures are used to increase the rigour and reliability of qualitative research (Johnson et al. 2020: 141). These methods include member checking, establishing data saturation, integrating ethics into research design, giving a clear explanation for sampling design choices, keeping a long-term relationship with and ongoing observation of study participants, and triangulating data sources. This study demonstrated rigour by employing interviews to corroborate findings and ensure that the conclusions were solid and unaffected by a single approach or point of view. In order to enhance and validate theoretical insights, new data was routinely compared with developing categories and concepts using constant comparison methodologies. Thorough data collection was employed to achieve theoretical saturation with twelve participants, ensuring that the resulting theory captured the nuances and complexities of the phenomenon under investigation.

In conclusion, the study upholds high standards of rigour, reliability, and validity by following these strict procedures, guaranteeing the robustness and credibility of the grounded theory produced.

5.8 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability serve as the benchmarks for judging the quality of any research (Osuagwu 2020: 50; Middleton 2023: 1). In the view of Abuhamda et al. (2020: 81), reliability and validity are still the terms that are reliable and acceptable for achieving rigour in qualitative research. The degree to which measurements may be repeated by several individuals using purportedly distinct devices that measure the same object at various times and under various circumstances is known as reliability (Arslan, 2022). The study's participants were asked the same interview questions in order to guarantee the reliability of the data gathered. Furthermore, information was gathered for structured interviews from a variety of sources, including examinations of local government publications, guidelines, and policies. Based on Middleton (2023: 1), validity is concerned with a measure's precision, whereas reliability is concerned with its consistency. As noted by Mariel et al. (2021: 114), validity is about bias, but reliability is about variance.

- **Validity**

The extent to which a test measures what it is intended to measure is known as validity. Validity can be defined as the degree to which a research instrument or scale measures what it is supposed to measure, generally speaking (Osuagwu 2020: 50; Abuhamda et al. 2021: 81; Middleton 2023: 2). In qualitative research, validity refers to the degree to which the data may be justified when contested because it is believable, reliable, and trustworthy. Comprehensive field notes, recording equipment, and digital file transcription can all improve it (Osuagwu 2020: 50). As highlighted by Natow (2020: 162), several researchers ensure the validity of this study by employing a variety of techniques or data sources, such as a variety of approaches. Various data analysis strategies are designed to guarantee that there are no biased or inaccurate data sources or methods (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). This study used construct validity to ensure that the established theories and concepts guided the research design.

Additionally, the researcher assesses a measurement's validity using four types of evidence, including face validity, content validity, criterion validity, and concurrent

validity, to manage factors that might affect the study's results. These types include face validity, content validity, criterion validity, and concurrent validity.

- **Faced validity**

Face validity typically depends on how well the notion is communicated and how the concept is altered. Face validity is used to define the item assessment but is not used in the review of the numerical analysis. After evaluating the item, the researcher concludes that, on the surface, the exam is a legitimate way to gauge the hypothesis under investigation (Mariel et al. 2021: 111).

- **Content validity**

In the opinion of Middleton (2023: 4), content validity is a sort of validity that is qualitative in nature. It involves defining the concept's domain and assessing if the measures accurately represent it. A qualitative method of confirming if indicators capture the meaning of the idea as defined by the researcher is content validity. As stated by Mariel et al. (2021: 111), content validity is concerned with how well the selected valuation method works in practice in all of its facets. It makes sense and is helpful in determining the actual value.

- **Criterion validity**

The degree to which an instrument's output aligns with other legitimate measurements of the same notion (Middleton 2023: 4)

- **Concurrent validity**

Concurrent validity is the degree to which the results of one test agree with those of additional tests of the same or related constructs (Nickerson 2023: 1). Concurrent validity also describes the extent to which test findings reliably reflect external criteria or correspond to them. In order to assure the validity of this study, a variety of techniques were employed, including the use of recording devices, digital file transcription tools, and numerous researchers and data sources. To ensure face validity, the researcher will also translate the concepts and modify the notions based on the participant responses.

- **Reliability**

The consistency, repetition, and dependability of the measurement of some phenomena is what constitutes reliability in a qualitative research instrument (Rashid 2019: 8; Middleton 2023: 2). The degree to which data can be repeated when measured by a different individual under different circumstances, on separate dates, and with purportedly distinct equipment that measures the same item is known as reliability (Abahamda et al. 2021: 80; Middleton 2023: 3). There are three different kinds of reliability: inter-rater reliability, test-retest reliability, and parallel forms of reliability.

- **Test-retest reliability**

The process involves giving the test to a set of participants and then giving the same test again at a later time in order to ensure the temporal stability of the test from one measurement session to the next (Abahamda et al. 2021: 80; Middleton 2023: 3; Mariel et al. 2021: 115). Test-retest reliability is operationally defined as the correlation between scores on the same test administered at different times (Abahamda et al., 2021: 80).

- **Inter-rater reliability**

Inter-rater reliability refers to the process of using raters or judges to assess the validity of their decisions or the overall internal consistency of those decisions (Middleton 2023: 3). Each participant in this study received identical interview questions to ensure the validity of the data gathered. The measuring tool employed to guarantee the study's quality and reliability was a test-retest procedure. To assess the dependability of their answers, the same individuals were contacted again two weeks later and asked the identical interview questions. This has validated the accuracy of the respondents' data analysis. Data from structured interviews was also gathered from a variety of sources, including the examination of local government policies, documents, and regulations.

- **Parallel forms of reliability**

The consistency of many versions or forms of a test meant to measure the same construct is evaluated using parallel-form reliability. In this study, the same set of people were given two identical copies of the same test, and the degree of agreement between the forms was ascertained by comparing the results (Hassan 2023: 2).

5.9 Ethical considerations

Making sure that participants are adequately informed about their participation and role requires careful consideration of ethical issues (Rashid 2019: 7). Throughout this study, ethical considerations have been upheld. The DUT's Faculty Research Ethics Committee approved the study to ensure ethical considerations. Each chosen municipality's managers authorised the gatekeepers' letters to conduct research. It should be mentioned that none of the 12 employees who participated in the interview experienced any bodily or psychological injury. The interviewer/researcher ensured no discussion of personal concerns that could compromise the participant's morality, values, or beliefs. The questionnaire was designed to ensure that all of the data on it would remain private and anonymous, with no mention of names or other identifying information.

5.10 Summary of the chapter

This chapter described the research plan and method used to conduct this study. The chapter scrutinised the acquisition and analysis of data using a case study technique. The reasons for using this strategy in the current study were presented. The target population and sample procedure were established, and the components of the analysis were discussed. The research style used sought to improve reliability and validity by employing a case study approach while also addressing the possibility of bias. This section defines and explains the terms mentioned above. The sensitive nature of this research prompted the researcher to address ethical considerations. The following chapter will describe the findings and analysis that resulted from the data obtained in accordance with the research methodology.

CHAPTER SIX

DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 focused on the research method and design for this study, while Chapter 6 presents the analysis of the gathered data. The primary outcome of this research consists of in-depth interviews conducted with specific managers from each of the selected municipalities. The data analysis also included notes from direct observation, relevant documents, and the websites of the municipalities, in addition to the in-depth interviews. This exercise was carried out to address bias and guarantee the credibility and trustworthiness of the results. The cross-case synthesis was applied, tables were utilised to display the data, and this was followed by a discussion of the results.

The findings inform the examination of the following themes, objectives, and research questions:

Theme 1: Change management practices within the sphere of local government.

Objective 1: To identify the change management model currently adopted by the selected municipalities in KwaZulu Natal.

Research question: What are the change management practices that are currently adopted by the selected municipalities in KwaZulu Natal?

Theme 2: Change management dimensions for administrative effectiveness

Objective 2: To examine change management dimensions that need to be considered in order to ensure sustainable administrative effectiveness in the selected municipalities in KZN,

Research question: What are the change management dimensions that need to be considered in order to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of administration in the selected municipalities in KwaZulu Natal?

Theme 3: Internal and external factors affecting change management practices in municipalities.

Objective 3: To explore factors that affect change management practices that are aimed at sustainable administrative effectiveness in the selected municipalities in KZN,

Research question: What are the factors that affect the adoption of change management aimed at sustainable administrative effectiveness in the selected municipalities in KwaZulu Natal?

Theme 4: A change management model for administrative effectiveness in municipalities.

Objective 4: To develop a prototype change management model that can be used by the selected municipalities in KZN to enable sustainable administrative effectiveness.

Research question: Which change management model can the selected municipalities in KZN use to enable sustainable administrative effectiveness?

6.2 General description of the selected municipalities

The three selected municipalities comprise two local municipalities and one district municipality, viz., UPhongolo Local Municipality, UMfolozi Local Municipality, and UMkhanyakude District Municipality.

6.2.1 General overview of UPhongolo local municipality

UPhongolo Local Municipality is a KwaZulu-Natal Category B municipality situated in the northern region of the Zululand District. It is close to both Mpumalanga Province's borders and Swaziland's. In the district, there are five municipalities. The N2 provides the municipality's primary access from Durban in the south and Gauteng in the north-west. Beyond its borders, the municipality offers a variety of regional access points to popular tourist destinations (uPhongolo Local Municipality, 2024).

6.2.2 General overview of UMfolozi local municipality

The N2 national route connects the UMfolozi local municipality to major communities like Richards Bay and Durban. This route is important to the municipality because it is the main thoroughfare for commerce in the region. There are 122,889 people living in the municipality. The Empangeni Complex and Richards Bay are both in close proximity to the municipality. The UMfolozi River borders it to the north, the Indian Ocean to the east, the Mhlana Tribal Authority to the west, and the UMhlatuze Municipality to the south (UMfolozi Local Municipality, 2024).

6.2.3 General overview of UMkhanyakude District municipality

UMkhanyakude District Municipality is located in the far northern area of KwaZulu Natal Province in South Africa, with a population of 625 846. The district is the second largest district in KwaZulu-Natal in terms of size, after its neighbouring district, Zululand District Municipality. The ISimangaliso Wetland Park, a World Heritage Site that spans more than 200 kilometres of coastline, is located in the UMkhanyakude District. The district stretches from Kosi Bay in the north to Mtubatuba (St. Lucia) in the south, and from there to the Lubombo Mountains in the west. Through the N2 highway, the district is strategically connected to the neighbouring market of Swaziland as well as the provincial markets of KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga (UMkhanyakude District Municipality, 2024).

6.2.4 Summary of the Participants

In-depth interviews were conducted with the performance management systems manager, who is responsible for the management and monitoring of the performance of the uMkhanyakude District Municipality. He formed part of this study because of his knowledge, experience, and understanding of change management within the municipality. Overall, four members of the management team from each of the three municipalities that comprised the selected municipality were granted permission to participate in this study. These include senior managers, local economic development and planning managers, finance managers, and performance management system managers. Each interview was conducted with the management team, which is part of the day-to-day running of the municipality, and Table 3 shows the participant information and interview information codes.

Table 3: Participants information and interview information codes

Municipality	Participant	Position	Mode
UMkhanyakude District Municipality (UDM)	Participant 1 (P1)	Senior Manager: PMS and IDP	Face to face
	Participant 2 (P2)	Manager: Financial Services	Face to face
	Participant 3 (P3)	Manager: Technical Services	Face to face
	Participant 4 (P4)	Manager: Local and Economic Development	Face to face
UPhongolo Local Municipality (PLM)	Participant 5 (P5)	Manager: Integrated Development Plan	Face to face
	Participant 6 (P6)	Manager: Financial Management Services	Face to face
	Participant 7 (P7)	Manager: Risk and PMS	Face to face
	Participant 8 (P8)	Administration: Parks and Garden	Face to face
UMfolozi Local Municipality (MLM)	Participant 9 (P9)	Manager: Budget Reporting and Financial Systems	Face to face
	Participant 10 (P10)	Deputy Senior Manager: IDP and Public Participation	Face to face
	Participant 11 (P11)	Manager: Local Economic Development (LED)	Face to face
	Participant 12 (P12)	Chief Accountant: Budget and Reporting	Face to face

6.2.5 Demographic characteristics of participants

Table 4 displays the participants' demographic information. The participants were all South Africans with one to fifteen years of experience working for municipalities. Of those participants, 17% are senior managers, 75% are in managerial roles, and 8% are in operational positions. Table 4 displays the participants' job experience duration, which ranges from 0–5 years (8%), 5–10 years (58%), 10-15 years (25%), and 15–plus years (8%). In addition, Table 4's demographic data for the participants reveals their qualifications, all of which are relevant to their employment. Participants who are in possession of a diploma (9%), an undergraduate degree (33%), a master's degree (25%), and honours or a B.Tech (33%). The information shows that the participants' educational backgrounds are highly diverse, with a significant percentage holding undergraduate degrees, including those with honours or B.Tech degrees. Furthermore, a small but significant percentage possess master's degrees. This diversity highlights the participants' appropriateness for active participation in the study, demonstrating a depth of experience and understanding that is in line with the objectives of the research. 58% of the study participants were between the ages of 30

and 39. This figure is consistent with research indicating that the median age of the labour force is 39 years old worldwide (Dyvik, 2024). Twelve participants from the three selected municipalities, of whom 42% were women and 58% were men, were interviewed. This gender ratio is consistent with South African statistics. According to Cowling (2023), men are the majority of people by gender who are employed and who occupy management positions in South Africa.

Table 4: Demographic information of the participants

Demographics	UDM	PLM	MLM	Participants (n, %)
Years of experience				
5-10years	1(25%)	2(50%)	2(50%)	5 (42%)
10-15years	1(25%)	2(50%)	2(50%)	5 (42%)
15 or more years	2(50%)			2(16%)
Duration of experience				
0-1 year			1 (25%)	1(8%)
1-5 years				0%
5-10years	2(50%)	3 (75%)	2(50%)	7(58%)
10-15years	1(25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	3(25%)
15 or more years	1(25%)			1(9%)
Position				
Manager	3(75%)	3(75)	3(75%)	9(75%)
Operational level		1(25%)		1(8%)
Senior Manager	1(25%)		1(25%)	2(17%)
Age				
30-39 years	2(50%)	2(50%)	3 (75%)	7(58%)
40-49 years		2(50%)	1 (25%)	3(25%)
50-59 years	1(25%)			1(8%)
60 years and over	1(25%)			1(9%)
Qualification				
Diploma	1(25%)			1(9%)
Undergraduate degree	1(25%)	2(50%)	1(25%)	4(33%)
Honours/B.Tech		2(50%)	2(50%)	4(33%)
Masters	2(50%)		1(25%)	3(25%)
Gender				
Male	2 (50%)	3 (75%)	2 (50%)	7 (58%)
Female	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)	5 (42%)

6.3 Data analysis per research themes and research objectives

The following section discusses the results in accordance with the developed themes and research objectives.

6.3.1 Theme 1: Change management practices within the sphere of local government.

This theme emerged while addressing this study’s first objective, which sought to identify change management practices currently adopted by the selected municipalities in KwaZulu Natal. Questions seven and eight of the interview schedule, consisting of sixteen test items, were used to address this objective.

- **Change of leadership or management**

Participants were asked if there had been a change in leadership or management in their respective municipalities over the past six years. All the participants were in consensus that a change of leadership or management has taken place in the past six years in their respective municipalities. This aligns with the Municipal Structures Acts (1998), which stipulate that the political wing in the municipality is elected for five years. The municipal councils are always elected every five years (Makwetu, 2021: 3; Municipal Structures Acts, 1998).

Table 5: Change of leadership or management

Question	Has there been a change of leadership or management in your municipality in the past 6 years?		
UDM	PLM	MLM	Total Responses
Yes	Yes	Yes	12

- **Impact on the organisational culture**

Participants were required to respond to how the organisational culture has been affected by the change in leadership in their respective municipalities. P1 responded by stating that *“in corporate governance there has been a huge negative impact, and also in management positions there has been a lot of political interference”*. P. 6 alluded to the fact that the negative impact of change on the organisational culture was caused by a forced change in leadership. Furthermore, a change in leadership was perceived by P3 to be impacting the culture of continuity within the municipalities. *“Change in leadership gives us challenges in terms of continuity because there are*

decisions or resolutions that are taken by the current management, and then we can't continue with whatever decision comes when another management comes or another manager comes, such as a municipal manager or general manager" (P3). Generally, participants were of the view that consistency in operations was affected as new leadership and management come with different ideas and visions, and the personnel have to adapt to that and change their culture.

This finding corroborates the findings by Zainol et al. (2021:3) and Aljohan (2016:320), who stated that changes in management or leadership affect organisational philosophies and disrupt continuous improvements. The decisions or resolutions taken by the previous management and political leadership might change. Moreover, the appointment of the new management is reported to have an effect on the organisational culture and the behaviour of the employees (Zainol et al., 2021: 3)

- **The process of change management**

The participants were questioned about how the management carried out the change process. P1 and P3 concurred that UDM's most recent leadership transition did not occur in a manner typical of other municipalities during the local elections held in November 2021. P3 further mentioned that *"as a result, the municipality had two mayors representing opposing political parties at the same time"*. The intervention of the national and provincial governments brought about a resolution. This research confirms that political intervention occasionally impedes the municipality's change management process. This study discovered that in some cases, more than one political party would field candidates for the mayoral seat. This interferes with the change management process. However, P4 stated that *"the municipal manager conducted employee consultations and introduced the new political leadership to the workforce"*. P5, P6, and P12 further pointed out that management and leadership had reviewed and presented the municipality with its mission, vision, and ambitions. This demonstrates that municipalities go through a change management process when electing new political leaders, which involves reviewing the municipality's strategic goals.

The findings highlight the complexities of change management in municipalities, especially during periods of political change. While political interference might be difficult, preventative measures such as employee discussions and strategy alignment efforts can help negotiate such transitions more successfully. This is similar to the findings of Junnaid, Miralam, and Jeet (2020: 2), who found that organisational change always strikes a compromise between planned strategies and organisational goals. Donald and Chukwamaobi (2022: 102) alluded that leaders need to be able to set moral standards that will allow them to reorganise their organisation and gain over staff members' trust.

- **Conducting a needs assessment of the change management**

The researcher enquired as to whether the municipality in which the participants were stationed had conducted a needs assessment for effective change management. P1, P4, P5, and P6 stated that their respective municipalities had not carried out a needs assessment when change took place. P7 stated that *“in an environment where we talk about change leadership where it changes counsellors that one, we don't do an assessment because it's something that we know that counsellors from time-to-time change; if there are problems, then they decide within their political arena to change someone; they will change a person”*. P3 agrees with the aforementioned authors that the need assessment was only conducted on the senior management positions in their respective municipalities. *“Yes, I remember some point in time they were consultants that were appointed by the municipality that had to deal with change management, although I cannot really specifically remember when, but the municipality will normally appoint the consultant that would make assessments or else they will just create a team within the institution that will address these issues”*.

The results suggest a variety of approaches to needs assessment for managing change in municipalities. While changes in political leadership may not undergo evaluations, senior management roles, whether through consultants or internal teams, acknowledge the need for such assessments. This demonstrates the complexity and diversity of methods to change management within municipal governance structures. The existing status of an organisation should be understood in order to properly assess the need for change management (Kumarasingle and Dilan, 2021: 53).

- **Compatibility of change management with vision and philosophy**

All of the participants agreed that the change was in line with the municipality's philosophy and that the municipalities have a clear vision. P8 and P9 emphasised that at the strategic session conducted by the political leadership with senior management and other stakeholders, the municipality's vision and philosophy were reviewed and accepted. P12 from MLM concurred with other participants by saying, "*Yes, it was clear and compatible because, with new political leadership, they were able to review the previous leaders municipal mission and vision, which led to a review of the municipal objectives, so these change practices are in line with the newly adopted municipal vision and mission*".

The findings show that municipalities hold strategic sessions in which management and leadership collaborate to examine and build a shared vision or philosophy for the municipality. These sessions are usually used to align goals, promote consensus, and ensure that decisions and adjustments are consistent with the municipality's overall ideals and direction. As mentioned by Ntusi (2019: 8), strategic transformation is concerned with long-term problems such as the organisation's mission, philosophy, and strategic vision. The plan needs to be developed with objectives that will give direction to the process of achieving the anticipated outcome (Donald and Chukwumaobi 2022: 101). Fusch et al. (2020: 169) mentioned that managing change in an organisation requires consistency in approach and consistency in purpose, and this can only be achieved with a clear vision.

- **Establishment of a strategic plan with stakeholders**

The question of whether a strategy plan for change management had been prepared in conjunction with all other stakeholders and how those stakeholders were involved was posed to the participants. P1, P2, and P7 concurred that a strategic plan had been evaluated and developed, involving every relevant stakeholder, including community members and other provincial departments. P8 also agreed by saying "*normally they conduct these strategic plans looking at the situation at that point in time and considering the resources they have, and we call the stakeholders to come in and we engage with them and to find out what are their plans regarding the municipalities so*

that we do, municipalities do involve other stakeholders. Municipalities service the community, and then in order for municipality to serve this, we need different stakeholders because we cannot have these services in one place. Some of the services are required in the communities; we get them from other departments or other sectors. So, when you are looking at the needs of the community and you are strategising on how to render service delivery, All the sectors that may be needed, even if the need is not the requirement at that point in time, if you know that this is the kind of need that can be required, you call them in, e.g., people like Eskom and Telkom".

The discussion emphasises the need to integrate a diverse range of stakeholders in municipal strategic planning. Municipalities ensure that their strategic plans are comprehensive and responsive to the needs of the communities they serve by incorporating representatives from the community and various levels of government. Public participation in these procedures increases the relationship between the community and the government, promoting transparency, accountability, and effective decision-making in municipal governance. As noted by Taamneh et al. (2020: 403), public involvement makes people feel important and deserving of respect when they are deciding on local government initiatives and policy formulation.

- **Management support and commitment to sustainable change**

P9 attested to management's commitment and support for change management. As he puts it, "*senior management was willing to work with the new leadership and accepted it*". Participants agree that management supported change by signing a performance agreement plan. P1 from UDM also concurred with the rest of the participants when he said that "*in terms of performance management systems, management has to sign performance agreements and performance plans that are linked to the strategic agenda of the municipality, so that process has been engaged, and we are now implementing the strategic agenda of the municipality through the performance management agreement that has been signed*".

This study concluded that participants' collective agreement emphasises the significance of managerial support and the implementation of performance

management systems as essential drivers of successful change management within the municipality. According to Madhani (2020: 47), management must internally provide high-quality service. Implementing quality services necessitates practices and policies aimed at improving organizational performance. Furthermore, the performance strategy encompasses all procedures and actions essential to the targeted operational strategy, including communication, the development of the performance appraisal system, and the establishment of the organisational framework.

- **Key staff or champions selected during change management**

P1, P2, and P10 confirmed that the municipality selects various committees to ensure the effective execution of the strategic objective. They elaborated that the Municipal Audit Action Plan (MAAP) steering committee handles concerns brought forth by the Auditor General and that Management Committee (MANCO) portfolios serve as supporters, acting as a link between the municipality's budget and the IDP. P1 further explained that *“there is also district development model (DDM). which has different clusters such as technical hub, finance etcetera. DDM is used as the link between different local municipality within the district as well as the government provincial department, all together meeting with one goal to achieve within their district area”*. P11 and P12 from MLM added by saying *the risk committee identify risks and mitigate those risks. P3 UDM indicated that “key staff or champion are selected during the change management of the political leadership which is accounting officer and Minister (MEC) from Cooperate Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) are chosen as key personnel or champions during the political leadership's change management process”*. Selected municipalities acknowledged that key personnel and champions were chosen through various committees throughout change management.

These findings emphasise the necessity of organised committees and organisational processes in supporting effective municipal governance, administration and leadership transition concerns. Managers are part of the organisation's internal structure because they are change agents who interact with people (Awoke 2020: 68).

- **Adequate human resources deployed to support change process**

Another question posed to the participants concerned how the management made sure that sufficient personnel were deployed effectively to support the entire process of change. Participants from P2, P3, P5, P9, and P10 municipalities hinted that their managers are skilled and knowledgeable about the dynamics of change management, particularly political management. P2 emphasised that *“when it comes to being tasked with interacting with the relevant politicians or management, they are able to discern the areas in which change has the greatest impact on the organisation”*. P3 also mentioned that *“the municipality has got managers of different unit and they are very qualified and very well experienced, I think they’ve been with the institution for quite some time, most of them, and they understand this dynamics and when the change is affecting perhaps the political leadership only those employees that deal with political changes and political management will be affected in terms of being allocated task maybe to engage with the responsible officials whether political or management in dealing with situation”*.

This demonstrates that effective change management necessitates managers who have a thorough awareness of the organisational environment, are skilled at negotiating politics, and can effectively convey the effects of change to stakeholders. Such managers play a critical role in efficiently allocating staff to support the whole change process. According to Tamunomeibi and Lawrence (2020: 160), workers who are able to effortlessly integrate their expertise, change awareness, and duties with change are essential for effective change management.

- **Communicating change to employees**

Every five years, the participants confirm a change in the local government through an election. Following implementation of this change, there are annual reviews of strategy, financial adjustments, and changes in political leadership. All of these communications are made through the IDP process, which involves communicating both internally with staff members and externally with the community. P3 and P6 described MANCO meetings as the management's internal communication strategy. Municipality PLM, represented by P5, stated that *“communication was done as a*

normal way, we invite people to meetings, we engage them, the points that you want them to hear, we update them, but that communication was haphazardly, where the municipality was the one initiating the change, for the ones that are project from the national and provincial department, it was a different strategy all together because it was most structured, there were time frames”.

This finding demonstrates that, while channels for communication exist both internally and externally, there may be discrepancies in the approach, particularly when it comes to external communication. Addressing these inconsistencies could increase the effectiveness of communication methods, ensuring that stakeholders are well informed and engaged throughout the change process. Information is disseminated to all employees through community consultative meetings and management meetings, which is consistent with Ntusi's (2019: 24) statement that the strategy entails both internal and external communication, with a certain degree of similarity between the two.

- **Training and educating employees about change management**

Employees undergo training and workshops on new developments, particularly with regard to the performance management system and any changes P1 and P4 mentioned regarding the municipality. P11 presenting PLM indicated that *“should there be change management principle that is identified or that municipality enhances to implement it depends whether the skills that the change management requires is available internally if it is available internally and then that champion or qualified or experienced person would facilitate decision of that change management principle and should it has been identified if it’s a scarce skills that the municipality does not hold then the facilitator get hired to come and capacitate the relevant employees that are implicated by that change management practice”*. P3 continued by discussing the modifications to the municipal standard chart of accounts (mSCOA), which became accessible to all municipalities in July 2017. When the change was first implemented, *“the manager in charge oversaw all aspects of education and training, making sure that all employees who would be most impacted by it and who used the system attended that specific training”*. P5 added that as local government receives training from the provincial and national governments when training is required.

These findings emphasise the importance of training and workshops in promoting organisational change and ensuring that personnel are well-prepared to adapt to new innovations in performance management systems and financial reporting standards. This proactive approach to employee development is critical for ensuring organisational success and responsiveness to changing needs in the local government sphere. P5's statement is supported by Mansaray (2019: 26), who mentioned that organisations do training and development to help personnel and modify rules, policies, and processes.

- **Informing employees of the change management**

All the participants reported that information about changes in the municipalities is communicated to all employees through extended MANCO sessions and general staff meetings. P12 disclosed that "*in certain instances, information is transmitted over emails, group chats on WhatsApp, and additional social media platforms*". Because employees are prone to believing what they hear in the media, it is important for an organisation to provide consistent internal and external media briefings because this will affect the workforce.

Overall findings highlight the necessity of effective communication techniques in managing organisational change. Municipalities may ensure that employees are well-informed and involved throughout the transition process by combining formalised meetings with digital means of communication, reducing uncertainty, and promoting a feeling of trust and openness in the workforce. Internal communication strategy and external communications to the public and media are both critical aspects of an organization's communication with employees (Ntusi 2019: 24).

- **Procedures and process developed after implementation of change management**

In addition, the participants were questioned about the procedures and processes that developed from the implementation of change management. Following the implementation of change management, P2 and P1 clarified that the municipality's management and administration were required to sign their performance plans and agreements. The strategy called for the process to begin with senior and middle

management and gradually cascade down to every employee. In accordance with P3, the Premier, the MEC, and “*the political leadership of the organisation, which includes the municipal manager, are all involved in change management process*”. In order to ensure that changes are in line with the strategic plan, P5 and P6 also confirmed that the institution should create an implementation strategy. P10 responded by saying “*I would say procedures, there are as I have said earlier on there is a report after our engagement meeting, there are also action plans which monitors the implementation of data report where every task is being outlined in term of duration as well as the date, budget if there is budget associated with that so all those strategic documents there are presented to employees there are presented to management there are presented even to council for closely monitoring of that process*”.

Findings point to a systematic and complete strategy to change management within the municipality, distinguished by prompt communication, the involvement of key stakeholders, alignment with strategic objectives, and rigorous monitoring measures. New change plans, change management procedures, and models improve the success of environmental challenges (Kumarasinghe and Dilan 2021: 49). Hamdo (2021: 3) emphasises that change management is a process that involves creating perceptions that alter to produce good results.

- **Monitoring the implementation of change management**

The participants indicated that their respective municipalities report the progress of change management in various leadership meetings. Each department, according to P1, P3, and P11, has a responsible head of department or senior management who acts as a champion, monitoring and reporting the status quo of the change through the MANCO platform on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis. P12 concurred with other participants by saying that “*if there are challenges with the MANCO meeting, they are called upon by the municipal manager to establish the courses and have a resolution matrix*”. P2 and P3 further state that even the politicians monitor the change through portfolio meetings. The municipal manager reports to the political leadership about council meetings, and the political leadership in turn reports to the Minister (MEC) and the Premier about the implementation of change within the institution. P7 stated that “*the annual audit outcome from AGSA and reports from National Treasury*

and Cogta are also monitoring tools for the municipality, especially on compliance matters, since these big brothers are required to monitor municipalities”.

This information demonstrates a comprehensive strategy for monitoring and reporting on change management programmes in municipalities, which includes internal governance structures, political oversight, and external regulatory compliance procedures. This complex strategy improves accountability, promotes openness, and facilitates the efficient implementation of change at all organisational levels. Nel and Masilela (2020: 36) mentioned that public organisations implement changes to develop, implement, and monitor encouraging policies as a cost-effective strategy for improving service delivery to the public.

- **Evaluating the outcome attained from the change**

P1, P3, P4, and P9 mentioned that the outcome report from the audited annual financial statement and annual report is used as the evaluating tool for the change in the municipalities. P2 corresponded by saying “*AGSA report is an external mechanism for evaluating the municipality and SDBIP and IDP are internal mechanism*”. P6 and P12 mentioned the “*performance management system and the departmental score card which reflect what the objectives that have been achieved by each department within the municipality*”. This tool also serves as an evaluation system for change management.

These findings show the many evaluation methodologies used by municipalities to measure the successful outcome of change management projects. Municipalities can gain comprehensive insights into the impact of change and identify areas for improvement by using a combination of financial reports, external audits, internal performance systems, and departmental scorecards, resulting in organisational success and resilience in a dynamic environment. The advantage of management knowing how to evaluate change's consequences before it occurs is a benefit to an organisation (Kumarasingle and Dilan 2021: 58).

- **Conclusions to theme 1**

In conclusion, municipalities' current change management practices include strategic planning, stakeholder involvement, managerial support, effective communication, and proactive staff development. These practices highlight the importance of adapting to new leadership and management visions while retaining continuity in operations and culture. Municipalities can deal with the complexity of change by implementing preventative measures, integrating stakeholders, and providing administrative support, particularly during political transitions. However, effective communication strategies, as well as ongoing training and workshops, are required to ensure transparency, accountability, and response to changing needs in the local government sector. Overall, the study found that these practices encourage successful change management and organisational resilience.

6.3.2 Theme 2: Change management dimensions for administrative effectiveness

This theme was developed to address objective number two and questions 9.1 to 9.5 of the interview schedule were used to achieve this objective.

- **Overall direction and objective of the change management**

When the participants were asked what was the overall direction and objective of the change management in their organisation. P1 hinted that *“the main constitutional mandate is the provision of water and sanitation to the people so whatever we do our main objective is to continuous[ly] improve the delivery of basic services”*. P2, P3, P6, and P12 supported P1, asserting that the goal of the change management programme is to guarantee the accomplishment of the municipality's mission at the time it was put into place. P4 added by mentioning that *“it’s a very broad statement on how that is achieved, to start with a stable political leadership, through stable management, through a happy workforce, and also ensuring that the community is happy because when the communities are not happy, they will protest service delivery”*. P11 concurred with the aforementioned participants by pointing out that *“unit managers sign the performance agreements which is significant to commitments towards achieving the*

municipal objectives and goals". This is done to ensure consistency with the approach towards achieving the objectives.

The findings indicate that the change management initiative's primary objective is to align with the municipality's mission, adhere to legal mandates, ensure stability and efficiency, prioritise community satisfaction, and establish processes for performance management and accountability. Tamunomeibi and Lawrence (2022: 160) describe 'define' as an operational dimension that focuses on systematically accomplishing the goals and putting into practice the strategies that were created during the direct and describe dimensions. Fusch *et al.* (2020: 169) mentioned that managing change in an organisation requires consistency in approach and consistency in purpose, and this can only be achieved with clear direction.

- **Change management purpose articulated to staff**

The researcher asked if the municipality's employees were aware of the goal of change management. All participants concurred that the municipality used lengthy MANCO meetings to communicate changes to all staff members. P1 emphasised that, "*communication strategy involves the engagement of unions representatives who are always part of the strategic sessions so that they will know what the plans are when it comes to monitoring and evaluation of the objectives*".

This finding suggests a concentrated effort to maintain transparency and participation in the change management process, including key stakeholders such as union representatives, to facilitate successful interaction and cooperation. Errida and Lofti (2021:6) emphasize the importance of envisioning the organization's anticipated future with a realistic ideal picture of the company after implementing change and ensuring effective communication of this vision to all participants.

- **Vision, mission and values established to achieve change management**

The participants were asked if the municipality had a clear vision, mission, and values of what needed to be achieved and what was established to obtain that? The majority of participants confirmed that the municipality possessed a clear vision, mission, and values, and utilised other stakeholders and sector departments to assist in achieving

its objectives. P1 stated that to establish vision and mission of *“the departments as you know they work out on business plans that they use in order to assess the achievement of vision and mission of the municipality but in direct language for the municipality I would say we use those SDBIP”*. P7 mentioned that committees were established to ensure *“that what we are talking about within the institution is also reflected external of how we conduct ourselves people don’t just only see municipality as or say no just this one are cheque collectors but we must be seen to be doing correctly and there are structures that were established towards achieving values and mission hence there are departmental MANCO Miss Sibisi”*

Overall, the findings indicate that the municipality has articulated its vision, mission, and values, as well as created structures and processes to achieve them. According to Fusch et al. (2020: 169), a clear direction is the only way to achieve consistency in approach and purpose when managing change in an organization.

- **Strategic plan and operational plan developed to achieve overall vision**

P1 mentioned that *“the strategic plan is simple: the development of the integrated developmental plan (IDP), which was adopted by the council, and then the operational plan is the service delivery and budget implementation plan (SDBIP), which was signed by the mayor and also noted by the council”*. Regarding the operational and strategic plans that were created and approved in order to realise the municipality's overall goal, P1 was supported by every other participant. In response, P5 stated that *“the municipality was reporting on a regular basis even to date and that an operational plan had been established and approved by the council during the implementation of the mSCOA change”*.

According to the participants' responses, the key finding is that the municipality has strategic and operational plans in place. These strategies work together to achieve the municipality's goals. There is regular reporting on the status of these plans. The operational plan was developed and approved during the execution of the mSCOA transformation, demonstrating responsiveness to external influences or changes in governance requirements. Clear communication of the vision is essential to avoid misleading and confounding stakeholders, as well as to articulate how the future will

differ from the past (Laig and Abocejo 2021: 35). The strategy must be designed and crafted using the direct model approach, which is the first step in the process of summarising the business's concept and purpose, in order to produce the desired behaviour (Haftor and Costa 2023: 4).

- **Resource strategy for staff retention after implementation of change**

P1 stated that there is a *“staff retention that is in place I just feel that it has not been adequately implemented because I think it’s only HOD’s that have rural allowance that type of think but this has since not been cascaded down to other levels”*. P1, P6, and P8 concurred that staff retention exists but it is only partially implemented. The remaining participants were reluctant to confirm if their municipality had adopted the resource plan. P10 explained that by saying *“it very difficult when it’s comes to staff retention let me tell you the truth cos we are grade one municipality so you can’t return the employee cos almost all the municipality are better than us”*.

Findings are that multiple participants acknowledge that staff retention procedures exist but have not been completely implemented. Concerns were raised about the unequal distribution of benefits, with rural allowances only available to Head of Departments (HODs). Participants acknowledged having difficulty competing with other municipalities for staff retention due to budget constraints and possibly less favorable conditions. Some participants are hesitant or unclear about the adoption of a resource plan in their municipality. According to Sepahvand and Khodashahri (2021: 440), the resource strategy encompasses hiring and retaining staff, training, development philosophy and practices, and advancement management.

- **Performance management strategy**

The participants were asked to describe the municipality's performance strategy. Every participant acknowledged that their municipality has a performance management strategy. P1 clarified that the *“cycle of performance management system that we have to adhere to which start I would say commences from the planning side of things and it’s starts from planning which is part of preparing the IDPs and the SDBIPs” is outlined in Chapter 6 of the Municipal System Act*. A performance management strategy coordinates the organization's operational and strategic goals,

empowering each team and individual to comprehend their specific roles and responsibilities within the organisation. P5 added on to clarify that senior managers would receive bonuses following an evaluation of their work, *"where they will perform based on the plan, performance target, and what not, depending on their scale of performance"*.

The municipality has a performance management strategy, which all participants acknowledge. The strategy starts with the planning phase, which aligns with the rules and regulations established in the relevant legislation. There is a strong emphasis on connecting individual and team performance to organisational goals and objectives. Bonuses and other incentives are linked to performance evaluations, particularly for senior managers, in order to encourage alignment with organisational goals. Some participants are hesitant or unclear about the adoption of a resource plan in their municipality. Madhani (2020: 47) asserts that management must integrate high-quality service internally.

- **Reward strategy for employees**

P1, P2, P3, and P7 all revealed that long-term service awards are their municipality's rewarding strategy. This is paid out every five years to employees who have served for the municipality for five years. The performance bonus is mentioned by P1, P5, P6, P9, and P11 as the reward strategy based on the best performance and the attained target. In an implicit statement, P12 said that *"the rewarding process becomes some sort of a fun as part of motivating showing means to the staff that you might not be told physically that your performance is significant but when we are together as staff we are provided an allowance to complement one another"*.

According to the participants' responses, long-term service awards are part of the municipality's reward system, which recognises employees' effort and devotion over time. Performance bonuses are related to meeting targets and proving great performance, providing incentives for individuals to thrive in their roles. Informal recognition and motivation are evident in the workplace, where staff members have opportunities to commend one another during gatherings, fostering a happy and friendly work environment. Organisations must guarantee that their remuneration

packages entice workers to choose them over other organisations (Madhani 2020: 41; Junnaid et al. 2020: 2).

- **Effective and efficient communication strategy**

An organisation's internal communication strategy and how it handles its outward communications to the public and media are both crucial aspects of its communication with employees. *"Since there haven't been any complaints from stakeholders, the general public, or any municipality beneficiaries"*, P12 described communication as *"effective and efficient"*. Regarding the effective and efficient communication plan, P1, P8, and P2 said that the municipality has made improvements in communication, as seen by the fact that it is now accessible on social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, and even TikTok.

These findings suggest that the municipality has taken steps to modernise its communication methods and engage with the public through popular social media channels, potentially increasing transparency and fostering better relationships with stakeholders. Errida and Lofti (2021: 6) suggest that the municipality has established a functional system to facilitate a smooth transition from one state to another. Internal communication strategy and external communications to the public and media are both critical aspects of an organization's communication with employees (Ntusi 2019: 24).

- **Procedures and processes to ensure the provision of service delivery**

The municipality developed the IDP and budget process, which tracks how well the service delivery budget, implementation plan, and integrated development plan are being implemented. P1 and P4 (UDM), P7 and P8 (PLM), P10, and P12 (MLM). P3, P5, and P11 note that municipalities have ward committees, community liaison officers, and council members as members of the municipal system; these individuals interact with the community. *"If there are issues, the community liaison officer, ward committee, and councillor will coordinate the issue on the ground to the municipality,"* P5 clarified. In accordance with P12, *"the municipality frequently engages the community, goes there to obtain information for MANCO meetings, and develops resolutions that help guarantee that the community is served"*.

Generally, the municipality uses the IDP and budget processes to track the progress of service delivery plans and the Integrated Development Plan. Various community representatives, including ward committees, community liaison officers, and council members, act as liaisons between the citizens and the municipality, coordinating concerns and complaints. The municipality regularly communicates with the community, obtaining information and input to inform decision-making processes and ensure that community needs are successfully addressed. Tamunomeibi and Lawrence (2022: 160) define the operational dimension as the set of business processes, rules, and procedures that guarantee the execution of company strategies and the accomplishment of goals.

- **Policies and regulations to achieve strategic goals**

Every participant stated that the municipality is a sphere of government regulated by laws, policies, acts, and regulations. In addition, P1 stated that *"we have stable labour forces and fundamental employment conditions a very basic one since nothing can move if we don't have human resources in place and stabilised"*. P1 and P2 went on to say that since we provide basic services, a municipality needs policies pertaining to infrastructure problems as well as the quality of the water we have. As such, bylaws governing water issues, water usage, and how people should respect water pipelines will be implemented. P1, P2, P3, and P5 emphasised that in order for any of this to occur, finance-related policies must be in place because we need to manage our spending, budget, acquire services, engage in supply chain management, manage our assets, and handle our liabilities. P1 hinted that *"planning, finance, and human resources are all related because there are issues with the GIS, or geographic information system, and municipal boundary issues, which raises the need for town regional planning. Economic development also involves a number of policies"*.

The municipality functions under a regulatory framework that includes laws, policies, acts, and regulations. Stable human resources are critical to the municipality's operational stability and performance. Policies concerning infrastructure, water quality, and financing are critical for effective governance and service delivery. There is recognition of the interconnection of planning, finance, and human resources, with a variety of concerns necessitating comprehensive policy strategies for resolution and

management. As stated by Masuku and Jili (2019), the administration's role in government institutions is to implement policies that address the demands of the community. Tamunomeibi and Lawrence (2020) assert that well-thought-out and skilfully executed policies have the power to lead to beneficial changes that improve performance overall as well as efficiency and effectiveness.

- **Consequences of non-compliance with the implementation of change**

Participants were asked what the consequences would be if an employee disobeyed the organisation's change management policy. They responded that the consequences would depend on the severity of the violation and the circumstances surrounding the case. Human resource policies and regulations are handled by a corporate department, as P1, P2, and P6 point out. A "*basic conditions employment act*" was also suggested in P1 "*We do have offices that deal with this,*" P3 said in more detail, "*and might be a legal office or a labour relations specialist office that they workshop employees on various consequences that will come if don't comply certain policies and procedures of the institution*". P3 and P4 (UDM), P5 and P6 (PLM), P9 and P10 (MLM) agreed that the employer may take disciplinary action against an employee who disobeys or performs below expectations.

The consequences of disregarding the organisation's change management policy vary based on the severity of the breach and the circumstances. A corporate department within the organisation is often responsible for managing human resource rules and regulations. Employees are taught the implications of policy noncompliance through a variety of internal agencies, including legal and labour relations specialists. Employers have the right to discipline employees who fail to follow policies or perform below expectations, as agreed upon by several participants. As stated by Mubarok, Zauhar, and Suryadi (2020: 33), the policy's objectives must be effectively implemented.

- **Expectation of employees during change management process**

In accordance with P1, "*this is very simple; the expectation is sound governance and sound leadership, making sure that all issues are addressed through internal audit, risk management, fraud prevention, and other controls*". P2, P4, P8, and P10 agreed that feedback, monitoring, and articulation are all necessary for effective change

management. Workers require excellent human resources, tools of the trade, training, motivation, leadership support, and rewards for their achievement. They also need to know if their jobs are safe (P3, P4, P6, P8 and P12).

The finding is that effective change management requires strong governance and leadership, with a focus on addressing concerns via internal audit, risk management, fraud prevention, and other controls. Feedback, monitoring, and clear communication are critical for effective change management, ensuring that staff are informed and involved throughout the process. Hence, managing change calls for managerial abilities, which Manafa (2020: 46) defines as the necessary aptitude for effective and efficient hiring, planning, coordinating, regulating, organising, and decision-making.

- **Measuring the change management process**

The researcher asked how the management assessed the success of the change management process. P1, P6, P7, P8 and P9 alluded to the fact that there is an internal audit that does the quality check and also through the oversight audit committee, municipal public accounts committee, and external auditor to ensure that the result and reporting to council of the entire oversight function have been performed. P3 mentioned that *“the other way of measuring if the change management was successful or not is the management of community protest, have stable work force whereby the management can see the changes that were being negotiated with local labour forums are materialise”*.

These findings inform the evaluation of the change management process's success by internal audits, oversight audit committees, municipal public accounts committees, and external auditors. The management of community protests and workforce stability, which demonstrates the realisation of agreed improvements and effective labour relations, serves as another measure of success. Asikhia et al. (2021: 75) argue that change impacts the performance of an organisation, especially when implemented successfully.

- **Evaluating and reviewing the result of change management**

P3 and P4 indicated that the performance assessment, which is carried out on a quarterly basis, is used to evaluate change management. P11 concurred, saying that *"new corrective measures and adjustment plans for that particular change management practice are introduced and be adopted so that they can be legal for implementation after the evaluations or assessment quarterly assessment have been conducted"*.

Performance assessments are conducted quarterly to evaluate the effectiveness of change management projects. Following the assessments, remedial methods and adjustment plans are proposed and implemented to remedy any detected deficiencies and ensure legal compliance with the changes. Aronsson *et al.* (2021: 8) have demonstrated that modifications can result in a variety of results, including disastrous consequences for an organisation's performance and outcomes. Zainol *et al.* (2021: 2) noted that effective leaders should be able to make choices quickly, stay current on technology, communicate effectively, and persuade subordinates to support organisational change.

- **Conclusion to Theme 2**

The findings for this theme suggest that municipalities effectively manage change by utilising a range of dimensions. They align directly with organizational goals, vision, and mission, ensure accountability, recognise employee efforts, and adhere to policies and regulations. Municipalities achieve success by implementing processes and procedures that establish a solid foundation for change management. However, other areas require improvement, such as fully implementing staff retention measures and addressing concerns about unequal benefit distribution. To maintain and increase its effectiveness in managing change, the municipality will need to continue to emphasise strong communication and stakeholder involvement and develop a continuous assessment and monitoring of performance management.

6.3.3 Theme 3: Internal and external factors affecting change management practices in municipalities.

In this section the factors for the abovementioned theme are discussed through question number ten to eighteen to achieve objective number three.

- **Motivating officials to adapt to a change management**

P1 stated that *“the municipality is currently only providing the absolute minimum of care for the welfare of its employees paying salaries on time and overtime when it is due”*. P6 stated that *“the achievement of the municipal target is motivated by the performance management system”*. P9 and P12 both mentioned that there is a wellness committee that takes care of the staff; on occasion, this committee gives the staff massages as a form of pampering.

The findings show that municipalities appear to prioritize satisfying fundamental needs, such as timely salary and overtime payments, while also developing a performance management system to encourage achievement. Furthermore, there are measures in place, such as the wellness committee and massage sessions, to address employee well-being; however, the scope and success of these efforts in establishing a holistic environment at work may differ. This is in line with Bose and Gupta (2021: 488); Laig and Abocejo (2021: 36), who assert that in order to keep employees motivated going forward, managers must acknowledge and reward those who put in a lot of effort to reach long-term goals.

- **Management of administrative structure**

P4 hinted that the municipality manages the administrative structure effectively *“by making sure that there are frequent meetings with staff members through MANCO and that there are also, I would say, oversight functions carried out by council members through portfolio committees where the municipal staff reports on their performance”*. P11 concurred with P4 that *“departmental meetings, the management meetings, and the political portfolio meetings are the methods used to govern the administrative structure, where the political leadership will also contribute and give their thoughts and recommendations on the political leadership after receiving reports on all municipal*

activities and plans. P12 went on to explain that it is accomplished through the performance management system and risk register, with officials being watched over to meet their goals.

The findings indicate that the municipality manages its administrative structure in a systematic and collaborative manner, using various meetings, oversight functions, performance management systems, and risk monitoring procedures to promote efficient governance and accountability. Municipalities need a model that ensures administrative sustainability and makes change management implementation easier (Rolland 2018: 1). For change management to be successful, managers must be in favour of the change that the administration requires (Jain 2023: 6).

- **Resistance to change management**

Everyone who participated shared instances of times when they had encountered resistance to change. For example, P2 recounted a year in which *"the then MM wanted to introduce the placement process to actually place all employees to positions according to their qualifications and there was so much resistance from the employees because most of them were not where they were supposed to be some of them don't have the correct qualification for the post that they were occupy so there was so much resistance people feared that they might lose their jobs so there was so much resistance to a point that it was stopped"* According to P3, P4, P8, and P12, decisions that are unfavourable or adversely impact specific facets of the other stakeholders will occasionally spark opposition. There will undoubtedly be opposition if the judgements are unfavourable or have an adverse impact on specific parts of the other stakeholder.

The findings indicate that resistance to change and rejection of choices are frequent in the municipality. These examples demonstrate the difficulties associated with implementing changes or making decisions affecting stakeholders, especially when there are concerns about job security or negative consequences for individuals or organisations. Recognising and handling opposition to change is critical for navigating organisational dynamics and developing successful decision-making processes within the municipality. Employee resistance to change is a major obstacle to the transition's success and has detrimental consequences for change management (Damawan and

Azizah 2020: 49). It also makes it more difficult for the organisation to thrive and continue to exist.

Supporting the implementation of change by staff and management

Staff and management provided regular performance reports, either monthly in departmental meetings or quarterly in management meetings, to facilitate the implementation of change management (P1, P3, P4, and P12). Securing leadership with the backing and dedication of management is a critical component of an organisation's effective and long-lasting transformation. In the words of P2, "the only way to support the change if the change management is successful is to take instructions, obviously from your superiors, maybe in line with the change".

The findings highlight the significance of frequent performance reporting and leadership assistance in enabling effective change management within the municipality. By exploiting performance data and gaining support from key stakeholders, the organisation may strengthen its ability to respond to change, promote continuous improvement, and accomplish long-term transformation. When management and employees want to facilitate the change's adoption by holding meetings with the participation of important stakeholders, personnel, and management (Kho et al., 2020: 8; Awoke, 2020: 65).

- **Fraud and corruption affecting change management**

All participants acknowledged that instances of fraud and corruption occur in municipalities on a regular basis, regardless of whether they are related to change management procedures or the day-to-day operations of the municipality. In response P9, mentioned that *"the report we received from the Auditor General confirms that any fraud and corruption detected in the municipality"*. P1 mentioned that *"there has been intervention of law enforcement agencies people have been suspended and taken through the disciplinary processes and some have actual resigned and so the municipality does take the issue of fraud and corruption very seriously"*. P10 also alluded that *"there is here fraud and anti-fraud policy further to that we are having disciplinary board which is there to ensure that this process is not being effected"*.

Municipalities recognize fraud and corruption as ongoing concerns and have implemented preventative measures such as external audits, regulatory interventions, anti-fraud rules, and disciplinary procedures to address and minimise these risks. This reflects the municipality's dedication to transparency, accountability, and ethical standards. Munzhedzi (2020: 97) notes that some individuals commit fraud, poor administration, corruption, and a lack of dedication.

- **New technology affecting the change management**

P1 asserts that there are *“slow changes that are taking place if you look at the fourth industrial revolution the municipality is still aspiring to be a smart municipality that is why we are trying to introduce smart meter, but it has not been very successful because we know for instant the speed of the internet in our area is still very slow but we are getting there in terms of new technology”* P10 agreed that *“we are going to 4IR fourth industrial revolution (4IR) and to have information technology (IT) here to assist us as municipality if there are new technological, new things or solutions that are in place they assist us a lot in terms of adopting or introducing them to the municipality”*. P12 added that as part of the change management practices, a new systematic leave application process and the SCM procurement process were introduced, so we are still experiencing challenges with the online leave management system.

While the municipality is aggressively embracing technology improvements and implementing change management strategies, it is encountering issues such as slow paced internet speed and system implementation difficulties. Despite these problems, the municipality is committed to moving forward and adapting to the needs of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, suggesting a forward-thinking attitude towards organisational growth. According to Tapia and Menger (2019: 13), technological solutions play a crucial role in designing and developing most innovations. For an organisation to survive and maintain success these days, it is always advisable to prepare for now and the coming future (Gibber 2022: 1).

- **Community protest affecting change management**

Every participant concurred that community protests have impacted change management. *"Community protests, some of which seem to have links to political instabilities, but with institutions themselves very minimal,"* according to P9. *"The primary problem is the availability of water, which has been insufficient. We have witnessed community protests where people block roads and, to some extent, damage infrastructure if water pipes aren't supplied"* P1 stated as much. The slow speed of service delivery has led to a rise in protests against it. P6 also agreed with other participants by saying, *"we have had community protest some of them like links to political instabilities, but with institution itself, very minimal because we try to do what we could but then if you go deeper you find now that is just Ms Sibisi not agreeing on something else, but whenever there were, then taking it to the municipality so those protest have been very minimal but yes we had services delivery indications concerns"*.

In conclusion, the findings highlight the broad character of community protests, which are influenced by socio-political factors, service delivery issues, and institutional responses. Addressing these underlying challenges requires a comprehensive strategy that prioritises effective governance, responsive service delivery, and meaningful involvement with affected communities. As stated by Zerihun and Mashigo (2022: 3), there is a lack of accountability in the delivery of services within South African communities. Community protests arise from this.

- **Political interference affecting change management**

P1 attested to the fact that *"political interference is pervasive within our municipality and affects a great deal of things; perhaps I couldn't pinpoint a single change, but the interference affects a great deal of things that we do as administration"*. P1, P2, and P3 mentioned that because these officials are technocrats, political meddling causes them to break rules and regulations, impacts, the municipality's performance. P9 concurred with other participants by saying, *"Yes, it has been affected as it was well extracted, especially in preferences in terms of who should be appointed to do either the services or for the municipal employment"*.

The findings emphasise the negative consequences of political influence on the municipality's administration, performance, adherence to legislation, and appointment procedures. Masuku and Jili (2019: 1) concluded that the political interface has an impact on the efficient and successful management of local government.

- **Laws and regulations that affect change management**

All participants mentioned that laws and regulations are set for the local government to abide by for the compliance. *P11 point outs that, "there are positive effects because these change management practices or plans that have been introduced are in line with local government laws and regulations, so these change management has positive impact towards the compliance with the local government regulations and laws".*

In summary, the findings highlight the importance of complying with local government laws and regulations, while demonstrating the positive impact of change management approaches that are consistent with these legal requirements. As described by Ajulor (2018), change management efforts can be influenced positively or negatively by policies and regulations. Effective implementation of well-designed policies that take stakeholders' needs into account can create a supportive environment for change initiatives.

- **Conclusion to Theme 3**

The findings of the study highlight key factors that influence the adoption of change management for sustainable administrative effectiveness in selected municipalities. These factors include community protests driven by socio-political reasons and service delivery concerns, along with institutional reactions. A comprehensive strategy prioritising good governance and responsive service delivery is essential to addressing these challenges. Political influence negatively impacts municipal administration, performance, compliance with legislation, and appointment procedures. Adherence to local government laws and regulations is crucial. Change management practices that align with laws and regulations yield positive outcomes. In summary, the study underscores the importance of good governance, responsive service delivery,

adherence to rules and regulations, and the implementation of effective change management strategies in municipal administration.

6.4 Key findings

The primary goal of this chapter was to highlight the significant findings of this research, which are described below:

- Municipalities' current change management practices include strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, managerial support, effective communication, and proactive staff development.
- Municipalities adapt to changing leadership and management visions while maintaining operational and cultural continuity.
- Municipalities address the complexity of change by implementing preventative measures, involving stakeholders, and providing administrative support, especially during political transitions.
- Transparency, accountability, and responsiveness to changing needs in local government necessitate strong communication skills, as well as ongoing training and seminars.
- Successful change management is supported by a number of factors, including adherence to regulatory obligations, stakeholder involvement, accountability, employee recognition, and alignment with organisational goals.
- Some areas for improvement include fully implementing staff retention processes and resolving concerns regarding unequal benefit distribution.
- Performance management, stakeholder involvement, and good communication are essential for change management to be sustainable and effective.
- The administration, performance, legislative compliance, and appointment procedures of the municipality are negatively impacted by political influence and community protests. Adherence to local government laws and regulations is critical.
- The findings highlight how crucial it is for municipal administration to have strong governance, provide responsive services, follow regulations and legislation, and implement efficient change management techniques.

6.5 Summary of the chapter

This chapter focused on interpreting the findings. This was accomplished by utilising the participants' answers to the questions. The data were reviewed in relation to the themes and objectives. The findings were presented in a discussion followed by a literature review.

The next chapter will discuss and interpret the study's findings.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

7.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter provided the study's findings, which originated from research interviews with senior managers and deputy managers of the performance management system and integrated developmental plan, financial services, technical services, and local economic development middle managers from selected municipalities. The primary focus of this chapter will be a discussion of the research's principal findings in relation to the study's themes and objectives. The study's findings will be discussed as part of the literature review to ensure that the research questions posed by the study are addressed.

The study's primary goal was to investigate the factors and change management techniques that influence the adoption of change in a selected KwaZulu Natal municipality and to suggest a prototype change management model that municipalities can use to promote sustainable administrative effectiveness.

7.2 Discussion of findings in terms of themes and research objectives of this study

This section examines the study's findings in light of the themes that emerged from the research and its goals.

7.2.1 Change management practices within the sphere of local government.

Objective 1: To identify the change management model currently adopted by selected municipalities in KwaZulu Natal.

- **Adapting to new leadership and management visions**

This study maintains that effective leadership is crucial in directing visions, policies, and plans, as well as restructuring the organisation during times of change (Mansaray 2019: 26). Adapting to new leadership and management visions entails more than just embracing change; it also entails cultivating a culture of continuous learning, open

communication, and resilience in which workers feel empowered to contribute their full potential towards attaining common goals. The findings from the literature review confirm that it is critical for municipalities to adapt to new leadership and management visions while maintaining operational and cultural consistency. New leadership and management visions frequently include fresh strategies, priorities, and techniques. Adapting to these changes requires employees to shift their perspective from rejecting change to embracing it as a chance for growth and innovation. Recognising and celebrating achievements along the way reinforces accomplishments and promotes morale. Recognising people and teams for their contributions to the successful implementation of new visions promotes a sense of accomplishment and motivation to keep moving forward. In this study, participants believed that consistency in operations became compromised as new leadership and management introduced new ideas and visions, forcing employees to adapt and modify their culture.

- **Effective communication and training**

This study discovered that municipalities use communication as a change management practice in the IDP process, which involves both internal staff and external community members. Communication is the foundation of any successful change or strategy (Chirwa and Boikanyo 2022: 1). Leaders must effectively communicate their rationale for new visions and how they relate to the organisation's goals (Musaigwa, 2023: 2). Encourage an open discussion in which employees may ask questions, express concerns, and provide feedback to promote transparency and confidence. Clear, timely, and transparent communication ensures that all involved parties understand the goals, objectives, and progress. It helps to build trust among stakeholders, clear up misconceptions, and encourage collaboration. Comprehensive techniques that prioritise strong communication open up opportunities for exchanging information, correcting problems, and soliciting feedback from all stakeholders, resulting in more efficient change management execution and improved outcomes.

Moreover, employees of municipalities receive training and workshops on new developments, particularly the performance management system and any changes that occur. This is consistent with the researcher (Mansaray 2019: 26), who explained

that organisations conduct training and development to assist employees and change rules, policies, and processes.

- **Involvement of stakeholders in strategy development**

The findings of this study confirm that municipalities ensure that their strategic plans are comprehensive and responsive to the needs of the communities they serve by incorporating representatives from the community and various levels of government. Stakeholder involvement, continued emphasis on good communication, and performance management are all necessary for sustaining and improving the effectiveness of change management. Public involvement makes people feel important and deserving of respect when they are deciding on local government initiatives and policy formulation (Taamneh *et al.* 2020: 403). Involving stakeholders in strategy formulation is more than simply a checkbox; it is a core concept of effective governance and management. It results in improved decision-making, higher buy-in, and, ultimately, greater organisational success. Active stakeholder involvement is essential for incorporating multiple viewpoints and objectives into decision-making processes (Ogunbukola 2023: 1). When stakeholders participate in the strategy formulation process, they become more invested in the results. Their participation provides essential insights and information that can help make better decisions. Furthermore, including stakeholders creates a sense of ownership and commitment to the strategy's success (Ogunbukola 2023: 2).

7.2.2 Change management dimensions for administrative effectiveness

This study's second objective sought to examine change management dimensions that need to be considered in order to ensure sustainable administrative effectiveness in the selected municipalities in KZN. The section below unpacks these change management dimensions.

- **Alignment with the organisation's goals, vision, and mission**

This study reveals that municipalities use change management dimensions to effectively manage change. Municipalities use the 'direct' dimension to articulate the overall direction of the purpose, vision, mission, and values of the organisation in an

appropriate manner. Managing change in an organisation requires consistency in approach and consistency in purpose, and this can only be achieved with clear direction (Fusch et al. 2020: 169). This dimension underscores the importance of aligning all change activities with the municipality's overarching goals, vision, and mission. When change efforts are consistent with these guiding principles, they are more likely to develop traction and contribute to overall organisational success.

- **Overall achievement of the vision through the operational and strategic plan**

Municipalities use the 'describe' dimension to translate their vision and direction into operating and enabling strategies. As mentioned by Kumarasinghe and Dilan (2021), operating strategies are the functional plans as well as the approaches adopted by each expert in their section to deliver their expected functions in the organisational strategy. Accountability is critical to successful change management. This dimension involves setting out specific roles and duties for all parties involved in the change process. Municipalities may guarantee that change initiatives run smoothly and produce the desired results by holding individuals and teams accountable for their actions and outcomes. Recognising and praising employees' contributions is essential for maintaining morale and motivation throughout times of change. This dimension involves recognising the accomplishments of employees who actively participate in change projects and expressing gratitude for their hard work and commitment (Madhani 2020: 41; Junnaid, Miralam, and Jeet 2020: 2).

- **Effectiveness of policies and regulations**

Municipalities comply with the operational dimension which involves the business processes, policies, and procedures that ensure business strategies are implemented and objectives are achieved. People are more interested in operating within the operational dimension because they play a strategic role (Tamunomeibi and Lawrence 2022: 160). This dimension emphasises the need to ensure that all change initiatives are implemented in line with applicable laws, regulations, and organisational policies in order to reduce risk and ensure ethical behaviour. Compliance with laws and regulations is a critical dimension of successful change management. The discussion in this study confirms that municipalities function under a regulatory framework that includes laws, policies, acts, and regulations. As mentioned by Sakib (2021: 9),

change management has processes and tools that are used to manage organisational changes. According to Masuku and Jili (2019), the administration's role in government institutions is to implement policies that address the demands of the community.

An ongoing review and monitoring of the processes is necessary when strategies and objectives have been achieved (Donald and Chukwumaobi 2022: 98). Continuous assessment and monitoring of performance management is essential for finding areas for improvement and ensuring that change initiatives achieve the desired results. This component entails creating Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), tracking progress, and making necessary adjustments to improve the efficacy of change initiatives. Keeping stakeholders involved throughout the change process is critical for achieving buy-in and commitment. This dimension includes rapidly requesting input, feedback, and engagement from a wide range of stakeholders, including employees, customers, partners, and community members, to ensure that change projects meet their needs and preferences.

7.2.3 Internal and external factors affecting change management practices in municipalities.

The third objective of this study was to explore factors that affect change management practices that are aimed at sustainable administrative effectiveness in the selected municipalities in KZN. The following factors were identified:

- **Effectiveness of administrative structure**

The study emphasises the need for excellent governance, responsive service delivery, following rules and regulations, and employing effective change management strategies to improve municipal administration. By addressing these critical criteria, municipalities may create resilient and effective systems that suit the needs of their communities while adhering to principles of compliance, transparency, and accountability (Rolland 2018: 1). Managers must support the change that the administration requires for change management to be successful (Jain 2023: 6). Municipalities necessitate a model that ensures administrative sustainability and simplifies change management implementation (Rolland 2018: 1).

- **Resistance to change management**

The findings of the study highlight a fundamental challenge that the municipality faces, employees and stakeholder resistance to change and rejection of alternatives. This resistance can be attributed to a variety of issues, including concerns about job security and fear of negative consequences for individuals or organisations (Rudvnev 2020: 333). These worries frequently emerge as a reluctance to support new initiatives or decisions that have the potential to disturb the status quo (Damawan and Azizah 2020: 49). The difficulty of implementing changes or making choices exemplifies the complexities of managing organisational dynamics within the municipality. Leaders and decision-makers must recognise and effectively confront this resistance in order to achieve successful outcomes. Ignoring or managing resistance may prevent development and jeopardise the success of change initiatives. Employee resistance to change, in particular, is seen as a significant barrier. This resistance not only weakens change management initiatives but also compromises the organisation's overall health and sustainability (Damawa and Azizah 2020: 49). When individuals resist change, it can lead to lower morale, productivity, and innovation, limiting the organisation's ability to adapt and succeed in a changing environment.

Addressing resistance to change needs proactive communication, stakeholder participation, and a willingness to address root causes. Leaders must build a culture of adaptation and open conversation in order to reduce resistance and create a more conducive environment for change and decision-making. Furthermore, offering support, training, and incentives can help relieve worries and boost confidence among stakeholders, resulting in a smoother transition. Ultimately, overcoming resistance to change is critical for the municipality's evolution and resilience in the face of difficulties and opportunities. By recognising and successfully handling resistance, the municipality can improve its potential for innovation, growth, and long-term viability.

- **Support from key staff, management and stakeholders**

The discussion also emphasises the role of stakeholder interaction in encouraging change adoption. Meetings with key stakeholders, personnel, and management present an opportunity for discourse, collaboration, and building consensus

(Tamunomeibi and Lawrence 2020: 160). By incorporating stakeholders in the change process, the municipality can obtain their support, resolve concerns, and develop a sense of ownership and commitment among those affected by the change (Kho *et al.*, 2020: 8; Awoke, 2020: 65). Leadership support is critical to facilitating transformation within the municipality. Strong leadership is required to provide direction, inspire commitment, and mobilise support from key stakeholders. Leaders must actively interact with employees and stakeholders, articulate the reasons for changes, and offer direction and support during the transition process (Attah *et al.* 2017: 37; Ereh, Ogechi, and Andeleh 2019: 316). Leaders may assist in establishing a culture of change and continuous improvement by displaying a clear vision, encouraging open communication, and allowing people to participate in decision-making (Zainol *et al.*, 2021: 2). Frequent performance reporting is a crucial tool for tracking progress, identifying areas for development, and guiding decision-making (Cone and Unni 2020: 1712). Using performance data, the municipality may get useful insights into its operations, assess the impact of changes, and make informed modifications as needed. This data-driven approach allows the organisation to better respond to change, spot patterns, and assess the efficacy of actions over time. Overall, effective change management in the municipality involves a diverse approach that includes performance reporting, leadership support, and stakeholder involvement. By exploiting performance data, getting support from key stakeholders, and developing strong leadership, the organisation can increase its ability to navigate change, encourage continuous improvement, and accomplish long-term transformation.

- **Impact of fraud and corruption**

The study revealed the acknowledgement of fraud and corruption as continuous issues. The study demonstrates a comprehension of the potential obstacles to the integrity and effectiveness of the municipality. This is consistent with Shongwe and Meyer (2023: 152), who highlight corruption as one of the most important factors contributing to a drop in municipal service delivery across the country. Furthermore, Munzhedzi (2020: 97) emphasises the recognition that fraud, poor administration, corruption, and a lack of dedication exist among some persons or sections of the municipality. This recognition is critical for increasing accountability and encouraging

efforts to address root issues and eliminate wrongdoing (Amanquandor 2024: 4). This identification is critical for initiating appropriate responses and enacting preventive measures. The study's findings describe a number of preventive measures that the municipality has implemented to combat and reduce fraud and corruption. External audits, regulatory interventions, anti-fraud standards, and disciplinary procedures are among the methods implemented. External audits provide an independent evaluation of financial records and operations, assisting in the identification of abnormalities and ensuring regulatory compliance. Regulatory interventions involve the implementation of policies and processes aimed at preventing and identifying fraud, while disciplinary procedures enforce compliance. The existence of these preventive measures demonstrates the municipality's dedication to openness, accountability, and ethical norms. By implementing tools to detect, discourage, and resolve fraud and corruption, the municipality demonstrates its commitment to maintaining public trust and protecting taxpayer resources. In general, the discussion implies that, while fraud and corruption are continuous concerns, the municipality is actively attempting to mitigate these risks through a combination of preventive and accountability measures. The municipality seeks to maintain its integrity and fulfil its public commitments by encouraging transparency, accountability, and ethical behaviour.

- **Effectiveness of new technology**

The findings highlight the municipality's proactive commitment to embrace technological advancements and change management tactics, despite obstacles such as weak internet connectivity and system installation issues. The municipality's prompt adoption of technological advancements demonstrates a realisation of the value of innovation in modernising operations and addressing the needs of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This forward-thinking mindset implies a dedication to staying on top of technical innovations and exploiting them to improve efficiency, production, and service delivery. However, the findings acknowledge that the municipality faces difficulties. Poor internet speeds and system implementation challenges may hinder development and reduce the effectiveness of technology-driven efforts. Despite these problems, the municipality is committed to moving forward and adapting to the changing environment of the digital era. Tapia and Menger (2019: 13) emphasise the

significance of innovation and technology solutions in promoting organisational success. In today's quickly changing climate, organisations must be proactive in planning for both current and future demands (Gibber 2022: 1). This necessitates investing in the research, development, and implementation of breakthrough technologies capable of addressing current difficulties while anticipating future demands. The overall discussion implies that, while the municipality has obstacles with its technology-driven projects, its commitment to advancement and adaptation demonstrates a forward-thinking approach to organisational growth. By overcoming challenges and embracing innovation, the municipality hopes to establish itself as a leader in navigating the difficulties of the Fourth Industrial Revolution while also promoting good change for its stakeholders.

- **Community protest as a result of service delivery**

Zerihun and Mashigo (2022: 3) emphasise the necessity of accountability in service delivery, especially in South African communities. The lack of accountability frequently causes irritation and desperation among citizens, leading to protests as a form of collective action to demand accountability and better services (Shongwe and Meyer 2023: 136). The findings recognise the socio-political factors that emphasise the larger context in which community protests occur. These protests are generally motivated by deep-seated frustrations like injustice, discrimination, and political disengagement. Social and economic inequities can create tensions among communities, resulting in rallies to vent unhappiness and demand change (Mkhatshwa-Ngwenya and Khumalo 2020: 270). Service delivery difficulties contribute significantly to community protests. When communities lack access to basic services such as water, power, housing, and healthcare, they may become frustrated and disillusioned with government institutions. Failed promises, inefficiencies, and corruption in service delivery systems undermine trust and confidence in authority, pushing communities to mobilise and fight for their rights. The municipality's responses, or lack thereof, influence the dynamics of community protests. When governments fail to adequately address issues or use harsh techniques for suppressing opposition, tensions rise and the situation worsens. Responsive and accountable administration, combined with meaningful interaction with affected communities, can help calm tensions and address root causes before

they erupt into protests. The emphasis is on the significance of a comprehensive plan for addressing the underlying issues that drive community protests. This approach should focus on effective governance, responsive service delivery, and meaningful community engagement. Governments can establish trust with their residents by promoting openness, accountability, and inclusivity, as well as collaborate to address issues and improve living standards. In summary, the conclusion emphasizes the complex interplay of factors that contribute to community demonstrations, as well as the need to address underlying issues through a comprehensive approach that prioritises effective governance, responsive service delivery, and meaningful community participation.

- **Political interference**

Political influence can compromise the independence and effectiveness of the municipality's administration. Political interests that influence decision-making processes or weaken the authority of municipal officials may prevent the implementation of programmes and initiatives that serve the public's beneficial purposes (Shongwe and Meyer 2023: 136). This influence may result in inefficiencies, delays, and mismanagement of the municipality's activities. Political influence can harm the municipality's effectiveness by diverting resources and attention away from critical priorities and goals. Political decisions, rather than evidence-based planning and governance principles, can lead to inadequate results, thereby hindering the municipality's ability to efficiently deliver essential services. Furthermore, political involvement may damage the municipality's compliance with legislation and procedural norms. When political players exercise excessive influence over appointment procedures or violate legislative criteria, the governance framework's integrity suffers, as does public trust in the municipality. This might have far-reaching consequences for accountability, transparency, and the rule of law in the municipality. Masuku (2019: 1) emphasizes the larger role of the political interface in the effective and successful functioning of local government. Political dynamics influence organisational culture, decision-making processes, and overall municipal performance. Ineffective control or constraint of political influence can negatively affect the municipality's ability to fulfill its mandate and provide services to its citizens. Finally,

the findings point out the negative impact of political influence on the municipality's administration, performance, adherence to legislation, and appointment procedures. Safeguarding the autonomy and integrity of local governance processes, promoting transparency and accountability, and ensuring that public interest guides choices instead of partisan motives are necessary to address these challenges.

7.2.4 Integrated change management model (ICM) to enhance sustainable administrative effectiveness

Creating an ICM model specifically for municipalities fulfils a crucial need for effectively managing organisational change in the public sector. Chapter 4 introduced and refined the integrated change management model. This model is based on numerous essential considerations, including the fact that municipalities face certain challenges such as political transitions, administrative sustainability, and environmental concerns. Traditional change management models, while useful, frequently fall short of meeting the unique needs and volatility of municipal contexts. The technique can be modified to better address these complications by developing a customised ICM model. The suggested ICM model's three phases and ten actionable activities offer a straightforward, methodical approach to change management.

The new model ensures its foundation on solid principles by drawing from existing change management theories like those proposed by Kotter and Lewin. Kotter's emphasis on a systematic process with distinct phases, as well as Lewin's attention to the processes of unfreezing, changing, and refreezing, provide useful insights into change management. Integrating these theories contributes to the creation of a comprehensive framework that balances structure and flexibility, addressing both administrative and psychological components of change.

The ICM model is intended to meet municipal-specific political and administrative difficulties. Political changes can disturb continuity and influence decision-making. The model helps to preserve stability and effectiveness during times of change by incorporating transitional management practices. Sustainability in management is critical to the long-term effectiveness of municipal initiatives. The model's emphasis on sustainability ensures that adjustments are both beneficial in the near term and

contribute to long-term stability and efficiency. This is especially crucial in municipal settings because reforms must be long-term to benefit citizens.

Municipalities must also deal with environmental issues that can affect both their operations and the populations they serve. The ICM model's flexibility to respond to various problems guarantees that communities are prepared to deal with both expected and unexpected environmental concerns.

In summary, the recommended ICM model for municipalities offers a structured but adaptable approach to change management, combining well-established theories with feasible, effective procedures adapted to the specific needs of municipal environments. By emphasising awareness, leadership alignment, and sustainability, the model addresses the intricacies of political transitions and environmental concerns, providing a holistic framework for successful change management.

7.3 Summary of the chapter

This chapter's main emphasis was on the analysis and interpretation of the findings. This was accomplished by addressing important discoveries in light of the primary themes that emerged. The examination of the existing research literature in this field provided support for the findings discussed.

The next chapter will focus on the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

8.1 Introduction

The literature suggests that after the local government election, the municipalities must deal with substantial changes. Changes in political leadership, administration, and strategic objectives and goals can trigger these adjustments, which in turn affect the administrative system's sustainability and effectiveness. Studies have indicated that changes in political leadership have a notable detrimental effect on the culture of organisations. These changes disrupted employee adaptation to new management and leadership visions, as well as continuity and consistency in operations. However, management's readiness to collaborate with new leadership and sign performance agreements connected to the municipality's strategic objective demonstrated their dedication to change. The study's conclusions highlight the many and varied aspects of change management in local government, emphasising the value of continuing assessment, management guidance, stakeholder involvement, and strategic alignment in promoting long-term administrative effectiveness.

The aim of this research was to examine the change management strategies adopted by selected KwaZulu-Natal municipalities, focusing careful attention to how these strategies may affect long-term administrative effectiveness. In addition, the study suggests a prototype change management model that municipalities may utilise to facilitate long-term administrative effectiveness.

8.2 Summary of findings from literature review

Change management has emerged as a pivotal factor for organisational success, particularly in dynamic and uncertain environments. According to Errida and Loffi (2021) and Brauns (2015), organisations must actively employ change management strategies to adapt to evolving external pressures and internal needs. This assertion holds significant relevance for South African municipalities, which continually face challenges due to frequent political transitions and the resultant administrative

instability. The necessity for effective change management strategies becomes apparent as these municipalities strive to maintain operational efficiency and service delivery amidst shifting political landscapes.

The local government elections in South Africa every five years precipitate substantial changes within municipalities, affecting leadership, policies, and administrative structures (Hayes, 2014; Rolland, 2018). Such transitions often lead to disruptions in governance continuity and can hinder the implementation of long-term strategic initiatives. The Auditor General's reports exacerbate these challenges by highlighting a regression in performance due to leadership instability (Auditor General's Report, 2020). Consequently, there is a growing recognition of the need for robust change management frameworks tailored to the unique context of South African municipalities.

The existing literature underscores the inadequacy of traditional change management models in addressing the complex and multifaceted challenges faced by South African municipalities (Nel-Gagiano, 2018; Rolland, 2018). Generic models often fail to account for the specific socio-political dynamics and environmental pressures that characterise the local government sector in South Africa. As a result, there is a call for innovative approaches that can integrate theoretical insights with practical considerations to foster sustainable administrative effectiveness.

In response to these challenges, the study proposes an integrated change management model that combines elements from Kotter's Eight-Step Change Management Model and Lewin's Change Management Model. This hybrid approach aims to provide municipalities with a structured yet flexible framework to navigate political shifts, enhance administrative resilience, and ensure long-term sustainability (Junnaid *et al.*, 2020). By integrating Kotter's emphasis on creating a sense of urgency and Lewin's focus on unfreezing, changing, and refreezing organisational behaviour, the model seeks to mitigate the disruptive effects of political transitions while fostering a culture of continuous improvement and adaptability.

The integrated model also fits the changing needs of South African cities and towns because it offers a planned way to make changes that takes into account how political

duties, administrative abilities, and community expectations all work together (Legoabe, 2021). It emphasises the importance of stakeholder engagement, capacity building, and strategic alignment to facilitate successful change initiatives and mitigate the risks associated with leadership turnover and policy shifts. The study advocates for the adoption of an integrated change management model as a proactive strategy to address the persistent challenges faced by South African municipalities. By leveraging insights from both Kotter and Lewin, this approach not only provides a roadmap for navigating immediate political transitions but also cultivates a resilient organisational culture capable of thriving amidst ongoing environmental changes. Moving forward, further research and practical application of this model are essential to refining its effectiveness and ensuring its relevance in promoting sustainable administrative effectiveness across South African municipalities.

8.3 Summary of findings from the empirical study

The research's key findings are summarised up in connection to the objectives that were set forth in Chapter One. The summary shows that the objectives were met and that the research questions were answered adequately.

8.3.1 Change management practices within the local government sphere

To effectively navigate changing environments, municipalities use a variety of change management practices. Effective leadership is crucial for directing visions, policies, and organisational restructuring during times of change. Leaders should clearly communicate the vision for change, engage with employees, and provide the necessary support and resources. Adapting to new leadership and management visions requires cultivating a culture of continuous learning, open communication, and resilience. Employees should feel empowered to contribute fully towards achieving common goals, fostering a positive environment for change acceptance.

While embracing new strategies and techniques introduced by new leadership, it is essential to maintain operational and cultural consistency where feasible. This can help minimise disruptions and ensure stability during the transition phase. Engaging employees throughout the change process is crucial. Encourage employees to see

change as an opportunity for growth and innovation rather than a threat. Recognise and celebrate achievements and contributions to boost morale and motivation.

Open communication is key to managing change effectively. Leaders should communicate the reasons behind the changes, the expected outcomes, and how employees' roles may evolve. Transparency helps build trust and reduces resistance to change. Provide training and development opportunities to help employees acquire the new skills and competencies needed for the new vision. This supports their adaptation to new roles and responsibilities.

Establish mechanisms for collecting feedback from employees throughout the change process. This allows for adjustments to be made based on insights and concerns raised by those directly affected by the changes. Recognise and celebrate milestones and successes achieved during the implementation of new visions. This reinforces positive behaviours and outcomes, encouraging continued commitment to the change process.

Address resistance to change proactively by understanding its sources and addressing concerns through dialogue and support. Engage with key stakeholders and involve them in decision-making when appropriate. Change management is an iterative process. Continuously evaluate progress against goals and be prepared to adjust strategies as needed based on feedback and evolving circumstances.

In summary, effective change management involves proactive leadership, fostering a supportive culture, maintaining consistency where possible, engaging employees, transparent communication, ongoing learning and development, celebrating successes, managing resistance, and continuous evaluation and adjustment. These practices can help organisations navigate transitions smoothly and achieve sustainable outcomes from new leadership and management visions.

8.3.2 Change management dimensions for administrative effectiveness

The direct dimension of change management focuses on ensuring that the overall direction of the municipality's purpose, vision, mission, and values is clearly articulated and consistently upheld throughout the change process. Municipalities need to clearly

define and communicate their purpose, vision, mission, and values to all stakeholders. This clarity establishes a fundamental framework for evaluating the alignment of all change initiatives. All change activities should be directly aligned with the municipality's overarching goals, vision, and mission. This alignment ensures that every change effort contributes meaningfully to the strategic objectives of the organisation.

Maintain consistency in the approach to managing change across different departments and initiatives within the municipality. Consistency helps in building trust, reducing confusion, and aligning efforts towards common objectives. Leadership plays a crucial role in championing change efforts. Leaders should demonstrate a strong commitment to the organisation's vision and actively support change initiatives through communication, resource allocation, and decision-making. Ensure that change initiatives are integrated into the municipality's organisational culture. This involves fostering a culture that values adaptability, innovation, and continuous improvement.

Municipalities employ a framework that integrates business processes, policies, and procedures to ensure the achievement of strategic objectives. This dimension emphasises the need to follow laws, regulations, and organisational policies to reduce risks and ensure ethical behaviour during transformation initiatives. Change management in municipalities includes strategies and instruments for effectively managing organisational changes. This includes the deliver dimension, which is implementing policies that respond to community demands while aligning with government objectives. Municipal administrations are crucial in executing policies that cater to community needs and guarantee adherence to governance structures. In essence, the municipal deliver dimension involves navigating complex regulatory environments while implementing effective change management strategies to meet community needs and uphold governance standards.

The develop dimension emphasises ongoing review and monitoring of processes to ensure strategies and objectives are achieved effectively. Continuous assessment of performance management plays a fundamental role in identifying areas for improvement and ensuring that change initiatives yield desired outcomes. Establishing clear key performance indicators (KPIs) helps in tracking performance and identifying

areas that require attention or improvement. Regular monitoring of KPIs and other relevant metrics allows municipalities to gauge the effectiveness of their strategies and initiatives. It offers valuable insights into the realisation of intended outcomes and aids in making informed decisions about adjustments and improvements. Municipalities should be prepared to make necessary adjustments based on ongoing assessment and feedback to enhance the efficacy of change initiatives. Involving stakeholders throughout the change process is critical for gaining their support and commitment. This includes seeking input, feedback, and active engagement from a diverse range of stakeholders such as employees, customers, partners, and community members. Municipalities, through active stakeholder involvement, can align their change projects with the needs, preferences, and expectations of those impacted by the initiatives. This alignment increases the likelihood of successful implementation and acceptance of changes. In summary, the municipal develop dimension based on the principles highlighted involves continuous assessment, strategic monitoring, stakeholder engagement, and flexibility in adapting strategies to optimise outcomes and ensure the success of change initiatives within municipal contexts.

8.3.3 Internal and external factors affecting change management practices in municipalities

Change management practices in municipalities are influenced by a variety of internal and external factors. These factors can either facilitate or hinder effective change implementation.

8.3.3.1 Internal factors affecting change management practices in municipalities

The internal factors influencing change management practices in municipalities include:

- **Legal and Regulatory Requirements**

Compliance with laws, regulations, and mandates imposed by higher levels of government or regulatory bodies can dictate the need for change and the methods by which it must be implemented.

- **Technology**

Advances in technology can create opportunities for efficiency improvements or new service delivery methods. Municipalities must adapt to technological changes to remain effective and competitive.

- **Leadership and governance**

The commitment of municipal leaders and their ability to communicate a clear vision for change are crucial. Strong leadership can drive change forward effectively.

- **Organisational culture**

The existing norms, values, and beliefs within the municipality can either support or resist change efforts. A culture that values innovation and adaptability is more conducive to successful change management.

- **Employee engagement and resistance,**

The attitudes and perceptions of employees towards change play a significant role. Resistance from staff who fear job loss or increased workload can slow down or derail change efforts.

- **Resources**

Adequate financial, human, and technological resources are essential. Lack of resources can impede change initiatives and make implementation challenging.

8.3.3.2 External factors affecting change management practices in municipalities

The external factors influencing change management practices in municipalities include:

- **Political environment**

Changes in local government policies, regulations, or leadership can impact change management practices. Political support or opposition can significantly influence the success of initiatives.

- **Social and demographic changes**

Shifts in the demographics or needs of the community served by the municipality may necessitate changes in services or infrastructure, driving the need for change management.

- **Increasing demand for globalisation**

Globalisation exposes municipalities to a more diverse range of stakeholders, including multinational corporations, international NGOs, and foreign investors. These stakeholders may have different expectations regarding municipal services, governance standards, and environmental practices. Managing these diverse expectations requires municipalities to adapt and change their strategies accordingly.

8.3.4 Change management model for administrative effectiveness in municipalities

This study suggests municipalities adopt a prototype integrated change management model to promote sustainable administrative effectiveness.

The ICM aims to establish a structured approach to change management tailored specifically for municipalities. It strives to raise awareness among municipalities about the need for change. Make stakeholders aware of the difficulties and opportunities for organisational change. By assembling a capable team, the developed model aspires to mobilise leadership capable of effectively leading the change endeavour. This partnership is critical to guiding the municipality through the intricacies of the change. Furthermore, it entails preparing municipalities and their stakeholders for change by overcoming resistance and preparing them emotionally and operationally for the impending changes.

The ICM highlights the need for establishing a clear and appealing vision for the municipality's future. This vision serves as a road map for managing the transition process. Effective communication is identified as critical to ensuring that all stakeholders understand the change initiative's vision, goals, and progress. Moreover, the ICM promotes a systematic and coordinated approach to change adoption,

maximising its effectiveness. This entails encouraging stakeholders at all levels of the municipality to take action and participate in the change process, instilling a sense of ownership and commitment.

It is considered crucial to celebrate early accomplishments to maintain momentum and effectively communicate the benefits of change to stakeholders. Once initial accomplishments have been achieved, the ICM recommends consolidating these benefits to strengthen the improvements in the organisational culture and practices. The last thing to do is to integrate the changes into the municipal culture so that they become durable and long-lasting improvements. This ICM intends to provide municipalities with a comprehensive framework for efficiently managing change in the context of shifting political and environmental settings. By taking these actions, municipalities can improve their administrative performance, build resilience, and achieve long-term governance success.

8.3.5 Summary of the change management model that can be used by municipalities to enable sustainable administrative effectiveness

- ***Preparing for change***

A comprehensive analysis of the current processes, protocols, and systems in place is necessary in order to conduct an analysis of the administrative processes already in place and identify inefficient areas. By outlining the entire current administrative operations from the beginning to the end, areas of ineffectiveness, challenges, and redundancies can be identified. This entails knowing who is in charge of each stage in a process, how information moves between various stakeholders, and each step itself. Analysing administrative process data can reveal information about performance indicators such as processing speeds, error rates, and resource usage. This analysis can assist in identifying areas that need improvement. Obtaining input from individuals who engage with administrative services as well as from staff members engaged in administrative duties can yield insightful viewpoints regarding areas of difficulty and potential development. By comparing present administrative practices with guidelines or standard procedures in the municipality, it is possible to identify areas in need of improvement. Assessing how well current technological solutions support administrative procedures, it is possible to find areas for automation, simplification, or

system integration. It's critical to successfully convey the need for change as soon as inefficient regions are located.

To do this, establish a sense of urgency, emphasise the need to resolve administrative issues as soon as possible, and highlight the advantages of increasing effectiveness. Create awareness among stakeholders about the need for change, focusing on environmental challenges and political transitions. Stress how ineffective management practices can have a direct bearing on the provision of services, resulting in mistakes, delays, and frustration for the public. Give concrete instances of delays in the administrative process that have had an adverse impact on the people receiving services. Emphasise the significance of citizen happiness and the way that bettering municipal administrative processes might benefit citizens' lives. Provide public input on their encounters with administrative services and demonstrate how improving inefficiencies can lead to higher levels of satisfaction. Demonstrate how streamlining administrative procedures can lead to cost savings through improved resource allocation, reduced errors, and enhanced efficiency. When possible, quantify projected cost reductions to offer hard data supporting the financial advantages of the move.

Describe how streamlining administrative practices might result in better services with fewer mistakes and quicker reaction times. Give an example of how this can improve the organisation's credibility and general reputation. Coordinate the need for administrative enhancements with the overall goals and objectives of the municipality. Demonstrate how the municipality's goal and vision may be supported by increased administrative effectiveness resulting in overall success and sustainability. Municipalities may create a strong case for addressing administrative difficulties and attaining higher effectiveness by thoroughly analysing present administrative practices and clearly conveying the need for change. This can therefore result in better service provision, higher levels of citizen satisfaction, and overall municipality success.

- **Create awareness of the need for administration improvement**

There are various important processes involved in getting stakeholders ready for change and raising awareness of the need for administrative improvement. To successfully inform all stakeholders of the need for administrative improvement, create

a thorough communication strategy. Numerous communication platforms, including community hall meetings, newsletters, emails, social media, and direct conversations, should be incorporated into this plan. Clearly state the justifications for administrative improvement, highlighting the advantages for citizens, staff, and municipal authorities. Emphasise how it contributes to the municipality's goals and objectives and how it will improve citizen satisfaction and service delivery. Present proof of the necessity for change and the possible advantages it will have for the municipality and the community to win over the political leadership of the municipality. Emphasise how addressing the difficulties the municipality has and achieving strategic priorities can be improved by administrative improvement. Engage staff members in the process of change by actively involving them in conversations regarding administrative reform, seeking their opinions, and attending to their concerns. Give them the freedom to offer comments and ideas for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of procedures.

Encourage the community to discuss the necessity of change and the significance of administrative effectiveness in order to reach a consensus. Engage the public in focus groups, questionnaires, and community forums to learn more about their opinions and experiences with administrative services as well as what they would want to see improved. Recognise and deal with any stakeholder resistance or indifference towards change. Allow people the opportunity to speak openly so they can address issues, correct inaccuracies, and enhance understanding of the need for administrative improvements. Encourage agreement among interested parties by highlighting common objectives and the advantages that come from administrative improvement as a whole. Emphasise the need for cooperation and teamwork among municipal officials, staff, and residents in promoting positive change. In order to help stakeholders comprehend the reasoning behind administrative changes and to provide them with the information and abilities required to effectively support and execute change, offer education and training programmes. Celebrate and acknowledge small successes along the way to demonstrate progress and keep administrative improvement projects on track. Provide instances of successful outcomes and the tangible benefits achieved through collaboration. Municipality can set the stage for successful administrative improvement initiatives by overcoming resistance or inertia, establishing consensus about the significance of administrative

effectiveness and the need for change and including municipal officials, employees, and people in discourse.

Implementing change

In order to ensure that different views are taken into account and to promote cooperation across departments, agencies, and community organisations, it is imperative that a cross-functional team of stakeholders be established to spearhead administrative improvement projects. Improving administrative effectiveness means identifying key stakeholders who come from different departments, agencies, and community groups. Department heads, frontline employees, representatives from neighbourhood organisations, and citizen advocates are a few examples of this. Following the identification of important stakeholders, bring them together to create a cross-functional team tasked with leading initiatives for administrative improvement. Make sure the team includes a variety of viewpoints and levels of experience pertinent to the initiative's objectives. Make sure that everyone in the team is aware of their specific tasks and responsibilities so that everyone is contributing to the endeavour. Assign team members' particular responsibilities and deliverables in accordance with their qualifications. Give the cross-functional team the power and tools they need to successfully spearhead change initiatives. This could entail granting access to funds, decision-making power, and other resources required to put administrative improvements into practice. Clearly define the team's objectives and the metrics used to evaluate the administrative improvement project's success. Make sure that these objectives are in line with the organisation's larger strategic goals and priorities. Work together to create an action plan that outlines the activities needed to accomplish the administrative improvement initiative's goals and objectives. Divide the plan into doable tasks with reasonable due dates and checkpoints. Encourage open communication and collaboration among team members by offering regular chances for meetings, updates, and brainstorming sessions. Utilise technological tools and platforms to make document exchange and communication easier. To ensure that the administrative improvement strategy has widespread support, interact with important stakeholders in the community and within the organisation. Inform all relevant parties of the initiative's significance and possible advantages.

Keep a close eye on how well the administrative efficiency programme is doing and adapt as needed. Assess strategy and tactics on a regular basis and be ready to adjust when conditions or priorities change. To show appreciation for the cross-functional team's hard work and dedication, celebrate the milestones and accomplishments they have accomplished. Share success stories, and publicly thank team members for their contributions to keep the initiative moving forward and motivate others. Municipalities can achieve significant administrative improvements that are advantageous to both internal operations and the community at large by assembling a cross-functional team of stakeholders, giving them the authority and tools necessary to spearhead change initiatives, and ensuring widespread support and alignment with strategic goals.

- **Develop clear vision for administrative effectiveness**

Creating a clear vision for administrative effectiveness is crucial to bringing stakeholders together and directing activities towards the intended results. To start, decide what the goals of administrative effectiveness are. Think about what success looks like in terms of reduced costs, better citizen happiness, and simpler operations. These goals must be time-bound, relevant, quantifiable, achievable, and targeted (SMART). To get the intended results, determine the important administrative process areas that require improvement. Workflow efficiency, communication protocols, technology use, resource allocation, and staff training and development are a few examples of these. Create a succinct and concise vision statement that outlines the goals of administrative effectiveness. The vision statement, which also effectively conveys the change's objectives and direction, should inspire and motivate stakeholders. Establish the basic principles and concepts that will guide the achievement of administrative effectiveness. These principles could include openness, responsibility, teamwork, creativity, and continuous growth. The municipality's commitment to these values is strengthened by their inclusion in the vision statement.

Ensure that the municipality's goal and strategic priorities are all in line with the vision for administrative effectiveness. Engage political leadership and top management in order to secure their support and endorsement of the vision, and motivate all parties involved to coordinate their activities in favour of it. Track progress towards attaining

the goal of administrative effectiveness and make necessary modifications in response to input, changing circumstances, or new opportunities. To guide continuous improvements, evaluate performance measures on a regular basis and get feedback from stakeholders. Municipality can provide stakeholders a clear direction and effect meaningful change towards increased efficiency, service delivery, and citizen satisfaction by creating a clear vision for administrative effectiveness, articulating the desired outcomes, and outlining the specific actions needed to achieve them.

- **Implement administrative changes**

A systematic methodology that divides the transformation into manageable phases and milestones is necessary for the methodical implementation of changes in administration. Start by evaluating the administrative procedures as they stand and noting any areas that require development. Create a thorough plan that outlines the changes that must be made as well as the intended results. Divide the change into more manageable phases, with clear goals for each. Inform staff members, management, and any outside partners about the proposed changes. Give concise justifications for the modifications' necessity and the ways in which they will help the municipality. Engage stakeholders at every stage of the process, asking for their opinions and resolving any issues they might have. Make sure that throughout the process, stakeholders have access to continuing support to handle any issues or queries that come up. Perform controlled, smaller-scale pilot tests prior to rolling out changes across the entire municipality. This enables you to spot any possible challenges or obstacles and fix them as necessary before implementing the changes more widely. Keep a close eye on how the administrative changes are coming along and assess how they will affect the municipality as a whole. Get input from interested parties and evaluate if the goals set are being achieved. Based on these comments and the assessment, make any necessary changes to the plan.

Acknowledge accomplishments made along the way of the change. This sustains stakeholders' motivation and sense of well-being. Furthermore, stress the value of continual development and invite stakeholders to continue offering input so that the administrative procedures can be improved even more. Give stakeholders and employees the tools and training they need to handle the changeover successfully.

This could include seminars, online resources, one-on-one assistance, and training sessions.

Sustaining change

Administrative improvement initiatives must be driven by an organisation's culture of empowerment and accountability. By leading by example, leadership may show a strong commitment to accountability and empowerment. It is imperative for leaders to proactively assist and motivate staff members to assume accountability for administrative transformation initiatives. All staff should be made aware of the clear expectations for accountability and empowerment. Remind them that their opinions and ideas are appreciated and that, within the boundaries of their responsibilities, they have the power to decide and carry out changes. Employees that drive administrative changes with initiative, creativity, and accountability should be acknowledged and rewarded. This could take the form of incentives that encourage desirable behaviours, like bonuses, promotions, or praise.

Dismantle departmental silos and promote cooperation and information exchange within the municipality. Provide forums or other venues where staff members from various departments can convene to share insights, pinpoint shared problems, and work together to find solutions. Cultivate an environment that values and promotes innovation by giving staff members the latitude to explore and test out innovative solutions to administrative challenges. Encourage staff members to look beyond their comfort zone and consider original ideas to enhance workflows and processes. Provide feedback channels so that staff members can offer ideas and suggestions for improving the administration. Encourage employees of all levels to provide feedback and give careful consideration to their suggestions. Frequently update employees on the status of development projects and the methods in which their input is being taken into consideration.

Employees can be inspired and empowered to take charge of administrative improvement initiatives and effect positive change within the municipality by cultivating an environment that values empowerment and accountability as well as encouraging cross-departmental collaboration and creativity.

- **Celebrate milestone**

To keep the municipality's momentum and morale high, it is crucial to recognise and celebrate initial achievements and accomplishments in reaching administrative effectiveness objectives. Recognise the contributions made by individuals or groups who helped achieve early wins. Public recognition, handwritten thank-you cards, or even small prizes or incentives can accomplish this. Provide concrete instances of how administrative effectiveness objectives have been met. Measurements like cost reductions, process enhancements, or greater efficiency may be included in this. Visual aids like graphs and charts can make these accomplishments easier for all parties to comprehend and more relatable. To motivate people and show that constructive change is achievable within the municipality, share success stories from other teams or departments. This could include exchanging case studies, testimonies, or even organising seminars or lectures so that groups can benefit from one another's experiences.

Establish clear objectives and recognise your progress towards achieving them as you move towards administrative effectiveness. To commemorate the occasion, this could entail planning a fun team-building exercise, throwing a themed party, or setting up a team lunch or dinner. Remind staff members of the overall goal and vision of initiatives to increase administrative effectiveness. Assist them in realising how their particular efforts are impacting the municipality's overall objectives. As you strive for administrative effectiveness, ask staff members about their strengths and areas for improvement. This keeps workers interested and involved in the process while also promoting a culture of continual development.

- **Institutionalise administrative changes**

In order to institutionalise administrative changes, new practices, guidelines, and behaviour must be incorporated into the governance structure and municipal culture. Establish a culture that values adaptation and continuous growth first. Encourage staff to collaborate, communicate openly, and have a common goal. It is important for leaders to set an example by committing to new behaviours and practices. Examine and update the municipality's governance structures as needed to conform to the latest administrative changes. This could entail setting up distinct lines of power and

decision-making procedures, reorganising departments, and outlining roles and duties.

Create standardised protocols and guidelines for important administrative tasks. Make sure that all staff have easy access to the clear documentation of these processes. To make sure they continue to be effective and efficient, review and update them frequently. Establish accountability systems to ensure staff members adhere to the new practices, guidelines, and procedures. Performance reviews, feedback systems, and recognition initiatives for individuals and groups who exhibit excellent adherence to administrative effectiveness. Give staff members the opportunity to receive training and development so that they can acquire the abilities and information necessary to successfully apply the new procedures. Workshops, seminars, online classes, and programmes for on-the-job training may fall under this category.

To foster a culture of continuous improvement by consistently seeking input from stakeholders, consumers, and staff is recommended. Utilise these comments to pinpoint places where administrative practices need to be improved and refined even more. Administrative effectiveness can become the new standard within the municipality by incorporating new practices, guidelines, and conduct into the governance structure and municipality culture. This guarantees that the changes are long-lasting and deeply integrated into the construction of the municipality, rather than only serving as temporary fixes.

8.6 Implication of the study

The study holds both practical and theoretical implications that are crucial for addressing the challenges faced by South African local governments.

8.6.1 Theoretical Implications:

The theoretical foundation of the study is grounded in the recognition that change management is fundamental to organisational success. As highlighted in the literature, organisations must adapt to changing environments through systematic change management strategies. This foundational understanding forms the basis for exploring how change management theories can be applied within the unique context of South

African municipalities. The study contributes to the theoretical discourse by proposing an integrated change management model tailored specifically for municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal. By integrating insights from existing models and adapting them to local government dynamics, the study advances the theoretical understanding of effective change management practices in public sector organisations.

8.6.2 Practical Implications:

Practically, the study addresses significant challenges faced by South African municipalities, such as leadership instability, poor performance, and ineffective service delivery. These challenges are exacerbated by the frequent changes in political leadership following local government elections, which disrupt administrative continuity and hinder long-term planning and implementation. The prototype integrated change management model proposed in the study aims to provide practical solutions to these issues by offering a structured approach to managing and adapting to change.

By identifying the current change management practices and dimensions adopted by selected municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal (Objectives 1 and 2), the study seeks to bridge the gap between theoretical insights and practical application. It examines factors influencing the adoption of change management practices aimed at sustainable administrative effectiveness (Objective 3), thereby informing strategies that can enhance organisational resilience and efficiency. Furthermore, the development of a prototype change management model (Objective 4) serves as a practical tool for municipalities to navigate political transitions, align strategic objectives with community needs, and improve service delivery.

The study's findings are expected to guide policymakers, administrators, and practitioners in implementing effective change management strategies that promote organisational stability and performance improvement. By focusing on sustainable administrative effectiveness, the study not only addresses immediate challenges but also lays a foundation for long-term governance and service delivery improvements in KwaZulu-Natal municipalities. This practical approach is essential for mitigating the

adverse effects of political and administrative instability, thereby fostering a more resilient and responsive local government sector in South Africa.

8.7 Recommendations

Here are some recommendations for municipalities based on the study's findings about municipalities' current change management practices and their implications:

Municipalities should continue to prioritise strategic planning that aligns with organisational goals, vision, and mission. This ensures that change initiatives are purposeful and contribute directly to desired outcomes. Regular reviews and updates of strategic plans should incorporate feedback from stakeholders to maintain relevance and responsiveness. Additionally, effective stakeholder involvement remains critical. Municipalities should establish robust mechanisms for engaging stakeholders throughout the change process, particularly during political transitions. This includes transparent communication, consultation on key decisions, and fostering partnerships that enhance community support and ownership of change initiatives.

Leadership continuity and support are essential for successful change management. Municipal leaders should demonstrate commitment to change initiatives, provide clear direction, and allocate resources effectively. Continuous managerial support helps maintain momentum and encourages employee buy-in. Moreover, effective communication is paramount to managing change.

Municipalities should implement comprehensive communication strategies that promote transparency, share information timely, and address stakeholder concerns. This fosters trust, minimises resistance, and aligns expectations across all levels of the organisation.

Municipalities should invest in ongoing training programs, workshops, and skills enhancement opportunities that empower employees to embrace new roles and responsibilities resulting from organisational changes.

Furthermore, this study recommends adopting the proposed ICM model tailored for municipalities. This model, derived from comprehensive literature and best practices,

provides a structured framework comprising cohesive phases and actionable steps. It facilitates effective change management, navigates political transitions, and enhances administrative sustainability amidst environmental challenges.

8.8 Limitations and suggestions for future research

The study has a number of limitations that need to be taken into account. First, it is noted that the sample size is a limitation that might affect the depth and breadth of the results. Furthermore, the breadth of insights gained may be constrained if data collection is done just through interviews. Moreover, the study's exclusive focus on a small number of KwaZulu-Natal municipalities points to a geographic restriction that would limit the applicability of the findings to the larger community of South African municipalities. Therefore, it is recommended to exercise caution when applying these findings to municipalities that are not included in the study.

The study suggests increasing the sample size and using a mixed-methods strategy in subsequent studies to solve these constraints. Future research could benefit from this methodological improvement in terms of consistency and reliability. Extending the scope of the study and integrating a variety of data collection methods can enhance our understanding of change management processes in municipal contexts.

8.9 Summary of the chapter

The study's final chapter offers conclusions and suggestions derived from the preceding chapters. It furnishes contextual details, elucidates the study's objectives, and establishes the framework for the conclusions and recommendations. The section also includes a brief synopsis of all previous chapters, summarises the main conclusions drawn from the analysis of the body of current literature, and focuses on the key conclusions drawn from empirical research techniques. The study's wider implications, such as possible effects on future research areas, practice, or procedure are also explained. The chapter also offers practical suggestions based on the findings and conclusions of the study. These include recommendations for best practices, areas for development, or strategies for further research. This chapter also identifies limitations that were encountered during the study and proposes areas for further

research to address these restrictions or delve deeper into related subjects. Overall, Chapter Eight summarises the research process and provides analysis, suggestions, and comments that contribute to advanced knowledge of the study's subject and field-related ramifications.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: CONSENT



Full Title of the Study: A prototype integrated change management model for sustainable administrative effectiveness in KwaZulu-Natal municipalities

Names of Researcher/s: Busisiwe Audrey Sibisi

Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Busisiwe A Sibisi, about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: _____.
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Full Name of Participant	Date	Time	Signature	Right
Thumbprint				

I, Busisiwe A Sibisi herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

<u>Busisiwe Audrey Sibisi</u>	<u>29/06/2022</u>	_____
Full Name of Researcher	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Full Name of Witness (If applicable)	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Full Name of Legal Guardian (If applicable)	Date	Signature

9 June 2022

Please note the following:

Research details must be provided in a clear, simple and culturally appropriate manner and prospective participants should be helped to arrive at an informed decision by use of appropriate language (grade 10 level- use Flesch Reading Ease Scores on Microsoft Word), selecting of a non-threatening environment for interaction and the availability of peer counselling (Department of Health, 2004).

If the potential participant is unable to read/illiterate, then a right thumb print is required and an impartial witness, who is literate and knows the participant e.g. parent, sibling, friend, pastor, etc. should verify in writing, duly signed that informed verbal consent was obtained (Department of Health, 2004).

If anyone makes a mistake completing this document e.g. a wrong date or spelling mistake, a new document has to be completed. The incomplete original document has to be kept in the participant's file and not thrown away, and copies thereof must be issued to the participant.

References:

Department of Health: 2004. *Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Structures and Processes* <http://www.doh.gov.za/docs/factsheets/guidelines/ethnics/>

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NOTE: Information in brackets in the Letter of Information is to be used as a guide in completing the Letter of Information. This information as well as the general section at the end of the Letter of Information and Consent document must be deleted before attaching the document to the PG 2a.

9 June 2022

APPENDIX B: LETTER OF INFORMATION

Appendix B



LETTER OF INFORMATION

Title of the Research Study : A prototype integrated change management model for sustainable administrative effectiveness in KwaZulu-Natal municipalities

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: Busisiwe Audrey Sibisi, Master of Business Administration

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: Dr C.J Nyide, DBA

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the study is to critically evaluate change management practices and examine factors that affect the implementation of processes of changes in South African local government. The study will reveal the challenges faced by the selected municipalities in KwaZulu Natal when effecting change management practices, and the impact of the change management practices in the administrative performance of municipalities. It will determine the factors and dimensions that lead to sustainability and the effectiveness of the administration in the local government. Furthermore, it will recommend the adoption of a prototype integrated change management model that can be implemented by those municipalities in order to have sustainable and effectiveness of administrative practices.

Greeting: How are you?

Introduce yourself to the participant: I am a student at Durban University of Technology doing research for my Doctor of Philosophy in Business and Information 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.

Outline of the Procedures: The aim of this study is to discover and examine critical factors that affect the effective management of change in selected municipalities in KZN and to suggest the development of a prototype integrated change management model for implementation by these municipalities. In order to address the aforementioned aims of this study, the following objectives have been developed, which is to identify change management model currently adopted by selected municipalities in KZN, and to develop a prototype change management model that can be used by municipalities to enable sustainable administrative effectiveness. The study will adopt the qualitative method because the nature of this research is concerned with aspects of reality, and will collect the primary data through the direct communication using one-on-one interviews with relevant respondents. The interview process will be recorded. The data will be analysed by examining all the information or data collected from various sources. The theory collected during the interview will be analysed with aim of achieving the objective of the study. Interviews will take place at the time and venue suitable to you. It will take approximately 60 minutes while audio recording the interview to capture your feedback.

9 June 2022

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A prototype integrated change management model for sustainable administrative effectiveness in KwaZulu-Natal municipalities

Section A: Demographic Information

Please mark with an x or (√) in the box with the appropriate response. Make one box only.

1. How long have you been working for this municipality?

0-1 year	
1-5 years	
5-10years	
10-15years	
15 or more years	

2. How long have you been working for the local government at a management position?

0-1 year	
1-5 years	
5-10years	
10-15years	
5 or more years	

3. What is your position in the municipality?

Manager	
Senior Manager	
Head of Department	
Municipal Manager	
Other (Please State the position)	

4. What is your age?

Below 20 years	
20-29 years	
30-39 years	
40-49 years	
50-59 years	
0 years and over	

5. What is your highest qualification?

Below matric	
Matric	
Certificate	
Diploma	
Undergraduate degree	
Honours/B.Tech	
Masters	
PhD	

6. What is your gender?

Male	
Female	

Section B: change management practices currently adopted by selected municipalities in KZN

7. Has there been a change of leadership or management in your municipality in the past 6 years?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

8. If your response was yes in the previous question, please answer the following questions.

8.1 How the organisational culture has been affected by the change in the leadership?

8.2 How did your management accomplish the whole process of change management?

8.3 Did your municipality conduct a need assessment for the change management? If the answer is yes, explain how it was conducted.

8.4 Was the change management clear and compatible with the vision or philosophy of your municipality? Support your answer.

8.5 When change was effected in your organisation, was there any change management strategic plan established with all other stakeholders? How were stakeholders involved in the plan?

8.6 How did the existing management supported and committed themselves on ensuring that the change management was sustainable?

8.7 During the change management process were the key staff or champions selected? Please explain how they were selected.

8.8 How the key staff were allocated the tasks relating to the change management process?

8.9 How did the management ensured that adequate human resources were deployed properly to support the whole process of change?

8.10 Did the municipality communicate the change to the employees before it was implemented and how was that done?

8.11 How the employees were trained or educated about the change management practice that was implemented?

8.12 After the change management process, how employees were informed of the new development or changes within the municipality?

8.13 What procedures or processes that were developed as a result of the implementation of change management?

8.14 How the change management practice was monitored during the implementation process?

8.15 How did your municipality evaluate the outcome attained from the change of the leadership?

Section C: Interview questions for achieving objective two

9. Five Dimensions of Change:

9.1 **Direct:**

9.1.1 What was the overall direction and objective of the change management in your organisation?

9.1.2 Was the purpose of the change articulated to the staff of the municipality by the management?

9.1.3 Did the municipality had a clear vision, mission and values of what needs to be achieved by the change. What did the municipality establish towards achieving that?

9.2 Describe:

9.2.1 Which strategic plan and operational plan were developed and adopted by your organisation in order achieve the overall vision?

9.2.2 What are the resource strategies that were implemented by your municipality for the staff retention after the implementation of change management?

9.2.3 Kindly explain the performance management strategy of your municipality.

9.2.4 What are the rewarding strategies for the employees in your municipality?

9.2.5 Explain how effective and efficient is the communications strategy in your municipality?

9.3 Define

9.3.1 What are the procedure and processes that are currently used by the municipality to ensure that service delivery is rendered to the community?

9.3.2 Which policies and regulations are used by your municipality to achieve its strategic goals?

9.3.3 What are the consequence of an employee who does not comply with the implementation of the change in an organisation?

9.4 Deliver

9.4.1 What are the expectation of employees from the leadership or your senior management during change management process?

9.4.2 How did management measure if the change management process was successful or not?

9.5 Develop

9.5.1 How does the municipality evaluate and review if the change management had positive or negative result in the working environment?

9.5.2 How often is the evaluation and analysis of the change done in your municipality?

Section C: Interview questions for achieving objective three

10. How does your municipality motivate officials to adapt to a change management process that is aimed at sustaining the effective administration?

11. How does your municipality ensure that the administrative structure is adequately managed during the change management process?

12. During the change management processes, was ever your municipality been affected by resistance to change? How has the municipality addressed that?

13. How do staff and management support the successful implementation of change management?

14. In your municipality, have fraud and corruption affected management of change? If yes, explain how? How were fraud and corruption incidents addressed in relation to change management processes?

15. Change is often influenced by the deployment of new technological solutions. Has your municipality been affected by changes in the administrative processes as a result of the introduction of new technological solutions? Please explain.

16. Has change management within your municipality been affected by community protests? Please explain.

17. Has change management been affected by political interference in your municipality? Please explain and describe how does your municipality address issues of political interference during change management processes?

18. Has change management been affected by government laws and regulations in your municipality? Please explain and describe government laws and regulations that have affected your municipality's change management processes?

APPENDIX D: GATEKEEPERS' LETTERS

UPHONGOLO LOCAL MUNICIPALITY



UPHONGOLO MUNISIPALITEIT / MUNICIPALITY

Rig Korrespondensie aan:
DIE MUNISIPALE BESTUURDER

Address Correspondence to:
THE MUNICIPAL MANAGER

MUNISIPALE KANTOOR
MUNICIPAL OFFICE

Martinstraat/Street 61

Posbus/P.O. Box 191
Pongola 3170

Tel: (034) 413 1223
Faks/Fax: (034) 413 1706

E-mail:
records@uphongolo.gov.za

24 MAY 2022

Miss Busisiwe A. Sibisi
7 Snipe Crescent
Yellowwood Park
Durban
4004

Dear Madam

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A STUDY


UPhongolo Local Municipality is in receipt of your request to conduct a study towards your dissertation topic: "*A prototype integrated change management model for sustainable administrative effectiveness in KwaZulu-Natal municipalities*" through Durban University of Technology.

This serves to inform you that authority has been granted by the Municipality to conduct a study.

The Municipality guarantees its employees cooperation's throughout the entire process until the study is complete.

Wishing you all the best of luck in your research paper.

Yours faithfully


Acting: Municipal Manager

UMFOLOZI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY



UMFOLOZI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY KZ-281

P. O. Box 96
Kwa-Mbonambi
3915

25 Bredelia Street
Kwa-Mbonambi
3915

Tel: 035-580 1421
Fax: 035-580 1141
Web: www.umfolozi.gov.za

09 May 2022

Enquiries: Office of the Municipal Manager

7 Snipe Crescent

Yellowwood Park

Durban

4004

Dear Ms. B. Sibisi

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT THE STUDY WITHIN UMFOLOZI MUNICIPALITY

1. The above matter has reference.
2. I am pleased to inform you that your request to conduct a study on "A prototype integrated change management model for sustainable administrative effectiveness in Kwa-Zulu Natal municipalities" has been approved.
3. The municipality reserves the right to withdraw the permission when code of ethics for researchers are breached.
4. For any clarity relating to this can be directed to the office of the Chief Operations Officer: Mr. T.L. Mfusi on 035 580 1421 during normal working hours.
5. Hoping this is in good order.

Mr. K.E. Gamede
Municipal Manager

Tel: 035-580 1421

Fax: 035-580 1141

Email: coo@umfolozi.org.za

UMKHANYAKUDE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY



OFFICE OF THE ACTING MUNICIPAL MANAGER

P. O. Box 449
Mkuze
3965

Harlingen 13433
Kingfisher Road
Mkuze

Tel : 035 573 8600
Fax : 035 5731094
Website: www.ukdm.gov.za

Email : mm@ukdm.gov.za

Miss B.A Sibisi
7 Snipe Crescent
Yellowwood Park
Durban
4004

Dear Madam,

RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT A STUDY AT UMKHANYAKUDE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

UMkhanyakude District Municipality is in receipt of your request to conduct a study towards your dissertation topic: "*A prototype integrated change management model for sustainable administrative effectiveness in KwaZulu-Natal municipalities*" through Durban University of Technology.

You are hereby granted a permission to conduct a research and interviews with the Municipal employees as per your sample and you are granted a permission to request information that may be relevant to your study.

The Municipality further acknowledge that a copy of your research containing your finding and recommendations will be made available to this municipality.

Further enquiries in this regard can be directed to the personal assistant in the office of the Municipal Manager on nomfundo@ukdm.gov.za

Wishing you all the best in your research.

Yours faithfully,

10/05/2022

MR. M. A NKOSI
Acting Municipal Manager

APPENDIX E: ETHICAL APPROVAL LETTER



Faculty Research Office
Durban University of Technology
Date: 20 April 2023

Student: Busiswe Audrey Sibisi
Student Number: 19701524
Degree: PhD BIM
Email: 19701524@dut4life.ac.za
Supervisor: Dr C. Nyide
Supervisor email: nyidec@dut.ac.za

Dear Ms Sibisi

ETHICAL APPROVAL: LEVEL 2

I am pleased to inform you that the Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) following feedback from two reviewers, has granted preliminary permission for you to conduct your research '**A prototype integrated change management model for sustainable administrative effectiveness in KwaZulu-Natal municipalities**'.

When ethics approval is granted:

You are required to present the letter at your research site(s) for permission to gather data. Please also note that your research instruments must be accompanied by the letter of information and the letter of consent for each participant, as per your research proposal.

This ethics clearance is valid from the date of provisional approval on this letter for one year. A student must apply for recertification 3 months before the date of this expiry.

Recertification is required every year until after corrections are made, after examination, and the thesis is submitted to the Faculty Registrar.

A summary of your key research findings must be submitted to the FRC on completion of your studies.

Kindest regards.

Yours sincerely

Dr Mogiveny Rajkoomar
FRC Chair
Faculty of Accounting and Informatics
Durban University of Technology
Ritson Campus

APPENDIX F: TURNITIN REPORT

Draft Thesis

ORIGINALITY REPORT

SIMILARITY INDEX **9%** **7** INTERNET SOURCES% **5%** PUBLICATIONS **4%** STUDENT PAPERS

MATCH ALL SOURCES (ONLY SELECTED SOURCE PRINTED)

2% ★ researchspace.ukzn.ac.za
Internet Source

Exclude quotes On Exclude matches < 10 words
Exclude bibliography Off

APPENDIX G: PROOF OF LANGUAGE EDITING

Sury Bisetty Academic Editing Services

CIPC No. 2021/360666/07



The pen is mightier than the sword

To the whom it may concern

I edited the thesis titled: A prototype integrated change management model for enhancing sustainable administrative effectiveness in KwaZulu-Natal municipalities, by Busisiwe Audrey Sibisi, student number, 19701524, submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Business and Information Management in the Faculty of Accounting and Informatics at the Durban University of Technology.

Sury Bisetty

21 August 2024

Professional Language and Technical Editor

CONTACT DETAILS

Email: surybisetty11@gmail.com

Cell no: 0844932878

Tel.: 031 7622 766

MEMBER OF:

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South African Council of Educators (222277)
SAMEA (761237008553)

CERTIFICATION:

BA. PG. UHDE (English Majors)
MLA – Editing & proofreading for academic purposes
ELSEVIER – Editor's guide to reviewing articles
Editing Mastery: How to Edit to Perfection: PEGSA
Complete writing, editing master class: Udemy
PEGSA: Critical Reading, et al.

Disclaimer: My editing adds tremendous value to your document, but I am only human. Although I rigorously check and recheck my work, it is impossible to guarantee 100% perfection.

Please note, I provided language and technical editing as per discussion with the client. The content of the thesis was not amended in any way. The edited work described here may not be identical to that submitted. The author, at his/her sole discretion, has the prerogative to accept, delete, or change amendments/suggestions made by the editor before submission.

