

**WARD COMMITTEE FUNCTIONARIES AS PARTICIPANTS FOR IMPROVING
SERVICE DELIVERY AT MAFUBE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY**

By

JOHN SIPHO MKHWANAZI (BA MASTERS)

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Supervisor: Prof EP Ababio

North-West University (Vaal Campus)

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I declare that this dissertation is my work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of a complete reference

JS MKHWANAZI

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ABSTRACT

The concept public participation as the bedrock of participatory democracy has the advantages of empowering civil society in decision-making skills and in legitimizing execution of programmes and projects. The vehicle driving public participation is the system of Ward Committees. Legislations such as White Paper on Local Government and the Constitution obligate municipalities to involve communities in facilitating development. Participation is an essential part of local democracy and is a statutory prerequisite for the local community to be drawn into decision-making through processes such as the integrated development planning.

The task of Mafube Local Municipality is not only to provide services that encourage sustainable living standards but, to also guarantee that the Mafube community is involved in council strategies and activities that affect the lives of local community. The study was undertaken to determine the effectiveness of ward committees in becoming partners in the developmental role of Mafube Local Municipality.

For the purpose of the study, hypothesis was formulated that ward committees are necessary mechanisms for facilitating service delivery and yet social and administrative challenges confront their efficient functioning at Mafube Local Municipality which needs to be resolved. To test the hypothesis, empirical research method of open ended questionnaires and interviews was used to test attitudes and perceptions of councillors, ward committees and the community of Mafube Local Municipality on the effectiveness of ward committees.

Amongst other findings, it was found that:

- Ward committees as community structures are well known by the community of Mafube.
- Ward committees need an on-going training with regard to their roles and responsibilities so that they are empowered to execute their duties as is required of them.
- The literacy level among certain ward committee members poses a challenge in enabling them to understand municipal programmes or projects.

- Public participation is viewed as consultation because there is minimal participation of the community during the planning and decision making of the municipal programmes or projects.
- Majority of community members do not attend ward or public meetings.
- Elections of ward committees are sometimes not fair and transparent, depending on political affiliation.

The study concludes with recommendations for consideration and implementation by Council of Mafube Local Municipality in enhancing service delivery.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER1 INTRODUCTION, ORIENTATION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT....	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.2 ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND.....	1
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT.....	4
1.4 HYPOTHESIS.....	5
1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	5
1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES.....	5
1.7 RESEARCH METHODS.....	6
1.7.1 Literature review.....	6
1.7.2 Empirical survey.....	6
1.8 ETHICS.....	7
1.9 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS.....	8
CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND WARD COMMITTEES.....	9
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	9
2.2 DEFINITION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.....	10
2.2.1. Different Phases of Public Participation.....	10
2.2.2. The Benefits of Public Participation.....	12
2.3. FOCUS OF PARTICIPATION.....	14
2.3.1. Strategies for community participation.....	14
2.3.1.1. Information sharing strategies.....	15
2.3.1.2. Consultation strategies.....	15

2.3.1.3. Decision-making strategies.....	15
2.3.1.4. Initiating action strategy.....	15
2.4 ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION.....	16
2.4.1. Representative and participatory democracy.....	17
2.4.2. Why participate?.....	17
2.4.3. How can one participate?.....	18
2.4.3.1. Public hearing.....	18
2.4.3.2. Referendum as participation strategy.....	19
2.4.3.3. Public Participation in Municipal Budget.....	19
2.4.3.4. Do we have to organise to participate?.....	20
2.4.3.5. Non- governmental organisations: a new space for participation.....	20
2.5 LINKING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT.....	20
2.5.1. Public participation in local government.....	21
2.5.2. Specific norms linking public participation.....	23
2.5.3. Levels of public participation.....	24
2.5.4. Principles of community participation.....	25
2.6. WARD COMMITTEES AS COMMUNICATION CHANNEL.....	26
2.6.1. Other functions of ward committees.....	27
2.7. UNDERSTANDING LOCAL GOVERNMENT.....	27
2.7. 1. Developmental Local Government.....	28
2.7.1.1. Maximising social development and economic growth.....	30

2.7.1.2. Integration and coordination.....	31
2.7.1.3. Democratising development.....	31
2.7.1.4. Leading and learning.....	32
2.7.1.5. Identification of interest groups.....	32
2.7.1.6. Specialist groups.....	34
2.7.1.7. Involving communities in development.....	34
2.8. COMPONENTS OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL STATES.....	34
2.9. INGREDIENTS OF A DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENTAL STATE	35
2.9.1 Economic growth with equity.....	35
2.10 BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY TO ENGAGE WITH MUNICIPALITIES.....	36
2.11 CONCLUSION.....	36
CHAPTER 3 INSTITUTIONAL ROLES OF WARD COMMITTEES AT MAFUBE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY.....	38
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	38
3.2 FUNCTIONS OF WARD COMMITTEES IN ENHANCING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.....	38
3.3 LOCALITY AND DESCRIPTION OF MAFUBE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY.....	39
3.4 ESTABLISHMENT OF WARD COMMITTEES AT MAFUBE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY.....	40
3.4.1 Structure and purpose of the ward committee.....	40
3.4.2 Functions of the councillor.....	40
3.4.3 Functions of ward committees in Mafube Local Municipality.....	41

3.4.4 Sectors within Mafube Local Municipality.....	41
3.4.5 Functions of ward committees in the Integrated Development and Planning.....	42
3.5 DEVELOPMENT OF WARD COMMITTEE SYSTEM.....	42
3.5.1 Opportunities for public participation.....	44
3.5.2 Managing the ward committee system.....	45
3.5.2.1 Implication for Mafube Local Municipality.....	46
3.5.2.2 Council meetings.....	46
3.5.2.3 People’s forums/ mayor’s road shows.....	47
3.5.2.4 Responsibilities of ward committees at Mafube Local Municipality.....	47
3.6 WARD COMMITTEES AND INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND BUDGETARY PROCESS.....	48
3.6.1 Ward committees, the Speaker and the Mayor’s Office.....	48
3.6.2 Endorsing good governance.....	48
3.6.3 Ward committee link to municipal functions.....	49
3.7 CONCLUSION.....	50
CHAPTER4 EMPIRICAL STUDY ON EFFECTIVENESS OF WARD COMMITTEES IN MAFUBE MUNICIPALITY.....	51
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	51
4.2 COMPILING DATA PLAN.....	51
4.2.1 Variables.....	51
4.2.2 Sampling.....	52
4.3 DATA FROM SAMPLE POPULATION.....	53

4.3.1 Interviews.....	53
4.3.2 Questionnaires.....	54
4.3.3 Question explained.....	55
4.4 RESEARCH METHOD DEFINED.....	55
4.4.1 The rationale for choosing the qualitative and quantitative methods.....	55
4.4.2 Reliability and validity.....	57
4.5 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH.....	57
4.5.1 Community’s responses	57
4.5.2 Responses from interviews.....	59
4.6 CONCLUSION.....	60
CHAPTER 5 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION.....	61
5.1 INTRODUCTION.....	61
5.2 REALISATION OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY.....	61
5.3 TESTING THE HYPOTHESIS.....	62
5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	62
5.5 CONCLUSION.....	63
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	64
APPENDICES	
ANNEXURE A: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE	

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

KEY WORDS

Ward committees, public participation, democracy, communities, integrated development and planning, Mafube Local Municipality.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an orientation and background to the study of ward committee functionaries as participants for improving service delivery at Mafube Local Municipality. The problem statement highlights the challenges that exist at the locus that is the area for the study in encouraging the objectives of ward committees. The hypothesis for research, research questions and objectives for the study are also mentioned. Methods for research are explained to involve literature review on public participation and ward committees, as well as on empirical survey. The chapter concludes with an outline of chapters for the study.

1.2 ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND

Public participation and ward committees are related concepts often used in the public service in South Africa. The concepts came about through the introduction and emphasis on them by the provision of the section 152(1) of the Constitution of South Africa of 1996, the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 and the Local Government White Paper of 1998. Work on the theoretical concepts has since been published by Ababio (2007), Brynard (2004), by Tshabalala (2007) and by Visser (2007). What have not been looked at academically are the performance evaluation criteria of public participation and ward committees in Mafube Municipality. This is the gap that this study aims to help fill as contribution to the current form of knowledge in Public Management.

Public participation has been defined extensively by various authors. For an example, the concept has been used to reflect the interactive process of informing and consulting with communities (DPLG, 2005:15). Public participation is also defined in the Department of Co-Operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) as... “an accountable process where individuals and group exchange views and influence decision making. Furthermore , public participation is a democratic process of engaging people and playing active part in the

development of services that affect lives” (DPLG, 2005). It has been used as a way of promoting sincere needs by addressing them through self-sufficiently and mass mobilisation.

Van der Waldt and du Toit (2004:117) concurs with these definitions of DPLG by stressing that public participation is an instrument that enlightens and educate communities, and therefore improving democratic practises. Participation is a mechanism of getting community’s desires and views before the policy resolutions are taken. Public participation encourages objectivity and rationality in the delivery of public resources. It stabilises bureaucracy and democracy. Public participation, furthermore teaches the people to understand desires of other citizen groups in society and to resolve conflict. It provides people with special insight to the soundness of government policies, and further guarantees that people have access to democracy.

According to Madlala (2005:45) “public participation is making chances for communities to state their thoughts in matters of governance. Communities must be involved throughout phases of a particular project, to ensure the transfer of skills and ownership of the community development”.

Community participation is done by community and facilitated by government to reach certain goals of particular community (Swanepoel, 1985:361). Burkey (1993:56) states that “public participation is a basic human right and necessary for rearrangement of political power in favour of the disadvantaged groups and for social development”.

Section 152(1) of the 1996 Constitution of South Africa layout the necessity for community participation that places specific emphasis on governance and service delivery. It is a requirement that local government must consult local communities when taking decisions that fall within their area (South Africa, 1996:81). Municipalities are compelled to improve mechanisms to ensure that participants participate in policy initiation, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes in terms of the White Paper of 1998 on Local Government. A localised system of participation has to be developed by each municipality (South Africa, 1998:33). The Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 requires municipalities to improve mechanisms to assist community involvement in local governance. A new culture of governance that supplements representative democracy through participation is being enforced (South Africa, 1998:14). This Act also provides for the formation of ward committees which may advice the municipality on local matters (South Africa, 1998:36).

When a new structure of local government was introduced through the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, it was positioned as “a last sphere of government that is best positioned to bring democracy next to the people and to address basic national challenges such as underdevelopment, joblessness, stagnation and poverty”. The ward committees are designed to help government to achieve such development agenda (Mufamadi, 2005: i).

The conceptualisation of local government has been positioned to address national challenges such as service delivery, provision of basic needs, and in combating poverty. At the sphere of local government implies the means for legitimate service delivery, participatory democracy, the mobilisation of the masses in decision-making to determine what is good for them in line with national objectives. Ward committees are intended to help achieve such developmental goals. Ward committees are created by legislation and obligated to be active partners in local government. In these, ward committees liaise with municipalities on aspirations and challenges of the people. Ward committees are channels facilitating communication between council and the communities, and actively participate in determining core municipal procedures. Except ward committees the system of democratic governance and developmental local government cannot be said to be entrenched among the people (Ababio, 2007:614).

The Government of South Africa has introduced comprehensive participatory methods in the different spheres and institutions of government. The determined attempt to present participatory democracy is evident in methods and institutions at national, provincial and local spheres (Putu, 2006:4). Participatory democracy means the delivery of services based on the mobilisation of communities through procedures of public policy making and implementation. Southall (in Nyalunga, 2006: 44) adds that “participatory democracy involves a high level of public participation in the political process through different institutional channels”. For that matter, participatory democracy exists only when communities are afforded a chance to actively contribute to their own progress and security. Brynard (1996:41) however, cautions that “participatory is not absolute and consequently defines participation as an activity undertaken by one or more individuals previously excluded from decision-making process in conjunction with one or more other individuals who were previously the sole protagonists in the process”. Participatory democracy is, therefore, “a process of inclusivity, a joint process that cuts across racial, privileged and

status profiles. The objective is to give recognition of ethos that the input process that is best driven by those who are affected by a problem” (Hanekom, 1987:34).

Ward committees function well in the role of participatory democracy in that they are an innovative legislative vehicle and facilitate mass representation that deal with matters that affect their localities in relation to policy-making by a municipality. Davids and Maphunye (2005:129) point out that “participation during decision-making is essential to develop the quality of decisions and to improve compliance”. With public participation prior to decision-making, authorities have an opportunity to reflect on public opinion and to gain commitment for participation in projects after decision-making.

There is however a gap in implementing the theory and practice whereby there is a lack of evaluating the performance of ward committees. It is therefore important to introduce the performance evaluation criteria when dealing with public participation and the function of ward committees. In order to fill these gaps, the study will therefore utilise and analyse the existing literature and explore all the legislations with an intention of making a meaningful contribution.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Mafube Local Municipality has established ward committees in all nine wards within its area of jurisdiction. The ward committees act as critical community organs that facilitate community input into municipal policy making, development and implementation of municipal programmes. Ward committees receive administrative support and logistical support from the Speaker’s office. Committees are trained on legislation, code of conduct and their roles on how to engage in planning, budgeting and service delivery processes.

However, Mafube ward committees seem to be encountering some challenges. Ward committee members appear not to be representative (Putu, 2006:21-22). The majority of wards seem to be dominated by women and youth with the exclusion of men and other interest groups for example, taxi owners, council of churches, professional practitioners, and businesses.

Ward committees seem not to be functioning effectively; in that they do not regularly meet. What is of more serious concerns is minimal influence ward committees appear to have on

council decision-making. This seems attributable to the lack of structured mechanisms ward committees input into council deliberation processes.

They are not encouraged to contribute into the Integrated Development Planning (IDP), performance management and budgeting process. The above challenges provide hypothetical issues that require a study of this nature to resolve the difficulties that confront ward committees as facilitators of public participation at Mafube Local Municipality.

1.4 HYPOTHESIS

Ward committees are necessary mechanisms for facilitating service delivery and yet social and administrative challenges confront their efficient functioning at Mafube Local Municipality which needs to be resolved.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In relation to the orientation and problem statement, the study aims to answer to the following questions:

- What is meant by the concepts ward committees and community participation?
- What mechanisms and systems are used in Mafube Local Municipality to support ward committees in public participation for service delivery?
- What are the successes or the failures of ward committees in service delivery at Mafube Local Municipality?
- What recommendations can be offered to help develop ward committees as effective institutions in Mafube Local Municipality?

1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study made attempt to realise the following objectives:

- To give theoretical exposition of the concepts ward committees and community participation.
- To describe an overview of mechanisms and systems used to develop ward committees in public participation at Mafube Local Municipality.

- To conduct research into the successes or the failures of ward committees at Mafube Local Municipality.
- To make recommendations that can help to develop ward committees as effective participants in Mafube Local Municipality.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODS

The research was conducted through the usage of techniques which are classified under qualitative research methods. The researcher employed the following methods, namely: literature review and empirical survey.

1.7.1 Literature Review

Literature review was used for the theoretical part of the research. It was based on information gathered in public libraries around Mafube and the library of North-West University. Government publications such as Acts, White Paper on ward committees, articles and journals, reports and gazette, policy documents and books and electronic sources on ward committees and public participation were utilised in this regard.

1.7.2 Empirical Survey

According to Brynard and Hanekom (1997:44) in stratified sampling a population should preferably be divided into different, clearly recognizable strata. Due to the fact that a large part of the population has not been investigated, statement made about the community has been found to be true for the samples are of necessity probability statement (Bless & Higoson-Smith, 1995:86). A questionnaire is a “document having questions and other types of items intended to obtain information suitable to analysis” (Babbie et al 2001:646). Structured questionnaires were constructed with the guidance of the supervisor.

A semi-structured questionnaire to determine the feelings and attitudes of the municipality ward committees and the community was created and distributed to officials and community members of the Mafube Local Municipality and to the ward committees within Mafube area. The questionnaires were randomly distributed among the three categories, namely, politicians from the municipality (Speaker of Mafube), the manager in the speaker’s office, 9 ward

committee members from different wards and ordinary members of the community. The objective was to get the general feeling of these three categories, on the success or failure of the functioning of ward committees at Mafube Local Municipality.

Another format that was applied is the face to face interview. This helped in reaching out to 9 members of the community who are not literate and those members of the community who had problems in understanding the questionnaires. Those who could not respond to questions in writing were interviewed face-to-face or via telephone and their responses were analysed statistically with those of other respondents.

1.8 ETHICS

This research is being conducted by a student whose core interest is the role of public participation and ward committees in Mafube Local Municipality. A high degree of ethics need be observed in such sensitive survey. For that matter:

- Permission was obtained from the Mayor and the Municipal Manager of Mafube Local Municipality.
- Research questionnaires were distributed to the target group without names of responded required in order to prevent bias.
- Confidentiality was maintained with regard to respondents' responses to questionnaires.
- Openness and transparency: open communication was made to all stakeholders to allay their fears with respect to the purpose of the study with the assurance that findings will assist the municipality to obtain better ways of involving communities.

1.9 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1: Introduction: Orientation and Problem Statement

Chapter one provides the general orientation for the study and also introduces the readers to the research problem. The hypothesis, research questions, objectives, methodologies and ethics are discussed and explained.

Chapter 2: Theoretical overview of public participation and ward committees

The chapter outlines in detail a theoretical overview of public participation and ward committees.

Chapter 3: Institutional roles of ward committees in Mafube Local Municipality

This chapter explains the roles, functions and structures of ward communities in Mafube Local Municipality.

Chapter 4: Empirical study on functioning of ward committees in Mafube Local Municipality

Chapter four focuses on the successes and failures of ward committees in Mafube Local Municipality.

Chapter 5: Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion

This chapter draws conclusions on the role of ward committee functionaries as participants for improving service delivery at Mafube Local Municipality. It attempt to come up with a number of recommendations for consideration, informed by the findings of the study in relation to the hypothesis.

CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND WARD COMMITTEES

2.1. INTRODUCTION

South African local municipalities are required by legislation to have effective community participation and engagements to strategically plan the most service delivery for their areas by implementing a number of systems and processes as outlined in the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 (Moroe, 2010:12). Conceptualisation of local government in South Africa is positioned as the last sphere of government in addressing basic national challenges such as public participation in matters of service delivery, provision of basic needs, and in combating poverty. At the sphere of local government, it implies the means for legitimate service delivery participatory democracy, the mobilisation of the masses in decision making to determine what is good for national objectives (Mufumadi, 2001:1).

The Freedom Charter declared in 1955 that “the people shall govern”. When the South African Constitution of 1996 was drafted, the might have had this slogan in mind, as the constitution reflects a descriptive and participatory nature. Nyathi (2008:102) states that “the inclusive feature embraces multi-party democracy that is achieved through regular elections based on a common voter’s roll and relative representation. The inclusive feature goes further in that it warranties participation of each voter in community life in between elections”. The two features supplement each other. Public participation is of vital importance for good governance as it encourages transparency and accountability to the needs of the local community. It also important for decision-making as it brings benefits for democracy in general.

Ward committees are intended to help achieve such developmental goals. Ward committees are created by legislation and obligated to be active partners in local government. In these, ward committees liaise with municipalities on aspirations and challenges of the people. Ward committees are channels facilitating communication between council and the communities, and actively participate in determining core municipal processes. Ababio (2007:614) states that “except them the system of democratic governance and developmental local government cannot be entrenched among the people”.

This chapter defines public participation, different phases, focus, strategies, accountability, specific assumptions, levels, and principles of public participation. The chapter further

examines the importance of ward committees and its functions and developmental local government's definition, its characteristics, components and ingredients in public participation.

2.2. DEFINITION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Burkery (1996:56) defines "public participation as mechanism in which people make contributions in the democratic institutions governing their lives and important for bringing back political power in favour of the disadvantaged groups and for social and their economic development". According to Williams (2006:197) "community participation entails the direct participation of the community in the planning, control and overall development programmes within the local government level".

Gibson (2006:7) states that "community participation happens when communities meet, deliberate and take action collectively in order to address problems that are applicable to their needs". This means information-sharing, acting to help solve community needs and participating in the decision-making process. Recipients play a central role on essential services that should be provided and this will make communities feel that they are part of the solution as well.

2.2.1. Different Phases of Public Participation

Mathur (1986:18) states that "different forms of public participation are based on the intentions of the public policy-maker, the makeup of the community targeted for participation, key interest at stake, level of influence that is created and the desired direction of the whole process".

The following are the phases according to Mathabatha and Naidoo (2004: 24)

(a) Participatory planning phase

For effective participation conditions need to first be put in places, and they are:

- A real motivation and enthusiasm within the community; and
- Effective community organisations, which can support the process and take it forward.

According to Hagmann *et al* (1998:19), without the two mentioned conditions there is little chance that development activities will be sustained. Hagmann *et al* indicate that to motivate people to effectively participate and take action, the project implementer has to identify and

address the people's key concerns. They further explain that only the community can effectively identify, clarify and prioritise their concerns and formulates their needs. This process will harness their natural energy and the community will become motivated to actively participate, which is a precondition for overcoming feelings of helplessness, powerlessness and apathy for initiating action.

(b) Implementation Phase

During this phase which largely comprises construction of projects amenities, the community's participation can be in a form of free labour contribution, that can help in saving costs and it can help to develop a sense of ownership and climate of co-operation amongst the community which will lead to responsible use and maintenance of the systems. This will also help the community to acquire many skills which will help in the maintenance of such projects.

(c) Operation and Maintenance Phase

When communities are given a chance to participate and to develop skills, they will be willing to contribute in maintaining the projects. This community needs to understand clearly the contribution expected from them by the public officials. They need support to enable them to carry out their part of the work effectively (WHO, 1991).

(d) Evaluation Phase

When the community has been involved in the municipal projects, it is imperative that it also forms part of the evaluation process. This promotes a transparent and accountable process and commitment. It is therefore important that from the implementation stage of the project to the evaluation phase, members of the public are involved in order to ensure ownership and sustainability. The four phases play a vital role in various forms that the public can participate in local government. Not only can they participate in decision making but can also participate in sustaining and maintaining what they regard as their needs.

Public participation is multifaceted activity with different degrees of community involvement. For the purpose of the study, different methods of participation have been distributed into four groups (London, 2002:10) namely:

- The questions and answer method used by local authorities for some time.
- Methods which are primarily customer orientated used in relation to service delivery.

- Innovative methods that represent the new research techniques.
- Advanced approaches which encourage citizens to deliberate over issues.

2.2.2. The Benefits of Public Participation

Public participation legitimises a local government by making it acceptable to the municipal community. The community needs to continually work together with its councillors to ensure that all decisions by the municipality is useful to them. Houston, Humphries, Liebenberg and Dichaba (2000:81) believe that “public participation contributes to the forming of community unity and create public pride”. The following are the benefits of public participation: Public participation:

- Makes the municipality to focus and respond to stated and appropriate public desires.
- Develops the process of consultation that can help to clarify and focus on community issues.
- Increases ownership of decisions and resultant outcomes in the decision-making process (DPLG, 2005:17).
- Recognises changes when dealing with issues, and many different views.
- Helps the community to understand the project better and informed the community to be involved.
- Assists in adding value to the decisions taken as it will be drawn in on the skills of the community members.
- Develops municipal integrity with the community when valuing the public’s opinions.

The above benefits of public participation enable the municipality to include the community in its programmes and projects. Moreover the public officials will take into cognisance the strengths, aspirations and challenges of the local communities. These benefits for public participation empower local communities with special skills and knowledge of their municipality (Moroe, 2010: 16).

Bekker (1996:75) discusses other benefits of public participation as follows:

- **Reduction of psychological suffering and apathy**

According to Kweit (1977:35), public participation in local government increases the citizens' sense of efficacy, as it makes the community to believe that they have the ability to influence government in its planning and decision-making. On the one hand Bekker (1996:75) suggests that the “empowerment of individuals and groups to have a say in matters affecting their lives reduces emotional suffering and overwhelps the apathy of normal community and should be the central reason for urging public participation”. Strange (1972:35) indicates that “the most credible argument in favour of increased public participation is that the public involvement is necessary in any endeavour to overcome a sense of helplessness among the community”. The lack of community involvement in the local government increases droopiness among communities.

- **Positive application of citizen powers**

Public participation can convert citizens from being dependent to being independent that is, changing passive consumers into producers of services (Moroe, 2010:17).

- **Readiness to sustain deprivation**

Public participation helps in fostering a spirit of participation and possession of citizens to accept the possible occurrence of local government in failing to render certain needed services. In a case where resources are scarce the community understands as they formed part of the discussions in which resources were selected and which were given first priority.

- **Converting opponents**

Southall (2004:54) indicates that “participatory democracy involves a high level of community participation in the governmental process through an extensive variation of institutional channels. Participatory democracy can only happen when communities are actively and meaningfully contributing to their own progress and security”. Brynard (1996:41) though cautions that “what constitutes participatory is relative in that many acts have the potential to shape in certain way participatory, and therefore he defines participation as an activity undertaken by one or more individuals previously excluded from the decision-making process in conjunction with one or more individuals who were previously the sole characters in the process”.

Participatory democracy is, therefore, a process of inclusivity, a joint process that cuts across racial, privileged and status profiles. The objective is to give recognition to the ethos that the input process is best driven by those who are affected by the problem (Hanekom, 1987:34). In a democratic society, community participation becomes a desired and necessary part of democratic processes which seek to deepen citizen involvement at local government level. Public participation makes it possible for citizens as individuals and groups to decisively take part in local government matters that affect their communities. Decisions made without public input are often eventually discarded as illegitimate and anti-democratic, which can hamper community development.

Bridges (1974:27) provides five advantages and benefits from active public involvement in community issues:

- The individual learns to acknowledge the individual needs and all community groups.
- The individual can express one's desire individually or through a community group.
- Individual learns to make the desired changes.
- Individual begins to value group dynamics.
- The individuals learn how to resolve the interests of the group.

Various municipalities are mandated to deliver essential services and are required to understand their community needs and identify the good skills within the community; all these are only possible through the interaction and participation by the community members and their public officials (Moroe, 2010:18).

2.3. FOCUS OF PARTICIPATION

The participation in a focus group is created on a geographic locality, a shared interest and a service orientated basis (Boaden et al 1982: 17). Participation is developed by way of long standing membership of and relationship with local government representatives. The greatest noticeable participants in local government activities are ward communities. In the South African context, civic associations play an important part in the formation of a tradition of activism in public society (Atkinson 1992:17).

2.3.1. Strategies for community participation

According to Theron (2005b; 123) in Integrated Environmental Management Information Series , “there is a diverse range of community participation strategies which range widely in

creativity, complexity and the type of technology used. There is no single recipe for selecting the right combination for a particular process and each strategy has advantages and shortcomings. Attaining affective, efficient and equitable community participation depends largely on choosing the appropriate combination of strategies to be used". The various strategies for community participation can be classified into four groups (Kok and Gelderbloem, 1994: 65). In the paragraphs below, these four groups will be discussed.

2.3.1.1. Information sharing strategies

Information sharing strategies do not constitute community participation because they merely require the community to judge a finished product, for an example of this kind of strategy is information documentation. Other examples of information sharing strategies include exhibitions, media coverage and audio and visual material (Kok and Gelderbloem, 1994:66). According to Taylor (1994:195), "project beneficiaries tend to be passive respondents". Information sharing strategies are referred to as "participation as means to an end", because participation is generally short-term. Theron (2005b:117) emphasis is placed on achieving the objective. There is no channel delivered for response. The main concern of information strategies is achieving long-term social advantage, sustainable development and what community participation contributes to the end product.

2.3.1.2. Consultation strategies

Consultation strategies are referenda, questionnaire surveys and focus group interviews (Kok and Gelderbloem, 1994:69). The beneficiaries need to respond to project management at various stages because they should be more reactive in their action (Taylor, 1994:195). Theron, (2005b:115) states that "there is no share in decision-making by the community".

2.3.1.3. Decision-making strategies

Decision-making strategies involve one way communication from the planners to the public. Examples of decision-making strategies are public meetings, hearings and the Delphi strategy which involves three or four rounds of questionnaires that allow views to be expressed anonymously (Kok and Gelderbloem, 194:19).

2.3.1.4. Initiating action strategy

Initiating action strategy can comprise self-help manuals, for example housing standards or layouts, workshop approach which allows residents to form groups to assess specific

problems. Planning teams are established to deal with specific problems that may include the responsibility for resolving upcoming conflicts (Kok and Gelderbloem, 1994: 74). Community participation is not just the mechanism to achieve objectives, but is seen as a right.

The other initiating action strategies include participation for material incentives, functional participation and self-mobilization. People participate by providing resources in return for material rewards. This decreases overall costs, and participants in return receive a resource (Reniga & Simpson, 2002:182). Theron (2005b: 115) states that “people have no stake in prolonging activities when incentives end. When people participate by joining groups to implement projects, usually after important decisions have been made; it is referred to as functional participation”. The bottom-up approach allows people to develop contacts with external institutions for resources and the technical advice they need. Mobilization is evident by joining groups and organization (Regina, 2002: 182).

2.4. ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Local Government Information Series (2007:10) defines the concept accountability as the need “to explain one’s conduct”. Accountability is needed to ensure that those in power can be held responsible for their actions. Community members must also be given an opportunity to know the decision making processes. They need to obtain the first hand and trustworthy information to keep relations at par with democratic process. Van der Waldt (2007: 26) also indicates that “citizens should participate in decision-making and obtain the information they need to keep political representatives responsive”.

Through the public participation process, communities continuously endeavour for a positive interaction with local government, demanding an update from authorities by being provided with accurate information (Van der Waldt, 2007:26). As a result of the participation process, it helps them recognise officials who represent them.

Furthermore, Brinkerhoff (in Van der Molen, Van Rooyen & Van Wyk 2001:293) denotes that “the current concern with accountability reflects certain factors: citizens are dissatisfied with government”. It centres mainly on cost effectiveness issues and on application of abuse of authority as well as on the lack of management of basic freedoms. Accountability is viewed as imposing good behaviours on civil servants. The concept of accountability has moved to a higher and enhanced level of importance due to the scope and size of the administrative position in the current society. Civil servants must account for incomes.

2.4.1. Representative and participatory democracy

The Government of South Africa in 1996 has introduced extensive participatory methods in the different spheres and institutions of government. The determination to present participatory democracy is evident in institutions and methods at national, provincial and local spheres (Putu, 2006:4).

Participatory democracy means the delivery of services based on involvement and mobilisation of community in the formal processes of public policy-making and implementation. Southall (in Nyalunga, 2006: 44) adds that “participatory democracy involves a high level of public participation in the governmental process through a variety of institutional channels”. For that matter, participatory democracy can only exist when communities are actively and meaningfully contributing to their own progress and security.

Participatory democracy is, therefore, a process of inclusivity, a joint process that cuts across racial, privileged and status profiles. Inclusivity in decision-making is therefore the bedrock of democracy, the tents of which involve the existence of a system with freedom of speech, association and assembly, as is the right to stand for office, a free press, and a secret ballot. Further, these tenets are strengthened by a stronger economy, the presence of credible political opposition, and the need to distinguish between the state and the ruling party (Thomson 2000: 216-218).

The most commonly known forms of participatory democracy are elections and referenda. Elections do much more than simply determine who will form the next government. The primary role is to provide mechanism for recruiting and selecting individuals in representative institutions. Regularly held elections also provide voters with chances to assess the government’s progress and substitute it with alternatives (Jackson & Jackson, 1997: 366). Another form of popular participatory is the referendum, where a policy question can be submitted directly to the electorate rather than being decided exclusively by the elected representatives. The problem here is that such a referendum on a specific issue may easily be converted into a plebiscite, a vote of confidence or not, in the Government proposing the vote (Tansey, 2002: 178).

2.4.2. Why participate?

Davids and Maphunye (2005: 129) point out that “participation during decision-making is essential to improve the quality of decisions and compliance”. Above all, it is important that

authority is well-informed on technical issues prior to making decisions and also on citizen's needs. Before participating, the authorities can better reflect public opinion when making their decisions and after decision-making, the public can participate by controlling the means for enforcement and in the joint management of the decision. Without this participation, the decision will result in failure.

2.4.3. How can one participate?

There are different mechanisms of community participation. Each mechanism has characteristics, strengths and weaknesses. The mechanisms depend on the political, social, economic and cultural context. In the next sections, the different forms of community participation are discussed.

2.4.3.1. Public hearing

According to Mafube Local Municipality's Rules for Ward Committees (2012:56) "public hearing is a formal meeting between citizens and government authorities in order to discuss a particular subject, such as a bill, a municipal by-law or any other type of decision to be made by the government. These meetings are carried out during the decision-making process; in general public hearings occur at both the legislative and executive level". Public hearings have many advantages and some examples are listed below:

For citizens:

- The opportunity to share their opinion, criticize and influence public decisions
- The opportunity to learn other citizens' perspectives that take into account environmental, social and economic considerations
- The freedom of speech and to be heard
- The opportunity to reach consensus

For Decision-Makers:

- The opportunity to communicate with a variety of social actors.
- The opportunity to strengthen the quality of their decisions by reflecting the rights and goals of the addresses
- The opportunity to access more information

- The opportunity to achieve and demonstrate more transparency in the decision-making process (Draft guidelines for the Establishment and Operation of Municipal Ward Committees 2003: 14).

2.4.3.2. Referendum as participation strategy

A referendum is a well-known form of democracy where citizens vote in favour of or against a proposal to establish a new norm or an existing one. Referendum has an obligatory effect: government authorities must accept and implement citizen's resolutions. Burkey (1996:88) states that "countries that use referendums create the legal topics that can be involved in referendum on a case-by-case basis". There are several Central and Eastern European countries where public participation in environmental decision-making is based on the constitutional right to launch a referendum. Local referendums on environmental issues have been held rather often in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia.

2.4.3.3. Public Participation in Municipal Budgets

A participatory budget is a new public accountability instrument used by people to participate in the elaboration and control of the public budget. In this instance, authorities and the public agree to transfer public priorities into public policy programmes. A participatory budget provides citizens with mechanisms for influencing the government's use of public resources.

Principles of participatory budget are as follows:

- Citizen participation must be guaranteed.
- The methodology must adapt to legal norms of a particular region for a legal body to establish who will be the political representative at the consultation process and the proceeding must be kept flexible.
- The participation process must be open, from the way the state spends financial resources to different forms of financing expenditures.
- Public participation must also include management control and accountability.
- In principle, opinions given in the participatory budget process are not binding.

2.4.3.4. Do we have to organise to participate?

Environmental Information (1997:9) states that “the prerequisite to organise depends on the type of public participation. In the case of an individual proceeding, previous preparation is obviously needed. Individual participation in public issues can occur when somebody files a petition against the state”. Conversely, collective participation requires a system, and a system implies a form of organisation. In modern democracies, one of the forms of addressing participation is through associations formed in order to pursue certain goals.

2.4.3.5. Non- governmental organisations: a new space for participation

Global Legislators Organisation for Balanced Environment (1995:9) states that “NGOs have developed as treasured global performers in defence of certain issues such as the environment, consumer rights and human rights. Their different types of activities have become treasured grounds for public participation. NGOs permit people to organise around essential issues, empower citizens and make unity when facing government authorities. Generally this political function was earmarked for businesses, churches and unions”.

Tshabalala (2007:19) on the one hand points out that “at present NGOs provide an channel for those marginalised members of society who do not belong to powerful associations nor occupy high-ranking positions”. Many people join NGOs to take action and organise around a common issue.

2.5. LINKING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Ward Committee Resource Book (2005: 10) states that “local government is viewed as the third sphere of government ‘next to the people’, the central of all legislation that has been put in place to find ways that ensure that citizens give input to the decisions that affect them at local level”.

Community participation is an essential part of effective and accountable governance at local level. Studies have been undertaken about the legal and policy arrangements for citizen’s participation around the world. Experience has shown that one way of achieving successful models of citizen participation is through establishing structured and institutionalised frameworks for participatory local governance. Structured and institutionalised models of participation generally work when citizens see them as legitimate, credible and where there is a political commitment to their implementation.

Structured and established models of participation will not work when:

- They try to co-opt independent and legitimate expressions within civil society
- There is no definite political commitment to the model
- The system exists in principle but the necessary resources are unavailable

In dialogue about South African local government, see effective principles for participation in the calls for:

- Bringing citizens more effectively on board when it comes to local governance and development
- Making government more approachable to the people's aspirations
- Empowering citizens to accomplish their potential as partners with government
- Deepening democracy beyond the representative dimension into a more participatory system (Ward Committee Resource Book, 2005: 10-11).

2.5.1. Public participation in local government

The Constitution of South Africa (1996), key legislation such as Chapter 4 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 and Chapter 4 of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 provides a powerful legal framework for participatory local democracy and ward committees in particular. Ward committees were included in the legislation as a vehicle that narrows the gap between local municipalities and communities since they have the knowledge and understanding of the citizens and communities they represent (Ward Committees Resource Book, 2005:20).

Pre-conditions for the ward committee system have the following needs:

- The process of participation should be meaningful
- The municipality and the public should listen to each other
- To make it clear at the outset who makes the final decision
- To provide resources that support the process of good practice and public participation that is funded
- Ensuring that information is conveyed in a manner that is relevant and understandable to the communities involved
- Understanding the distinction between providing information, consultation and participation

- Providing feedback on the participation process
- Involving elected councillors in the participatory process
- Guaranting that policies exist that guide municipal staff in participation process
- Recognising that meetings are only one form of participation (Ward Committees Resource Book, 2005: 21).

Community problem-solving is central to public participation. The initial form of representative democracy works well at the state and provincial levels, but it is inadequate for the local level of government and administration. Ward committees are responsible to discover ways to assist their communities in improving the quality of their lives.

Bekker (1996:55) states that “in reality the idea of community participation creates a major and fundamental anomaly”. The idea of community participation arises from the classical theory of democracy, yet the structure of modern government is not that of pure democracy, but that of a republic. Community interests are to be cared for indirectly by the actions of elected representatives and the policies determined are to be applied. In reality, the irregularity of citizen participation has been imposed on governmental structures that were never intended to function democratically. The conflict between the structures of government is community participation concerns and fundamental problems of implementing community participation.

According to Davids, Theron and Maphunye (2005:113) “putting public participation as concept and strategy into context calls for definition, or as stated in the Manila Declaration for a re-clarification of the term”. With other key concepts in the “development growth industry”, public participation defines attempts to package it in single statement. This definition should be understood as part of social learning process which relate to grassroots interaction.

Public participation is a vague concept which acts as a broad term for a new style of development planning intervention. It is difficult to suggest development strategies but policy makers and community agree on the meaning of public participation and how it should be implemented (World Bank, 1996a; IAP2 2000; Johnson 2003).

Mafube Local Municipality operates within an international environment through, for example, the Municipal International Relations and must as a result adhere to international norms and standards. It is therefore within this context that Mafube must take into account

the emerging international trends. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has developed the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) which must also be taken into consideration when dealing with the delivery of service to the people or their capacity thereof (Tshabalala, 2007:22). The National and Provincial governments recognise the need to support municipalities to deliver their constitutional mandate of service delivery by taking cognisance of extreme capacity constraints of Mafube Local Municipality (United Nations Development Programme).

2.5.2. Specific norms linking public participation

These include:

- Public participation is intended to promote the values of good governance and human rights
- Public participation is acknowledged as fundamental right of all people to participate in the governance system
- Public participation is intended to narrow the social distance between the electorate and elected institutions
- Public participation requires recognising the intrinsic value of all people and investing in the ability to contribute to governance processes
- People can participate as individuals, interest groups or communities more generally (Tshabalala, 2007:68).

2.5.3. Levels of public participation

Public participation is interpreted differently by different people. Arnsteyn (1969:34) categories participation as follows, as shown in figure 1 and the degree of participation ranges from manipulation to public control.

Figure 1: Steps of participation

CITIZEN POWER
DELEGATE POWER
PARNERSHIP

PLACATION
CONSULTATION
INFORMING
THERAPHY
MANIPULATION

Source: Arnsteyn (1969: 2)

Steps of participation

Citizen power- people participate by initiating independency but retain control over how resources are used. An example of citizen control is self-government in other words, the community makes the decision.

Delegated power- communities are given some delegated powers to make decisions but the government runs the decision-making process and fund it. People also participate in planning and formation of local organisations. The process involves interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives and make use of systematic and structured learning processes. As groups take over local decisions and determine how available resources are used, so they have a stake in maintaining structures or practices.

Partnership- an example of partnership is joint projects. Community plays a crucial role in decision-making processes but the government is accountable for all decisions. Participation is a mechanism to achieve project goals, especially in reducing costs. People may participate by creating groups in order to meet predetermined objectives related to the project. Such involvement tends to arise only after external agents have already made major decisions, participation may also be for material incentives where people participate by contributing resources.

Placation-the community is asked for opinions and token changes are made.

Consultation- community is updated about the project and asked to comment- e.g. through meetings or survey- but feedback is not given. External representatives describe problems and information gathering processes and control analysis. Such a consultative process does not concede any share in decision-making.

Informing- community is told about the project through meetings and leaflets but their opinions are not considered.

Therapy- people participate by being told what has been decided or has already happened. It involves unilateral announcements by project management without any listening to people's responses.

Manipulation- participation is simply a pretence, e.g. with people's representatives on official boards but who are not elected and have no power, or where community is selectively told about a project according to an existing agenda. The community's input is only used to further manipulation (Arnsteyn 1969:2).

2.5.4. Principles of community participation

Federation of European Green Parties (1995:12).the Indian Green Party works according to the following principles:

- The legitimacy of community participation should be established as supporting principles of all activities of government
- All individuals and community groups should be afforded the opportunity to participate in decisions which affect them
- The contribution of various groups provides a valuable addition to available information
- The needs of future generations should be recognised in modern decision-making
- The decision should be made at the most appropriate level
- Every attempt should be made to give marginalised groups chances to be effectively involved in decision-making
- Community participation should be on-going to enable communities to review policies
- Policies, strategies and frameworks should be developed to enable local infrastructure to facilitate community participation

- Support should be provided to community organisations to participate in consultative processes
- The ability of community groups and individuals to gain access to information empowers communities to participate effectively and
- All three spheres of governments should produce the following procedures to ensure that community representative consult on daily basis the views of the constituencies.

Section 16, of the Systems Act 32 of 2000 sets out two important principles for community participation:

“Participation governance 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 the product of representative democracy, not only has the sole legal mandate to govern but also, and more importantly, the political legitimacy to do so”.

Participatory democracy is there to supplement the politically legitimate responsible structures. All community structures must comply with the principles of participatory democracy and the councils have the right to establish ward committees.

2.6. WARD COMMITTEES AS COMMUNICATION CHANNEL

Ababio (2007:618) points that “the focal purpose of the ward committee is to communicate with the municipality. Ward committees are viewed as a two way communication channel for both government and local communities on matters pertaining to local governance and delivery of basic services”. In terms of Section 74 (a) of the Structures Act 117 of 1998, “a ward committee may make recommendations on any matter affecting the ward to the councillor or through that councillor to the council. Furthermore, a ward committee would be a proper channel through which communities can lodge their complaints. It would also be a forum for communication between the ward councillor and the ward community about municipal issues and development and service options”.

The Local Government Bulletin (2007:7) states that “innovative communication and reporting mechanism must be developed by municipalities to ensure that the content of ward committee meetings is not lost. Ward committees cannot function without a direct line to an official who can provide information and feedback, and generally facilitate interaction between ward committee and administration”.

A ward committee should be a communication channel between the ward and the council. It cannot merely be a replicate of the elected council because that would amount to double representation. Nor should it be used as a communication channel for the winning party only. The councillor and his or her political party already perform this function (Tshabalala, 2007:28).

With regard to composition of ward committees, Section 73 (3) of the Structures Act 117 of 1998 merely states that “the procedures for electing members must take into account the need for women to be equally represented in a ward committee and for a ‘diversity of interests’ in the ward to be represented”. The idea behind this provision is that the interests that have not been accommodated should be included in municipal governance. The reference to a ‘diversity of interests’ means that it should be inclusive processes.

2.6.1. Other functions of ward committees

Section 74 (b) of the Structures Act 117 of 1998 provides that a “council may delegate specific municipal duties and powers to a ward committee”. It is difficult to consider what executive functions a ward committee should be entrusted with. Once a ward committee is given powers, the problem of election procedures will become challenged. Any election procedure will be essentially difficult and provide an uncertain base from which to launch an executive conclusion. It is therefore recommended that no executive functions be given to ward committees. Apart from its main function, a ward committee could also be an important mobilising agent for community action. The Masakhane campaign could, for example, be strengthened by the participation of such committees. They can also play an essential part in mobilising partnership for the development of local projects. The ward committee cannot propose to the ward councillor how to vote in council meetings. However, it may well call on the ward councillor to resign and pass motions of no confidence in him or her, but it may not hinder any activities of the councillor in the ward (Local Government Law Bulletin 2001: 8).

2.7. UNDERSTANDING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government is the last sphere of government closest to the people. Many basic services are provided by local municipalities and local ward councillors are nearby to the communities. Organisations that interact with communities should know local government functions and how to impact them.

The South African government has clear legislations that local municipalities and councillors should be thoughtful to community needs and how to address local problems. Partnership should be established between communities and local government to address local challenges. A number of laws outline participation methods that municipalities have to utilise to consult the community. This guide is “part of the series that explains different aspects of local government and the mechanisms for participation and consultation that organization can access” (Developmental Local Government 2006: 1).

The guides of local government are:

- Understanding local government
- Ward committees
- Integrated development planning
- Municipal budgets and finance
- Municipal service delivery

2.7. 1. Developmental Local Government

The developmental state was first defined by Chalmers Johnson as concept descriptive of how Post-Second World War Japan was able to reconstruct itself successfully. It was subsequently, used to describe the significant development strides made by the ‘Asian Tigers’ (South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong). A distinctive feature of these countries was the centrality of government in leading a economic growth, and mobilisation of national resources toward national development priorities.

Developmental state is “generally understood to be that territorial, socio- economic and political entity whose leaders, policies and practices suggest a deliberate and sustained path towards development” (Maphunye, 2009:125).

Developmental state creates country specific institutional structures, articulates political purposes and harnesses nationalism and a sense of national cohesion towards economic growth and development and towards overcoming late and uneven development. They are characterised by regular interactions between state structures (particularly the pilot Ministry) and targeted sectors of industry (Johnson 1999, Leftwich 1995, Sean O Rian 2000, Woolrock 1998, Huff 1995). The state concentrates power and autonomy in the pilot Ministry in order that the explicit developmental objectives can be pursued in an enabling environment free

from threat and competition. This results in a structured intimate association between the state and the private sector where the state plays a significant interventionist role in the market.

A developmental state is a state that excels in public administration and arbitrates in the economy to promote social development. It is a state concerned with addressing the socio-economic needs of its entire population. A developmental state that is well-controlled and democratic that builds its legitimacy on its capacity to simultaneously foster productive economic activities and economic growth of its people (National Capacity Building Framework 2007:9). Local government in South Africa has a developmental role in terms of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 and the White Paper on Local Government of 1998. Developmental local government requires local managers who create chances to account to the community over and above regular elections. Increased accountability ensures that the actions of the councillors to resolve the desires of the community would increase the legitimacy of the council to deepen local democracy.

The idea of a 'Developmental State' is an essential element in government's programme. The concept dates back to some of the African National Congress' (ANC) original policies developed in the early 1990s. These are now gaining dominance in the implementation phase. A 'Developmental State' is an enabling State that is able to intervene tactically while carefully arranging scarce resources. State involvement will be careful and targeted, based on sectorial planning. However, where the state chooses to interfere, its involvement would be universal and extensive (Erwin, 1992:38). At the heart of government policies an emphasis is on "State coordination that will strategically steer the system through legislation, financial incentive, reporting and monitoring requirements. Much of this steering requires high level of management information, state planning and cross, departmental coordination" (Chang, 1994:23).

According to the White Paper on Local Government (1998) "developmental local government is local government dedicated to working with citizens and groups within the community to get sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives". The Constitution of 1996 "enshrines the rights of all people in South Africa to dignity, equality before the law, freedom and security. It affirms our rights to freedom of religion, expression, culture, association and movement, as well as our political, labour and property rights". The Constitution commits government to take

appropriate measures, within its available resources, to ensure that all South Africans have access to adequate housing, health care, education, food, water and social security. The certainty in our cities, towns and rural areas is far from this ideal because many of our communities are still divided. Millions of our people live in terrible poverty, isolated from services and opportunities. The apartheid local government system did very little to help those with the greatest needs. The present interim system has not yet been able to do much to address these long-standing designs of inequity and human desires. In the future developmental local government must play a central role in representing our communities, protecting our human rights and meeting our basic needs. It must focus its efforts and means on improving the quality of life of our communities, especially those members and groups within communities that are most often excluded, such as women, disabled people and very poor people.

Developmental local government has four interconnected characteristics:

- Maximising social development and economic growth.
- Integrating and coordinating.
- Democratising development.
- Leading and learning.

These four characteristics of developmental local government are further explained below (White Paper, 1998).

2.7.1.1. Maximising social development and economic growth

The White Paper (1998) states that “the powers and roles of local government should be implemented in a way that has a supreme influence on the social development of communities, in particular meeting the basic needs of the poor and on the growth of the local economy. Through its traditional responsibilities (service delivery and regulation), local government exerts a great influence over the social and economic well-being of local communities. Each year municipalities collect a large sum in rates, user charges and fees. They employ thousands of people throughout the country. In many cases they are responsible for the price and quality of water, electricity and roads, and they control the use and development of land. In parts of the country they own substantial amounts of land. They purchase goods and services and pay salaries, and therefore contribute to the flow of money in the local economy. They set the agenda for local politics, and the way they operate gives

strong signals to their own residents and to prospective migrants or investors. These functions give local government a great influence over local economies. Municipalities therefore need to have a clear vision for the local economy, and work in partnership with local business to maximise job creation and investment”.

2.7.1.2. Integration and coordination

According to White Paper (1998) “In most areas there are many different activities that contribute towards the progress of the area, such as national and provincial departments, parastatals, trade unions community groups and private sector institutions. Developmental local government must provide a vision and leadership for all those who have a role to play in achieving local prosperity. Poor coordination between service providers could severely undermine the development effort. Municipalities should actively develop ways to leverage resources and investment from both the public and private sectors to meet development targets. One of the most important methods for achieving greater coordination and integration is integrated development planning. Integrated development plans provide powerful tools for municipalities to facilitate integrated and coordinated delivery within their locality. The principles set out in the Development Facilitation Act should guide municipalities in their method to building integrated, liveable settlements municipalities to assist integrated and coordinated delivery within their locality. The principles set out in the Development Facilitation Act should guide municipalities in their method to building integrated, liveable settlements. Although approaches for building human settlements may differ between areas, it is clear that the establishment of sustainable and liveable settlements depends on the coordination of a range of services and guidelines, including land-use planning, household infrastructure, environmental management, transport, health and education, safety and security and housing. Municipalities will be required to work closely with other spheres of government and service providers and play an active integrating and coordinating role”.

2.7.1.3. Democratising development

Municipal Councils play a central role in promoting local democracy. In addition to representing community interests within the Council, municipal councillors should promote the involvement of citizens and community groups in the design and delivery of municipal programmes. Municipalities can support individual and community initiatives, and to direct community strength into projects and programmes which benefit the area as a whole. The involvement of youth organisations in this regard is particularly important. Municipalities

need to be aware of the divisions within local communities, and seek to promote the participation of marginalised and excluded groups in community processes. For example, there are many obstacles to the equal and effective participation of women, such as social values and norms, as well as practical issues such as the lack of transport, household responsibilities and personal safety. Municipalities must adopt inclusive approaches to fostering community participation, including strategies aimed at removing obstacles to, and actively encouraging, the participation of marginalised groups in the local community. At the same time, the participatory processes must not become an obstacle to development, and narrow interest groups must not be allowed to 'capture' the development process. It is important for municipalities to find ways of structuring participation which enhance, rather than impede, the delivery process (White Paper, 1998).

2.7.1.4. Leading and learning

Very fast changes at the global, regional, national and local levels are forcing local communities to rethink the way they are organised and governed. All over the world communities must find new ways to sustain their economies, build their societies, protect their environments, improve personal safety women and eliminate poverty.

The leadership of a developmental local government should stay on top of developments and change. They should be able to strategise, develop visions, policies and mobilise resources to achieve developmental goals in the area (DPG, 2006:3).

The White Paper also identifies three approaches that can assist municipalities to become more developmental:

- Integrated developmental planning, budgeting and performance monitoring
- Performance management
- Working with the public partners (Davids and Maphunye, 2005: 60).

2.7.1.5. Identification of interest groups

Interest groups that should be accommodated are those that are directly related to the core business of the municipality. In other words, they must relate to the municipality's key performance areas in that ward.

The various interest groups and organisations in the community are different and can be characterised as follows:

- Service or municipal- directed groups
- Organisations are formed with the definite goal of ensuring performance by a local municipality in key performance area. Examples of such organisations include community based organisations (CBOs) and ratepayers' associations. These structures will obviously be candidates for inclusion (Tshabalala, 2007: 33).

For most advantages local municipality tend to include the whole community rather than targeting particular groups or neighbourhoods. In actual fact, mechanisms such as grievances and proposal schemes, other opinion polls, communicating websites and citizens' panels are most predominately used to involve the whole population (or representative samples) than to involve particular citizen groups or neighbourhoods (Public participation in local government, 2002:19).

As a result of the extensive choice of the municipal roles and powers, many interest groups could be attracted in municipal matters. Within a maximum of ten members of ward committee, one should select from an extensive variation of interest groups appropriate to the key performance areas of the municipality in a specific ward. Key performance areas (KPA) in a ward are those acknowledged through the Integrated Development Planning (IDP) process (Tshabalala, 2007:34).

Key performance areas communicate the main services that must be distributed namely, water, electricity, sanitation, roads and storm water. Further significant social services include health, safety and security. There is no single list of key performance areas and additional areas can be identified through the IDP process.

Some key performance areas could be linked to a particular ward for example, where a large truck stop along a national road is found in a particular ward, leading to high occurrence of HIV/AIDS in that ward, and the combating of Aids would be a key performance area for that ward. The same is applicable to economic development in wards were central business districts are located. The identified key performance areas (KPA's) of a particular ward should thus be used to identify interest groups (Tshabalala, 2007: 34).

2.7.1.6. Specialist groups

The second set of interest groups involves organisations that focus on a particular topic which may or may not intersect with municipal activities. A council should thus identify those interest groups whose specific areas relate directly to the ward's key performance area (KPA's, for example, community safety forums, business chambers, informal trader associations, and environmental groupings (Moroe, 2010:34).

2.7.1.7. Involving communities in development

According to World Summit (2002) in order to embrace the mentality of cooperation and friendship must be initiatives to form societies. There must be commitment to fundamental transformation that brings about hope and security for all citizens, now and in the future. Citizens and groups within communities should form relationship with government in order to find sustainable solutions to financial, communal and material needs. This is the vision of the South African Government captured in the programme of transformation that is centred on developing a strong local government sphere that is responsive, innovative and capable of coordinating service delivery and economic development.

This is the vision that embraces the principles of Agenda 21 adopted at the Earth Summit in Rio, 1992. South Africa was fortunate in the sense that it had the opportunity to reflect on the 1992 summit in preparing a new constitution following the first democratic elections held in 1994, following out the new constitution in a series of policies and legislation that already in the process of implementing. Key amongst this is the White paper on Local Government (1998), the Municipal Systems Act (2000), and the Municipal Structures Act (1998).

2.8. COMPONENTS OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL STATES

After surveying the literature and studying a number of different developmental states, Saloojee and Pahad (2011:67) identify the major components of the developmental state as follows:

- A small, coherent, capable highly trained bureaucratic elite located in a pilot Ministry that is insulated from outside pressure;
- Movement, and circulation between the political, beaucratic and economic elites;
- Weak civil society;
- An ideological impetus to overcome late and uneven development;

- Clear articulation of economic objectives;
- Political structures that enable the insulated bureaucrats to pursue clearly articulated national development objectives;
- Political mobilisation of nationalism towards realising the objectives (the use of repression if necessary);
- Intervention in the market, but not controlling it and using it to promote economic transformation; and
- The use of state resources to build up the economic infrastructure of society, and raise the levels of education and training so as to provide the country with significant competitive advantage; promote social cohesion and use repression to deal with labour and other forms of unrest; promote macro- economic stability as precondition for growth; and use state resources to create competitive advantages for certain target certain industries.

2.9. INGREDIENTS OF A DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENTAL STATE

2.9.1. Economic growth with equity

The world-wide disparity dividing the developed and developing countries, rich and poor, rural and urban binaries is due to the failure of the economy to trickle down. Chole (1996, in Taylor, 1997:23) posits that the developmental state is framed on human development and informed by the principles of social justice through the equitable redistribution of income and country's resources. In reality a stable democratic state is possible through the balance between a growing economy and good and enabling governance (political economy).

It is evident that development equated to economic growth advocated by western or developed nations has contributed to poverty and underdevelopment due to the failure of development to trickle down. Higher rates of GDP growth according to Graaff (2003:7) meant lower levels of poverty. Despite the growing GDP, healthy economic growth was no guarantee against widening inequality. The growth of the South African economy has been steadily increasing but the unfortunate reality is that such growth has not trickled down to the lowest sectors of society. In this regard, Taylor (1997:151) maintains that economic growth should be accompanied by the government ensuring that such growth will result in job creation.

2.10. BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY TO ENGAGE WITH MUNICIPALITIES

Tshabalala (2007:36) states that “the subject of the intervention of poor people in particular, what contributes towards their attitude and opinion formation, and whether they can be inspired to engage with policy debates came up in debate forums with civil society stakeholders. Participants felt strongly that the fulfilment of basic needs has an influence on people’s capacity to engage with policy process, and that those missing in basic service delivery experience a sense of hostility from government”.

In addition, numerous writers refer to basic resources and ability required by participants in the government participatory process. Cornwall (2004:98) speaks of the “need to evaluate what work is needed with groups prior to their involvement in a process, to ensure that they contribute with greater equity”. Capacity building develops knowledge of the policy framework and process, and improves practical and preparation capacities (Logolink, 2000).

(Gaventa, 2003; Kabeer, 2005) state that “It also covers to comprise developed advocacy skills to organise outside of the policy arena to challenge any obstacles to participation, as well as fundamental awareness-raising and conscientisation”. The important role played by NGOs in providing support to participatory initiatives and to marginalised groups with access to information and material support, as well as establishing ‘vertical lines’ of communication, linking grassroots issues and structures with national process (Stiefel and Wolfe, 1994: 207).

2.11. CONCLUSION

It is obvious that ward committees have great potential to link the communities and municipalities, and to facilitate greater community involvement in municipality planning. For ward committees to achieve this function will need a multi-faceted response addressing the flaws and approvals outlined above. This will need more than the allocation of important resources to fund interventions, the progress of appropriate internal systems and guidelines, suitable attitudes and answers from municipality.

However, involvement is important to satisfying democracy and supporting good governance and administration. As vision could arise that the community is impeding in the running of the country, governments often concerned by communities who obstinately request open and transparent governance. This observation should be addressed as soon as possible to insure

democratic principles are upheld at all times. The next chapter will deal with the institutional roles of ward committees at Mafube local municipality.

CHAPTER 3 INSTITUTIONAL ROLES OF WARD COMMITTEES AT MAFUBE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the ways Mafube Local Municipality is devoted to community participation which is sincerely empowering, rather than mere consultation or manipulation. Community participation involves a variety of activities including establishing ward committees, assisting them to plan at local sphere, to implement and monitor those plans, and to support ward committees through community development workers.

The chapter will conclude by indicating that Mafube Local Municipality's ward committee functions in terms of the Municipal Structures Act of 1998.

3.2 FUNCTION OF WARD COMMITTEES IN IMPROVING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Government in 1996 has introduced wide ranging participatory processes in the different spheres and institutions of governance in the country. The aim of introducing participatory and direct democracy is obvious in institutions and processes of national and provincial spheres of government, and in planning process and policy formulation of local government structures. Municipal authorities, for example are legally devoted to involving community organisation in the formulation of budgets, planning and developmental priorities. Further, the 1996 Constitution of South Africa orders local government to provide a democratic and accountable local government that encourages the involvement of communities. Measures were introduced to establish community participation and also to alter local government functions by emphasising on development rather than regulations as was under the previous dispensation" (South Africa, 1996). Consequently developmental local government is defined as "local government dedicated to working with citizen and groups within the community to find suitable strategies to meet social, economic, and material needs and improve the quality of their lives" (Tshabalala, 2007:39).

Houston (2000:206) points out that "local government regulations made provision for local authorities to establish ward committees". Ward committees were introduced to link and inform municipalities about the desires, goals, abilities and problems of communities. They were established to form the communication channel between local municipalities and communities by facilitating proper communication. Through working directly with the

municipality, ward committees serve as a link which articulates the new system of local government to formerly underprivileged communities. Ward committees have an important role to play in defining essential municipal business such as integrated development planning, budgeting, municipal performance and management process (Tshabalala, 2007:39).

3.3 LOCALITY AND DESCRIPTION OF MAFUBE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

The Mafube Local Municipality is located in the Fezile Dabi District Municipality. Mafube , a Sotho name meaning “ where the sun rises”, is one and a half hour’s drive from Johannesburg on the N3 route to Durban. The geographical area of the municipality is 4604.3810 square kilometres (Mafube Annual Report, 2012-2013:12). The four major towns that form part of the Mafube Local Municipality are Frankfort (the municipal head office), Villiers, Cornelia and Tweeling.

Frankfort/Namahadi is located 55km east of Heilbron and approximately 120 km south east of Sasolburg. The town was originally laid out on the farm Roodepoort and named Frankfurt after the German town by Albert van Gordon in 1869. It remains the growth point in Mafube and plays a major role in terms of a regional service provider and industrial and commercial development. It is a small town typically developed that serves the predominately agricultural community. The R34 provincial road from Kroonstad to the KwaZulu-Natal Province extends adjacent to the town.

Tweeling/Mafahlaneng is located approximately 150km east of Sasolburg and 350 km north-east of Bloemfontein and is situated adjacent to the Frankfort/Rietz primary road. Other larger centre such as Vereeniging and Vanderbijlpark are all within 160 km from Tweeling. Primary agricultural activities include sheep and cattle farming, maize and sunflower seed production.

Villiers/Qalabotjha town area is situated on the banks of the Vaal River, adjacent to the N3 National Road between Gauteng and Durban. In relation to other major centres, the town is located 120 km from Johannesburg, 80 km from Vereeniging and 117 km from Sasolburg it is predominantly agricultural orientated where products such as maize, sunflower, wheat, grain, sorghum, meat and dairy products are produced.

Cornelia/Ntswanatsatsi is situated 60 km east of Frankfort, 160 km east of Sasolburg and 32 km south east of Villiers. The town is situated adjacent the R103 secondary road between

Warden and Villiers and further located in an area of agricultural significance (Mafube Annual Report, 2012-2013:15).

3.4 ESTABLISHMENT OF WARD COMMITTEES AT MAFUBE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Consistent with the Batho Pele principles as entrenched in various Government legislations, the Mafube local municipality diligently strove to bring government closer to the people as much as possible. Thus the establishment of ward committees became key deepening democracy, through having been mindful that it would not be an easy ride.

Nine ward committees were established by Mafube local municipality. Indeed the process that gave rise to communities interfacing with government was on issues pertinent to their, daily lives. Subsequent to the establishment of ward committees, members underwent an induction workshop regarding the role and function of the committees (Mafube Annual Report 2012-2013).

3.4.1 Purpose of the ward committee

The purposes of ward committee are:

- To enhance community participation and to notify the community about council decisions
- To develop communication channel between the council and the community
- To assist the ward councillor with consultation and to provide feedback to the community (Mafube Annual Report 2012-2013).

3.4.2 Functions of the councillor

A ward councillor is directly elected to represent and serve the people in a specific ward. The ward councillor ensures that the interest of the people in the ward is represented properly in the council. The ward councillor should be knowledgeable about the problems, monitor development and service delivery in the ward. In all committees, caucuses and council meetings, the ward councillor should act as a spokesperson for the entire ward. The ward councillor is the mediator between the council and the voters. He/She ensures that voters are always consulted and kept informed about council decisions, development and budget plans

that affect them. He/she should be approachable and be able to deal with any matters arising from his/her ward (Mayor's foreword, 2012:1).

3.4.3 Functions of ward committees in Mafube Local Municipality

The main function of the ward committees is to ensure that voters are participating in matters affecting them and contribute in council decisions. The ward committees should be inclusive of their ward. The main responsibilities of ward committees are to communicate and engage with their communities regarding development and service plans. It has no official powers however to engage the council to do anything. The council should provide support to allow ward committees to function (Mafube Rules for ward committee, 2006:67).

3.4.4 Sectors within Mafube Local Municipality

The sectors are determined by the ward in which the municipality is situated and the role of interest groups in the municipality. At Mafube local municipality, sectors include the following:

- Religious groupings
- Women
- Community safety forums
- Health and welfare
- Disabled
- Business
- CBO's
- Education
- Youth sports recreation arts and culture
- Senior citizen
- Traditional leaders
- Informal traders association
- Employment groupings

3.4.5 Functions of ward committees in the Integrated Development and Planning

The Ward Committee is where inclusive participation in the IDP process actually happened. These forums are the formal communication channel between the community and the Council. Representation on the forums must be as inclusive as possible. Ward committees at Mafube contribute significantly to the process of Integrated Development and Planning (IDP). Their main roles are to:

- Recognise the critical issues facing its area;
- Provide a mechanism for discussion, negotiation and decision-making between the stakeholders, including municipal government;
- Form a structure that links between the IDP Representative Forum and the community of each area; and
- Monitor the performance of the planning and implementation process concerning its area.

3.5 DEVELOPMENT OF WARD COMMITTEE SYSTEM

A fundamental objective of the COGTA (Department of Co-Operative Governance and Traditional Affairs) and is to enhance participatory democracy in all municipalities. In 2001 South African municipalities adopted a structured form of participative democracy known as the ward committee system which had become the most prevalent since from 2008. The legal framework for the ward system is derived from the Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998. The COGTA programme sets out to review experience of ward committee functioning by capturing current practices but also by drawing on previous research material and other sources of information emanating from training and consulting work. The project brief was to present a broad scan of issues relevant to effective functioning of ward committees and record instances where ward committees have effectively overcome obstacles and optimised the opportunity for effective community participation in municipal affairs (National Ward Committee Survey, 2004/5:29).

In order to design an appropriate research instrument, the survey was preceded by a scan of main issues affecting ward committee functioning. This resulted in a Status Quo Report of October 2004 that forms separate but related product of this survey report. The central aim of Report activity was to produce a ward committee resource book for use by ward committee

members, ward councillors and municipal officials. However the findings of the survey also indicated the need for the report to be carefully considered by policy makers.

The survey approach aimed to generate a broad spread of perceptions from municipalities on the functioning of their ward committees. This will be compared with more in-depth material already held by the service providers in order to outline the main lessons for the resource booklet. In terms of actual methodology, this survey report is based on a quantitative survey conducted in the last quarter of 2004. A questionnaire was sent via e-mail or faxed to municipalities followed to ensure the broadest possible response rate (Ward Committee Status Quo Report, 2004:26).

Some problems were experienced with the contact details of the listed municipalities and further checks were necessary to ensure that all targeted municipalities received the questionnaire. Some municipalities indicated difficulty in receiving the questionnaire to the appropriate stakeholders and some did not understand that a single questionnaire could be returned by any of the stakeholders' groupings. This created some problems in the number of responses from individual municipalities.

Municipalities are required by all legislations of government to engage the community. Sometimes politicians and officials can feel as something they are forced to do rather than will benefit them. Some are also scared of facing the community because feed-back or consultation meetings turn to be forums for complaint and protest against service delivery. It is difficult to face a hall full of angry people (Education and Training Unit, 2005:30).

According to Delivery (The Magazine for Local Government February/April2006) the Systems Act 32 of 2000 made it compulsory for municipalities to encourage and create conditions for the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality. Residents need to understand how they can participate in the IDP and how to charge for the services and set property rates, why paying for services is in their best interests, how the budget affects them and what to do when something is wrong. This means Mafube Local Municipality needs a communication strategy that

- Builds bridges with local media
- Creates channels of communication
- Is cost-effective and easy to manage
- Supports public participation

Local municipalities had compulsory legislative responsibilities to involve the community in matters affecting them. Research proved that not only have local municipalities been using such traditional approaches for example, service satisfactory surveys, and complaints/suggestion) but systems have also become well recognised in local government. Also, there were signs of local government introducing innovative ways of involving the community.

Public participation in South Africa which is embedded in the Constitution of 1996 is building guarantee of the democratic government to develop democracy between the municipality and the community. The current government is committed to form participation which is genuinely empowering rather than mere consultation or manipulation. This involves a variety of activities including establishing democratic representative structures (ward committees), assisting them to plan at a local sphere and to carry those plans using a variety of working groups and Community Based Organisations and to support those local structures through a cadre of community development workers. There is also the need to develop the responsibility of ward committees and municipal structures to each other and to the communities they serve, improving the relationships between provincial and national departments to their voters, and to service delivery. A Mafube communication channels to be improved and dedicated capacity is needed to deal with this function (Mafube IDP Report, 2012-2017).

3.5.1 Opportunities for public participation

The ward councillor is a direct bridge between the local council and the community. It is his or her duty to ensure that communities are consulted and kept informed about council decisions, development and budget plans and any council programmes that will affect them. For that reason ward committees play a key role in forming a democratic culture of local participation and accountability. Mafube Local Municipality introduced in a system of ward committees to ensure sound and democratic governance, in other words, so that communities have a say in the running of their council and development of their communities. In Mafube, the ward committee system is the responsibility of the Office of the Speaker because facilitates and coordinates community participation in local government.

Ward committee system at Mafube Local Municipality promotes participatory democracy in the following ways:

- There is a ward committee for each ward
- Subcommittees with portfolios anchor the ward committee to each ward
- A forum in each place brings all the ward committees in each area together
- A municipality wide forum involves stakeholders that are not ward based
- Community participation to get all residents and stakeholders involved in the running of the municipality
- Communications to bring about better understanding and interaction between the people of Mafube local municipality
- Development to create a vehicle for the development and to consult with the community on initiatives that result in development
- Capacity to empower communities to become partners in developing Mafube local municipality (Tshabalala, 2007:49).

3.5.2 Managing the ward committee system

Mafube Local Municipality created ward committees as the system is to bring about participative government (Mafube Ward Committees Draft Guidelines, 2012:18). Satisfactory management of ward committees requires that specific objectives be set, namely:

- To meet constitutional obligation on community participation as embedded in the 1996 Constitution and the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000
- To develop a culture of community participation through the creation of conditions for local communities to participate in the affairs of local government
- To build an open, transparent and accountable municipality
- To develop and implement mechanism, processes and procedures for community participation
- To assist disadvantaged groups to participate effectively in the systems of local government
- To provide clear, sufficient and timeous information concerning community participation to communities
- To communicate public notices of meetings of council to communities in a manner that promotes public participation

- To set up systems and mechanisms that will ensure compliance with regulations and guidelines that may be issued from National and provincial Government

3.5.2.1 Implication of ward committees for Mafube Local Municipality

The effort to build the ability of local communities to facilitate effective participation of ward committees can be achieved through:

- Mayoral road shows
- People's forum
- Petitions management system
- Recording of all motions to council and providing relevant answers for each where a reply is required. Any member of council can view motions
- Setting up of ward committees
- Projects specific forums
- Councillor community support system based at Mayor's office and the Speaker's office
- Complaints and suggestion system (suggestion and book recording)
- Accessible Municipal Code for by-laws (Mayor Sigasa, Personal interview June 2013).

3.5.2.2 Council meetings

The municipal manager must give notice of council meetings as prescribed by the council in Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000. It is suggested that a notice be published once a year in the local media, outlining the programme of meetings for the year. This can also cover Mayoral Committee meetings and Portfolio meetings.

It should be understood that all Council agendas/minutes are public documents and should be available on request. But section 20 of the Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 creates provision for Council to "exclude the public and the media from a meeting when the nature of the report requires that to be done, but resolution will be made public". It should be noted that despite the transparent nature of Council meetings, the community and the media do not have any participation and revoking rights.

3.5.2.3 People's forums/ mayor's road shows

The plans to hold meetings with communities in Mafube municipality where the Mayor will, together with the councillors, interact with communities and listens to their problems have begun. It should be strengthened and can be improved based on the relevant needs and timing.

The purpose will be to listen to views and problems raised by communities to the Mayoral team. This process was started successfully where the team was introduced to the council employees.

3.5.2.4 Responsibilities of ward committees at Mafube Local Municipality

Ward committees provides principles that firmly create circumstances conducive for participatory governance. For consistency, ward committees must fit into the official structures of government and not to change them.

Mafube Local Municipality sees ward committees as agents for public participation in the following ways: Ward Committees

- Serve as forums for grassroots contribution in the matters of local government;
- Provide communities with the opportunity to be part in the development processes of integrated development planning in terms of Chapter 5 (MSA, 2000);
- Also provide the opportunity for participation in the budgetary processes;
- Further serves as a two way communication channel for both government communities on matters relating to governance and delivery of basic services;
- Sectoral participation must transcend narrow political, ethnic, racial and class affiliations, and reflect the demographics of the ward;
- Promote and encourage women to contribute in the matters of the community, a minimum of forty percent of ward members must be women; and
- Lastly, must be constituted of ten active sectoral structures (interest groups) in a ward. While this promotes organised democracy as opposed to individual democracy, it also ensures that members of ward committees represent broader community interests and not themselves (Tshabalala, 2007:52).

3.6 WARD COMMITTEES AND INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND THE BUDGETARY PROCESS

Both IDP and the budgetary processes are complimentary to each other, with the understanding that IDP in practice precedes the budgetary processes; therefore it is incumbent on the ward committees to lay a foundation by:

- Identifying key impact areas for development priorities
- Develop an awareness campaign programme for the development of ward
- Conduct a geographic assessment of the ward
- Conduct basic feasibility study of the ward with the needs assessment as the goal (Mafube ward committee guidelines, 2002:6).

3.6.1 Ward committees, the Speaker and the Mayor’s Office

Below is the list of clear division of responsibilities with regard to Mafube ward committees (Mafube Ward Committees Draft Guidelines 2012:18)

ASPECT	OFFICIALS
Day to day functioning of ward committees	Ward councillor with the ward committee
Convening of ward committee meetings and public meetings	Speaker’s office assisted by the ward committee coordinators
Service delivery in wards	Mayor and the council
Problems, disputes and arbitration on matters in the ward committee	Ward arbitration committee
Dissolution of ward committees	Council

3.6.2 Endorsing good governance

The basis for effective service delivery and building a better life for all the communities rests with having a strong community centred development. The Free State government set good governance as its key priority in 1999 and dedicated itself to:

- The transformation of local government
- The reorganisation of the public service to meet more effectively the priorities of service delivery and to foster the ethic of Batho Pele

- Prudent and effective use of government resources
- Public accountability

Significant development has been made in respect of public service transformation, service delivery improvements, communication and public participation, comprehensive intergovernmental relations and practical management of public finances (Mafube Council Resolution, 2005:54).

3.6.3 Ward committee link to municipal functions

The following is a description of roles played by ward committees in municipal functions:

(Mafube IDP document 2012-2017)

The Mafube ward committees have participated in the IDP Appraisal, IDP representative forum and municipal budgeting process.

Forums involvements are explained as follows:

- IDP Appraisal and Representative Environment
- Information gathering involved ward committees
- Identified priorities/ reprioritise new projects
- Serve on representative forum
- Assist representative forum to communicate with residents
- Oversee development projects emerging from IDP
- Attend public IDP meeting

Budget

- Public hearing per ward
- Mayoral committee and finance committee outreach program
- Discussion with ward councillor
- Attend budget meetings as community members
- Attend community meetings and budget road shows
- Ward committees are first after council to discuss budget

Performance management

- Ward committee monitor performance of ward councillor in a specific areas

- Involve fears concerning off-schedule wealth plans and service delivery needs
- Ward committees included in KPI's
- Through the IDP review
- Provide written comments on the level of proposed service delivery (Tshabalala, 2007:55).

3.6 CONCLUSION

Establishment of ward committees varies from municipality to municipality. One of the crucial regulatory aspects is legislations that emanated into life in 2000 with THE Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000. Councils elected in December 2000 were thus eligible to have ward committees. Strictly speaking, the Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 covers greatest of the applicable requirements concerning ward committees but the creation of municipal types that comprised ward committee options occurred 2002. Ward Committees were shown to play various constructive, participatory roles and serve as effective channel between council and the community. The next chapter involves the empirical research on the role and effectiveness of ward committees at Mafube Local Municipality.

CHAPTER 4 EMPIRICAL STUDY ON EFFECTIVENESS OF WARD COMMITTEES IN MAFUBE MUNICIPALITY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to outline the theoretical empirical concepts. Firstly, it is to outline the outcomes of the empirical research that was conducted at Mafube Local Municipality. Information was gathered from 5 municipal officials involved with community issues; an interview with 20 community members and, as ward committee co-ordinator, observation inferences as participant observer. The purpose of empirical research was to ascertain the coherence of ward committees as vehicle for promoting public participation at Mafube Local Municipality.

The chapter begins with an exposition of research concepts. The following are explained: compilation of data plan, variables, sampling, and the tools of interviews and questionnaire, these are followed by questions posed to respondents and analysis of responses.

4.2 COMPILING DATA PLAN

Empirical research works by the process of introduction. It introduces a formulation of general theories from specific observation which is the derivation of a new logical truth from existing facts (Bless, 2000:13). As an example of introduction, if one observed 500 tomatoes and found in each case that the tomato was red, one might induce that all tomatoes are red. As an example of deduction say you know as facts that (1) all stars contain hydrogen, and (2) the sun is the star then you can deduce the new fact that (3) the sun contains hydrogen. Note that the results of deduction are true (if the existing facts used are true) while the results of induction are not necessarily true (some tomatoes are green) (Goddard and Melville, 2001:32).

4.2.1 Variables

In an experimental method the researcher chooses and manipulates the research. The variable that is manipulated is known as the independent variable. The effects of this manipulation on other variables (the dependent variable) are measured. According to Bless (2000:26) suppose the problem has been formulated in a way that relates two or more variables it may be relevant to ask that question as: which are these variables and how are they related? Do they all have the same importance? Do they all vary at the same time: in some circumstances the

researcher might anticipate a fundamental relationship to exist between variables, where a variation in one results in a variation in the other?

While the researcher witnesses components of analysis in the process of research, it is the relationship among characteristics of units that are of primary interest. Characteristics of units that vary are called variables. Variables may vary over time for example, among individuals; any set of characteristics that may differ from different people, such as age (range of years) is a variable (Singleton, 1993:72).

4.2. Sampling

Sampling involves the introduction of the concept of a population and a sample, and discusses the 'why' and 'how' of taking scientifically useful samples. Creswell (2003:57) pointed out that "though a subsection of the population, the sample, must have possessions which make it separate of the total. Following the example of the students, selecting a sample of very stupid, brilliant students would be wrong because they would not represent the total of the student's body. Thus one of the key issues in sampling is to ascertain samples that best represent a population so as to permit for precise generalisation of outcomes. Such a group is called a representative sample".

4.3 DATA FROM SAMPLE POPULATION

Neuman (2000:27) states that "scientific methods of gathering data are suitable for examining marvels that can be perceived directly by the researcher. Conversely, not all marvels are reachable to the researcher's direct reflection. Therefore, frequently the researcher must gather data by asking people who are knowledgeable about certain phenomena to limit these marvels. The researcher advance towards a sample of individuals supposed to have undertaken certain experience and interviews them regarding this experience". The obtained experience constitutes the data on which the research hypothesis is examined. Three major survey research methods are used to obtain data from respondents namely the mail questionnaire, the personal interview and the telephone survey.

- Mail questionnaire is an important survey method for indirect conditions and for a number of research purposes; an impersonal method of data collection can be useful.
- Personal interview is a one- on-one relational role condition in which an interview asks respondents questions intended to obtain answers relevant to the research

hypothesis. The questions, their wording, and their sequence define the structure of the interview

- Telephone survey, can be categorised as a semi-personal method of gathering information. Not too lengthy ago, telephone surveys were observed with uncertainty and absolute suspicion. Some manuscripts clearly warned their research to elude them. The principal aim for the unwillingness to use telephone interviewing was possibility of a serious sampling bias. When a considerable amount had no access to telephones, the sample tends to over represent those who were comparatively well off and could afford a telephone. More lately, however, telephone survey has gained approval as a genuine method of data gathering in the social sciences.

4.3.1 Interviews

According to Delport (2002:166) interviews carry the work forward, covering collecting the data and preparing it for analysis. The first stage, getting the necessary permission, is usually done while the schedule is being prepared; pretesting and carrying out a survey both require interviewing. Few researchers can draw on a group of trained interviewers, so this skill must usually be taught to those who will do the work. As the schedule come in, they are edited and coded; this transforms individual answers into categories, which are usually numbered so the data can be handled by a computer.

Survey requires more planning than just choosing a sample and working out an interview programme. Permission must be obtained, influential members of the community contacted, copies of the schedule reproduced, if necessary accommodation and transport must be organised, interviewers hired and trained. These planning often take longer than the time spent in the field.

Leedy (2001:49) defines an interview “as a one-on-one oral communication between the researcher and a respondent. An interview should have a strategy. The researcher must not direct the respondent’s answers through his/her tone of voice or the manner he/she phrases a question, eg. “you agree with us that this is right, don’t you? One area where researchers would need to use interviews rather than questionnaire would be in obtaining information from the people who cannot read. Other advantages of an interview over a questionnaire are that the researcher can ask the respondent to explain uncertain answers and can follow up on stimulating answers. Some benefits of a questionnaire over an interview are that the respondents can answer the questionnaires at times that are appropriate to them, and the

respondents may not be as reserved in answering sensitive questions. However, a questionnaire is the only practical method (Leedy (2001:50)).

4.3.2 Questionnaires

The basis of all questionnaires is the question. The question must interpret the research aims into specific questions; answers to questions will provide the data for hypothesis testing. De Vos (2002:339) further explains that the “question must also inspire the respondent to deliver the information being wanted. The main considerations involved in formulating questions are their content, structure, format and order”. Fouche (2002:272) point out that a “questionnaire is a written list of questions that respondents are requested to answer. These instruments are usually used and usually abused. It is to compile a questionnaire; it is not easy to compile an effective one. Effectiveness requires planning beforehand to ensure that the data can be objectively analysed afterwards. Open (or unstructured) questions can be in preliminary survey or to get the feel for the subject. Here respondents answer questions in their own words. Closed (or structured) questions are used in large-scale data collection. Here respondents choose from a collection of alternatives (e.g. true/false) or assign a numerical score or ranking”. Closed question frequently use a four point scale, for example.

Q1. Bart Simpson is a good role model?

Strongly agree

Agree

Strongly disagree

Disagree

A four point scale forces a decision, while the five point scale provides the probability of a neutral answer.

A good questionnaire:

- Is complete
- Is short
- Asks only relevant questions
- Gives clear instructions
- Starts with overall questions
- Has objective questions
- Has appropriate questions

- Puts sensitive questions at the end
- Uses mostly closed questions

4.3.3 Question explained

Once the researcher has defined the objectives and has ascertained that no existing methods can be used, he or she may begin the task of writing the questions. It is best to write the items objectively and to consider the way the results are analysed once the data has been collected. It is essential to provide clarity to what the researcher wants to achieve by posing the type of questions (Silverman, 1993:175) into questions that solicit the opinion of participants on issues related to ward committees as an agent of change toward improving public participation at Mafube Local Municipality.

4.4 RESEARCH METHOD DEFINED

Bless (2000:37) explains that “there are different types of research. Distinctions are drawn between quantitative and qualitative research, applied and basic research, and exploratory, descriptive, correlation and explanatory research. Emphasis is based on the relationship between the research problem and the type of research selected to investigate it. The characteristics of the problem, the early level of knowledge, the possessions of the variables, as well as the purpose of the study all impact the type of research. There are also numerous means of categorising research studies. One of the most important focuses on the methodology used. Methodologies include approaches such as quantitative research which depends on measurement to compare and scrutinises various variables. In contrast, qualitative research uses descriptions to record aspects of the world”.

4.4.1 The rationale for choosing the qualitative and quantitative methods

Mutton (2000:56) explains that “qualitative research methodology depends upon measurement and uses numerous scales. Numbers form a coding by system by which different cases and different variables may be compared. Systematic changes in “scores” are interpreted or given meaning in terms of the actual world that they represent. Numbers have the advantage of being exact. Three means precisely the same thing to all human beings who know the concept, and will mean precisely the same in different social, cultural and linguistic circumstances. Another important advantage of numbers is that they can be analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics”.

Denzin & Lincoln's Handbook of Qualitative Research (1994) stresses that "the capable social researcher cautiously chooses the most suitable method to a specific problem. In nearly all cases the line between qualitative and quantitative methods is somewhat blurred. In fact a complete study will use both methods and thus cannot severely be called either qualitative or quantitative".

4.4.2 Reliability and validity

According to Royce, et al (1993:114) the level of measurement provides a framework for interpreting the categories of a variable. It tells us what sort of interferences can make about cases assigned to different categories. Are they merely different? Can one say that one is greater or lesser than the other? But what about the adequacy of the set of categories as a whole and of the operationalization procedure for assigning cases to categories? In other words, how does one evaluate the goodness of specific operational definitions?

For any concept a large number of operational definition are possible, and that creative insight, good judgement, and relevant theory aid in the development of operational definitions. Royce (1993:115) Admitted that "these aids are rather personal in nature; however, once a working definition is chosen, there are more impartial ways to appraise its quality. Community scientists use the terms "reliability" and "validity" to outline issues involved in assessing the quality of working definitions".

Royce (1993:115) further states that "reliability is worried with questions of consistency. Is the working definition measuring "something" consistently and dependably, whatever that "something" may be? Do repeated applications of the working definition under similar conditions yield consistent result? If the working definition is shaped from a set of responses or items (e.g. a test score), is the component responses or items consistent with each other?" An example of a high reliable measuring instrument is a steel measure. With such an instrument, a piece of wood 20 inches long will be found to measure, with negligible variation, 20 inches every time a measurement is taken. A cloth tape measure would be somewhat less reliable in that it may vary with humidity and temperature, and in that we can expect some variation in measurements depending on how loosely or tightly the tapes is stretched.

Royce (1993:115) said that "measurement validity refers to the extent of matching, congruence, or "goodness of fit" between an operational definition and the concept it is

purported to measure. Does this operational definition truly reflect what the concept means? Are you measuring what you intend to measure with this operational definition? If so, you have a valid measure. An example of a valid measure is amniocentesis, a procedure for defining numerous hereditary characteristics of an unborn child, including sex. It is a valid measure of biological sex because it can determine with virtually perfect accuracy whether the unborn will be a boy or a girl. At one time, a number of invalid “means” of the unborn sex existed in the form of folk wisdoms. One belief, for example, involves tying a string to the pregnant woman’s wedding band and holding it suspended over her abdomen. If the band swings in a circle, the baby will be a girl; if, however the band swings back and forth, the child will be a boy”.

Dauids (1971:14) mentioned that an extremely untrustworthy measure cannot be valid; how can you get at whatever you need to measure if your results vary wildly? But every reliable measure still may not be valid; that is, you could be measuring very reliably something other than what you intend to measure. To take a facetious example, suppose we decide to measure the “intelligence” of students by standing them on a bathroom scale and reading the number of the dial. Such an operational definition would be highly reliable as repeated scale readings would yield consistent results. However, this obviously would not be a valid measure of an individual’s “intelligence”.

4.5 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Two sets of interviews were conducted, namely, with councillors and public servants, and with members of the community. The objective of questions asked was to test the hypothesis for study that is, determining the effectiveness of ward committees as liaison in council policy-making and implementation.

4.5.1 Community’s responses

Question 1: Respondents were asked if the community of Mafube Local Municipality know about the existence of ward committees. Yes or No.

Response:

100% of community members interviewed agreed that they know about the existence of ward committees. Reasons given for knowledge of ward committees were wide publicity used by Mafube Local Municipality to elect ward committees, and especially that ward committee

members tend to conduct door-to-door meetings in wards. Community members were given an opportunity to participate in the election process of the ward committees.

Question 2: Is the community of Mafube Local Municipality aware about the meetings of ward committees? Yes or No.

All the respondents responded that they are aware about the meetings of the ward committees. 60 % of the respondents indicated that such meetings are attended by few members of the community and 40% were of the opinion that such meetings are well attended

Question 3: Do ward committees receive support from municipal council in relation to aspects such as human resource, office space, financial support etc. so as to perform their duties effectively? Yes or No and kindly motivate your answer.

100% of respondents agreed that ward committees receive support from the council. The reasons given were that ward committees receive stipend, human assistance and office space so as to perform their duties effectively.

Question 4: Do the Municipal council consult ward committees before undertaking developmental programmes or projects in a ward? Yes or No and kindly motivate your answer.

40% agreed that the Municipal council consult ward committees before undertaking developmental programmes or project in a ward. They cited a reason that because the councillor is a chairperson of the ward they are always informed and consulted. 60% disagreed by saying ward committees are not informed and consulted because when clarity is sought they cannot explain what the council is doing in their wards.

Question 5: In your opinion do ward committees possess enough powers to influence policy decision on service delivery objectives of the ward? Yes or No.

98% of the respondents responded that ward committees do not possess enough powers to influence policy decision on service delivery objectives of the ward. They mentioned that the ward committees possess only advisory powers which are not binding to the council. 2% agreed that ward committees possess enough powers to influence policy decisions.

Question 6: Does the Municipal council consider the ward committee's recommendations? Yes or No and kindly motivate your answer.

65% of the respondents indicated that the municipal council does not consider the ward committee's recommendations unsatisfactorily, while 35% respondents indicated that the council does consider the wards committee's recommendations satisfactorily.

Question 7: Did the ward committee members receive any induction or training? Yes or No.

All the respondents responded that they did receive an induction and training. They also indicated that they wished that the training should have been on going.

4.5.2 Responses from interviews with participants

Question 1: In your opinion do you think the community of Mafube Local Municipality understand community participation? Motivate your answer.

50% of the respondents replied that the community of Mafube Local Municipality understand community participation. They indicated that the community attends public meetings. The other 50% of the respondents indicated that they don't believe community participation is necessary because the council disregarded the views of the community.

Question 2: Which ways would you say that Mafube Local Municipality promotes community participation?

100% respondents indicated public meetings, budget, IDP and stakeholder meetings as ways the Mafube Local Municipality promotes community participation.

Question 3: What is the relationship between your ward committee and municipal council? Please explain.

All the respondents agreed that the relationship between their ward committees and the municipal council is good.

Question 4: How do the Municipal council and ward committees ensure that the community participate fully in municipal matters? Please explain.

100% indicated that the municipal council and the ward committees ensure that community participate fully in municipal matters through public meetings, budget, IDP, imbizo's by the mayor and street committees.

Question 5: How do you understand your role as a ward committee member in relation to community participation?

100% of respondents felt that they understand their roles as to facilitate community participation in municipal matters and to ensure that they channel the needs of the community and aspirations to the council. The respondents also felt that they would wish to have more inputs during public participation meetings.

Question 6: in your opinion have ward committees been an asset or liability to Mafube Local Municipality in community development? Motivate your answer.

70% of the respondents felt that wards committees have been an asset to Mafube Local Municipality because they have carried the complains and the aspirations of the wards to the council. 30% of the respondents indicated that ward committees have been used by the council for its benefit than carrying challenges faced by their wards.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The chapter outlined the theoretical empirical concepts used in conducting research. The findings indicated that community participation played a crucial role in improving development and effective service delivery to local communities. The findings were vital as they gave direction to the methods applied in the empirical research. A main method used was the open-ended questionnaire. Questions were posed to councillors, ward committees and community members. The aim was to establish the effectiveness of ward committees in enhancing community participation in Mafube Local Municipality. The next chapter will outline the recommendations and conclusion for the research.

CHAPTER 5 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This final chapter outlines the extent to which aims for the study have been realised. There is also a comment on the test of the hypothesis. In conclusion, the study ends with a set of recommendations for management action by the Council of Mafube Local Municipality.

5.2 REALISATION OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

The first objective of this study was to give a theoretical exposition of the concepts ward committees and public participation. In that regard chapter two of the study provided literature review on the concept public participation as a basic function of ward committees. The definition, forms and basic assumption underlying public participation in local government were given specific attention. This was realised by outlining that public participation legitimises a local authority by making it acceptable to the municipal community. The public needs to constantly interact with its councillors and officials to ensure that all actions by the municipality are beneficial to them.

The second objective was to describe an overview of the mechanisms and systems used to develop ward committees to public participation in Mafube Local Municipality. This was achieved with Chapter 3 by analysing local government legislations including the Constitution of 1996, the Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998, and the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 which makes public participation in affairs of local government mandatory. For this purpose they legislate for creation and functioning of ward committees in municipalities. As the representative structure of local communities, the ward communities enhance and strengthen community participation in municipal decision-making thus improving service delivery.

The third objective is aimed to research into successes or the failures of ward committees at Mafube Local Municipality. Testing this objective was by means of empirical survey with the use of a questionnaire. Data was collected through qualitative methodology as the method was deemed fit to realise the objective of the study. The response rate was 100% as all the ward committee members responded to the questionnaire. This therefore adds to the objectivity of the study.

The last objective of this study is to make recommendations that can help and add value for the functioning of ward committees in Mafube Local Municipality. These are accordingly outlined below and conclude analysis of the study.

5.3 TESTING THE HYPOTHESIS

The cardinal objective of the study was to test the hypothesis as set out in chapter one namely: Ward Committee are necessary mechanisms for facilitating service delivery at Mafube Local Municipality.

Literature review in chapters two and three was used to explore the effectiveness of ward committees in public participation. More significantly, use was made of open-ended questionnaire in empirical survey to test the validity of the judgement. The results of the empirical survey were:

- Ward committees as community structures are well known by the community of Mafube.
- Ward committees need an on-going training with regard to their roles and responsibilities so that they are empowered to execute their duties as is required of them.
- The literacy level among certain ward committee members poses a challenge in enabling them to understand municipal programmes or projects.
- Public participation is viewed as consultation because there is minimal participation of the public during the preparation and decision-making of the municipal programmes or projects.
- Majority of community members do not attend ward or public meetings.
- Elections of ward committees are sometimes not fair and transparent, depending on political affiliation.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has arrived at the following recommendations:

- Community members should be encouraged to attend meetings and the advocacy of meetings should be done well in advance to reach all community members.
- The ward committees must report to and continuously engage their communities in a regular and structured fashion on municipal programmes or projects.

- For effective development and execution of municipal programmes and projects, community participation must not be reduced to consultation alone but people must actively participate in the planning and decision-making of the municipality.
- Municipal councillors and Mayoral road shows and imbizo's should occasionally include addressing community members on good work being done by ward committees.
- An audit of the capacity of ward committees should be undertaken to identify training needs.
- Monitoring and evaluation of tools such as the community based planning and ward implementation plan is of vital importance, as some wards there are no involvement of the community.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The study explored the theoretical background and orientation of ward committees as vehicle for promoting public participation as the bedrock of participatory democracy in South Africa. The latter concepts formed the conceptual framework on which the practical realities of the study were derived. The literature review was done and empirical survey was conducted with which the hypothesis was validated and which helped in the realisation of study objectives. It is hoped that the findings and recommendations will help to add new knowledge to existing body of literature on the elusive concepts of public participation and participatory democracy.

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ANNEXURE A

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

The questions that follow are meant for your frank and voluntary completion. The researcher is a Master student of North-West University, Vaal Campus. The exercise is purely academic and you are assured of your utmost confidentiality.

Topic: Ward committee functionaries as participants for improving service delivery at Mafube Local Municipal area.

Researcher: Siphon Mkhwanazi

Institution: North-West University (Vaal Triangle Campus)

SECTION A

Profile of Respondent

Instructions:

Please do not indicate your name. Answer the question frankly; and mark with X where applicable.

1. Gender:

Male----- Female-----

2. Age Category: Tick the appropriate space using X

18 to 24 years	-----
25 to 31 years	-----
32 to 37years	-----
38 to 44 years	-----
45 to 52 years	-----
53 to 58 years	-----
59 to 65 years	-----
66 and above	-----

3. Education: Tick the appropriate space using X

Below Matric -----

Matric -----

Diploma -----

Degree -----

Honours -----

4. Employment Status: Tick the appropriate space using X

Employed -----

Unemployed -----

Section B: Information provided on ward committees and their involvement in public participation

1. Yes or No

Does the community of Mafube Local Municipality know about the existence of ward committees?

2. Yes or No

Is the community of Mafube Local Municipality aware about the meetings of ward committees?

3. Yes or No kindly motivate your answer

Do ward committees receive support from municipal council in relation to aspects such as human resources, office space, financial support etc. so as to perform its duties effectively?

[Empty rectangular box for answer]

4. Yes or No kindly motivate your answer

Do the Municipal council consult your ward committees before undertaking developmental programmes or projects in your ward?

[Empty rectangular box for answer]

5. In your opinion do ward committees possess enough powers to influence policy decisions on service delivery objectives of the ward?

[Empty rectangular box for answer]

6. Yes or No kindly motivate your answer

Does the Municipal council consider the ward committee's recommendations?

[Empty rectangular box for answer]

7. Yes or No

Did the ward committee members receive any induction or training?

[Empty rectangular box for answer]

SECTIONC

Interview Schedule

1. Question1: In your opinion do you think the community of Mafube Local Municipality understands community participation? Motivate your answer.

[Empty rectangular box for answer]

2. In which ways would you say that Mafube Local Municipality promote community participation?

3. What is the relationship between your ward committee and the municipal council?
Please explain.

4. How do the Municipal council and ward committees ensure that the community participate fully in municipal matters? Please explain.

5. How do you understand your role as a ward committee member in relation to community participation?

6. In your opinion have ward committees been an asset or liability to Mafube Local Municipality in community development? Motivate your answer.

Thank you for your participation!