

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF
POTCHEFSTROOM MUNICIPALITY**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 STUDY	1
1.2 BACKGROUND	1
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT	5
1.4 OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH TO THE STUDY	7
1.5 IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH	7
1.6 METHODOLOGY	8
1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY	9
1.8 STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION	10
1.9 CONCLUSION	11

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

2. INTRODUCTION	12
2.1 BASE OF THEORY OF THE DISCIPLINE	12
2.2 CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE OTHER THEORIES	14
2.3 MANAGEMENT STYLES	21
2.4 CONCLUSION	22



CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE SURVEY

3.	INTRODUCTION	23
3.1	SPECIFIC THEORY RELATED TO THE PROBLEM	23
3.2	DISCUSSION OF RELEVANT STUDIES	33
3.3	CONCLUSION	43

CHAPTER 4

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

4.	INTRODUCTION	45
4.1	DISCUSSION OF THE PERCEIVED PROBLEM	45
4.2	SUB-PROBLEMS	48
4.3	FORMATION OF OBJECTIVES	56
4.4	CLOSING COMMENTS	56

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.	INTRODUCTION	58
5.1	RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY	58
5.2	THE QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPED FOR THIS STUDY	62
5.3	STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF QUESTIONNAIRE	63
5.4	POPULATION AND SAMPLING	64
5.5	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	65
5.6	CLOSING COMMENTS ON RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	65

CHAPTER 6

RESULTS

6.	INTRODUCTION	66
6.1	PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS	66
6.2	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	70
6.3	COMMENT ON THE RESULTS	80

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.	INTRODUCTION	81
7.1	POLICIES	81
7.2	KNOWLEDGE	82
7.3	MANAGEMENT	84
7.4	COMMUNICATION	86
7.5	THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	87
7.6	TESTING THE MAIN PROBLEM	90
7.7	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	90
7.8	AREAS OF FUTURE STUDY	90
7.9	CLOSING COMMENT	90
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	92

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 6.1 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	70
TABLE 6.2 MANAGEMENT	71
TABLE 6.3 POLICIES	71
TABLE 6.4 AWARENESS	72
TABLE 6.5 PROMOTION AND PARTICIPATION	73
TABLE 6.6 MECHANISM	73
TABLE 6.7 LACK OF EDUCATION	74
TABLE 6.8 ACCOUNTABILITY	74
TABLE 6.9 INEFFECTIVENESS	75
TABLE 6.10 ETHICAL CONDUCT	76
TABLE 6.11 EFFECTIVENESS	76
TABLE 6.12 CAPACITY	76
TABLE 6.12 COMMUNICATION	77
TABLE 6.13 COMMUNICATION (MEETINGS)	77
TABLE 6.14 COMMUNICATION (OTHER FORMS)	78
TABLE 6.15 DEDICATED UNIT	78
TABLE 6.16 CONSTRAINTS	79

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 6.1 GENDERS	66
FIGURES 6.2 AGES	67
FIGURES 6.3 QUALIFICATIONS	68
FIGURES 6.4 EXPERIENCES	69

ANNEXURE A

DECLARATION

“I declare that; Public Participation: A Critical Assessment of the Potchefstroom Municipality is my own work, that all sources used quoted have been dedicated and acknowledged by means of complete references and that this dissertation was not previously submitted by me, or anybody for a degree at any other institution, university.”

JOSEPHINE DIMAKATSO MWELI

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to focus on public participation in the context of local government, with specific reference to the Potchefstroom Municipality.

Public participation in the formulation and implementation of policy is not a new phenomenon in South Africa. Before the introduction of the democratic constitutional dispensation in April 1994, it was limited and not supported by legislation. The principle of community, citizen or public participation in South Africa does not take place in a vacuum. The Municipal Structures Act, *inter alia*, provides that the municipality must develop a culture of municipal governance which complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance.

The objectives of the study include, the explanation of the concept of public participation, the determination of the policy and legislation provision for public participation in the Potchefstroom Municipality, mechanisms and processes used for public participation as well as constraints, challenges and strategies to enhance public participation.

The study found that policies regulating public participation are in place and that mechanisms to promote it are effectively managed. Public participation is generally understood by role players and effectively managed. But, it was also found that there is a lack of accountability and community disillusionment in some areas of service delivery. There is also a lack of ethical conduct, perceived corruption and this will require the municipality to act promptly to deal with these challenges. Capacity building is required for Council officials in areas of skills that they require to ensure service delivery and to implement Batho-Pele (People-First). There are various forms of communication in place; however, there is a need to introduce strategies to reach out to all residents in languages that they understand. Meaningful participatory government provides active and direct involvement of the community in matters that affect their well-being.

CHAPTER 1

1. Introduction

The study focuses on the Potchefstroom Municipality which is rated among the best in the country. The municipal area is divided into 20 wards and it has a population of approximately 250 000. In 2003, Potchefstroom won the provincial leg of the Vuna Awards for Municipal Performance Excellence in the North West Province. The Vuna Award is an initiative of the Department of Provincial and Local Government to reward municipalities that among others, are service delivery orientated, engage in community projects, job creation and sound financial management (Botha, 2005:1).

1.1 Study

This study will focus on public participation in South Africa in the context of local government in general, with specific reference to the Potchefstroom Municipality. The introductory chapter will provide a background on the motivation for the study in order to place the problem in context. The problem statement that arises, the research problem and objectives and the approach to the study are also provided. The research approach in this study is descriptive, quantitative and interpretive. To clarify this approach, it has also been necessary to explain the manner in which information was gathered, as well as the research method employed. This chapter concludes with an overview of the chapters contained in the research.

1.2 Background

South Africa, like many other countries in the southern hemisphere, made its historic transition from authoritarian rule to democracy with the founding elections in 1994. In the past 13 years, many changes have occurred, among others the institutionalisation of formal structures for representation and participation. Public participation in the formulation and implementation of policy is not a new

phenomenon in South Africa. Before the introduction of a democratic constitutional dispensation in April 1994, however, it was limited and not supported by legislation. For instance, in terms of Section 52 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 110 of 1983), which was in effect from 1983 to April 1994, participation in general elections was limited to white, coloured and Indian citizens only. Furthermore, the said Constitution made no specific provision for other forms of public participation. Black South African citizens were not given an opportunity to participate in general elections, or to make an input into the process of making and implementing policies that affected them. Their involvement in the process of policy implementation was limited to compliance with the policies of the government.

Even though little provision was made in an official sense for public participation, black South African citizens attempted to influence the process of policy-making and implementation in various ways during the apartheid era. For instance, they embarked on mass demonstrations and boycotts, such as the historical one held on 21 March 1960 at Sharpeville, for the purpose of protesting against the legislation which required black people to always carry passes or reference books; and the rent and consumer boycotts which occurred in various parts of the country during the 1980s.

The introduction of a democratic constitutional dispensation in 1994 replaced the previous selective and undemocratic government. Consequently, it opened up new opportunities for public participation in policy-making and implementation.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 200 of 1993) enlarged the scope of public participation in the affairs of the public sector. For instance, Sections 16 and 21 of this Constitution provided for the right of assembly, demonstration and petition, as well as political rights for all South African citizens.

The interim Constitution paved the way for the current Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) which further enlarged the scope of public

participation through the provisions of Section 152(1)(e) and 195(1)(e), which encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in matters of local government and public participation in policy-making.

In addition to the constitutional provisions for public participation which are stipulated in the 1996 Constitution, statutory provisions in legislation, which also encourage public participation, were promulgated anew.

The promulgation of these statutory provisions went hand in hand with the emergence and prominence of the role of community forums and interest groups in policy-making and implementation in South Africa. Furthermore, the adoption of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) as a policy framework of the government and its subsequent implementation reinforced the idea of public participation in policy-making and implementation. This is also due to the fact that the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) is intended to be a people-driven process (African National Congress, 1994:5). In a post-apartheid society, the emphasis is now on empowerment of the entire public, to enable all its members to change their lives and their environment to counter the decades-long erosion of their dignity and confidence as individuals and as communities.

Apartheid has damaged the spacial, social and economic environments, in which people live, work, raise families and seek to fulfill their aspirations. Local government has a critical role to play in rebuilding local communities and environment, as the basis for a democratic, integrated, prosperous and truly non-racial society. The building of local democracy has been one of the most critical challenges of the overall transformation process in South Africa (SA, 1998:1).

Local Government in South Africa is undergoing a process of fundamental transformation (Venter, 2003: 201). It is a process which affects all citizens and will impact on the places they live, the services they have access to, the economics they

are part of and the social communities which give identity and security and define who they are as local communities and as a nation.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) envisaged a complete transformation of the local government system. It did not only incorporate the local sphere of government as an integral component of the democratic state, but also prescribed and envisaged a new, expanded and developmental role for the local sphere as a whole and for each of the municipalities that constitute this sphere.

Although local government is democratised, the local government system is not yet fully transformed and is still structured to meet the demands of the previous era. With the policy framework set out in the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) for democratic development and effective, efficient and sustainable local government, the dire need arose for the fundamental transformation of local government with a policy that reflects the values of the constitution, and which addresses the serious challenges that face this sphere of government.

In addition to the constitution, the Local Government White Paper (SA, 1998) contains policies that not only address the entire sphere of government, but also establishes a basis for a new developmental local government system. Local Government is the sphere of government that interacts the closest with communities and is responsible for the services and infrastructure that are essential to the well being of people (Craythorne, 2003: 100). It must work closely with citizens, groups and communities to realise a decent quality of life which meets the social, economic and material needs of the community.

The challenge of meeting the needs of local communities requires a political leadership able to build partnerships with communities, business, labour and other public agencies. A political leadership that engages in ongoing dialogue with a wide range of local actors will be able to identify and act on opportunities to build

partnerships between sectors. In this way, human and financial resources and capacity can be mobilised to achieve developmental goals (Schoeman, 2002:2).

There is no doubt that from the policy and legislative position, South Africa remains committed to encouraging and creating an enabling environment for participation at all levels of government. Nonetheless, it must be acknowledged that a great deal needs to be done by both government and civil society in ensuring that the desired participation, particularly at local community level, is achieved (Mtaka, 2002:8).

As indicated, provision has been made to work with communities in the running of local government. In particular, section 73 of the South African Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 requires local government to establish Local Wards Committees. Chapter 4 of the Municipal Structures Act encourages that the municipality must develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance. The municipality must enable participation through capacity building in the community and among staff and councilors.

1.3 Problem statement

The interaction between the public, political and administrative institutions in the South African democracy takes on a multiplicity of forms and aspects and is, in principle, complicated. The heterogeneous public, government, parliament, provincial, municipal authorities and administration, business sector, unions, political parties and community organisations have their own function, and their own professional tendencies, which are often a source of controversy. They also often derive their power and authority from various statutory sources. Public participation offers a channel through which the public can give inputs into decision-making.

This is all the more essential in South Africa's case, as the country emerges from an apartheid rule during which the majority of South Africans were actively turned

away from and denied the right to participate in the process of governing. The legacy of apartheid rule continues to haunt the implementation of public participation programmes in the communities. Often, the democratic institutions of Government as well as their concomitant processes and rules, which aim to bring closer to communities, appear them as something distant, alien and perplexing. No reminder is needed of the inherent danger this poses for a healthy system of democracy. Citizens will not support democratic institutions that appear foreign or incomprehensible to them.

However, popular support for democracy and its institutions and policies is not, as is commonly assumed, expressed solely via the ballot box during elections, but is also dependent upon an ongoing and regular interaction between the public and these institutions and their policies.

In view of the background provided above, the main problem to be addressed by this study is to determine the role of public participation in the management of the Potchefstroom municipality.

1.3.1 Research questions

The need for such reflection as stated in the problem statement is important, because the determination of the level of public interaction with democratic institutions can serve as a useful benchmark whereby the progress of democratisation in South Africa and the consolidation of democratic gains can be assessed.

Through the application of primary and secondary service research methods, the following research questions, which could lead to the possible solution to the problem statement, will be pursued.

- What is public participation?

- What provision has been made in terms of policy and legislation regarding public participation in local government?
- What mechanisms and processes are being used for public participation?
- What are the constraints and challenges of public participation?
- How can public participation be enhanced to ensure effective and efficient involvement of citizens in the management of the municipality?

1.4 Objectives and approach to the study

The following objectives are set:

- To explain the concept of public participation.
- To determine the policy and legislation provision for public participation in local government.
- To examine mechanisms and processes used for public participation in the Potchefstroom Municipality.
- To identify constraints and challenges of public participation.
- To recommend strategies to enhance public participation.

1.5 Importance of the research

The reason for choosing this municipality as the focus of the study is because it can be regarded as a role model institution. The critical assessment of public participation in the management process can identify guidelines for similar institutions. The study also has academic value given the fact that there has not been much documented research that focuses on public participation particularly in respect of local government. Currently the government is faced with the challenge of making public participation work, especially at local government level where there is enormous pressure for service delivery.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

This study is based on a variety of sources. Besides primary research done by way of a qualitative and participative observation study, various leading persons will also be consulted, interviewed and used with the other primary and secondary sources.

1.6.1 Information gathering

In an effort to obtain information and knowledge on the field of study and research method, primary as well as secondary literature was consulted. The use of the Constitution and statutes of the Republic of South Africa have, for instance provided the framework within which public participation takes place.

1.6.2 Research method

A comprehensive literature study was done in which secondary literature was used. Semi-structured interviews were held with selected respondents (specific persons in the case study of Potchefstroom). An empirical study was undertaken in which semi-structured interviews were used to gather information. The semi-structured interviews were held with relevant role-players in the Potchefstroom city council who were selected on a random basis. Respondents were selected from the Council, Ward committee members, members from some of the Executive Mayor's advisory committees and leaders of political parties in the Council.

Interviews with these role-players are aimed at soliciting information regarding mechanisms and processes established to promote public participation in local government as well as constraints and challenges in this regard. The secondary purpose of the interviews is to examine the perception that local communities are not involved in the running of the affairs of the municipality. On the basis of the research objectives all relevant information will be analysed, evaluated and presented scientifically.

1.6.3 Literature study

Literature on development, community development, community participation, democracy and public participation that represents important literature sources of case studies where public participation is addressed with regard to specific matters is used in this study.

The most important literature on the evaluation of participation as an aid to gaining a better understanding of evaluation as an appropriate research methodology includes:

- Relevant literature on public participation.
- Unpublished dissertations and theses.
- South African Constitution and other relevant policies and legislation of the Republic of South Africa.
- Official and unofficial documents of the Potchefstroom Municipality.
- Research reports.
- Political speeches.
- Articles from newspapers and journals.

1.7 THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The research focuses on public participation at local government level in South Africa in general, and in particular on the municipality of Potchefstroom in the North West Province.

1.7.1 TERMINOLOGY

Comprehensive conceptual clarification of terms pertinent to the research is provided. The terms utilised throughout the study are concisely defined below:

Policy – means a body of rules and regulations which is usually found in Acts, ordinances, by-laws, circulars and memoranda.

Participation – means taking part with others in an exercise.

Public participation – means people who are or may be affected by an exercise taking part in such an exercise.

Governance – refers to the function, actions, process or qualities of government. It does not refer to government structures such as cabinet.

Public hearings – for purposes of the study, means public hearings on all three levels of government.

1.8 Structure of the dissertation

The structure of the various chapters is as follows:

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the background for the motivation for the study in order to place the problem in context.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

This chapter provides a theoretical foundation which will include the base theory of the discipline and a critical review of various theories.

CHAPTER 3 LITERATURE SURVEY

This chapter focuses on the literature study as well as examining policy and legislative framework in the field of development and public participation.

CHAPTER 4: PROBLEM STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

This chapter covers the background to the problem based on theory, sub-problem as well as formulating objectives.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides the justification for the methodology, which includes the population, method of data collection, measuring instrument, operationalisation of variables, qualifying questions and research procedures.

CHAPTER 6: RESEARCH RESULTS

This chapter focuses on information solicited through questionnaires which were distributed to council members, ward committee members, members from the executive mayor's advisory committee and leaders of political parties in council. The chapter focuses on data analysis.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter looks at the findings and states conclusions and implications. It also provides recommendations.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter has laid the basis as well as introducing the study. The next chapter will provide the theoretical foundation of the study.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

2. Introduction

This chapter provides a theoretical foundation which will include the base theory of the discipline and a critical review of various theories. In this regard general management principles, the functional management of the organisation and approaches will be covered.

2.1 Base theory of the discipline

The management of the public sector requires a new approach all together. The next aspect will focus in detail on the concept of management.

2.1.1 Management

Van der Walt and Du Toit (1997: 11) are of the view that from the earliest times people saw the importance of working together to produce services and products which could not be realised through individual attempts. Institutions came into being and it became essential to arrange and coordinate the activities of individuals. As the demands of the community became more sophisticated, larger groups were formed and larger institutions also came into being, which made management and the task of a manager indispensable.

2.1.2 Definition of Management

Van der Walt (1997: 11) points out that there are probably just as many definitions of management as there are authors on the subject. Knight (quoted by South African Management Development Institute, 2002: 108) defines management as the act or the manner of treating, which implies conducting, administration, guidance and control. Management can also be a collective body of those who direct an institution or interest. Management deals with the accomplishment of organisational goals and objectives.

Hersey and Blanchard (quoted by South African Management Development Institute, 2002: 108) on the one hand define management as the process of working with and through individual and groups, accessing and applying all resources for the attainment of organisational goals and objectives.

According to Whetten and Cameron (Quoted by South African Management Development Institute, 2002: 108), effective management should be characterised by good communication skills, management of time and stress, management of individual decisions, recognising, defining and solving problems, motivating and influencing others, delegating, setting goals and articulating a vision, self awareness, team building and managing conflict.

The term management is one that is widely used in everyday work life. Some people see management as a process, others see management as those people sitting in the office the whole day, while others may view management as the activities concerning the controlling of outputs of subordinates (South African Management Development Institute, 2002: 22).

South African Management Development Institute provides the following definitions of management:

- Management is defined as the process of planning, organising, leading and controlling the work of the organisation members and of using all the available organisation resources to reach the stated organisational goals.
- Management on the one hand can also be defined as a set of activities (including planning and decision making, organising, leading and controlling) directed at an organisational resources (human, financial, physical and information) with the aim of achieving organisational goals in an efficient and effective manner.
- It could be said, therefore, that management is about the process where assignments are completed effectively and efficiently with and through other people. The management process implies that all the primary activities that are performed in

getting things done. In management terms, these could be called functions of management. They are typically known as planning, organising, leading and controlling.

2.2 Critical review of the other theories

2.2.1 General management principles

According to Fox and Meyer (1995:101), principles refer to the "...the existence of formal, written procedures, generally not open to the public scrutiny, which prescribe specific courses of action to be taken under specific situations and which bureaucrats must follow without regard to personal preferences or special interests". **The Collins Dictionary and Thesaurus in One Volume** (1989: 671) defines a principle as "... a standard or rule of personal conduct, and principles as a set of morals".

Management is the process through which resources are employed in such a way that the goals of an organisation are accomplished. This process consists of four fundamental elements or activities of management, which are planning, organising, leading and control (Cronje *et al*, 1998: 106).

Planning

It could be said that planning is the starting point of the management process. It is indeed the fundamental element of management that predetermines what the organisation proposes to accomplish and how it intends realising its goals (Cronje *et al*, 1998: 108).

Planning would, therefore, involve the following perspectives:

The determination perspective

In this regard the organisation must determine what it proposes to achieve at some particular time in the future. This means that goals or objectives have to be developed that will serve as guidelines for the organisation and its various departments and sub-departments (Cronje *et al*, 1998: 108).

The decision-making perspective

Under this aspect the goals specify the actions necessary, or the way in which they can be obtained. It is, therefore, important to understand that management has to decide what resources (human, financial, technological, material or physical), should be used to attain these objectives, and in what combinations, and over what period. This is about making decisions between alternative ways of accomplishing the objectives (Cronje *et al*, 1998: 108).

Future perspectives

An objective can be said to be something to be accomplished in the future. What planning does is that it establishes a relationship between the things that have to be done now to bring about certainty in the future. Important is that the future dimension of planning is also intended to cope with change in the business environment (Cronje *et al*, 1998: 109).

It is clear that planning forms the basis of all other tasks of management because it gives the organisation its direction and determines the actions of management. Without planning, organizing would be haphazard, and it would be extremely difficult to lead subordinates and explain clearly where the organisation is heading, and as such planning is indeed indispensable (Cronje *et al*, 1998: 109).

Planning gives direction

It can be said that probably the most important contribution that planning makes to the managerial process is that it gives direction to the organisation. It is about setting objectives, developing plans as well as indicating how to achieve them. It goes to the extent of clarifying the objectives and determining their feasibility. It determines whether the organisation is doing the right things and also help to get rid of all uncertainties and guesswork, thereby reducing risks (Cronje et al, 1998: 109).

Planning promotes cooperation

Planning helps to promote cooperation between the various components and people in the organisation. Once objectives have been developed, tasks and resources can be allocated in such a way that everybody is within the realisation of the objectives. This will enhance the optimum utilisation of scarce resources and thereby lead to productivity and profitability (Cronje *et al*, 1998: 109).

Planning in its very nature is future orientated and it assists to get rid of crisis management. To be future oriented, one will help to mitigate threats in the environment and take steps in time to avert them. Forward planning will ensure that the future will be prosperous (Cronje *et al*, 1998: 109).

Planning is the objective or goal through which the organisation aims to achieve a desirable state. A plan is the means by which the objective is to be realised. Planning is, therefore, a complex process consisting of various activities. Planning may be seen as the identification and formulation of the objectives of an organisation. It is the making of plans or the choice of alternative plans to achieve the objectives, and then the implementation of the selected alternative (Cronje *et al*, 1998:110).

The implementation of the plan would mean that operationalising it in the existing organisation or specifically creating an organisation for the purpose, taking the lead to

ensure that the plan is carried out, and finally exercising control. Planning, however, takes place in close relation to other elements of the management process (Cronje *et al*, 1998:110).

It can, therefore, be said that planning is the starting point of the management process. It determines what an organisation proposes to achieve and how this is to be done.

Organising

As indicated in the aforementioned area, planning is the first fundamental element of the management process defined as the setting of objectives and the development of a plan of action to achieve these as productively as possible. Planning is, however, only one component of the management process, and it alone cannot guarantee that the aims of the organisation will be accomplished (Cronje *et al*, 1998:122).

Organising means that management has to develop mechanisms to put the strategy or plan into effect. It is about making the arrangements to determine what activities will be carried out, what resources will be employed, and which person will perform the various activities. This involves the distribution of tasks among employees, the allocation of resources to persons and departments, and giving the necessary authority to certain persons to ensure that the tasks are in-fact carried out. It is also important to remember that there must be communication, cooperation and coordination between the persons and departments performing the tasks (Cronje *et al*, 1998:122).

The process of organising, or the setting up of a framework in accordance with which the work is to be done to accomplish the objectives is, therefore an indispensable step in the management process of any business. Organising is the fundamental element of management (Cronje *et al*, 1008:123).

Organising, like planning, is an integral and indispensable component of the management process. Without the successful implementation of plans and strategies and the systematic

allocation of resources and people to execute the plans, the organisation cannot perform (Cronje *et al*, 1998:123).

Organising is important for the following reasons:

It entails a detailed analysis of the work to be done and resources to be used to accomplish the aims of the organisation. It is through organisation that a number of tasks and resources and methods or procedures can be systematised. Every person in the organisation must know his/her duties, authority and responsibility, as well as procedures or methods to adopt and resources to use (Cronje *et al*, 1998:123).

Organising divides the total workload into activities that can be performed by an individual or a group. Tasks are allocated according to the abilities or qualifications of individuals, ensuring that nobody in the organisation has either too much or too little to do. The ultimate result is higher productivity (Cronje *et al*, 1998:123).

Organising promotes the productive application and utilisation of resources. The related activities and tasks of individuals are grouped together rationally in specialised departments such as marketing, personnel or finance departments, in which experts in their particular fields carry out their given duties. The development of an organisation structure results in a mechanism that coordinates the activities of the whole organisation into complete, uniform, harmonious units (Cronje *et al*, 1998:123).

Successful organising makes it possible for a business to achieve its goals and objectives. It is central in the coordination of the activities of managers and subordinates so as to avoid unnecessary duplication of tasks and obviate possible conflicts. It also reduces the chances of doubts and misunderstandings, thereby enabling the organisation to attain its objectives effectively (Cronje *et al*, 1998:123).

It is, therefore, clear that organising is the development of a structure or framework in accordance with which the task is to be performed for the accomplishment of the goals, and

the resources necessary for this are allocated to particular individuals. This division of labour could be done in various ways, and ultimately it has to be coordinated to make the concerted action possible. Eventually someone has to take the lead to set the activities concerning planning, organising and control in motion (Cronje *et al*, 1998:123).

Leadership

The third function in the management process involves leadership that converts plans into realities. Leadership includes giving orders, handling and motivating people, whether as individuals or in groups, managing conflict and communicating with subordinates.

Leadership can be defined as the task of management to combine and coordinate human resources and their performance so as to accomplish the goals of the enterprise as productively as possible. It is an element of management that injects energy into the organisation to activate its members to get things moving and to keep them moving (Cronje *et al*, 1998:137).

Leadership also means passing on information to subordinates, explaining the mission, goals and plans of the organisation, allocating tasks and giving instructions, consulting with staff and supervising their work, taking whatever steps necessary to raise production, disciplining staff and handling conflict. Leadership also entails the ability to motivate staff, a knowledge of groups and the relations between them and the skill of communication. All these are aimed at improving performance and increasing productivity (Cronje *et al*, 1998:137).

Leadership may be defined as the influencing and directing of the behaviour of subordinates in such a way that they willingly strive to accomplish the goals or objectives of the organisation. Exercising leadership is to influence and direct the behaviour and actions of human beings in some particular direction (Cronje *et al*, 1998).

The performance of any enterprise is in direct proportion to the quality of its leadership. Leading is the third function of management, and it is the one that sets and keeps the organisation going (Cronje *et al*, 1998:151).

Control

The last important function of the management process is control. Control is the process through which organisational activities are regulated in such a way as to facilitate the attainment of planned objectives and operations. In working towards the accomplishment of the mission and objectives of the organisation, management should develop a strategy and with the necessary leadership.

Effective control may, therefore, be defined as a management process designed to keep deviations from the planned activities or level of achievement of the whole organisation. It ensures that performance tallies with plans, and constitutes a valuable guide in the execution of strategies and plans. The controlling task of management will indicate whether there has been any departure from the plans and will enable it to take steps to rectify and prevent errors (Cronje *et al*, 1998:151).

Controlling means getting planning and performance to coincide. It narrows the discrepancy between what is planned and the actual achievement, ensuring that all activities are carried out as they should be. Control is a continuous process, and is linked with planning, organising and leading. It is an integral component of the management cycle (Cronje *et al*, 1998:151).

Control is a logical corollary to the management process. It is the final step in the management task, and the starting point for planning and further strategy development. It is the process through which management narrows the gap between the objectives and actual performance by setting performance standards in accordance with which the performance management, employees and resources can be measured. If necessary, corrective steps can be taken to rectify discrepancies (Cronje *et al*, 1998:156).

2.3 Management styles

Van der Walt and Du Toit (1997:71) make the point that a relationship can be considered to exist between management styles and management ethics, management principles and various management theories because a specific management style that is followed may be unethical within a given context, and may cause conflict and inefficiency and may also be in conflict with recognised management principles.

Smit and Cronje (1992:386) assert that there are four different management styles: an A type who is autocratic and negative; a B type who cannot express feelings and is unwilling to be open with subordinates; a C type who rejects ideas and opinions and believes only in him/herself; and lastly, a D type who balances exposure and feedback and reality, communicates ideas and opinions. Smit and Cronje (1992: 387) recommend the D type of management style. The D type is participative or democratic management.

Participative or democratic management

Since the democratic dispensation came into being in South Africa, there has been an ever increasing insistence on the part of employees on becoming involved and being consulted in the institution's decision making process. The insistence upon transparency in the political environment has had an influence on the management style of public institutions. Managers can, therefore, no longer make decisions in isolation without involving employees (Van der Walt & Du Toit, 1997:71).

In respect of participative management, there is a significant shift away from manager-subordinate relationship to a team relationship. Team spirit therefore plays a major role in effective participative management (Van der Waldt & Du Toit, 1997:71).

Kroon (1995:13) describes participative management as a process whereby employees are directly involved in planning, decision-making and change in the situation.

Participative management integrates the need, expectancy and reinforcement theories of motivation. This is based on the assumption that most people have a need to participate in making decisions affecting their work or their lives. Such an involvement can lead to the setting of more challenging objectives with greater acceptance and commitment to reach the stated objectives (Kroon, 1995:14).

According to Kreiner and Kinicki (in Kroon, 1995:14), trust plays a significant role in participative management. It is, however, extremely important that the creation of a relationship of trust should not exclusively be the responsibility of management. If members of the team do not inspire trust through their conduct and attitude, management may be less inclined to delegate any decision-making power. A partnership should be established between management and employees in which both parties recognise and uphold their responsibilities.

2.4 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to look at the definition of management in context. It was argued that management is an activity that takes place every day, but should always be properly understood and put into context. For instance, there are as many definitions of the concept of management as there are people who define it. For any organisation to function effectively, it has to embrace the principles, functions, tasks and approaches of management. Participatory or democratic management is important in terms of the contemporary approach to managing people.

In the next chapter a literature review will be presented to focus on the specific environment in which the study takes place.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE SURVEY

3 Introduction

This chapter provides a literature study as well as an examination of Policy and Legislature Framework in the field of development and public participation. In order to provide a sound background to the following chapters, conceptual clarification and a general overview are also presented in terms of public participation.

3.1 Specific theory related to the problem

Public participation is about the active and meaningful involvement of citizens in the manner in which they are governed. It is the form of governance that has gained the support of many democracies in the world in an endeavour to bring government closer to the people. Implied in public participation is that an election is not the only event that citizens can be involved in concerning their government. In South Africa, there is a policy and legislative framework for citizens' engagement in the running of Local government (IDASA, 2003:1).

3.1.1 Green Paper on Local Government

Before 1994, local government in South Africa did not play a strong role in the promotion of public participation. As with other organs of the apartheid state, local government was used as a mechanism of control and suppression in black areas. White local authorities tended to keep their citizens at a distance, with public participation assumed necessary only when services broke down or costs increased dramatically (SA, 1997:63).

South Africans as a nation have a significant history of local community mobilisation and active involvement in community affairs. Municipalities, however, have a relatively short

experience in mobilising community participation for local development. There is, therefore, a need to increase the role of municipal councils in the promotion of public participation. Municipal councils have a central role to play in enhancing public participation, both as a means of rebuilding local communities and as a contribution to nation building (SA, 1997:63).

Public participation can be promoted in many ways. The importance of effective representation of community interests by elected councilors in the decision making structures of local government, for example, can never be over-emphasised. The elected council remains at the heart of public participation, provided that electoral competition is open and regular. However, the contact between municipalities and representatives need not be limited to election and representation. Increased citizen involvement will increase municipalities' ability to shape viable human settlements effectively (SA, 1997:63).

Public participation in government enhances effective governance by:

- Building human capital and strengthening democratic cultures in communities.
- Enhancing official responsiveness by enabling public interests to be clearly expressed by communities themselves.
- Promoting government legitimacy by ensuring transparency.
- Creating conditions for smooth policy implementation by facilitating an understanding of policy objectives and constraints, and incorporating citizen preferences and concerns into the design of policy programmes.
- Channeling independent energy, ideas and sometimes resources into civil projects, and
- Improving citizen's knowledge of the governing processes and its constraints, and so fostering an understanding of the need for prioritization (SA, 1997:64).

Successful initiatives to promote public participation require both political commitment and a fundamental shift in the internal management of municipalities. Decision making structures and administrations are designed to provide and maintain standard services. Municipalities which seek to enhance public participation within their communities need to enhance democratic participation within their organisations (SA, 1997:65).

3.1.2 The White Paper on Local Government

The White Paper on local government provides that public participation can be promoted through working together with local citizens and partners. One of the strengths of integrated development planning is that it recognises the linkages between development, delivery and democracy. Public participation is a central role of local government and municipalities should develop strategies and mechanisms (including, but not limited to, participative planning) to engage with citizens, business and community groups continuously (SA, 1998:33).

Municipalities need active participation by citizens at four levels:

As voters

They need to ensure maximum democratic accountability of the elected political leadership for the policies they are empowered to promote. Similar to the rest of the world, municipalities will need to ensure that voters are constantly made aware of the need to vote and that they are able to vote easily and safely. Once voter participation declines, democratic accountability loses meaning. The following are approaches that will enhance voter participation:-

- Civic education programmes about the importance of voting.
- Ward-level activities to continuously connect elected leaders and their constituencies.

- Creative electoral campaigning around clear policy choices that affect the lives of citizens.
- Electoral systems which ensure that resignation and voting procedures are structured in a way that enhances access and legitimacy (SA,1998:33).

As participants in the policy process

Municipalities need to develop mechanisms to ensure citizen participation in policy initiation and formulations, and the monitoring and evaluation of decision-making and implementation. The following are the approaches that can assist to achieve this:

- Forums initiated from within or outside Local government allowing organised formations to initiate policies and/or influence policy formulation, as well as participate in monitoring and evaluation activities. Forums seem to work better in formulating either general community-wide development visions or issue specific policies, rather than for formulating many policies that affect a multiplicity of interests.
- Structured stakeholder involvement in certain council committees, in particular if these are issue oriented committees with a limited lifespan rather than permanent structures.
- Participatory budgeting initiatives aimed at linking community priorities to capital investment programmes.
- Focus on group participation action research conducted in partnership with NGOs and CBOs can generate detailed information about a wide range of specific needs and values.
- Support for organisational development of associations, in particular in poor and marginalised areas where the skills and resources for participation may be less developed than in better-off areas (SA, 1998:33-34).

As consumers and service-users

For many citizens the main contact with local government is through the consumption of municipal services, and it is important that municipalities need to begin to build relationships with communities and citizens. Municipalities need to be responsive to the needs of residents, business as consumers and end-users of municipal services. Improved customer management and service provision are critical to building an environment conducive to economic and social development (SA,1998:34).

The Batho-Pele (“People first”) White Paper, issued by the Minister of Public Service and Administration, provides a useful approach to building a culture and practice of customer service. The eight principles of the Batho-Pele address themselves to a customer oriented service delivery. Importantly, the Batho-Pele White Paper notes that the development of a service oriented culture needs active participation of the wider community. Municipalities need constant feedback from service-users if they are to improve their operations. Local partners can be mobilised to assist in building a service culture (SA, 1997: 16-23).

As partners in resource mobilisation

Municipalities are expected to carry out their mandates within the constraints of available resources. It is also expected that they must become effective and efficient, but they also need to mobilise off-budget resources (resources additional to those budgeted for) through partnerships with businesses and non-profit making organisations. Municipalities can utilise partnership to promote emerging businesses, support NGOs and CBOs, mobilise private sector investment, and promote the development of projects which are initiated but not necessarily financed by local government. Examples of the range of options for this approach include various combinations of the following:

- Community development corporations.

- Public-private and public-public partnerships around service delivery.
- Community contracting for services such as refuses collection.
- Development partnerships around issues such as local economic development, eco-tourism or farming.
- Community banking and various forms of community finance control (e.g. stokvels).
- Community information and learning centres as central points for using the new information technology (e.g. the Internet, e-mail) for development purposes.
- Emerging business development centres.
- Training and capacity building initiatives aimed at building the skills base for development projects.
- Social housing mechanisms.
- Value adding initiatives aimed at transforming wastes into products, e.g. linking recycling to job creation for the unemployed (SA, 1998:34-35).

(1) Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 108 of 1996

The principle of community, citizen or public participation in South Africa does not take place in a vacuum. All relevant policies and associated legislation place participation and accountability at the heart of the system of local government. The Constitution recognises the importance of participation in ensuring sustainable, democratic and developmental local government.

Section 152 of the constitution establishes representative democracy and participatory democracy as two objectives of local government. Section 152 (1) states that the objectives of local government are:

- (a) to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities;
- (b) to ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner;
- (c) to promote social and economic development;

- (d) to promote a safe and healthy environment; and
- (e) to encourage the **involvement of communities and community organisations** in matters of local government.

Section 152 (2) also makes the point that a municipality must strive, within its financial and administrative capacity, to achieve the objectives set out in subsection (1).

(2) Municipal Structures Act, 117 of 1998

In terms of the Municipal Structures Act, a municipality must develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance. These roles include establishing and encouraging conditions for effective public participation. The municipal Structures Act requires all municipal councils to develop mechanisms to consult and involve community and community organisations.

Section 74 (a) of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 states that a municipality could decide to establish a ward committee. The primary function of a ward committee is to serve as a communication channel between the community and the municipal council. It serves as a forum for communication between the ward councilor and the ward committee. Therefore, the members of the community can keep up to date with the activities of their municipal council through their ward councilor.

Furthermore, the ordinary meetings of the municipal council are open to members of the community and individuals who attend such meetings can learn about the affairs and the administration of their municipality. The ward system allows for matters of local concern to be addressed by such committees established for wards. This gives residents a more direct voice in the governance of their neighbourhood. It enhances participatory democracy in local government by providing a vehicle for local communities to make their views and needs known to the municipal council. It is imperative that ward committees represent the diverse interests and needs of the community.

The Municipal Structures Act, 1998, sections 73 (2) (a) and 73 (3) (c) provide that to a large extent, the ward committee can determine its own internal procedures. The council must, however, make rules regulating the frequency of the meetings. The municipal council must determine rules for the manner in which a committee may make recommendations or decisions.

Sections 73 (4) and 77 of the Structures Act leave it to the discretion of council to make administrative arrangements to enable ward committees to function effectively. While no remuneration is to be paid to ward committee members, this does not prevent the council from reimbursing committee members for travel costs and other out-of-pocket expenses.

(3) Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000

In section 16, the Systems Act sets out two important principles for Public participation.

First, public participation should not permit interference with a municipal council's right to govern and to exercise the executive and legislative authority of the municipality. The municipal council, which is a product of a representative democracy, not only has a sole legal mandate to govern, but also and more importantly, the political legitimacy to do so.

Secondly, given the pre-eminence of formal representative structures, participatory democracy is there to "complement" the politically legitimate and legally responsible structures. This means that any community participatory structure may merely add to the formal structures of government and not replace or substitute them. While every council must comply with the broad principles of participatory democracy, councils have the discretion to decide whether or not they want to establish ward committees. Where ward committees are established, the principles of participatory democracy also apply to this system.

Section 17 (4) of the Municipal Systems Act, states that participation must take place through the established structures (ward committees). It must also take place through

mechanisms, processes and procedures that exist in terms of the Systems Act itself or that have been established by council. The Systems Act mentions the ward committee as a vehicle for participation. In addition to ward committees, the council may, for instance, establish advisory committees consisting of persons who are not councilors. The mechanisms, processes and procedures mentioned in the Systems Act must include:

- Procedures to receive and deal with petitions and complaints of the public;
- Procedures to notify the community about important decisions (such as by-laws, Integrated Development Plan service delivery choice) and allowing public comments when it is appropriate.
- Public hearings.
- Consultative meetings with recognised community organisations and, when appropriate, traditional authorities, and
- Report back to the community.

These systems must, as a minimum measure, be established in every municipality. The special needs of women, illiterate people, disabled people and other disadvantaged groups must be taken into account.

Section 18 (1) of the Municipal Systems Act provides that council must make the public aware of the established mechanisms for participation. It must also inform the public of the issues in which it wants participation. The residents must be informed regarding municipal governance, management and development.

Section 19 of the Systems Act, states that the municipal manager must notify the public of the time, date and venue of every meeting of the council. The council determines how notices should be given (e.g. via the local newspaper). This also applies to urgent meetings, except when time constraints prohibit prior notification. The council must determine, in a by-law or resolution, the circumstances under which council or committee meetings are closed to the public.

In terms of Section 20 (1) of the systems Act, the public and the media can attend council and committee meetings, except when it is reasonable to exclude them because of the nature of the items on the agenda. An executive committee or a mayoral committee can also close its meetings if it is reasonable to do so because of the nature of the items on the agenda. The meetings must always be open to the public if one of the following matters is discussed or voted on:

- A by-law.
- The budget.
- The Intergrated Development Plan (or an amendment to it).
- The performance management system, or
- A service delivery agreement.

Section 20 (4) of the Municipal Systems Act provides that the council must, as far as its financial and administrative capacity allows, provide space for the public in its meeting venues. It can make rules to regulate access to and public conduct at council and committee meetings.

The council must determine what its official languages are, taking into account the language preferences and usage within the municipal area. Whenever the council notifies the community through the media in terms of any legal provision, these languages must be used. One or more of the following means of notification must be considered:

- Local newspaper.
- Other newspaper that has been designated as a newspaper or record, or
- Radio broadcasts.

Any such notice, as well as those that must be published in the Provincial Gazette, must also be displayed at the municipal offices.

Section 21 (4) of the systems Act states that when the municipality invites comments from the public, it must ensure that an official is available at the municipal offices during office hours to assist residents who cannot write (due to illiteracy or disability) to put their comments in writing. This option must be communicated to the public in the invitation for comments. Similarly, when the council requires a form to be completed, officials must assist residents in understanding and completing the form.

Section 21 (4) of the Systems Act further provides that the minister of provincial and local government may issue further regulations on participation and may set minimum standards, including standards on funding for participation. In doing so, the minister must take into consideration the capacity of municipalities to comply with regulations.

(4) Municipal Finance Management Act, 56 of 2003

Section 23 (1) requires that when the annual budget has been tabled, the municipal council must consider any view of:

- The local community; and
- The National Treasury, the relevant provincial treasury and any provincial or national organs of state or municipalities which made submissions on the budget. In terms of subsection (2) the act provides that the council must give the mayor an opportunity to respond to the submissions, and if necessary to revise the budget.

3.2 Discussion of relevant studies (shortcomings/gaps)

Prior to 1994, local government was mainly concerned with service provision and the implementation of regulations. The introduction of the new Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) brought new legislative and policy frameworks, and the role of local government expanded

to a large extent. Municipalities are now required to be developmental and to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities (SA, 1996).

Meaningful participatory government requires active and direct involvement of the community in matters that affect its well-being. Given the history of local government in the country this might seem far-fetched. Public participation has become something much talked about especially at the level of local government. Municipalities need to engage in strategies to promote public participation (Ababio, 2004:277).

Local government is indeed the sphere of government closest to the community, and this strategic position makes it an ideal tool for developmental government. It could be said that there is no sphere of government that can exert more meaningful development than what local government can deliver. Development is a participatory process which includes all sections of the community, local business and other interested stakeholders. The community comprises both ratepayers and consumers of services, and business as investors in the local economy who are entitled to have a say in how their municipality operates (Ababio, 2004:272).

It is the members of the community who are at the forefront of receiving municipal services. Municipal councilors and officials cannot, on their own, ensure that effective services will be delivered. Continuous feedback from the community is important in improving service delivery. Regular consultation is imperative to ensure that all policies and developmental projects undertaken by the municipality are accepted by the community. Meaningful public participation is indispensable for a viable local government. Municipal inhabitants have to be provided with accessible, timely and accurate information to make the right decisions (Ababio, 2004: 272-273).

3.2.1 Definition of Public Participation

The concept of public participation has a number of meanings. It could describe the relationship between local government and the community. On the other hand, public

participation could describe the extent to which the community influences decisions that affect their lives. Meaningful public participation requires the involvement of all stakeholders, including the marginalized groups such as women and youth (Ababio, 2004: 273).

Public participation entails the involvement of the community in a wide range of administrative policy making activities. This will also include the determination of levels of the service, budget priorities and other issues that affect the welfare of the community. In this way public participation gives effect to democracy (Freysen, 1998: 249).

It can be argued public participation could mean allowing the community, if it wishes, to state in a general manner what it considers to be important issues or policies. Strategies will then need to be employed to translate such wishes into reality (Craythorne, 1997: 98).

The International Association for Public Participation (Ababio, 2004:273) differentiates between five levels of participation: First, **inform**, which means to provide the community with balanced and objective information to enable people to understand the problem, alternatives and solutions. Second, **consult**, which is about obtaining feedback on analysis, alternatives and decisions. This also involves acknowledging concerns and providing feedback on how the public inputs have influenced the decision.

Third, **involve**, where the intension is to work directly with the community throughout the process to ensure that community issues and concerns are understood and considered at an early stage. Fourth, **collaborate**, the objective is to involve the community as equal partners on each aspect of decision-making. This would include the development of alternatives and the identification of preferred solutions. Fifth, **empower**, where the main aim is to place the final decision in the hands of the community. This will ensure that decisions taken by the municipality are accepted by the community (Ababio. 2004:273).

Brynard (in Bekker, 1996: 41) explains public participation as receiving information by the community from the authorities about the proposed actions and the sharing of power to

shape the final decision. Public participation essentially would mean allowing as many people as possible to be involved in the decision-making process since the community as customers of local government are naturally more responsive to the public needs than government officials are (Du Toit *et al*, 1998: 124).

According to Schoeman (2002:1), different forms of participation must be acknowledged and valued. Too often stakeholder participation is seen in terms of involvement in committees and formal meetings. While such processes are important, this form of participation does not take into consideration the interests and diverse skills and talents of others. Good community participation processes provide the broadest possible range of participatory activity.

Schoeman demonstrates his point by outlining the following types/kinds/forms of participation stated in Table 3.1.

TABLE 3.1: TYPES/KINDS/FORMS OF PARTICIPATION

	Definition
1. Passive Participation	People participation by being told what is going to happen or has already happened. It is a unilateral announcement by an administration or project management without listening to people's responses. The information being shared belongs only to external professionals.
2. Participation in information giving	People participate by answering questions posed by extractive researchers using questionnaire/surveys or similar approaches. People do not have the opportunity to influence proceedings, as the findings of the research are neither shared nor checked for accuracy.
3. Participation for material incentives	People participate by providing resources, for example labour, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. Much of farm research falls in this category, as farmers

	<p>provide the fields but are not involved in the experimentation or the process of learning. It is common to see this called participation, yet people have no stake in prolonging activities when the incentives end.</p>
4. Functional participation	<p>People participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to the project, which can involve the development or promotion of externally initiated social organisation. Such involvement does not tend to be at early stages of project cycles or planning, but rather after major decisions have been made. These institutions tend to be dependent on external initiators and facilitators, but may become self-dependent.</p>
5. Interactive participation	<p>People participate in joint analysis, which leads to action plans and the formation of new local institutions or the strengthening of existing ones. It tends to involve interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives and make use of systematic and structured learning processes, so that people have a stake in maintaining structures or practices.</p>
6. Self-mobilisation	<p>People participate by taking initiatives to change systems independent of external institutions. They develop contacts for resources to be used. Such self-initiated mobilisation and collective action may or may not challenge existing inequities re wealth and power.</p>

3.2.2 Forms of Public Participation

There are many forms of public participation and the following are some :

i. Participatory, consultative processes should be strengthened

It is rare today for municipalities to engage in major infrastructural development without first taking the opinions and inputs of the community groups into account. This would usually take place through public meetings or a more structured consultation process, such as the development of Local Development objectives forms of public participation like the aforementioned need to be retained and strengthened (SA, 1997: 64).



ii. Involvement in service delivery

There are many opportunities to involve citizens and communities actively in service delivery programmes. There are already some good experience gained in enlisting citizens in the regeneration or upgrading of their communities (SA, 1997: 64).

iii. Building a culture of local democracy

Creative and innovative means are necessary to build a culture of local democracy and promote an understanding of how citizens can contribute to their governance of their own communities. The establishment of structures such as the Youth Councils should be encouraged (SA, 1997: 64).

iv. Encouraging enterprise for the public good

Municipalities may provide opportunities and incentives for citizens and communities to engage in entrepreneurial activities on their own behalf, which also benefits the public at

large. Some means to enable local economic development, such as community development corporations, are good examples of this (SA, 1997:64).

3.2.3 Mechanisms of Public Participation

The following are mechanisms for Public Participation:

i. Ward Committee

The ward participatory system allows for the establishment of a ward committee to facilitate community participation in matters of local government. According to section 72(3) of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998, the purpose of the ward committee is to enhance participatory democracy in local government. The ward system allows for matters of local concern to be addressed by committees established for wards. This gives residents a more direct voice in the governance of the neighbourhood. It enhances participatory democracy in local government by providing a vehicle for local communities to make their views and needs known to the municipal council (SA, 1998).

Section 74 of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998, states that the ward committee acts as an advisory committee and can make recommendations on any matter affecting their ward. Through their councilor a ward committee can make recommendations to the municipal council, the Executive Committee and the Executive Mayor. A municipal council may delegate additional powers and duties that can be handled effectively by a ward committee (SA, 1998).

ii. Public Meetings

Public meetings are the most common methods of public participation. Municipalities invite the public to attend council meetings. They can discuss anything from development to reports to the community regarding progress of the projects taking place in the area. The

Municipal Structures Act clearly provides for notices regarding time, venue and date of a council meeting (IDASA, 2003: 4).

iii. Public Hearings

Public hearings are usually held to give the community a fair and open opportunity to state its case on the matter. For instance, public hearings would be held on matters such as the budget of the council. Public hearings are also used by national and provincial legislatures as part of the process of making law. Municipalities also make by-laws and are required by law to publish them. Public hearings can be held to allow the public an opportunity for input in the process of developing certain by-laws, especially if they bring changes to the way of doing things in the municipal area. Inputs at hearings are normally through direct communication, although written submissions are encouraged (IDASA, 2003: 4-5).

iv. Consultative Sessions

Municipalities are given the responsibility of the social and economic development of their communities. Since this is a new mandate for many municipalities, it is important to consult the community on matters of development generally. It is important for communities to own the development process in their areas. Consultative sessions can prove fruitful to public participation (IDASA, 2003: 5).

v. Report back meetings

The community must be informed of the decisions the municipality takes affecting its rights and expectations as well as regular disclosure of the state of affairs and finances of the municipality. Regular report back meetings can be used for this purpose. Councils report back to their communities on their activities (IDASA, 2005: 5).

vi. Advisory Committees

According to section 79 of the Municipal Systems Act, a municipality may establish one or more advisory committees consisting of persons who are not councilors to advise the council on any matter within the council's competence. These committees can be useful in that they bring in expertise that may not be resident in council's expertise. These committees could be technical or community based organisations and NGOs can play a meaningful role in local governance. It is important that these committees are gender sensitive (IDASA, 2003: 5).

vii. Focus or Interest Groups

Concerned individuals in a community who share the same interest (for example, tourism, crime or concern for the environment) may form groups to lobby and advise the municipal council on those specialist interests. They can also be consulted by the municipalities for advice (IDASA, 2003: 5).

viii. Communication

Communication is an important tool in facilitating public participation. It is, therefore, crucial for a municipality to have a newsletter, hold annual general meetings, establish information points or help centres, and form strategic partnerships with various stakeholders in the community (IDASA, 2003: 5).

3.2.4 Short-comings/gaps of public participation

The research evidence indicates that the municipal elections attract far less voter interest than the national elections. Established Western democratic states record far less voters in local government than any tier/sphere of government. Milbrath and Goel (in Bekker, 1996: 52) assert that empirical research in most Western countries, including the United States of

America, suggests that there are normally only a few members of the community who become involved actively in the functioning of their municipality.

Low participation in local government activities by the community can be attributed to various factors. Clapper (in Bekker, 1996: 71) states that most community participation activities do not necessarily lead to greater participation. Low levels of community participation are a reality and unless the community gets motivation and resources participation will remain low. The following reasons are associated with low participation in local government activities.

i. Lack of education and civil apathy

Most community members are not sufficiently informed to participate meaningfully in municipal government. The majority of community members do not seem to understand the role of the municipality. Communities do not appear to be competent to participate in municipal issues that influence them directly, especially planning issues. Another contributing factor may be the tendency to write local government rules and regulations into laws using language which is not easily understood. This would require municipalities to embark on civic education programmes (Ababio, 2004: 277).

ii. Lack of public accountability

According to Latib (in Cloete & Mokgoro, 1995: 9), municipal senior officials, together with councilors, are responsible for policy decisions and the allocation of scarce resources. These officials are not effectively held responsible and accountable to the electorate. Sekoto and Van Straaten (1999: 17) suggest that the municipal councilors should display a sense of responsibility and accountability when performing their duties. Accountability and responsibility need to be increased both in the administration and with political authorities.

iii. Community disillusionment with local government ineffectiveness

Local government is expected to address real needs and justified expectations of communities. In many cases municipalities fail to respond to these needs and expectations due to lack of finance. Development planning meetings and consultations have become focal points for projects that were promised but never delivered. As a result, communities are not keen to get involved in matters of local government any more (Ababio, 2004: 278).

iv. Lack of ethical conduct and perceived corruption

Over the past few years the media has uncovered and exposed cases of fraud and corruption from both the administrators and councilors. Administrators and councilors are expected to be exemplary and above reproach (Ababio, 2004: 278).

v. Poorly skilled municipal officials

Local government is the front desk of the government. It is the sphere of government which is closest to the community, and mistakes in this area are easily noticed by political office-bearers and the community. Gildenhuys (1997: 62) states that various facets of financial management and the administrative process in the local government sphere have become complicated and ineffective, and officials with the requisite skills, experience and knowledge are needed.

3.4 Conclusion

It could be said that whilst public participation is provided for in terms of policy and legislative framework in South Africa, it is not without limitations. Public participation should not permit interference with municipal council's right to govern and exercise the executive and legislative authority of the municipality. The municipal council which is a product of representative democracy, has the sole legal mandate to manage and govern. More importantly it has the political legitimacy to do so. Public participation is only there

to complement the political legitimate and legally responsible structures. A public participatory structure such as a ward committee, for instance, may add to the formal structures of government, but may not replace or substitute them.

In Chapter 4 the research problem as well as the objectives of the research will be discussed and formulated.

CHAPTER 4

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

4. Introduction

This chapter discusses the background to the problem based on theory. Sub-problems will be discussed, as well as formulating objectives based on the problem.

4.1 Discussion of the perceived problem

Most South African municipalities already play a role in enhancing public participation, predominantly through providing access to government, allowing for the oversight over municipal decisions, and consulting their constituencies on forms of development in the area. Many municipalities, both by law or by choice, are already accustomed to subjecting land-use decisions to public inspection and comment, giving public notice of loans, large investments, new by-laws, and amendments to rates for comment, opening budget, financial statement and auditor's reports for scrutiny; and allowing citizens to contest property evaluation (SA, 1997:64)

The National Statutory Framework allows municipalities to develop in terms of the Municipal Systems Act (no. 32 of 2000) that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory government.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) depicts a completely transformed local government system. It prescribes and envisages a new, expanded and developmental role for the local sphere as a whole and for each of the municipalities that constitute this sphere.

In terms of policy and legislature perspective, South Africa remains committed to encouraging and creating an enabling environment for participation at local government level. Nonetheless, it must be acknowledged that more needs to be done by both government and civil society to translate policy intentions into practice (Mtaka, 2002:8).

Structuring mechanisms to ensure meaningful public participation is not easy. In the absence of an appreciation that Municipal Councils, as the only body elected by all local citizens and representatives of all interests, have the legitimate right to take decisions on behalf of the community, there is a danger that participatory processes may undermine the representative's role of elected councilors (SA, 1997:65).

Managing public participation is always time-consuming and costly, and public participation often opens or deepens community splits and tensions. It is crucial that municipalities should bear in mind the following principles when structuring participative processes:

- Civil society is not homogenous, and any participatory process should recognise the divisions and unequal power relations between those it seeks to involve.
- The most marginalised groups are often those who have the least capacity to participate. Investment in the provision of information and logistical support is often a prerequisite for participation by marginalised groups.
- Democracy is an interactive process, and participatory processes themselves provide a way of building capacity for deeper participation; and
- The way in which participatory processes are structured influences the outcomes of such processes. Municipalities need to design processes and structures for participation in consultation with stakeholder groups (SA, 1997:65)

Successful initiatives to promote democratic participation require both political commitment and a fundamental shift in the internal management of municipality's decision-making structures and administrations. These are designed to provide and maintain standard services and are usually hierarchical and rule-bound. Municipalities which seek to enhance

democratic participation within their communities need to enhance democratic participation within their organisations (SA, 1997:65)

Section 16 of the Municipal System Act, 2000 sets out two important principles for public participation:

- Participatory governance should not allow for interference with a Municipal Council's right to govern and exercise the executive and legislative authority of the Municipality. The Municipal Council, which is the product of the representative democracy, not only has the sole legal mandate to govern, but also, and more importantly, the political legitimacy to do so.
- Given the pre-eminence of the formal representative structures, participatory democracy is there to complement the politically legitimate and legally responsible structures. This means that any public participatory structure may merely add to the formal structures of government, and not replace or substitute it.

While every Council must comply with the broad principles of participatory democracy, Councils have the discretion to decide whether or not they wish to establish ward committees. Where ward committees are established, the principles of public participation also apply.

In research focused on the Potchefstroom Municipality, it was discovered that the Municipal area is divided into 20 wards and has a population of approximately 250 000. In 2003, the Potchefstroom Municipality won the provincial leg of the Vuna Awards for Municipal Performance Excellence in the North West Province. The Vuna Award is an initiative of the Department of Provincial and Local Government to reward municipalities that, among others, are service-delivery orientated, engaged in community projects, job-creation and social financial management. This municipality is, therefore, rated among the best in the country (Botha, 2005:1)

The main research problem is: To what extent does the Potchefstroom Municipality promote the involvement of citizens towards the social and economic upliftment of local communities as well as ensuring universal access to essential services that are affordable to all?

4.2 Sub-problems

(i) Public participation in the context of Local Government

Public participation is about the involvement of communities in a wide range of administrative policy-making activities. It also includes the determination of levels of service, budget priorities and other issues that affect the welfare of communities. This then means that public participation gives effect to democracy (Freysen, 1998: 289).

It could be argued that public participation could mean allowing the community, if it wishes, to state in general terms what it considers to be important issues or policies. Effective strategies will then be required to translate such wishes into reality (Craythorne, 1997: 98).

In the 1997 document "Towards a White Paper on Provincial Local Government", 2005: 3) it is stated that:

"Through the world, municipalities have come to appreciate that the relation between government and those who are governed is as important as government itself. This is what is meant when people speak of the shift from government to governance. Governance is a way of governing. It takes the views and interests of those affected by government more serious than in the past. The governed refers to the community organisations, businesses, trade unions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)".

Municipalities have realised that they need to involve the community and all its constituencies in the functioning of government. Relationships, partnerships and alliances have, therefore, become much more important for local government than in the past.

The International Association for Public Participation (Ababio, 2004:273) de-lineates five levels of participation: First, inform, which is about providing the community with balanced and objective information to enable the people to understand the problem, alternatives and solutions. Second, consult, which has to do with obtaining feedback on analysis, alternatives and decisions. This also involves acknowledging concerns and providing feedback on how the public inputs have influenced the decision.

Third, involve, taking into account working directly with the community throughout the process to ensure that community issues and concerns are understood and considered at an early stage. Fourth, collaborate; the objective in this regard is to involve the community as equal partners on each aspect of decision-making. This would include the development of alternatives and the identification of preferred solutions. Fifth, empower, where the main aim is to place the final decision in the hands of the community. This will ensure that decisions taken by the municipality are accepted by the community (Ababio, 2004:273).

(ii) Policy and legislation regarding public participation in local government

An important element in the promotion of local democracy is the enlargement of public participation in municipal governance. To this effect the Local Government, through the Municipal Structures Act (Act no.117 of 1998) provides for structures of engagement with the communities such as ward committees.

In the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, (Act no. 108 of 1996) it is stated that the objective of Local Government is to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisation in matters of local government which would directly or indirectly affect them.

The Green Paper on Local Government of 1997 stated that municipal councils have a central role to play in enhancing local democratic participation, both as a means of rebuilding local communities and as a contribution to nation building. It further argued that the contact

between municipalities and communities must not be limited to elections and representation only. On the contrary, increased citizen involvement will increase the municipality's ability to shape viable humansettlements effectively.

Significantly, the Green Paper stipulates that public participation in government enhances effective governance by:

- Building human capital and strengthening democratic cultures in communities,
- Enhancing official responsiveness by enabling public interests to be clearly expressed by communities,
- Promoting government legitimacy by ensuring transparency,
- Creating conditions for smooth policy implementation by facilitating an understanding of policy objectives and constraints, and incorporating citizens' preferences and concerns into the design of policy programmes,
- Channeling independent energy, ideas and sometimes resources, into civic projects, and
- Improving citizen's knowledge of the governing processes and its constraints, and so fostering an understanding of the need for prioritization.

The 1998 White Paper on Local Government holds public participation as a central theme. The term "ward committee" is specifically used within the context of local government systems. The reasoning in this regard is that it acts as a mechanism to allow greater interaction with the municipality by communities.

(iii) Mechanisms and processes for public participation

There are many forms and mechanisms of public participation, and the following are some examples:

a) Participatory, consultative processes should be strengthened

It is rare today for municipalities to engage in major infrastructural developments without first taking the opinions and inputs of the community groups into account. This would usually take place through public meetings or more structured consultation processes, as in the development of Local Government objectives. Forms of public participation such as the afore-mentioned need to be retained and strengthened (SA, 1997:64).

b) Involvement in service delivery

There are many opportunities to involve citizens and communities actively in service delivery programmes. There are already some good experiences gained in enlisting citizens in the regeneration or upgrading of their communities (SA, 1997:64).

c) Building a culture of local democracy

Creative and innovative means are necessary to build a culture of local democracy and promote an understanding of how citizens can contribute to the governance of their own communities. The establishment of structures such as the Youth Councils should be encouraged (SA, 1997:64).

d) Ward Committees

The Ward Participatory System allows for the establishment of a ward committee to facilitate community participation in matters of local government. According to section 72(3) of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 the purpose of the ward committee is to enhance participatory democracy in local government. The ward system allows for matters of local concern to be addressed by committees established for wards. This gives residents a more direct voice in the governance of the neighbourhood. It enhances participatory democracy in local government by providing a vehicle for local

communities to make their views and needs known to the Municipal Council (SA, 1998).

Section 74 of the Municipal Structure Act, 1998 states that the ward committee acts as an advisory committee and can make recommendations on any matter affecting their ward. Through their Councilor a ward committee can make recommendations to the Municipal Council, the Executive Committee and the Executive Mayor. A Municipal Council may delegate additional powers and duties that can be handled effectively by a ward committee (SA, 1998).

e) Public meetings

Public meetings are the most common method of public participation. Municipalities invite the public to attend council meetings. They can discuss anything from development to reports to the community on progress of the projects taking place in the area. The Municipal Structures Act clearly provides for notices regarding time, venue and date of a council meeting (IDASA, 2003:4).

f) Public hearings

Public hearings are usually held to give the community a fair and open opportunity to state its case on the matter. For instance, public hearings would be held on matters such as the budget of the council. Public hearings are also used by national and provincial legislatures as part of the process of making law. Municipalities also make by-laws and are required by law to publish them. Public hearings can be held to allow the public an opportunity to provide input on the process of developing certain by-laws, especially if they bring changes to the way of doing things in the municipal area. Inputs at hearings are normally through direct communication, although written submissions are encouraged (IDASA, 2003:4-5).

g) Consultative sessions

Municipalities are given the responsibility of the social economic development of their communities. Since this is a new mandate for many municipalities, it is important to consult the community on matters of development generally. It is very important for communities to own the development process in their areas. Consultative sessions can prove fruitful to public participation (IDASA, 2003:5).

(iv) Constraints and challenges of public participation

The research evidence indicates that the municipal elections attract far less voter interest than the national elections. Established Western democratic states record far less voters in local government than any tier/sphere of government. Milbrath and Goel (in Bekker, 1996:52) assert that empirical research in most Western countries, including the United States of America, suggests that there are normally only a few members of the community who become involved actively in the functioning of their municipality.

Low participation in local government activities by the community can be attributed to various factors. Clapper (in Bekker, 1996:71) states that most community participation activities are a reality and unless the community gets motivation and resources, participation will remain low. The following reasons are associated with low participation in local government activities:

- **Lack of education and civil apathy**

Most community members are not sufficiently informed to participate in municipal government. The majority of community members do not seem to understand the role of the municipality. Communities do not appear to be competent to participate in municipal issues that influence them directly, especially planning issues. Other contributing factors may be the tendency to write local government regulations into laws using language which is not easily

understood. This would require municipalities to embark on civic education programmes (Ababio, 2004:277).

- **Lack of public accountability**

According to Latib (in Cloete & Mokgoro, 1995:9), municipal senior officials, together with councilors are responsible for policy decisions and then allocate scarce resources. These officials are not effectively held responsible and accountable to the electorate. Sekoto and Van Straaten (1999:17) suggest that the municipal Councilors should display a sense of responsibility and accountability when performing their duties. Accountability and responsibility need to be increased both in the administration and with political authorities.

- **Community disillusionment with local government ineffectiveness**

Local government is expected to address real needs and justified expectations of communities. In many cases municipalities fail to respond to these needs and expectations due to a lack of finance. Development planning meetings and consultations have become focal points for projects that were promised but never delivered. As a result communities are not keen to become involved in matters of local government any more (Ababio, 2004:278).

- **Lack of ethical conduct and perceived corruption**

During the past few years the media has covered and exposed cases of fraud and corruption from both the administrators and councilors who are expected to be exemplary and above reproach (Ababio, 2004:278).

- **Poorly skilled municipal officials**

Local government is the front desk of the government. It is the sphere of government which is closest to the community and political office-bearers and the community easily notice mistakes in this sphere. Gildenhuis (1997:62) states that various facets of financial management and the administrative processes in the local government sphere have become so complicated and ineffective and that officials with the requisite skills, experience and knowledge are needed.

Local government has the responsibility of ensuring that citizens are involved in a number of ways as voters, as consumers of services, as members of interest or stakeholder groups, through traditional authorities and leaders, and through specialised structures. Despite all the above-mentioned challenges, public participation lies at the heart of a successful developmental local government.

h) Report back meetings

The community must be informed of the decisions the municipality takes affecting its rights and expectations as well as disclosure of the state of affairs and finances of the municipality. Regular report-back meetings can be used for this purpose. Councils report back to their communities on their activities (IDASA, 2005:5).

i) Advisory Committees

According to Section 79 of the Municipal Systems Act, a municipality may establish one or more advisory committees consisting of persons who are not councilors to advise the council on any matter within the council's competence. These committees can be useful in that they provide expertise that may not be resident in councilors' expertise. These committees could be technical or community-based organisations and NGOs and can play a meaningful role in local governance. It is important that these committees are gender-sensitive (IDASA, 2003:5).

j) Focus or interest groups

Concerned individuals in a community who share the same interests (for example, tourism, crime or concern for the environment) may form groups to lobby and advise them municipal council on these specialist interests. They can also be consulted by the municipalities for advice (IDASA, 2003:5).

k) Communication

Communication is an important tool in facilitating public participation. It is, therefore, crucial for a municipality to have a newsletter, hold annual general meetings, establish information points or help centres and form strategic partnerships with various stakeholders in the community (IDASA, 2003:5).

4.4 Formation of objectives based on the problem

The following objectives are formulated, based on the problem:

- To explain the concept of public participation.
- To determine the policy and legislative provision for public participation in local government.
- To examine mechanism and process used for public participation in the Potchefstroom Municipality.
- To identify constraints and challenges of public participation.
- To recommend strategies to enhance public participation

4.5 Closing comments

This chapter discussed the background information to the problem as well as constraints and challenges relating to public participation in local government. The next chapter will look at

the justification for the methodology, research procedures including method analysis and statistical techniques. It will also discuss ethical conditions.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5. Introduction

This chapter provides the justification for the methodology, which includes the population, method of data collection, measuring instrument, operationalisation of variables and qualifying questions. Research procedures including method of analysis and statistical techniques employed will also be discussed. This will also include ethical considerations.

5.1 Research Methodology

Research methodology or method of collecting data necessitates a reflection on the planning, structuring and execution of the research in order to comply with the demands of objectivity. Research methodology focuses on the process of research and the decisions which the researcher has taken to carry out the study. This includes which methods and techniques of data collection and data analysis should be used (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997:28).

5.1.1 Applying methods for collecting data

The research data that one collects consist mainly of two types, primary data and secondary data. Primary data are the data collected for the research project, while secondary data are the available data from sources other than the current research project. In this regard both types of data will be discussed.

5.1.2 Secondary data collection

Secondary data can be classified into three broad categories, namely, raw data already collected (e.g. figures supplied by Statistics South Africa) and written treatises (e.g. books, articles and theses). Secondary data may be gathered and tabulated using different definitions of key terms or the data may be outdated. One determines whether such data fit the particular research needs of data collected.

This can be done through examining the internal consistency, test-retest reliability, or the validity of the data to determine whether the data have been collected and reported with care and precision (Struwig & Stead, 2003:80).

5.1.3 Primary data collection

Observation and asking questions are the two basic data collection methods in this regard. Regardless of which of the two methods one uses, some procedure must be devised to standardise the collection process, thereby standardising the data collected.

Questionnaire studies are part of the primary data collection. Questionnaire studies involve personal interviews, telephone surveys and mail surveys (Struwig & Stead, 2003: 86).

i. Personal interviews

Personal interviews are believed to be the most versatile and flexible of the three questionnaire methods. They are also said to be an expensive method for collecting data, because interviewers have to be trained and many interviewers may be needed to conduct all the interviews. Personal interviews have a good response rate, since the interviewer is often able to persuade individuals to take part in the research (Struwig & Stead, 2003:87)

ii. Telephone surveys

In respect of the telephone surveys, the major advantage of telephone interviews is their speed. With short questionnaires as many as twenty interviews can be completed per hour. Respondents tend to answer briefly to open-ended questions over the telephone and it is difficult to maintain their interest while the interviewer records their answers. Control of the sample selected from telephone interviews can be poor, specifically in a country such as South Africa where many people do not have a telephone. Telephone surveys tend to exclude many poor people. Telephone surveys seem to be cheaper than personal interviews (Struwig and Stead, 2003:87).

iii. Mail Surveys

In the case of mail surveys, there is no interviewer to explain the purpose of the study, to induce co-operation, to ask questions or record the answers. Mail surveys can be used to employ relatively longer questionnaires, or when one wants to collect personal or potentially embarrassing information. Proper control of the mail survey requires a mailing list. The major advantage of a mail survey is the cost. Compared with the personal interview and the telephone survey, the mail survey is the cheapest per completed interview (Struwig & Stead, 2003: 89).

5.1.4 Questionnaire design

The questionnaire has been developed for purposes of collecting valid and viable information with the view to test the hypothesis scientifically. Questionnaires are usually used by researchers to convert data solicited during the empirical study into reliable information. This technique makes it possible to measure what one knows, ones' skills, dislikes and what one's attitudes and perceptions are. What is important about this type of data collection is that the questionnaire remains the primary means of communication between the respondents and the researcher (Best, 1977 : 166).

Questionnaires could be used to obtain the following kinds of information:

- Biographical particulars.
- Behaviour.
- Opinions, beliefs and convictions.
- Attitudes.

In this study the opinions, beliefs and convictions of the respondents are tested to determine their knowledge and skills on public participation in local government development and service delivery (Huysamen, 1994 : 128).

5.1.5 Advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires

A questionnaire as a tool for research has both advantages and disadvantages. The following are examples of the advantages and disadvantages:

i. Advantages

A questionnaire is one of the instruments which a researcher utilizes to collect data quickly and is relatively inexpensive, provided that the respondents are able to interpret the content of the questionnaire correctly. The administration of the questionnaire is fairly easy as it is developed in terms of the number of respondents involved in certain well prepared questions. It is an economical instrument to utilise. This includes the economy of time. Questionnaires provide reliable results of data obtained, normally without any bias because respondents are usually not known to the researcher (Best, 1977: 166).

This technique has proven to be a valuable instrument to collect data in this research due to the fact that respondents from various levels and occupation in the municipality participated and could be reached in a relatively short time.

ii. Disadvantages

The respondents often fail to return completed questionnaires or do not complete them at all. An important reason for this is that they are suspicious of the reasons for the research and see it as a threat in some way or another. Lengthy questionnaires discourage respondents due to the time and effort involved to complete them. The inaccurate completion of questionnaires creates problems. Some respondents may not supply accurate answers as they may misinterpret the questions or lack the verbal skills to express themselves adequately (Chadwick *et al*, 1984: 137).

In some cases respondents who are reluctant to divulge information may ignore certain questions or falsify their answers. A further limitation in using questionnaires is the challenge of getting respondents to think and respond honestly rather than supply responses which are merely pleasing to the researcher. Questionnaires can be rigid and provide no flexibility to the researcher, and comments made by the respondents cannot be further explored or probed. Open-ended questionnaires and interviews may, however, address this disadvantage to some extent (Chadwick *et al*, 1984: 137).

5.2 The questionnaire developed for this study

Special attention has been given in the development of the questionnaire used in this research to secure valid information. The questionnaire was structured with the purpose of determining the effect of public participation in local government development and service delivery in the context of the Potchefstroom municipality. Assurance of confidentiality of the information was provided to the respondents; thus more sincere and truthful responses could hopefully be obtained. The development of the questionnaire took the following in account:

- Long complex sentences were avoided.
- The wording of questions was clearly presented with attention focused on directness and simplicity (Chadwick, 1984: 137).

The reason for taking this approach was to make sure that the questionnaire was compiled as simply as possible in order to obtain accurate information. The questions in the questionnaire are multiple choice questions in which respondents had to select from two or more alternative responses which best apply to them (Huysamen, 1994: 128).

When compiling the questions in the questionnaire the following was taken into account:

- Not to make use of loaded questions.
- Not to use questions that facilitate responses which may be regarded as indicative of socially unacceptable attitudes.
- Not to use questions that are sensitive in nature.

With the compilation of the questions the researcher was careful not to lead the respondents in a specific direction, in order to determine the true opinions, attitudes and beliefs of the respondents and not the responses which they felt were expected (Huysamen, 1994: 131 – 132).

5.3 Structure and content of the questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of three sections (See Annexure A). Section A which covers the biographical information, ranges from question 1 – 4, provides for the profile of respondents. Respondents were requested to indicate their age, gender, level of education and number of years of experience in local government matters. Section B focuses on factors influencing public participation in the context of local government in the Potchefstroom municipality. This section also tests the understanding of respondents on the concept of public participation in respect of its relation to local government as well as its effectiveness. The questions asked range from 5.1 – 5.12.

Section C deals with examining the level of knowledge of respondents on policies, mechanisms and constraints on public participation. This section provides for respondents to list and give some of the policies, mechanisms and challenges or constraints of public participation.

The questions were developed to test the following:

- The research questions.

- The objectives.
- Factors influencing public participation.
- The effectiveness of public participation
- The knowledge of policy and legislative environment regulating public participation.

The respondents had to indicate their choices in the following way:

- Strongly agree.
- Agree to a certain degree.
- Disagree to a large extent.
- Strongly disagree.

The response from the respondents was positive and the respondents indicated that they did not experience difficulty in completing the questionnaire and that the questions were clear. This questionnaire was, therefore, administered without any changes.

5.4 Population and Sampling

It is usually not possible for researchers to collect data from the whole population of the study due to specific time limits and financial constraints. The researcher then has to rely on getting evidence from part of the population with the expectation and hope that what is found applies equally to the rest of it (Denscombe, 1998: 11). It is also important to realise that, normally the total population in respect of a specific study topic is so large that from a technical point of view it would be impossible to conduct research on the whole of it. Consequently, a representative sample of the total population becomes the viable approach in this regard (Huysamen, 1994: 38). In this survey the questionnaire was administered to 50 respondents selected from ward committee members, members from the Executive Mayor's advisory committees, members of the council and leaders of political parties. Out of 50 distributed questionnaires only 30 were successfully returned.

5.5 Ethical considerations

Conducting research is an ethical enterprise. Chamber's Concise Dictionary (quoted by Struwig and Stead, 2003:66) refers to ethics as a system of morals, and rules of behaviour. Research ethics provides researchers with a code of moral guidelines on how to conduct research in a morally acceptable way. The intention with such guidelines is to prevent researchers from engaging in scientific misconduct, such as: distorting and inventing data, plagiarizing the work of others, republishing their data as an original contribution without proper acknowledgement, failing to maintain the confidentiality and privacy of research participants and clients, forcing people against their will to be involved in research and not executing a study properly.

This would also include deceiving people, falsely reporting results, and assigning authors publication credit when they have provided minor contributions to the study or only made their data available to the researcher. There are many instances where the researcher can engage in unethical conduct. Some of the more common types of such behaviour are informed consent, confidentiality, deception and plagiarism (Struwig & Stead, 2003:66).

5.6 Closing comments on research design and methodology

This chapter covered the research methodology which involved applying methods for collecting data, secondary data collection, primary data collection, questionnaire design, and advantages and disadvantages of questionnaire. It also focused on the structure and content of the questionnaire developed for this study. Population and sampling was discussed as well as ethical consideration. The next chapter deals with the research results, viewing the description of the sample which includes indication of representativeness, the analysis of data which covers supporting tables/figures/exhibits/diagrams, and the use of statistical analysis to interpret findings, as well as validity and reliability of the data.

CHAPTER 6

RESULTS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The main focus in this chapter is the analysis of data . It views information solicited through questionnaires which were distributed to council members, ward committee members, members from the Executive Mayor's advisory committees and leaders of political parties in council. There were 30 respondents who participated in the survey.

6.2 Profile of respondents

6.2.1 Gender

In Figure 6.1 the gender of the respondents is given

FIGURE 6.1 GENDER

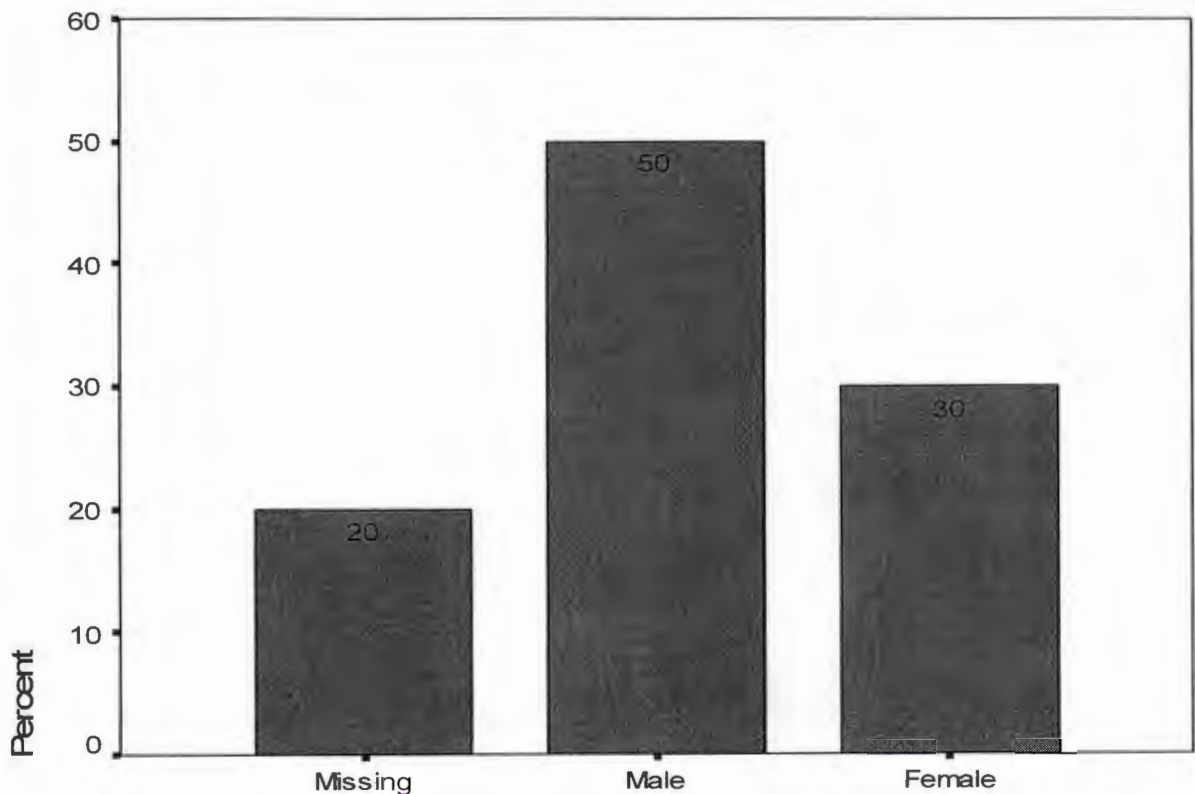


Figure 6.1 shows the percentages of respondents by gender. There were 30 respondents who participated in the survey. Males constituted 50% (15 participants) of the respondents compared to 30% (9 respondents) of females. This shows that the majority of the respondents were males. There is also an observation that there are probably more males in the Potchefstroom Local Government than females. However, 20% of the respondents refused to disclose their gender status.

6.2.2 Age

In Figure 6.2 the age of respondents is reflected

FIGURE 6.2 AGE OF RESPONDENTS

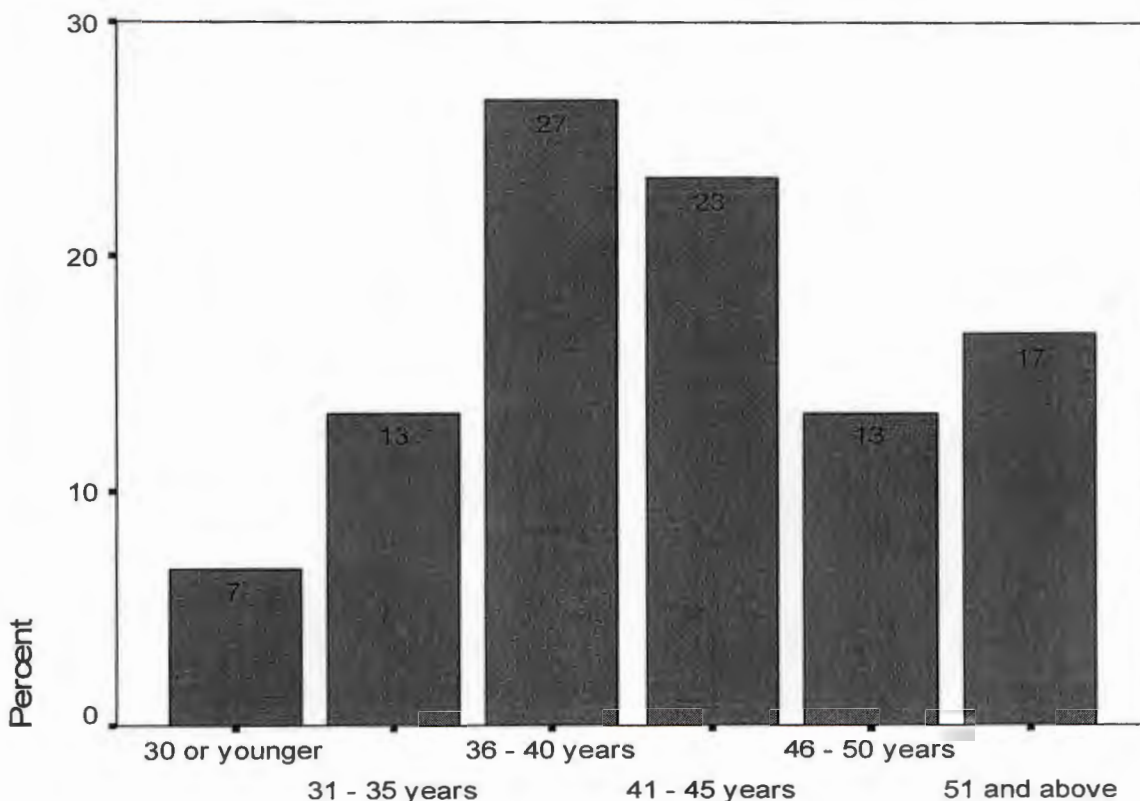


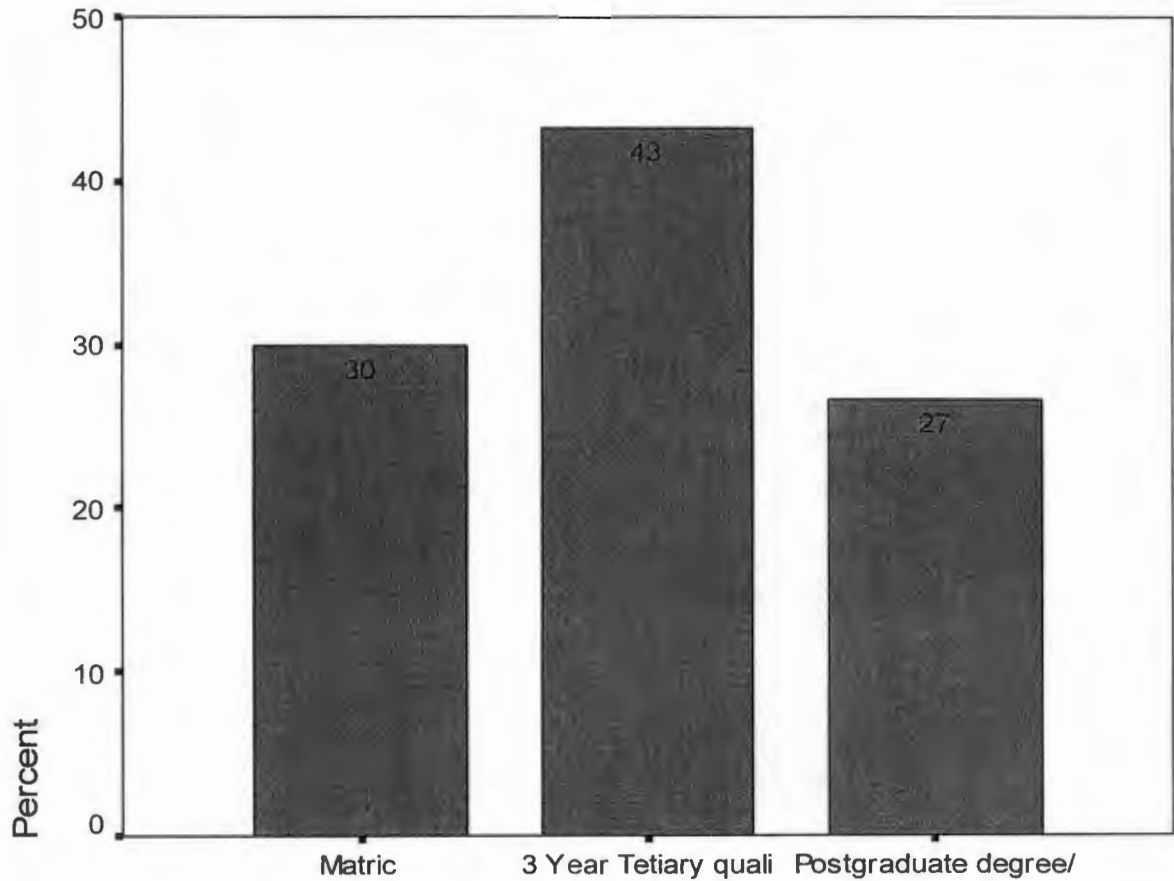
Figure 6.2 depicts the percentage of respondents by age. It reveals that the majority (27%) of the respondents of the interviewed respondents were between the ages of 36 to 40 years, suggesting that most of the interviewed respondents were relatively young. Twenty three

percent of the interviewed respondents were between 41 - 45 years. It is also evident that about 20% of the respondents are less than 35 years and 30% are 46 years and older.

6.2.3 Qualifications

In Figure 6.3 the qualifications of respondents are provided

FIGURE 6.3 QUALIFICATIONS OF RESPONDENTS

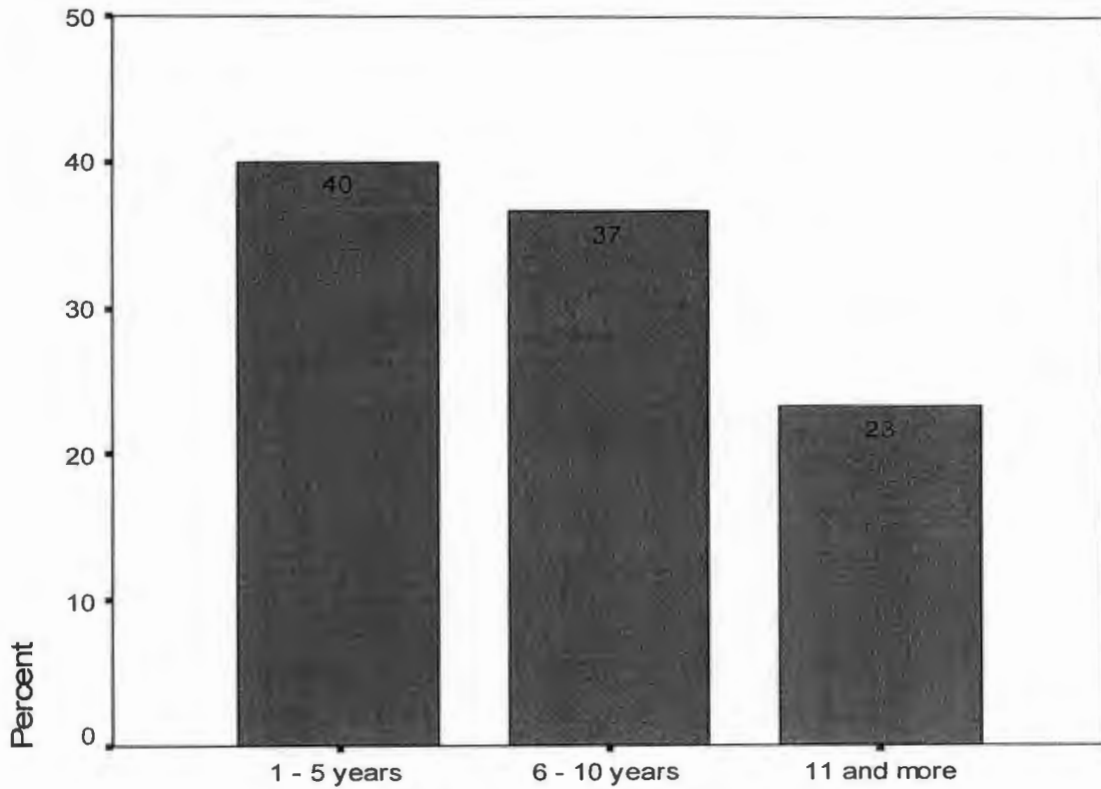


As illustrated in Figure 6.3. the majority of the respondents (43%) possess tertiary qualifications, followed by 30% of respondents with matriculation (standard ten) qualifications, and 27% of respondents have postgraduate degrees.

6.2.4 Experience

In Figure 6.4 the years of experience of respondents are covered

FIGURE 6.4 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE OF RESPONDENTS



From figure 6.4, it can be observed that the majority (40%) has between 1 – 5 years working experience. This is followed by 37% of respondents with between 6 – 10 years working experience. However, few respondents (23%) have 11 and more years of working experience.

6.3 Public participation

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with regard to certain statements on the scale of “strongly agree”, “agree to a degree”, “disagree to a large extent” and “strongly disagree”. The responses are reflected below:

6.3.1 Understanding

In Table 6.1 the responses are given with regard to the concept.

TABLE 6.1: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IS UNDERSTOOD BY ALL ROLE PLAYERS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	6	20.0
Agree to a degree	22	73.3
Disagree to a large extent	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0

Table 6.1 depicts that 73.3% of the respondents agree to an extent that public participation is understood by all role players in local government, while 20% indicated that they strongly agree. However, 6.7% of the total respondents disagree to a large extent about the understanding of public participation by all role players in local government. Nobody disagreed strongly.

6.3.2 Management

The way that public participation is arranged effectively in the Potchefstroom Municipality is indicated in Table 6.2

TABLE 6.2: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IS EFFECTIVELY MANAGED IN THE POTCHEFSTROOM MUNICIPALITY

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	11	36.7
Agree to a degree	18	60.0
Disagree to a large extent	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

The information in Table 6.2 shows that 60% of the respondents are positive and agree to a certain degree that public participation is effectively managed in the Potchefstroom Municipality, while 36.7% strongly agree about the effective management of public participation in that municipality. However, only 3.3% disagree about the effectiveness of public participation. Nobody disagreed strongly.

6.3.3 Policies

TABLE 6.5.3: POLICIES REGULATING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ARE IN PLACE

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	9	30.0
Agree to a degree	19	63.3
Disagree to a large extent	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0

The data in Table 6.3 show that 63.3% of the participants in the analysis phase about the placement of policies regulating participation, agree to a certain degree, and 30% strongly agree. Only 6.7% disagree about the placement of policies regulating public participation. Nobody strongly disagreed.

6.3.4 Awareness

Table 6.4 reveals the perceptions of the respondents about the awareness of policies regulating public participation by all role players

TABLE 6.4: POLICIES REGULATING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ARE WELL KNOWN BY ALL ROLE PLAYERS

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	8	26.7
Agree to a degree	18	60.0
Disagree to a large Extent	4	13.3
Total	30	100.0

It is evident from the above that 60% agrees to a degree about the awareness of the policies regulating participation and 26.7% strongly agree about the awareness. However, only 13.3% disagrees to a large extent. Nobody strongly disagree with this statement.

6.3.5 Promotion and participation

TABLE 6.5: MECHANISMS TO PROMOTE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ARE IN PLACE

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	12	40.0
Agree to a degree	16	53.3
Disagree to a large extent	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0

According to Table 6.5, 53% of the respondents agree to a degree that all the mechanisms to promote public participation are in place and 40% of the respondents strongly agree about the mechanisms of promoting public participation. However, only 6.7% of the participants disagree about the placement of the mechanisms of promoting public participation. Nobody disagreed strongly.

6.3.6 Mechanism to promote public participation

TABLE 6.6: MECHANISM TO PROMOTE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IS EFFECTIVE

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	7	23.3
Agree to a degree	22	73.3
Disagree to a large extent	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

Table 6.6 depicts that 73.3% of the respondents concur to a degree that the mechanisms for promoting public participation are effective, whilst 23.3% of the respondents strongly agree. Only 3.3% disagree about the effectiveness of the mechanisms of promoting public participation. Nobody strongly disagreed.

6.3.7 Lack of education and civil apathy from community members

TABLE 6.7: THERE A IS LACK OF EDUCATION AND CIVIL FROM COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	5	16.7
Agree to a degree	20	66.7
Disagree to a large extent	4	13.3
Strongly disagree	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

Table 6.7 reflects that the majority of the respondents, (66.7%) agree that there is lack of education and civil apathy from community members and this is also confirmed by 16.7% of the respondents which strongly agree with the statement. However, 13.3% of the respondents disagree to a large extent and 3.3% strongly disagree with the statement.

6.3.8 Accountability

TABLE 6.8: THERE IS LACK OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	3	10.0
Agree to a degree	13	43.3
Disagree to a large extent	11	36.7
Strongly disagree	3	10.0
Total	30	100.0

According to Table 6.8, 43.3% of the respondents indicated that there is lack of public accountability and 10% strongly agree. Hence 36.7% disagree that there is no lack of public accountability and 10% of the respondents also strongly agree that there is no lack of public accountability.

6.3.9 Ineffectiveness

TABLE 6.9: THERE IS COMMUNITY DISILLUSIONMENT WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT INEFFECTIVENESS IN SOME AREAS OF SERVICE DELIVERY

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	2	6.7
Agree to a degree	17	56.7
Disagree to a large extent	10	33.3
Strongly Disagree	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

The data in Table 6.9 show the respondents' expressions of community disillusionment with local government effectiveness in some areas of service delivery. There is evidence that the majority (56.7%) agree to a degree that there is community disillusionment with local government ineffectiveness in some areas of service delivery. This is confirmed by respondents (6.7%) who strongly agree. However, 37% of the respondents disagree.

6.3.10 Ethical conduct

TABLE 6.10: THERE IS A LACK OF ETHICAL CONDUCT AND PERCEIVED CORRUPTION FROM SOME ADMINISTRATORS AND COUNCILORS

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	1	3.3
Agree to a degree	13	43.3
Disagree to a large extent	13	43.3
Strongly disagree	3	10.0
Total	30	100.0

The issue of ethical conduct was also questioned. Table 6.10 shows that the majority (53%) disagree with the fact that there is a lack of ethical conduct and perceived corruption from some administrators and councilors.

6.3.11 Capacity

TABLE 6.11: SOME MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS WOULD REQUIRE CAPACITY BUILDING IN SKILLS THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE TO ENSURE SERVICE DELIVERY

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	6	20.0
Agree to a degree	22	73.3
Strongly disagree	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0

Table 6.11 indicates that 73.3% of the respondents agree that some municipal officials would require capacity building in skills that they do not have to ensure service delivery. This is contrasted by 20% of the respondents who strongly agree.

6.3.12 Communication (Report back)

TABLE 6.12: REPORT BACK MEETINGS ARE TAKING PLACE IN COMMUNITIES

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	10	33.3
Agree to a degree	20	66.7
Total	30	100.0

It can be observed from Table 6.12 that 66.7% of the respondents agree that report back meetings are taking place with communities and it is supported by 33.3% of the respondents who strongly agree.

6.3.13 Communication (Meetings)

TABLE 6.13: THE COUNCILORS HOLD REGULAR STRUCTURED MEETINGS WITH INTEREST GROUPS

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	11	36.7
Agree to a degree	19	63.3
Total	30	100.0

Table 6.13 shows that all the respondents (100%) agree that the councilors hold regular meetings with interest groups.

6.3.14 Communication (Other forms)

TABLE 6.14: THE COUNCILORS HAVE VARIOUS FORMS OF COMMUNICATION WITH VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	13	43.3
Agree to a degree	15	50.0
Disagree to a large extent	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0

In Table 6.14 the answers on the issue of communication between councilors and various stakeholders are given, where the majority of the respondents (94%) agree that the councilors have various forms of communication with the different stakeholders.

6.3.15 Dedicated Unit

TABLE 6.15: THERE IS A DEDICATED UNIT ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE COUNCIL

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	8	26.7
Agree to a degree	16	53.3
Disagree to a large extent	4	13.3
Strongly disagree	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0

It can be observed from Table 6.15 that the majority of the respondents (53%) agrees that there is a dedicated unit on public participation in the council. However, 13.3% disagree to a large extent and 6.7% strongly disagree.

6.3.16 Other

Respondents were asked in section C of the questionnaire to list policies, mechanisms and constraints on public participation. The answers are illustrated in table 6.16.

TABLE 6.16: POLICIES, MECHANISMS AND CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Q1. List of policies regulating public participation in the municipality	Q2. List of mechanisms for public participation that you are aware of	Q3. Constraints/challenges for public participation
Establishment of ward committee	Ward committee meetings being held	High illiteracy level of community and lack of interest/involvement
Regulations for Public participation .	Advertisement	Lack of education of local government officials
Municipal Structure Act	IMBIZO's and CLO's on projects	Timing and accessibility of central venues
Draft communication strategy	Newspapers, media and website	Unemployment
Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and Municipal Finance Management Act	Public presentation	Budget constraints and policy developed
	Electronic and print media	Limited understanding of participation democracy
	Announcements in various institutions	Awareness building
	NGOs and inter governmental relations	
<p>General finding under Q1: The general view of the respondents regarding this question indicates that policies regulating participation in the municipality, particularly on ward committees, policy and the Municipal Structure Act are in place. Other views were about draft of communication strategy, integrated development plan and municipal finance management act.</p>		

General finding under Q2: Almost all respondents answered this question positively about the popularities of imbizo's, media, ward committees and meetings, advertisements and public presentations as a mechanism of public participation.

General finding under Q3: The respondents unanimously agreed about the challenges of public participation such as an illiterate community, lack of interest/involvement and also lack of education on local government level. Further, respondents revealed the unemployment, budget constraints and policies recently developed as other serious challenges for public participation. Finally, respondents indicated that limited understanding of participation democracy and awareness building are also serious constraints of public participation.

6.4 Comment on the results

The results of the study showed that respondents agree that public participation in the Potchefstroom Municipality is understood by role players and is effectively managed and that policies, regulations and mechanisms are in place to promote public participation.

The respondents indicated that there is a need to pay attention to education, disillusionment of community members and lack of public accountability as well as capacity building within some municipal officials. The next chapter will state the conclusions and certain recommendations.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the conclusion, implications and recommendations regarding public participation at local government level in South Africa in general and in particular regarding the Municipality of Potchefstroom in the North West Province. A reflection on the findings contained in Chapter Six will be made with the specific purpose of how to improve certain aspects of public participation. The recommendations will focus on more essential aspects of public participation, which have been deduced from the empirical study.

7.1 POLICIES

7.1.1 Findings (Table 6.3 and Table 6.16)

The results of the questionnaire in Table 6.3 revealed that participants agreed that policies regulating public participation are in place. It is a small minority of the participants who are of the view that such policies are not in place.

In Table 6.16 participants listed policies regulating public participation as well as mechanisms for public participation that they are aware of. The findings indicate that participants were able to list a number of policies and mechanism.

7.1.2 Conclusions

Policies and mechanisms to regulate public participation are in place and participants were able to list a number of them. There are, however, a few of the participants who are not aware of the existence of policies and mechanisms to regulate public participation.

7.1.3 Implications

There is a need for the municipality to reach out to certain sections of the community who do not seem to be aware the existence of policies and mechanisms to regulate public participation. Because the existence of policies and mechanisms translates into strength for the municipality to enhance public participation.

7.1.4 Recommendations

Policies and mechanisms for public participation are indispensable for any viable municipality. The municipality must reach out to the sections of the community who remain oblivious to the existence of policies and mechanisms regulating public participation. Pamphlets and brochures can be used as formal education material. Meetings can be used to inform residents of participation mechanisms.

7.2 KNOWLEDGE

The focus in this area was to test the knowledge about public participation.

7.2.1 Findings (Table 6.1, Table 6.4 and Table 6.7)

In Table 6.1 the results of the questionnaire indicate that an overwhelming majority of the participants agree that public participation is understood by all role players in local government. A small percentage, however, do not agree that all role players in local government understand public participation.

In Table 6.4 a large majority of the participants attested to the fact that they are aware of the policies regulating public participation. However, a few pointed out that they are not aware of such policies. The findings in Table 6.7 revealed that the majority of the participants

shared the view that there is a lack of education and civil apathy from the community members. A few of the participants hold a different view in this regard.

7.2.2 Conclusions

Public participation is generally understood and people are aware of policies regulating public participation but there is a lack of education and civil apathy from community members.

7.2.3 Implications

The section of the community that does not understand public participation and is not aware of policies regulating public participation will need to be attended to. Lack of education and civil apathy have a potential to militate against effective and meaningful public participation.

7.2.4 Recommendations

The council will have to institute an advocacy programme for members of the community. The municipality should consider teaching the community about the policies through news letters, media, workshops and other public gatherings. Education remains central to effective public participation. There is a need to provide information with national, provincial and local public education programmes focusing on highlighting the importance of public participation in local government and the role that local government plays in the development of communities and service delivery.

Programmes of this nature should ensure the involvement of every citizen in the following:

- . Encourage a local community participation approach in the local government issues.
- . Encourage local community participation in a wide range of issues.
- . Strengthen local leadership capacity to represent community issues.

7.3 MANAGEMENT

This area discusses the management of public participation.

7.3.1 Findings (Table 6.2, Table 6.8, Table 6.9, Table 6.10, Table 6.11, and Table 6.15)

In Table 6.2 the majority of the participants are of the opinion that public participation is effectively managed in the Potchefstroom Municipality. However, there are those, albeit a few, who disagree with the view that public participation is effectively managed in the municipality.

The findings in Table 6.8 point out that a number of participants believe that there is lack of public accountability. There are only a few that do not share the same view in this regard.

In Table 6.9 the majority of the participants is of the opinion that there is community disillusionment with local government ineffectiveness in some areas of service delivery. It is, however, important to observe that a few of the participants do not believe that there is community disillusionment with local government ineffectiveness in some areas of service delivery.

Table 6.10 shows that a number of participants is of the view that there is lack of ethical conduct and perceived corruption from some administrators and councilors. However, there are a number of those who do not share this view at all.

The findings in Table 6.11 show an overwhelming agreement from participants that some officials would require capacity building in skills to ensure service delivery. Few of the participants hold a different view.

In Table 6.15 the findings indicate that the majority of the respondents is of the opinion that there is a dedicated unit of public participation and only a few share a different observation in this regard.

7.3.2 Conclusions

Public participation is effectively managed in the Potchefstroom Municipality but there is a lack of public accountability. There is community disillusionment with local government's ineffectiveness in some areas of service delivery. There is also a lack of ethical conduct and perceived corruption from some administrators and councilors. There is a need for capacity building for some municipal officials in skills they need for service delivery.

7.3.3 Implications

The council will have to identify areas for improvement to enhance effective management of public participation. Lack of public accountability undermines public participation and community disillusionment might result in undesirable actions such as protests and riots against the municipality. Lack of ethical conduct and perceived corruption would lead to community members losing confidence in the council. Lack of the requisite capacity will undermine service delivery.

7.3.4 Recommendations

Councilors must be held accountable by the community members. Community members have to be encouraged to become involved in meetings and structures that are intended to hold councilors accountable. An advocacy programme has to educate community members about the important role that they need to play. Councilors and administrators should be compelled to adhere to proper ethical conduct and corruption must be rooted out. There should be zero tolerance of corruption. Council officials should be capacitated.

7.4 COMMUNICATION

In this regard the survey examined the extent to which the municipality is able to communicate effectively.

7.4.1 Findings (Table 6.5, Table 6.6, Table 6.12, Table 6.13, and Table 6.14)

In terms of the results of the questionnaire, Table 6.5 indicates that the majority of respondents agree that mechanisms to promote public participation are in place. A few of the respondents disagree with this observation.

Table 6.6 indicates that an overwhelming majority of participants agree that mechanisms for promoting public participation are effective. Only a few disagree with this observation.

In terms of Table 6.12 the majority of the participants agree that meetings are taking place with communities to give feedback on a host of matters. There is no indication of any participant who has shown disagreement in this regard.

Table 6.13 points out that the majority of respondents agree that councilors hold regular meetings with interest groups. There is no indication for disagreement in this regard.

In Table 6.14 a majority of respondents believe that the councilors have various forms of communication with various stakeholders. Only a few disagree with this observation.

7.4.2 Conclusions

Mechanisms to promote public participation are in place and are effective. Meetings with communities are taking place. Councilors hold regular structured meetings with interest groups.

7.4.3 Implications

The municipality could identify areas of improvement to heighten its effectiveness on promoting public participation. The municipality could also consider improving in the areas of organising and conducting such meetings. The success of holding regular structured meetings will have to be sustained. More and more forms communication could be employed to enhance communication.

7.4.4 Recommendations

It is recommended that the council should devise more effective communication strategies including communicating to residents in languages that are accessible to them. The municipality could also use strategic places such as churches to communicate crucial information.

7.5 THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study were:-

- To explain the concept of public participation (Chapter 3).
- To determine the policy and legislation provision for public participation in local government (Chapter 3)
- To examine mechanisms and processes used for public participation in the Potchefstroom Municipality (Chapter 3)
- To identify constraints and challenges of public participation Chapter 6)
- To recommend strategies to enhance public participation (Chapter 7)

The study revealed that the concept of public participation is understood very well by all role players in local government. In terms of local government, public participation is provided for in terms of policy and legislative framework in South Africa, and this is not without limitations.

It is important that public participation should not allow for interference with Municipal Council's right to govern and exercise the executive and legislative authority of the Municipality. Public participation is only there to complement the political legitimate and legally responsible structures. A public participatory structure such as a ward committee adds to structures that are there in government, but it does not replace them.

In general, public participation in the Potchefstroom Municipality appears to be effectively managed. The effective management of public participation does not assume that all managers and administrators are actively involved in the promotion of public participation or support public representatives in enhancing public participation. In many instances council employees perceived public participation as a terrain of public representatives and that those who are not public representatives don't have any role to play.

The study revealed that policies regulating public participation are in place and that other players are generally aware of them. This does not mean that these policies are translated into practice. Having these policies in place and being aware of them does not necessarily mean that this enhances public participation.

It is indicative from the study that there are attempts to promote public participation. This study revealed that not much has been done to implement mechanisms to promote public participation. Indeed, much work will have to be done to get into the area of implementing mechanisms to promote public participation.

The study also found that generally there is lack of education and civil apathy, which hampers effective public participation in the Municipality, failure to attend to the aforementioned factors might undermine the success of public participation in the municipality.

The study also observed that in the main there is lack of public accountability. Public accountability is a strong element that enhances public participation as well as giving meaning and expression to the concept of public participation and the enhancement of Developmental Local Government.

It has also been observed that there is, in the main, community disillusionment with Local Government in effectiveness in some areas of service delivery. The Potchefstroom Municipality might have been successful in some area, but there are areas of service delivery that appear to contribute to community disillusionment.

The study has indicated that lack of ethical conduct and perceived corruption from some administrators and councilors do not seem to be a problem in the municipality. This is despite the fact that, generally, this perception prevails in many areas about local government in particular.

The study established that some municipal officials would definitely require capacity building in skills that they do not have, to ensure service delivery. Generally, this observation has been with many municipalities that they are unable to deliver service promptly, because of lack of capacity from some officials.

In respect of communication, the study pointed out that the Council has various forms of communication with different stakeholders. Going beyond the availability of various forms of communication will be to test the effectiveness of the various forms of communication and whether these forms reach out to all residents of the municipality.

It has also been found out that there is a general agreement that there is a dedicated unit on public participation in the Council. What remains in this regard would be test the effectiveness of the available dedicated unit for public participation.

The study identified several challenges to public participation such as, an illiterate community, lack of interest / involvement, civil apathy, and also lack of requisite capacity from local government officials.

Furthermore, the study found that, unemployment, budget constraints and policies recently developed as other serious challenges for public participation. Limited understanding of

participatory democracy and awareness are also identified as serious constraints for public participation.

7.6 TESTING THE MAIN PROBLEM

The main problem was formulated as follows:

To establish the role of public participation in the management of the Potchefstroom municipality in delivering services and the development of the area. The study established that public participation plays a central role in the running of the Potchefstroom municipality and that it is understood by role players, effectively managed and that policies and mechanisms are in place to promote public participation. The study also identified key challenges that need to be addressed to enhance public participation in the municipality.

7.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study has not adequately tested the functionality of public participation and only 50 questionnaires were distributed and more than 60% were returned. Caution must be exercised when interpreting the results that cannot be generalized to the wider population.

7.8 AREAS FOR FUTURE STUDY RESEARCH

The following could be considered :

- Determining the effectiveness of mechanisms for public participation
- Determining the reasons for civil apathy in public participation
- Determine the effectiveness of the unit for public participation in council

7.9 Closing comment

Municipal councilors and officials cannot on their own ensure that effective service delivery and development happen. Continuous feedback from the community remains extremely vital in improving service delivery given the fact that every member of the community has a constitutional right of quality life through the delivery of quality services. Attempts have been made by the Potchefstroom Municipality to promote the involvement of community members towards their social and economic upliftment. A great deal will still need to be done in this regard given the fact that many members of the community remain excluded or are unwilling to involve themselves in the affairs of the municipality that affect them.

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ANNEXURE A

TO : RESPONDENTS

QUESTIONNAIRES

I am J.D. Mveli, a graduate student in the Master in Business Administration Programme at the North West University. I am conducting a study on "Public participation : A critical assessment of the Potchefstroom Municipality".

You have been randomly selected to participate in the study. Your honest and sincere responses to this questionnaire will assist in assessing the role of public participation.

Information regarding your identity has been omitted to ensure confidentiality.

Your participation is highly appreciated.



QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

NB. Make a tick in the appropriate block.

1. AGE

30 or younger	
31-35	
36-40	
41-50	
46-50	
51 - older	

2. GENDER

Male	
Female	

3. YOUR LEVEL OF EDUCATION (HIGHEST GRADUATION)

Less than matric	
Matric	
3 Year tertiary qualification	
Post-graduate degrees	

4. NUMBER OF YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT MATTERS

01-05	
06-10	
11 or more	

SECTION B

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE CONTEXT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS INFLUENCED BY A NUMBER OF FACTORS.

Indicate by the extent to which you agree/disagree with statements below with regard to ensuring

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE TO A DEGREE	DISAGREE TO A LARGE EXTENT	STRONGLY DISAGREE
5.1 Public participation is understood by all role players in Local Government				
5.2 Public participation is effectively managed in the Potchefstroom Municipality				
5.3 Policies Regulating Public Participation are In place				
5.4 Policies regulating are well known by all role players				
5.5 Mechanism to promote public participation are in place				
5.6 Mechanism to promote public participation are effective				
5.7 There is lack of education and civility from community members.				

5.8 There is lack of Public accountability				
5.9 There is Community Disillusionment with local government ineffectiveness in some areas of service delivery				
5.10 There is lack of ethical conduct and perceived corruption from some administrators and councilors				
5.11 Some Municipal officials would require capacity building in skills that they do not have to ensure service delivery				
5.12 Report back meetings are taking place with communities				
5.13 The council holds regular structured meeting with interest groups.				
5.14 The council has various forms of communication with various stakeholders.				
5.15 There is a dedicated unit on public participation in the council.				

SECTION C

6. PROVIDING POLICIES, MECHANISM AND CONSTRIANTS ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

6.1 List policies regulating participation in the municipality

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

6.2 List mechanisms for public participation that you are aware of

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

6.3 Give the constraints/challenges of public participation

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME!