

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION THROUGH
THE WARD SYSTEM : A CASE STUDY IN
WARD 28, MALUTI- A- PHOFUNG
MUNICIPALITY**

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ND: ADMIN. B.TECH DEGREE**

**Mini- Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
of Master Artium in Public Management and Governance at the Potchefstroom
Universiteit vir Christelike Hoër Onderwys**

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POTCHEFSTROOM

November 2003

This study is dedicated to my wife
TEBOHO and our two sons K ABELO and
PABALLO

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank my study leader, Professor Willie J. Van Wyk, for his unrelenting guidance.

He did not only save the ship from wreckage during heavy storms, but also remained a torch lamp to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Secondly, my sincere thanks to my wife who constantly encouraged me, and who, despite her physical infirmity, managed to distribute some of the questionnaires among the people.

Thirdly, I would also like to thank Mr. Sefume M.G. for his contributions to this work. Mr. Sefume, your contributions were a source of motivation to me to complete this work.

Lastly, my tribute goes to my father, **Robert**, who unfortunately did not live to witness this important occasion of his son's achievement. May his soul rest in peace.

SUMMARY

The study basically deals with community participation for development purposes at grassroots level through the utilisation of the Ward System. The main purpose of the study was to establish reasons for non-participation of the community in municipal matters. The apparent lack of interest by the people in municipal matters and other incidental matters that affect their daily lives in ward 28 under Maluti-A-Phofung Town Council, has prompted the researcher to investigate the underlying causes for such reluctance on the part of the community.

The research study was conducted through a case study investigation into reasons for lack of participation of the people in the municipal structures that have been established and designed to improve their socio- economic well-being. A qualitative, interpretative approach has been used in attempting to establish reasons.

The study sought to achieve its objectives by identifying reasons for non-participation of the community. The literature study has shown that community participation in developmental issues will bring about visible and significant changes in people's circumstances and environment. The authorities must therefore always apply a people-centred approach when strategies for development are being drawn up.

Based on the results of the investigation certain recommendations could be formulated in connection with active community participation and the type of relationship that should prevail between the community and the local government institutions.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 ORIENTATION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

In terms of the Municipal Demarcation Board of 1998, local areas within districts in various provinces in South Africa have been demarcated into manageable units. These manageable units are called wards, which are administered by ward councillors, nominated by the political party that has won the local elections.

Ward 28 in Qwaqwa is such a ward, which falls under the Maluti-A-Phofung Municipal Council in the Thabo Mofutsanyane District of the Eastern Free State. Qwaqwa is the poorest area in the Free State Province and has been prioritised as one of the President's nodal points for development. Qwaqwa is mainly a rural area and most people are concentrated in rural villages. These villages previously fell under the jurisdiction of tribal chiefs.

One of the main purposes of the Maluti-A-Phofung Municipal Council is to represent the inhabitants of the whole municipal area and to assure effective and efficient development. This includes sustainable programmes to socially and economically uplift the communities in the area and to make sure that community participation and empowerment become a reality.

The Maluti-A-Phofung Municipal Council is committed to the development and the upliftment of all the residents within its new demarcated area of jurisdiction, through the implementation of sustainable developmental programmes that are facilitated by the ward councillors. This includes the conscious promotion of projects calculated to raise the status of the disadvantaged communities, which would give them access to resources and services (Craythorn, 1997: 11).

In spite of the willingness of the municipality and the ward councillors to create structures for participation and development of the communities in municipal affairs, the perception is that the communities seem reluctant to participate in community affairs.

A related problem is the poor attendance of the existing ward meetings by the inhabitants of ward 28. It is during these meetings that developmental and service delivery matters are discussed, and it is crucial for the inhabitants to attend the meetings. It is not known why there is a lack of motivation amongst the community to attend ward meetings. Without the proper functioning of these structures, service delivery and development in the ward is virtually impossible.

The lack of interest in municipal matters in ward 28 leads to the situation that the Municipality Council is not in a position to determine the needs of the community in order to address them properly. It is therefore important to determine the reasons for the lack of interest displayed by the community.

This leads to the following questions:

1. What does community participation and development stand for?
2. Are there any concrete reasons for people not to utilise Ward 28 as a means of making their needs known to the municipality?
3. Why do people not attend ward meetings?
4. Are there methods to improve participation in municipal structures in Ward 28?

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are:

1. To determine what the concepts participation and development mean.
2. To determine the reasons why the community does not utilise the ward committee system (ward 28) to make their needs known to the municipality.
3. To determine why people do not attend ward meetings.
4. To determine whether there are methods to improve community participation in Ward 28.

1.3 HYPOTHESIS

Members of the community of Maluti-A-Phofung do not understand the ward system in Ward 28 and are not aware of the advantages that the utilisation of the ward system holds for them, especially as far as making their needs known to the municipality is concerned.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

The following methodology was followed in this study:

1.4.1 Literature study

A preliminary literature study indicated that there is abundant literature available on community participation and efficient service delivery on municipal government level. There is also a large number of books available for the compilation of a questionnaire to gain information on the subject matter.

1.4. Data Basis

The following data basis has been consulted to ascertain the availability of the study material:

- Catalogue of thesis and dissertations of South African universities.
- Catalogue of books: Ferdinand Postman- Library (PU for CHE).
- Index of South African Journals.

1.4.3 Method of investigation

The purpose of this study was to determine the *causes* of the lack of interest by the community of Ward 28 to participate in the activities of the Maluti-A-Phofung Municipality. The purpose of science is to explain a phenomenon and such explanation may consist of indicating the causes as far as possible (Huysaman, 1994: 20).

A random sample of 100 persons from the population, irrespective of sex, race, political affiliation or religion, was selected. To draw a random sample an address list of the population was used. Numbers were chosen and considered regardless of any specific order (Huysaman, 1994: 20).

A questionnaire, consisting of open-ended and close-ended questions was compiled and issued to 100 community members. The questionnaire was designed to focus on the causes of the problem and to allow for responses which could lead to more information about the community's lack of interest and participation in municipal activities.

1.5 Chapter division

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Development and community participation on municipal level

Chapter 3: Community participation as a phenomenon.

Chapter 4: Empirical research and findings

Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations

CHAPTER 2

DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION ON MUNICIPAL LEVEL

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, (hereinafter referred to as "the constitution) 108 of 1996 provides for the establishment of local governments or municipalities, which constitute the third tier or level of government and administration. (The terms municipality and local government will be used to describe the same phenomenon). This tier of government is considered to be the closest level to the people and it is this level of government that is expected to develop and improve the well being of the previously disadvantaged communities, especially those in the vast rural areas of South Africa.

The aim of the Municipal System Act, 32 of 2000, is " To provide for the core principles, mechanisms and processes that are necessary to enable municipalities to move progressively towards the social and economic upliftment of local communities, and ensure universal access to essential services that are affordable to all; to define the legal nature of a municipality as including the local community within the municipal area, working in partnership with the municipality's political and administrative structures; to provide for community participation; to provide a framework for local public administration and human resource development; to empower the poor and ensure that municipalities put in place service tariffs and credit control policies to progressively build local government into an efficient, frontline development agency capable of integrating the activities of all spheres of government for the overall social and economic upliftment of communities in harmony with their local environment;

and to provide for matters incidental thereto" (Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000).

Through legislation the principles of development and community participation are well and fully entrenched. Municipalities have to play an important role to create structures to secure the development of communities and to make sure that communities participate in local government activities.

2.2 THE NEED FOR MUNICIPALITIES

Before discussing development and community participation it is necessary to give an indication why municipalities are needed. This should contextualise development and community participation on municipal level.

Craythorn (1997:72) stipulates the reasons in favour of the existence of municipal government and administration as follows:

1. In a free and democratic society people should be able to exercise the maximum choice about the way their local or civic affairs are managed.
2. Non-existence of democratically elected municipal authorities would impact negatively on the threshold of democracy in any country and this could invite totalitarian experiments.
3. Local communities differ in size, distribution or density, wealth, culture and religion. Thus the needs of the people should be accommodated and be treated in accordance with the existing differences. Uniformity treatment could jeopardise development.
4. Service standards will tend to decline and the central bureaucracy, not being subject to a wider span of democratic control, will tend to become meddle-some and also less efficient.

5. Problem solving will tend to become slow and rigid because decision making on problems will be brought within set public service patterns of operation, and innovation and flexibility will tend to become excluded.
6. Public accountability will wither, citizens will become apathetic, and a general lack of concern about local matters will result.
7. People will value what they themselves worked for and created, and this human need is met when there is a local democratic self- government.

Naseem (1997:66) sees the following as the objectives of the municipal government:

1. The promotion of democratic and accountable government for local communities.
2. The provision of services to citizens in a sustainable manner.
3. The promotion of social and economic development.
4. The promotion of a safe and healthy environment.

The new Constitution of 1996 (Act 108 of 1996) requires the municipal authorities to implement developmental programmes in that they are expected, firstly, to organise and manage their administration, and to adopt budgeting and planning strategies that will give priority to the basic needs of citizens and promote their socio-economic development. Secondly, municipal authorities are obliged to participate in both national and provincial development programmes in the spirit of co-operative governance. Municipal government should, therefore, adopt a development-orientated approach and get involved in relevant planning and activities.

2.3 DEVELOPMENTAL MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

The White Paper on Local Government (1998) stresses that municipal governments must play a "developmental role". As already mentioned a developmental municipal government is a municipal government that is committed to work with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve their lives. The target groups within the society are the previously disadvantaged, marginalised or excluded groups, such as women, disabled people and very poor people. Section 153 of the Constitution goes further in defining the developmental duties of municipalities and mandates them to "structure and manage its administration and budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community and to promote the social and economic development of the community".

The promotion of economic development is therefore a Constitutional responsibility of a municipality and cannot be viewed as an unfunded mandate. This implies that a municipality must, in its Integrated Development Plan (IDP), identify the services required to promote economic activity within its area of jurisdiction and give priority to the delivery of such services within its financial capacity. These are issues that have to be taken into consideration during the general planning as well as during the budgetary planning.

Todaro (2000:18) argues that development in all societies must at least include the following three objectives:

1. To increase the availability and widen the distribution of basic life-sustaining goods, such as food, shelter, health, and protection.
2. To raise levels of living, including higher incomes, the provision of more jobs and better education, - all of which serve not only to enhance

material well-being but also to generate greater individual and national self-esteem.

3. To expand the range of economic and social choices available to individuals and nations by freeing them from servitude and dependence not only in relation to other people and nation-states but also to the forces of ignorance and human misery.

A developmental municipal government has the following characteristics, which help it to deliver expected services (ETU publication, February 2000, page 3):

2.3.1 The ability to provide household infrastructure and services

The infrastructure relates to aspects like, water pipes, sewerage pipes, roads, storm water drainage and an electricity network, without which it will be difficult to render services like water, sanitation, refuse removal and electricity. These services are not only a constitutional right, but can also help people find jobs, support their families and develop their skills to start their own small businesses (ETU publication, 2000:3).

2.3.2 Promotion of relief for the poor

It is the government's policy to provide free basic needs such as water and electricity to the households, which do not yet have access to these services. Municipal government may also promote social development through provision of recreational and community facilities, and the delivery of social welfare services (ETU 2000:2 –3).

2.3.3 Ability to integrate and coordinate activities

Most local areas have many different sectors involved in the development process, for example, it could be national and provincial departments, parastatals (Eskom and Telkom), businesses and community groups. Developmental municipal government must provide leadership and co-ordination to all those who have a role to play in developing the area. The most important method for achieving greater coordination and integration is through integrated development plans (ETU 2000 : 03).

2.3.4 Creation of liveable, integrated cities, towns and rural areas

Apartheid planning has left deep scars on the way cities, towns and rural areas look. Cities and towns are racially segregated, with the poor often living in townships far away from the business and industrial areas. It is important that spaces where people live, work, shop and play are planned close together. This is referred to as spatial integration. It will make areas economically more efficient since it will be easier and cheaper to provide services, reduce the costs of public transport for workers, and enable social development (ETU 2000:4).

2.3.5 Ability to democratise development

Democratisation comes about when people are allowed to participate in decision-making processes on matters that affect them directly. Municipal councils at local level play a significant role in promoting democracy. They represent community interests within a council. Ward councillors should ensure that citizens and community groups are involved in decisions about municipal programmes. Ward committees and recognised community structures are important means of community involvement. Municipalities must be supportive of individual and

community initiatives taking place and must ensure that these benefit the area as a whole (ETU, 2000 : 04).

2.4 NEED FOR LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of development is to create an environment in which all people can expand their capabilities and in which opportunities for both present and future generations can be created. Economic development can be regarded as a measure for the economic growth of a country. Development is a multidimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes, and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality, and the eradication of poverty. Development, in its essence, must represent the whole gamut of change by which an entire social system, tuned to the diverse basic needs and desires of individuals and social groups within that system, moves away from a condition of life widely perceived as unsatisfactory toward a situation or condition of life regarded as materially and spiritually better (Todaro, 2000:16).

2.5 CORE VALUES FOR DEVELOPMENT

The following three core values of development are seen as representing common goals sought by individuals and societies. They relate to fundamental human needs that find their expression in almost all societies and cultures at all times.

2.5.1 Sustenance: The ability to meet basic needs

Basic needs are those needs without which life is impossible. These include food, shelter, health and protection. A basic function of all economic activities is to

provide as many people as possible with the means of overcoming helplessness and misery arising from lack of food, shelter, health and protection. Economic development is, therefore, a necessary condition for the improvement of the quality of life. Without sustained and continuous economic progress at individual as well as societal level, the realisation of the human potential would be impossible. Rising *per capita* incomes, elimination of absolute poverty, greater employment opportunities, and lessening income inequalities constitute the necessary but not the sufficient conditions for development (Todaro, 2000:16).

2.5.2 Self-esteem: To be a person

Self-esteem has to do with a sense of worth and self-respect, of not being used as a toll by others for their own needs. The nature and form of self-esteem may vary from society to society and from culture to culture. National prosperity has become an almost universal measure of worth. Due to the insignificance attached to material values in developed nations, worthiness and esteem are nowadays increasingly conferred only on countries that possess economic wealth and technological power – those that have “developed”(Todaro, 200:17).

2.5.3 Freedom from servitude: To be able to choose

Freedom is to be understood in the sense of emancipation from alienating material conditions of life and from social servitude to nature, ignorance, misery, and dogmatic beliefs. Freedom involves an expanded range of choices for societies and their members together with a minimisation of external constraints in the pursuit of some social goal such as development. Wealth on the other hand allows people to gain greater control over nature and physical environment and gives them the freedom to choose at greater leisure, to have more goods and services, or to deny the importance of these material wants and choose a life of spiritual contemplation. The concept of human freedom should also

encompass various components of political freedom including, but not limited to, personal security, the rule of law, freedom of expression, political participation, and equality of opportunity (Todaro, 2000:17 – 18).

Municipalities are required by law to promote local economic development, social development and democracy in their area of jurisdiction. Municipalities must not only deliver according to present demands, but must also anticipate future demands and find ways to provide services in an effective, efficient and sustainable manner. In compliance with various Acts (such as the Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000), municipalities must incorporate a wide range of sectoral programmes into their own municipal development programmes and must further adopt a strategic approach to planning and management.

Various challenges facing municipalities can be overcome through the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), which is a statutory planning document designed to help municipalities to develop a coherent, long-term plan for the coordination of all development and delivery in their areas. The Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000 requires each municipality to adopt a single inclusive strategic plan for development of its area, which is expected to include the following:

- To link, integrate and co-ordinate plans and take into account proposals for the development of the municipal area.
- To align the resources and capacity of the municipality with the implementation of the plan.
- To form the policy framework and general basis on which annual budgets must be based.
- To comply with the provisions of Chapter 5 of the said Act.
- To comply with national and provincial development plans and planning requirements binding on the municipality in terms of legislation.

Section 35(1) of the Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000, stipulates that the IDP binds the municipality in the exercise of its executive authority, except to the extent of any inconsistency between an IDP and national or provincial legislation, in which case such legislation prevails.

2.6 NECESSITY FOR MUNICIPALITIES TO HAVE AN INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (IDP) PLAN IN PLACE

The IDP gives guidance to local government in the following matters:

2.6.1 Effective use of scarce resources

The Integrated Development Plan helps the municipality to focus on the most important needs of local communities taking into account the resources available at local level. The municipality must find the most cost-effective ways of providing services and money will be spent on the causes of problems other than treating the symptoms of the problems, for example, a municipality may decide to allocate resources to building a canal that will prevent homes from being damaged during flood seasons. This will reduce the financial burden placed on the municipality's emergency services. Flooding in Qwaqwa under Maluti-A-Phofung municipality is a common occurrence during the summer period. Ward 28 has a bad reputation of people being displaced due to floods (ETU, 2000:17)

2.6.2 IDP helps to speed up delivery

The IDP identifies the least serviced and most impoverished areas and points to where municipal funds should be spent. Implementation is expedited and made easier since the relevant stakeholders become part of the process. The IDP provides deadlock-breaking mechanisms to ensure that projects and programmes

are efficiently implemented. The IDP helps to develop realistic project proposals based on availability of resources (ETU, 2000:17).

2.6.3 IDP helps to attract additional funds

Government departments and private investors are willing to invest where municipalities have clear development plans. Since IDP is a well thought of and a comprehensive document, it could as well be used to attract funds not only within borders of South Africa but could serve as a good bait for securing funding for identified projects from as far as overseas countries. Countries such as Belgium are more than willing to finance projects accompanied by clear developmental plans (ETU, 2000:18).

2.6.4 IDP strengthens democracy

Through the active participation of all stakeholders, decisions are made in a democratic and transparent manner. The community is involved and kept informed about the developments. They contribute to the planning and implementation of projects and attribute successes to themselves (ETU, 2000:18).

2.6.5 IDP helps to overcome the legacy of apartheid

Municipal resources are used to integrate rural areas (which lack the necessary infrastructure) as well as urban areas and to extend services to the poor. They enable municipalities to align their financial and institutional resources behind the agreed policy objectives and programmes. An IDP is a vital tool to ensure the integration of local government activities with other spheres of development planning at provincial, national and international levels, by serving as a basis for communication and interaction. An IDP plan serves as a basis for engagement

between local government and the citizenry at the local level, and with various stakeholders and interest groups. Participatory and accountable government only has meaning if it is related to concrete issues, plans and resource allocations. IDPs enable municipalities to weigh up their obligations and systematically prioritise programmes and resource allocations (White Paper, 1998 : 27).

2.6.6 IDP promotes co-ordination between local, provincial and national government

The different spheres of government are encouraged to work in a co-ordinated manner to address the development needs in a local area. For example: If the Department of Health plans to build a clinic in a certain area it would in the first place be necessary to make certain whether the municipality will be in a position to provide services like water and sanitation for the effective functioning of the clinic (Local Government in South Africa – an ETU publication. February 2002. Pages 17 – 18).

2.7 THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

Community participation is the creation of opportunities to enable members of a community and the larger society to actively contribute to and influence the development process and to share equitably in the fruits of development, (Midgley, 1986:24). Chapter 4 of the Local Government Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000 specifically deals with and encourages community participation. Subsection 16(1) of the same Act contains the following stipulations:

A municipality must develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance, and must for this purpose—

- 2.7.1 Encourage, and create conditions for, the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality, including in—
- (1) The preparation, implementation and review of its integrated development plan in terms of Chapter 5;
 - (2) The establishment, implementation and review of its performance management system in terms of Chapter 6;
 - (3) The monitoring and review of its performance, including the outcomes and impact of such performance;
 - (4) The preparation of its budget; and
 - (5) Strategic decisions relating to the provision of municipal services in terms of Chapter 8; contribute to building the capacity of –
 - (6) The local community to enable it to participate in the affairs of the municipality ; and
 - (7) Councillors and staff to foster community participation; and use its resources, and annually allocate funds in its budget as may be appropriate for the purposes of implementing paragraphs (a) and (b).

There is a warning, however, that community participation must not be construed as a means to allow for interference with a municipal council's right to govern and to exercise the executive and legislative authority of the municipality.

Participation may further be seen as an activity undertaken by one or more individual previously excluded from the decision-making process in conjunction with one or more other individuals who were previously the sole protagonists in the process (Brynard, 1996 : 41). It starts well before the decision in question is made and extends well beyond it. Acts of participation should not be viewed in isolation, but rather seen within a stream of interconnected acts. Hence, the need for the communities to take responsibility for themselves and to find ways

to improve the quality of their lives. This refers to individual citizens, businesses and community groups.

Brynard, (1996 : 44) outlines specific objectives for citizen participation:

- Providing information to citizens.
- Getting information from and about citizens.
- Improving public decisions, programmes, projects and services.
- Enhancing acceptance of public decisions, programmes, projects and services.
- Supplementing public agency works.
- Altering political power patterns and resource allocation.
- Protecting individual and minority group rights and interests.
- Delaying or avoiding complicating difficult public decisions.

However, Brynard (1996:50) warns that community participation must not be considered a panacea for all the ills of the society; it is simply a change in process. Through this change in process, however, participation advocates a claim that changes will occur in the distribution of power in society, in the attitudes of citizens towards their government, and in the type of policies produced by the government.

2.8 INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP) DOCUMENT AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The compilation of Maluti-A-Phofung's comprehensive IDP document required participation of various stakeholders.

An IDP *steering committee* was established which comprised the municipal manager and heads of departments in order to steer the process. Where needed,

the mayor and mayoral committee members participated in the IDP steering committee meetings.

- a) *Sector Forums* were established in each geographical area to encourage participation of residents and communities through elected representatives, hence the establishment of Ward Committee Member systems whose members were expected to participate in the sector forum meetings together with councillors and other officials. The philosophy adopted was that these sector forums would continue to function beyond the IDP process in order to coordinate the activities of various organisations at a community level. The document envisaged service providers to make use of these forums for future consultations with community members within the municipal area.
- b) An IDP *Representative Forum* was established to be the integrating mechanism. This forum had to meet only once to determine the overall priorities, visions and objectives for Maluti-A-Phofung.
- c) IDP *project task teams* were also established as where service providers could participate with community members, councillors and municipal officials in the IDP process.

The IDP document of Maluti-A-Phofung municipality appears to be in compliance with the requirements for mechanisms for community participation as stipulated in Chapter 4 of the Municipal System Act. Section. 17(1) of Chapter 4 makes provision for community participation by stipulating, *inter alia*, that participation by the local community in the affairs of the municipality must take place through

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- (i) Political structures for participation in terms of the Municipal Structures Act;
- (ii) The mechanisms, processes and procedures for participation in municipal governance established in terms of this Act;

- (iii) Councillors; and
- (iv) Generally applying the provisions for participation as provided for in this Act.

One would assume, at this stage, that the formation of various task groups, for example, the project task teams, sector forums and the steering committees would be a means to encourage public participation. The central question is whether ward residents were ever made aware of these processes. Were they encouraged to participate or was the whole process simply left and entrusted to the steering committee, which comprised mainly the 'elite' group of the society and the heads of the departments, to decide on behalf of the people at grassroots level? How much do people know about these task teams? Were all sections of the community or their representatives equally involved in these committees?

The purpose of development is to raise the sustainable level of living of the masses of poor people as rapidly as is feasible and to provide all human beings with the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential. For any developmental project to succeed, the involvement of the people at grass root level is crucial. Every member of the community concerned has a role to play, no matter how small. If the whole community is not totally involved, there could be conflict in the implementation phase of a development project.

Because of a lack of clarity as to what participation really entails, most people find it difficult to define the levels of achievement as they progress with the projects.

Thomas (Thomas, doc. <http://www.>) suggests the following simple method of grading of different levels of participation.

Table 2.1: Different Levels of Community Participation in Development Projects.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Community Receives Benefits from the service, but contributes nothing	Some personnel, financial material contributions from the community, but not involve and no decision making	Community participates in lower level management decision making	Participation goes beyond lower level decision making to monitoring and policy making	Programme is entirely run by the community, except for some external financial and technical assistance

Source : Thomas : Online

The above levels of community participation can be equated to the development theories as proposed by the economic historian, Walt Rostow, in 1960 (71). According to Rostow (1960:71) each society inevitably moves through five consecutive stages as listed below:

- The traditional society.
- The establishment of the preconditions for take-off.
- The take-off into self-sustained growth.
- The drive to maturity.
- The age of high mass consumption.

Development here is seen as implying a kind of teleology, an end towards which history is moving or should move. Development is more than simply change or the passage of time: it is change in some particular direction.

Even though these grades appear to be relatively simple to understand, most people find it difficult to apply them during monitoring. According to Coetzee

(1994:419), the role of public administration in development efforts has been that of trying to implement blueprints based on detailed planning with little or no local participation in the planning or implementation stages. Practice has shown that successful development projects all have the following characteristics:

- Participation by target groups in planning and implementation
- The use of existing institutional structures.
- Upgrading of target groups to keep projects going.
- The use of local resources.
- Positive political engagement.

The above testify to the efficacy of the more organic approach to administration, which stresses that communities develop themselves; they are not developed by outside institutions.

The most obvious need for an extension of research in public administration for development is to be found in the ecological sphere, which focuses on the identification of environmental factors that enhance or inhibit administrative efforts for development and on the analysis of constructive connections between them.

But in order to succeed, it is suggested that neither the government nor other agencies should prescribe what communities must do, but rather should they create the right atmosphere for community development to take place in communities, establish a framework within which community development can take place and provide assistance for the communities in their efforts.

However, Thomas (Doc.: 2000) warns that in certain instances, enhanced community participation may lead to disadvantages in fulfilling the vision of the programmes. The major risk of enhanced community participation is the potential of a vocal minority to hijack the programme for their personal short

term benefits rather than to fulfil the community's needs. Another aspect that is debated often, is the tendency of resource-poor governments of developing countries to shift responsibilities of development to the members of the community, while they spend the revenue collected as taxes for non-developmental expenditure. In developed countries, given an opportunity, communities are always ready and have the skills to participate in development programmes whilst in the developing countries the concept of community participation is not as simple to implement, because the communities are traditionally not ready to take on this responsibility.

2.9 NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS (NGO's) AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The significant role played by the NGOs in local development cannot be overemphasised. Non-governmental organisations are highly diverse, they are engaged in various activities and operate at a variety of scales. They have a long history of influencing governments' decisions and lobbying for specific actions. Through this lobbying, they have become an increasingly powerful force in the modification of governments' activities over long periods. They also play a role in an advisory capacity, not only with the governments, but also with businesses and other international institutions. They contribute toward effecting sustainable development through giving advice, acting as watchdogs on the activities of the government, and implementing projects for the local people and own initiatives.

The NGOs also pride themselves in being particularly sensitive to the needs of the poor people in developing countries and in responding quickly to them (Riddell, 1995:46).

Riddell (1995:46) further argues that almost all NGOs share a perception of the development process which is far wider than simply the provision or acquisition

of goods, services, or the means of production. Most subscribe to the view that raising the standards of living of the poor in a sustainable manner is a fundamental responsibility. It necessitates that the poor acquire more power, for example, through promoting community organisation and encouraging non-formal education, with some NGOs going so far as to equate 'development' with 'empowerment'.

More recently, a cluster of NGO's in (the British Overseas Aid Group) has focussed on the notion of 'inclusion', linking the idea that success in achieving greater inclusion of the poorest in the mainstream of development should help to make the world more secure. (Riddell, 1995:46).

2.10 CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that municipalities, as the third tier of government, play a pivotal role and exist for reasons. They are the closest levels of the government to the people and this position puts them at helm to ensure that development takes place at grass-root levels. But, municipalities can never succeed on their own to develop communities as mandated without the earnest participation of the other stakeholders such as communities *per se* and influential NGOs. Municipalities are compelled by legislation to have their IDPs in place.

Development is, however, not about the delivery of goods to a passive citizenry. It is about active involvement of the community. This will improve the quality of life of all South Africans, and in particular the most poor and marginalised sections of communities. This objective should be realised through a process of empowerment, which gives the poor control over their lives and increases their ability to mobilise sufficient development, which is owned and driven by communities and their representative organisations to secure community participation.

The phenomenon community participation will be discussed in the next chapter. The discussion will form the point of departure for the empirical study of the Maluti-A-Phofung Town Council

CHAPTER 3

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AS A PHENOMENON.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Ward 28 in Qwaqwa is one of the 34 wards under Maluti-A-Phofung Town Council (municipality). This ward has an estimated population figure of 5000 persons. Development in the ward is at a snail's pace because most of the inhabitants in this ward are seemingly not enthusiastic to participate in developmental matters that affect their livelihood.

Community development strategies have been suggested for the community of Ward 28 which are aimed at uplifting the standard of living of the people, but to no avail. The future of the developmental strategies that are designed to improve the welfare of the people in the ward is a great concern to the service provider in Maluti-A-Phofung Town Council; hence, the need to optimise community participation. This advocates for the development of mechanisms, which will allow the people of the community to become actively involved in their own development through participation.

The contents of the phenomenon development must be understood by the people, whose lives stand to be improved by it. It must also recognise the need to empower them. The creative initiative of the people nowadays is regarded as a primary development resource within which the mental and material welfare of the people is seen as the final object of development.

The top-down planning system by which authorities used to run the affairs of communities, for example, the authoritarian methods and style of leadership, that have been fashionable, are now being substituted by bottom-up methods

that imply active participation and involvement of the people in all stages of a development process. If development is to enhance the capacity of the people to determine their own future, it is imperative that they be drawn into the development process without hesitation. Participation of civil society (people-driven process) is also widely covered by the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). One of the six basic principles, namely, '**A people driven process**' has it that the RDP is focused on the people's most immediate needs, and it relies, in turn, on their energies to drive the process of meeting these needs. Regardless of race or sex, the people of South Africa must together shape their own future (RDP, 1994: 05).

Development is not about the delivery of goods to a passive citizenry. It is about active involvement and growing empowerment. Further, since the objective of the RDP is to improve the quality of life of all South Africans, and in particular the most poor and marginalised sections of communities, this objective should be realised through a process of empowerment, which gives the poor control over their lives and increases their ability to mobilise sufficient development resources. The RDP reflects a commitment to grassroots, bottom-up development, which is owned and driven by communities and their representative organisations to secure community participation (RDP, 1994: 15).

This Chapter forms the theoretical basis for the questionnaire that has been used in this study.

3.2 DEFINING THE TERM COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Traditionally, community participation is a familiar concept amongst the Africans especially the Nguni Tribe, who had been practising it from time immemorial through the system of chieftainship. During a certain period of the year, for example harvesting time, the community of a particular area would converge at

the King's or Chief's palace and proceed to the maize fields to harvest the maize crop for their leader. A certain share of the crop would then be divided amongst the Chief's subjects who have participated in the harvesting process, especially the poor families. This practice is still common amongst the Basotho people who always prefer to work as a group in the form of "Letsema" in order to make tasks easier to complete (rural-life experience)

The idiomatic expression "two heads are better than one" is relevant here. Letsema in essence means "people working together for a common purpose" and also refers to community participation. The President, Thabo Mbeki has urged all South Africans to voluntarily participate in community projects through "Letsema". He appeared on television wearing an overall and participating in the renovation of a school in Johannesburg with a group of residents from Soweto. "Letsema" has now become a catch phrase for the citizens of this country and is encouraged by National, Provincial and Local governments (SABC TV NEWS BROADCAST)

Participation literally means to take part. Longman (1995:1031) defines participation as "the act of taking part in an activity or event". The United Nations' definition of participation is "the creation of opportunities to enable all members of a community and the larger society to actively contribute to and influence the development process and to share equitably in the fruits of development" (Midgley, 1986: 24). A more comprehensive definition of community participation which is relevant to the South African situation, is the one advanced by Burkey.

Burkey (1993: 59) sees participation as involving organised efforts to increase control over resources and regulative institutions in given social situations, on the part of groups and movements of those hitherto excluded from such control, for example, blacks, Indians and coloured communities in South Africa. They were

disadvantaged in many ways due to their exclusion from certain activities. Statutory mechanisms for exclusion were, for example, the Group Areas Act (Act No. 41 of 1950), the Population Registration Act (Act No. 30 of 1950) and the Black Labour Act (Act No. 48 of 1953).

Cheetham (2001:03) is of the opinion that there is no single definition of participation by communities but, rather, *a potpourri* of definitions varying mostly by the degree of participation. He uses a 'continuum' as a framework to understand community participation. In this continuum, "participation" ranges from negligible or "co-opted" – in which community members serve as token representatives with no part in making decisions – to "collective action"- in which local people initiate action, set the agenda, and work towards a commonly defined goal. The continuum employs 6 C's to define community participation, namely Cheetham (2001: 03):

- "Co-option" – which serves as tokenism representation with no power.
- "Co-operation" – whereby tasks are assigned, with incentives.
- "Consulted" – local opinions are sought.
- "Collaborating" – local people work together
- "Co-learning" – local people and outsiders share knowledge and work together.
- "Collective action" – local people set the agenda and execute it, not as initiators, but as part of a team.

Jakariya (M.Sc. Thesis. Aug, (2000:2) defines community participation as " the involvement of a significant number of people in situations or actions that enhance their well-being, e.g. their income, security, or self-esteem". He views participation as a means to defined ends, not as an end in itself; the goal therefore is to optimise participation in order to achieve the desired project goals, not simply to maximise participation.

It is evident from the above definitions that community participation occurs when people organise themselves and take responsibility for managing their problems and this includes the following:

- Identifying of the problems.
- Developing action plans.
- Implementing the action plans.
- Ensuring sustainability of projects that lead to the empowerment and betterment of their livelihoods.

With this as background community participation can be defined, for the purpose of this study, as:

The active process of involvement by the people in any of the community projects where holistic development of people takes place which helps to empower and capacitate the individuals to think and work independently thereby improving their well-being and/or social status.

3.3 RATIONALE FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION.

Community participation facilitates a learning process amongst the people, promotes responsibility, assists with the mobilisation of resources and empower people (Rahman, 1993: 218).

3.3.1 Participation facilitates learning

Communities have different needs, diverse cultural beliefs, different problem approaches, practices and when combined, this facilitates learning of new things by the people through the people.

3.3.2 Participation promotes responsibility

Participation encourages people to act responsibly by instilling confidence in them and enables them to articulate their views in a well-coordinated fashion. It also promotes shared responsibility by the service providers in that they feel they are part of the local community.

3.3.3 Participation assists with resource mobilisation

Participation helps to mobilise resources, which may not otherwise be available through projects that alleviate poverty and other material, societal and personal benefits. It further creates opportunities to enable all members of the community and larger society to actively contribute to and influence the development process within the localities and to share equitably in the fruits of development.

3.3.4 Participation empowers people

This is the case especially with the disadvantaged groups of the society whose voices were never heard in the development of their area. It is a form of empowerment that helps to amplify traditionally unacknowledged voices in the society, for example, the so called "unlearned and the extreme poor". This is in line with the requirements of the Reconstruction and Development Programme. Individual and community empowerment can be strengthened significantly if local people are involved from the planning stage until the implementation stage. (Rahman, 1993: 218).

Empowered persons are normally motivated to change problems that they face and mediate the negative effects over things which they have no control.

Relevant information is accessed easily to communities and skills and capacity are developed to utilise such information (Rahman, 1992:120). He further states that the aim of participation is to achieve power : “ a special kind of power – people’s power – which belongs to the oppressed and exploited classes and groups and their organizations, and the defence of their just interests to enable them to advance towards shared goals of social change within a participatory system”. This argument can be seen as political, but his summarised assumptions underlying empowerment through popular participation are more convincing:

- a) Present obstacles to people’s development can and should be overcome by giving the population concerned the full opportunity of participating in all the activities related to their development.
- b) Participation is justified because it expresses not only the will of the majority of people, but also is it the only way for them to ensure that the important moral, humanitarian, social, cultural and economic objectives of a more humane and effective development can be peacefully attained.
- c) ‘Dialogical interaction’, ‘conscientisation’, ‘PAR’ and other similar activities can make it possible for all the people to organise themselves in a manner best suited to meet their desired ends, Rahnema (In Sachs, 1992:121).

Rahnema has, however, identified six reasons for the unprecedented interest governments and developing institutions have in the concept of participation:

- a) The concept is no longer perceived as a threat, which in essence means that community participation assists government institutions to make informed decisions about matters relating to local development.
- b) Participation has become a politically attractive slogan. Participatory slogans create feelings of complicity between the public manufacturers of illusions and their consumers. Politicians give their constituencies the

impression that they are really sensitive to all their problems, often inviting the latter to enlighten them on their needs and aspirations.

- c) Participation is now perceived as an instrument for greater effectiveness as well as a new source of investment. The process brings to development projects what is mostly needed and avoids failures of the past, for example, (a) a close knowledge of the 'field reality' which government bureaucrats do not have; (b) networks of relations, essential both to the success of ongoing projects and long-term investments in rural areas; (c) the co-operation, on the local scene, of organisations able to carry out developmental activities.
- d) Participation is becoming a good fund-raising device. Particularly the NGOs whose reputation of their participatory approach have allowed them to meet the needs of the people with greater efficiency and at less cost.
- e) An expanded concept of participation could help the private sector to be directly involved in the development business. Private corporations are mostly equipped to deal with the developmental issues because of the expertise they possess.

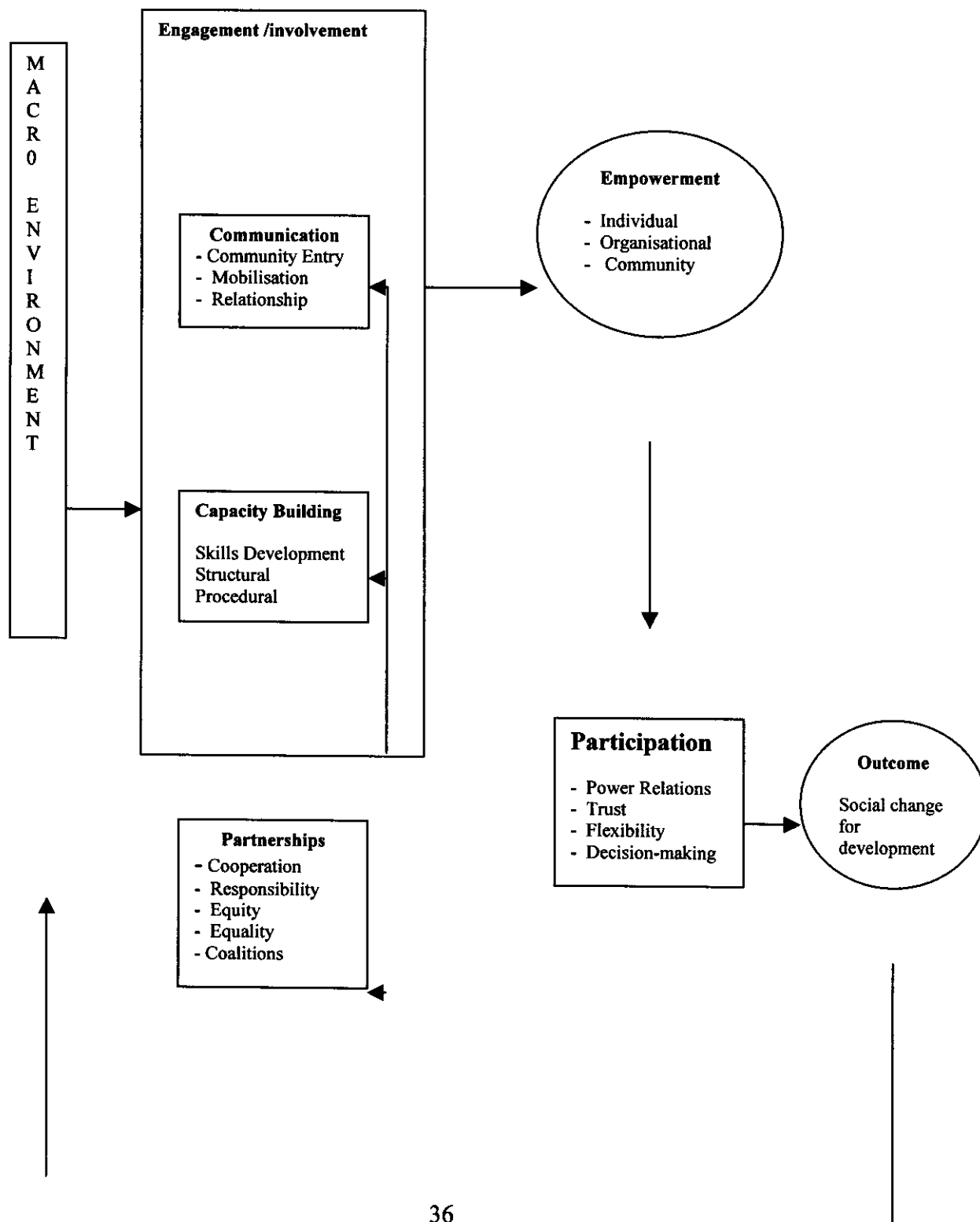
The crux of the matter, as discussed in this section, is that people who are in a position to participate in their own development are people who are empowered and who can contribute to their own development. Participation is, however, not a single event, but a process.

3.4 THE PROCESS OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Community participation occurs when people come together to share and discuss their problems, prioritise them and find possible solutions. Active community participation results in effective decision making and promotes commitment to ensure that plans are realised.

A conceptual model (Fig.3.1) by Brian Delcarme (doc 2000) will be used as a theoretical framework that explains the processes that will lead to successful active participation. The model consists of the (1) macro environment; (2) engagement/involvement; (3) empowerment; (4) participation and (5) outcome.

FIG. 3.1: PROCESS FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION (Delcarne doc.2000).



Each of the components will be discussed in the next section to give a clearer picture of the process.

3.4.1 Macro Environment

The macro environment represents the context that gives rise to needs that stimulate community participation. It incorporates sustainable development issues that directly or indirectly affect the quality of life. People are products of their society. As members of a particular community, nation or population group they adopt the culture of that society – that is, they learn its language, values, faith expectations, laws and customs. This culture – or the sum total of the way of life of a group of people – influences an individual's lifestyle (Smit & Cronje, 1999:70).

3.4.2 Community Involvement/ Engagement

This is a process where people express their right to be active in the development initiated. It is a collaborative partnership between individuals groups, organisations and the public sector to mobilise resources and change relationships. Individuals initiating community engagement activities must understand the belief system held by community members, especially if these are different from their own. This case of Ward 28 in the Maluti-A-Phofung municipal council becomes relevant here since it comprises of rural and semi-urban populations with different beliefs and expectations when it comes to issues pertaining to development. It becomes necessary to apply the principles of communication, capacity building and partnership (Delcarne doc.2000, pages 2-3).

Communication. One should be clear about the goals and purposes of the engagement effort and the communities to be engaged, thus knowing about the communities' dynamics, structure, norms and values.

Capacity Building. Capacity building is based on the premise that people can lead their own change processes in order to become actors and not merely subjects of change. Community capacity building is developmental in nature. It involves training and providing resources that strengthen the ability to establish structures and systems, upgrade skills, and develop procedures that enable them to participate.

Partnerships. Partnerships with the community is characterised by mutual cooperation and responsibility. The main purpose of establishing partnerships is to reach a compromise that entail the recognition of self-help activities, respect for the individual and a willingness of authorities to cooperate.

3.4.3 Empowerment

Empowerment is the process whereby individuals, communities and organisations gain confidence, self-esteem and power to articulate their concerns and take actions to address them. Empowered persons are motivated to change negative things that confront them into positive things from which they derive some benefits. The key to the empowerment of the communities is the unrestricted access to the information which is relevant and the development of the necessary skills and capacity to utilise that information (Delcarme,doc. : 03).

Cook (In Fitzgerald, 1997: 281) argues that empowerment of people is a prerequisite for their development being sustainable. And this applies as much to staff in a department as it does to participants in '*a rural community development project*' (my emphasis). Cook further states that "management literature indicates that empowerment is used in several contexts, including total quality management, self-managing work teams, continuous improvement, and

participative management". Typical of this understanding is the following statement: 'With empowerment, the idea is to give non-management employees the freedom to make decisions without supervision' (Kirkpatrick, 1992:29).

The common denominator in all the uses of the term – empowerment – is that empowerment clearly has to do with power. Power operates at various levels – within a person, between people, and between groups. It is possible to speak on one level about empowering an individual in an absolute sense, in which the person becomes more able to direct his or her own life and more likely to succeed in whatever he or she attempts. Training, for example, provides people with the skills required to get ahead in any context, and is not usually provided for the express purpose of giving participants an edge over other specific people. On the other hand, affirmative action, for example, seeks to empower those previously excluded from the mainstream of organisational success (blacks, women, the handicapped) relative to those who previously enjoyed an unfair advantage. This could be referred to as the collective level of empowerment, and is very much the concern of industrial relations and politics, Cook (In Fitzgerald, 1997:282 – 283).

3.4.4 Participation

Participation refers to the sum of actions taken by people in order to influence or attempt to influence an outcome. Participation varies in extent and intensity and is considered increasingly intensive as more people engage in it. It should be viewed as an evolutionary process that starts with planning and ends with operation.

It is important at this stage to discuss the factors that affect participation as these factors could, if ignored by the people promoting participation, hinder the

process of participation. The factors that affect participation are discussed as follows:

Power Relations: Needed to reduce the power distance between the have and the have nots. This relates to the information and monetary strength that certain individuals may possess that could influence the outcomes. They must not be used as bargaining tools.

Trust: Communities and authorities do not have to be equally skilled nor have confidence but must trust one another and share commitment. Honest actions are the source for developing and maintaining trust.

Flexibility: Communities and authorities must be flexible in accommodating each other's feelings and needs. Greater flexibility is strongly associated with greater responsiveness to needs.

Decision making: Community participation will only be truly democratic if the community has the right and opportunity in actual decision making (Delcarme doc.2000, page 3).

3.4.5 Outcome

The outcomes of any community participatory project should be social change for development in addressing the needs created by the macro environment. However, clear distinction must be made between community involvement and community participation. Community participation means participating in the initial assessment of the situation, defining the main social problems, setting priorities for programmes, implementing activities, monitoring and evaluating the results. In order to achieve this, the community needs to be aware, and be made aware of existing opportunities and then be equipped with the necessary

knowledge and skills. The question that comes to mind is whether the community of Ward 28 under Maluti-A-Phofung Town Council are aware of the opportunities that exist for their development and, are further equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills. The duty to create awareness and to provide the community with the necessary knowledge and skills rest with those who promote community participation. It therefore becomes important to evaluate the outcome to determine if it addresses the needs created (Delcarne doc.2000, page 4).

There are basically two forms of community participation, namely the participatory democratic model and the liberal democratic model.

3.5 FORMS OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The forms of community participation in existence, which could be helpful to the people who are involved in the promotion of the community participation and development, are the participatory democratic form and the liberal democratic form.

Local government is perceived as the most democratic tier of government, which allows community to play a significant role through participation that assist in the achieving of set objectives. The reason for this view is that local government is the sphere that is closest to the people, hence the definition "a decentralised representative institution with general and specific powers" Bekker (1996: 16).

But, contrary to the approach of South Africa, local government in other countries is sometimes seldom seen as a fully democratic expression of the preferences of the local citizenry. More often than not the reality in these countries is that local government is, instead, a distortion of local democracy, indicating either elitist domination or "clientelism".

The scenario may suggest that the local government and its policies are not representative of the majority of the local electorate. Furthermore, the so-called "responsiveness" of local government generally means responsiveness to the demands of the local elite. In other words, it is not responsive to the voice of the people (Geldenhuys in Bekker, 1996:11 – 12).

3.5.1 Participatory democratic model

Ishmael *et al.* (1997:28) argue that participatory democracy tends to emphasise more on people's direct involvement in the decision-making process. This is made possible by the representative institutions, which are regarded as truly democratic in that they allow people to participate freely in their policy – making structures. The argument that participatory democracy tends to emphasise people's direct involvement in the decision making, is augmented by the following characteristics (Christenson, 1971:194):

- ❑ Participatory democracy regards citizens as highly motivated politically, and believes that they will participate fully and continuously in public life.
- ❑ Citizens will have access to adequate political information and will use it for enlightened political decision making.
- ❑ Citizens are able to communicate their political views to others and debate them effectively.
- ❑ Government becomes accessible to all citizens.
- ❑ As many issues as possible are exposed to popular discussion. There is often no rigid demarcation of issue areas in different sectors of an organisation, and boundaries between organisations are flexible and informal.
- ❑ Formal procedures are played down in favour of popular enthusiasm, Christenson *et al.* (1971:194).

3.5.2 Liberal democratic model

This model tends to place more emphasis on the individual liberty and privacy and also focuses on representative government or institutions to fulfil aims such as liberty, equality, and fraternity. Ishmael et al (1997:26) outlines the features of liberal democracy as reported by the Centre for Policy Studies as follows:

- Control over government decisions about policy is constitutionally vested in elected officials.
- Elected officials are chosen in frequent and fairly-conducted elections in which coercion is comparatively uncommon.
- Theoretically all adults have the right to vote in the election of office-bearers.
- Practically all adults have the right for elective offices in the government.
- Citizens have the right to express themselves without any danger of punishment.
- Citizens have a right to seek out alternative sources of information and these (such as the media) are protected by the law.
- The political system is competitive, in that competing leaders and organisations define the alternatives of public policy, and this offers voters the opportunity of making real choices.
- Citizens have the right to form relatively independent associations or organisations including independent political parties and interest groups.
- Clear distinctions are drawn between the various functions of government – legislative, executive and judicial.

It becomes obvious from the factors mentioned above that participation in all its forms stands to benefit the people who are involved in it. The idiomatic expression, "two heads are better than one" is relevant. There is always a sharing of ideas and capacitating of the individuals with knowledge and skills in any participatory set up. However, participation must by no means be induced

on the people as this could derail the intended objectives. The derailment of well-intended objectives is supported by Rahnema (In Sachs 1992:126) when he states, "Contemporary history is particularly rich in cases where induced participation in projects of an ideological, national or ethnic nature had repeatedly led to frightfully self-destructive tragedies. After all, slogans of participation have accompanied the events which led to the physical or mental destruction of millions of innocent people in Germany, the USSR, Cambodia, India, Iran, Iraq and elsewhere".

Although many advantages of community participation have been discussed thus far, there are also certain disadvantages to the phenomenon.

3.6 ADVANTAGES AND LIMITATIONS OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AT LOCAL LEVEL

The fundamental role of the municipalities is to satisfy the needs and expectations of the communities they serve. Many reasons exist for the involvement of the local communities in the activities that enhance their quality of life and are calculated to make a difference in their living. Participation may be in the form of cleaning up operations, neighbourhood watch, preventing the destruction of public property or voting for councillors or attending council meetings (Bekker 1996:79).

Although it is in the community's, as well as the local authority's, best interest to participate, some citizens prefer to play a passive role and find it more comfortable to sit on the sidelines and watch the game of local government being played by others. It therefore becomes incumbent upon the local authorities to move the citizens from their so-called "comfort zones" towards active participation through successful marketing strategies.

Clapper, (1996:75) highlights the following as the advantages of participation:

3.6.1 Reduction of psychological suffering and apathy

Increased citizen participation once led to the promulgation of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, which established a community action programme in the United States of America. Involvement in citizen participation activities reduces psychological suffering and overcomes the apathy of ordinary citizens.

3.6.2 Positive application of citizen powers

Participation can serve as a means of converting dependency into independence that is, converting the poor from passive consumers of the services of others into producers of those services. As citizens need the local authorities to deliver services to them, the effective delivery of these services, for example, refuse collection, may be enhanced by the involvement of the citizens (that is, carrying the refuse bin to the outside pavement).

3.6.3 Willingness to sustain deprivation

Participation normally leads to citizens receiving necessary information on availability or non-availability of scarce sources. The likelihood of citizens reconciling themselves to scarcity of resources and deprivation thereof will be higher when citizens have a say in how the finite sources are applied.

3.6.4 Converting opponents

Citizen participation may influence citizen behaviour positively and provide a technique whereby opponents may be co-opted into positively contributing to programmes, which traditionally may have been repleted with conflict.

3.6.5 Information dissemination

Community will readily acquire correct and reliable information on whatever the authorities intend doing with regard to service deliveries. This *per se* is essential for optimal goal achievement and relationship building.

3.6.6 Restraining the abuse of authority

Community participation is an effective watchdog over the activities of the government officials and ensures that there is no power abuse, nepotism and corruption practised within the institutions. It results in public managers and their juniors becoming more accountable and responsible for the decisions and actions they take. Rowland, (1987:133) argues that participation through political parties in government domain enhances accountability. This further enforces transparency within the institutions.

3.6.7 The inalienable right of citizens

While the above advantages may be challenged, the general perception is that community participation needs to be pursued and encouraged for its own sake, on the basis that it is the inalienable democratic right of all citizens of a country.

The main problem, which affects community participation, is "civic apathy". 'Apathy' is seen as indifference to or lack of interest in something. Craythorn

(1997:107) states that, " people cannot be coerced out of apathy by legislation: any country that legislated in this way would rightly be labelled as a minor and insignificant banana republic". "It may be that the root of the apathy problem is that, while the average citizen may identify strongly with his or her town, he or she does not identify with his or her town council, and that, in fact, while he or she may have some vague attachment to civic symbols such as the town or city hall, he or she does not care whether his or her town is run by local councillors and officials, or bureaucrats from Pretoria".

Craythorn (1997:108) further identifies the probable causes to civic apathy as:

- ✓ Lack of information and knowledge.
- ✓ Tendency to write municipal government systems into laws using language, which is not readily understood.
- ✓ Hiding the reality of a situation behind 'bureaucratic speak" by some municipal officials.
- ✓ Withholding of essential information by the councillors.
- ✓ Lack of media publicity on activities by municipal government.

The advantages of effective community participation are clear and every municipality should create the necessary structures to secure that the community can participate in municipal activities.

3.7 MUNICIPAL STRUCTURES THAT ENABLE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Municipal structures, which are organised in the form of committees, are established under the Municipal Structures Act, (Act No.117 of 2000). The significant role played by the various committees, both as a link between the town council authorities and the communities at large, as well as being platforms through which community grievances could be aired, cannot be underestimated.

These committees also serve as mechanisms through which community participation can be achieved.

The phenomenon of citizen participation in public affairs of democratic governments is a well-established global concept. A study of the relevant literature leaves no doubt that 'interest' and 'pressure' groups provide useful mechanisms through which inhabitants of cities and towns may interact with their municipal authorities. One of the most obvious and probably the most decisive reason for the establishment of these groups is the fact that, collectively, a group of people is in a more favourable position to negotiate successfully with a municipal government than individuals are on their own (Bekker, 1996:29).

The ideology of community structures came about through the activities of the civics. Civic organisations were formed in the aftermath of the 1976 township rebellion. They vehemently resisted and campaigned against the imposition of non-legitimate municipal government structures. They provided a mouthpiece for the disenfranchised to voice their opinions on matters affecting them and, as such, were perceived and treated by several communities as alternative municipal government structures. A typical example of an active community structure was Wattville Concerned Residents Committee (WCRC), the Civic which successfully represented the residents of Wattville and Tamboville in Benoni in the 1980s in the fight for land and housing, Ahmed Vanda and Leila Mckenna (In Fitzgerald, 1997 : 581 –582).

The Town Council of Maluti-A-Phofung has the following committees established which allow for participation by the community:

3.7.1 Portfolio committees

These are the most common committees and usually have the same names as the different departments in council, for example, Housing Committee, Health Committee, Finance Committee. What is interesting in connection with the Portfolio Committees is that they are chaired by experts in a particular field or department and this expedites the decision-making process. Portfolio Committees are governed by section 80 of the Municipal Structures Act of 2000 and are usually permanent committees that specialise in one area of work and are sometimes given a right to make decisions over small issues. They also advise executive committees on policy matters.

3.7.2 Geographical based committees

These Committees are set up to deal with issues in a specific area. Examples are the following:

3.7.3 Issue related committees

These committees are governed by section 79 of the Municipal Act, Act 2000 and are usually temporary. They do not have decision-making powers and are usually set up to deal with a specific issue in a way that involves people from different committees. This helps to stop problems from being treated in isolation. Both outside experts as well as councillors can be included on section 79 committees. After completion of their task section 79 committees are disbanded.

3.7.4 Ward committees

They are set up in municipalities where the ward committee model is used. This is the case with Maluti-A-Phofung Town Council. Ward Committees are elected by the communities they serve and have no formal power, but can advise the Ward Councillor, or make submissions to the council regarding developmental issues. The main purpose of ward committees are:

- To get better participation from the community to inform council decisions.
- Make sure that there is more effective communication between the council and community.
- Assist the ward councillor with consultation and report-backs to the community.

Gildenhuys (1997:69) prefers to use ward forums instead of ward committees. He states that there is a need for constant interaction between councillors and the people in a real democracy. For this purpose a system of ward forums is imperative. These ward forums should consist of representatives of organised groups, such as ratepayers' associations, political parties, sports clubs, cultural organisations and other similar civic organisations. The condition should be that they must be resident in the relevant ward and represent the people of the ward.

Ward 28 has such a structure called ERO – Elite Residents Organisation. The committee was formed by the residents with a view to address the problems relating to service delivery by Maluti-A-Phofung Council and to further develop the ward. The organisation plays a dual role, namely, interest group and a pressure group. Though the pressure groups and interest groups are sometimes regarded as synonymous, a pressure group is seen as any organisation that endeavours to influence the policies of the government without accepting the responsibility for public office. They pressurise and sometimes use hostile activities to attain their goals. On the other hand, an interest group is seen as “ a

shared-attitude group that makes certain claims upon other groups in society “. Depending on the type of activity performed, an interest group may easily turn into a pressure group. But, the main aim of both the interest and pressure groups is to influence the government policies through negotiation or other means, such as organised community resistance (Bekker, 1996:30).

3.8 CONCLUSION

Municipal Structures and recognised community structures remain vital forums through which the concerns of the people can be channelled and debated. Well-established and recognised community structures serve as a deterrent to the abuse of power by the local government authorities in the long run. Community structures formed do not only fight for the concerns of the residents, but also act as powerful tools that expose corruptions by the municipal officials.

Municipal governments must play a developmental role in its communities. A developmental municipal government is a government that is committed to work with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve their lives. The target groups within the society are the previously disadvantaged or marginalised, or excluded, such as women, disabled people and very poor people. Municipal government also has a developmental role to play and should manage its administration and budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community and to promote the social and economic development of the community.

The empirical study regarding this study will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH AND FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The first part of this chapter deals with the study undertaken and further explains the reasons behind the methodology used and the way in which the study was conducted. It also covers areas such as the research design, the research methodology, the strengths and weaknesses of case studies, questionnaires, population sampling and data analysis.

The second part of this chapter concentrates on the empirical study, research and findings. These will be covered under biographical information of the respondents (Section A); political participation of the respondents (Section B); municipal councillors and participation (Section C); community structures and participation (Section D); attending of community meetings (Section E); and community development (Section F). Respondent percentages on data gathered will be given by means of tables. An interpretation of the results of the findings will also be given under each section. The chapter will end with a brief summary.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Higson (1995: 63) defines a research design as the planning of any scientific research from the first step to the last step. In this sense it is a programme to guide the researcher in collecting, analysing and interpreting observed facts. A research design helps the researcher to illustrate how data will be organised and presented. It also lists the instrument that will be used for gathering data.

Yin (1994: 19) sees a research design as an action plan from 'here' to 'there', where 'here' may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered, and 'there' as some set of conclusions about these questions. Between 'here' and 'there' may be found a number of major steps, including the collection and analysis of relevant data.

The type of study undertaken in this study is evaluation research. Evaluation research is defined as the systematic application of social research procedures in assessing the conceptualisation, design, implementation and utility of social intervention programmes (Rossi & Freedman, 1993: 5). This means that evaluation research is that field of social science, which utilises a whole range of social science methods in assessing or evaluating social intervention programmes. Evaluation research entails the use of science methods to measure the implementation and outcomes of programmes for decision-making purposes (Rutman, 1984: 10).

4.2.1 Case study as a methodological framework

This study is basically a case study on community participation by the residents of Ward 28 under the Maluti-A-Phofung Municipal Council in the Eastern Free State. Polit and Hungler (1991: 207) describe a case study as an in-depth investigation of an individual group, institution or other social units. It is also a thorough examination of an event based on information collected from a variety of sources. Case studies also provide a fruitful breeding ground for ideas and hypotheses and are very useful in providing a counter-instance of a universally accepted principle (Christensen, 1996: 51 – 52).

Polit and Hangler (1991: 207) state that a researcher conducting a case study attempts to analyse and understand the variables that are important to the history, development or care of the subject or the subject's problem. As it is

appropriate for an intensive analysis, the focus of a case study is typically on determining the dynamics of why the subject of the investigation thinks, behaves and develops in a particular manner, rather than what the status, thoughts and actions of the subjects are.

Case studies are useful since they provide ways of exploring phenomena that have not been rigorously researched and the information obtained can be extremely helpful in the production of hypotheses to be tested in subsequent research (Pilot *et al*, 1991: 208). Case studies, however, have their own advantages and disadvantages, which should be highlighted.

4.2.2 Advantages and disadvantages of case studies

According to Cooper (1998: 133), one of the advantages of case studies is the thoroughness that is possible when a limited number of institutions or groups are investigated. Case studies place more emphasis on a full environmental analysis of fewer events or conditions and their interrelations. They also provide the researcher with the opportunity to be familiar with the subject under investigation, feelings, action (both past and present), intentions and environment.

Pilot *et al* (1991: 210) argue that the biggest disadvantage of a case study is that of data collected through observational techniques by the researcher who is the sole observer. This might lead to subjective conclusions. Another weakness is that the cause of any specific event cannot be identified with any degree of certainty. As long as these are present, there shall be no assurance that the organisation chosen for study is fully and equally representative of other organisations (Royse, 1991: 34).

4.3 UTILISATION OF QUESTIONNAIRES

A questionnaire is one of the most reliable tools used to collect data. Questionnaires rely on written information supplied directly by the participants in response to questions asked by the researcher and therefore the information it contains can be classified as facts or opinions. Questionnaires that are administered face to face with the respondents can be valuable for a social researcher. This is because in the case where the respondent seeks clarity, the researcher is there for immediate assistance (Denscombe, 1998: 88).

According to Cooper and Schindler (1998: 44), a well-designed questionnaire boasts the reliability and validity of the data to acceptable levels of tolerance. The most significant aspect of this type of data collection is that the questionnaire is the only means of communication between the respondent and the researcher.

4.3.1 Types of questionnaires

Questionnaires come in the form of (i) open-ended questionnaires and (ii) close-ended questionnaires.

(i) Open-ended questionnaires

This study has employed an open-ended type of questionnaire. Open-ended questionnaires leave the respondent to decide the wording of the answer, the length of the answer and the kind of matters to be raised in the answer. The questions may tend to be short while the answers may be long. They are not restrictive in nature. The advantage of this type of questionnaire is that the information gathered by way of responses is more likely to reflect the full richness and complexity of views held by the respondents. They allow the respondents to express themselves more freely in their own words. However, its

main disadvantage is that it is time consuming on part of the researcher in terms of analysis and the respondents in terms of responding to the questions asked (Denscombe, 1998: 101).

(ii) Close-ended questionnaires

Unlike the open-ended questionnaires, close-ended questionnaire structures the answers by allowing only answers which fit into categories that have been established in advance by the researcher and this type of questionnaire has also been used in this study. The researcher in this case instructs the respondents by selecting from a range of two or more options supplied on the questionnaire. The advantage of this type of questionnaire is that it provides the researcher with the information that is of uniform length and in a form that lends itself widely to being quantified and compared. In other words, it provides pre-coded data that can easily be analysed. However, its main disadvantage is that it is restrictive in nature on part of the respondent since the respondent can only choose from the options provided by the researcher (Denscombe, 1998: 101).

4.3.2 Questionnaire as a research tool

As the secondary data collection instrument employed in this study, questionnaires were distributed to a selected number of residents of Ward 28 in the Maluti-A-Phofung Municipal Town Council. According to Denscombe (1998: 95) there is no rule about the number of questions that can be included in the questionnaire itself. This will depend on various factors like the topic under investigation, the complexities of the questionnaire itself, the nature of the targeted respondents and the time it takes to complete the questionnaire.

4.3.3 The advantages and disadvantages of a questionnaires

Chardwick *et al* (1984: 137) regard the following as advantages of questionnaires:

- The respondent may consult others, review records, think about a question before completing it if necessary.
- A questionnaire is very economical since it yields the maximum number of facts or bits of data.
- Ease of processing: the questionnaires should be carefully structured and preceded and very little use is made of open-ended questions.

However, the following disadvantages are also identified by Chadwick *et al* (1984: 138):

- Questionnaires must be as brief as possible otherwise the response rate may be very low or none at all.
- Questions with negative attitudes can be very detrimental to the entire process, that is, questions that are too personal on part of the respondent and too destructive on the part of the organisation or department should be avoided at all costs.

4.3.4 Questionnaire construction

Cooper and Schnidler (1998: 44) argue that a well-designed questionnaire ensures both the reliability and validity of the data. In this study great care was taken when the questionnaire was constructed since the measuring instrument has a greate influence on the reliability of the collected data. Bless and Higson

(1995: 166 – 167) advance the following guidelines that need to be followed when constructing questionnaires:

- Taking into account the interests, needs and problems of the respondents.
- Giving attention to the wording of the questions.
- Giving short and simple questions.
- Avoiding ambiguous questions. This implies that words which are too general or too vague are discouraged as this can lead to different interpretations.
- Avoiding leading questions. This refers to questions that favour one type of an answer over the others.
- Questions should be clear and understandable. This means the use of complex language should be avoided, but rather, questions should be adapted to the educational level of the participants.

4.3.5 Developing the questionnaire items

The questionnaire was designed based on the objective of the study and literature review. The main purpose of the questionnaire was to gather information on community participation and the developmental needs of the residents of Ward 28.

The questionnaire was divided into the following sections:

- Section A: Questions 1 – 5
- Section B: Questions 1 - 3
- Section C: Questions 1 – 5
- Section D: Questions 1 – 4
- Section E: Questions 1 - 4
- Section F: Questions 1 – 6

Section A (Biographical information): This section basically dealt with the profile of the respondents with regard to sex, age, term of stay, employment and education level. **Section B** (Political participation): This section measured the political interests of the residents in the ward and the importance of taking part in politics. **Section C** (Municipal Councillors and participation): This section measured the interaction between the residents and municipal councillors. It further established the expected relationship that needs to exist between the councillors and the community. **Section D** (Community structures and participation): The purpose of this section was to find out whether residents are aware of ward committees in their area. **Section E** (Community participation through ward committees): The purpose of this section was to find out whether residents do attend the meetings, how they preferred meetings to be called and time frames for the meetings. **Section F** (Community development): This section measured the opportunities available and/or created by the municipality to encourage development and whether residents are optimistic about development in their area.

4.3.6 Pre-testing the questionnaire

The questionnaire was distributed to a number of colleagues at the work place. The intention was to ensure that the questionnaire was clearly understood and did not contain any form of ambiguity. The pre-test results and comments were taken into account when the final questionnaire was drawn up, which was then distributed to the residents. The residents were requested to complete the questionnaires.

4.3.7 Population and sampling

A population may be defined as the total collection of individuals who are potentially available for observation and who have attribute(s) in common to

which our research hypothesis refers. Usually it is not practically feasible, if not entirely impossible, to get hold of all the members of a particular population and to have them participate in a particular study. Consequently, the behavioural or social scientist has to rely on a sample from the population. The sample is then a relatively small subgroup of cases from the population (Huysamen, 1990: 02).

According to Denscombe (1998: 11) researchers cannot collect data from everyone who is in the category of being researched. As a result, reliance is on getting the evidence from a portion of the whole in the expectation and hope that what is found in that portion applies equally to the rest of the population. This means the sample is selected from the population.

In this study, the population was identified as the residents of Ward 28 in the Maluti-A-Phofung Municipal Council. In selecting samples, great care should be exercised as the researcher hopes to gain access to a segment of the population that is representative of or looks like the entire population (Brynard *et al*, 1997: 47).

4.3.8 Data analysis

Since this research is evaluative in nature, a qualitative data analysis technique was employed for the analysis of the results.. According to Denscombe (1998: 207) qualitative data are concerned with meanings, patterns of behaviour and the way people understand things. It is the kind of analysis where the researcher is concerned with the assessment or evaluation of the subject under investigation. The main advantage of this kind of data analysis is that it allows for the possibility that different researchers might reach different conclusions despite using broadly the same methods. It is able to deal with the intricacies of a situation and do justice to the subtleties of social life.

4.4 EMPIRICAL STUDY FINDINGS: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION – MALUTI A-PHOFUNG

The study was undertaken by following approved scientific measures and guidelines. In order to obtain the required information, a well-designed and tested questionnaire was, as mentioned, used to gather the information (see the attached Annexure A).

4.4.1 Biographical information of the respondents

Section A of the questionnaire concentrated on the biographical information of the respondents in order to determine the biographical profile of the people living in the ward and who took part in the study.

Table 4.1: Gender of the respondents

1. Gender of respondents

Male	62%
Female	38%

2. Age of respondents

17 to 24years	0%
25 to 34 years	0%
35 to 44 years	54%
45 to 49 years	36%
50 to 59 years	8%
Over 60 years	2%

3. Length of stay in the ward

Under 5 years	12%
6 – 10 years	32%
11 – 15 years	54%
16 – 20 years	1%
Over 20 years	1%

Interpretation of biographical information

The statistics indicate that 62% of the respondents who took part in the study were males and 38% were females. This is not an unusual phenomenon because males normally act as spokespersons for a household.

Interestingly enough, the inhabitants of this area are middle-aged people whose ages range primarily between 35 and 49 (80%). Although not scientifically tested, this may be an indication that people in this age group are not as committed to political activities as expected.

Eighty-six per cent of the respondents indicated that they had been living in the area for 6 and 15 years. The inhabitants of the area should thus be well acquainted with the ward system and activities of the municipality.

4.4.2 Political participation and Ward 28

It is important for the municipality to know the level of political participation of the area, because municipal affairs are conducted in a political environment.

Table 4.2: Political participation

1. How important is voting to you?

Very important	60%
Important	20%
Uncertain	12%
Unimportant	0%
Totally unimportant	8%

2. How important is it for you to belong to a political party?

Very important	57%
Important	15%
Uncertain	12%
Unimportant	8%
Totally unimportant	8%

3. How important is it for you to participate in political activities?

Very important	38%
Important	40%
Uncertain	6%
Unimportant	12%
Totally unimportant	4%

Interpretation of political participation

Voting was regarded as important by 80% of the respondents (very important = 60% + important = 20%), while 12% of the respondents were uncertain and only 10% viewed voting as unimportant. The assumption would be that the people of this area are eager to vote for leaders whom they trust would bring about changes in their social lives. It is also an indication that the people are or want to be politically active.

The majority of the respondents (72%) found it important to belong to a political party, 12% were still uncertain and 16% regarded belonging to a political party as unimportant.

This figure correlates with the previous question, namely the importance of voting to the people. There is undoubtedly an urge for the people to be politically active in the area. The above statistics give the municipality the assurance that politics is important to the people living in the ward and that political activities should be managed in an effective way.

4.4.3 Municipal councillors and participation

It is important for a municipality to understand the role that its councillors play in creating a better political dispensation in a specific area. Councillors form an important link between the community and the municipality and they form the communication channel to secure development. The municipality should therefore know what the people think of councillors' activities.

Table 4.3: Municipal councillors and participation

1. I know how municipal councillors operate

Totally agree	16%
Agree	28%
Uncertain	26%
Disagree	16%
Totally disagree	7%

2. The municipal councillors are concerned over me

Totally agree	4%
Agree	18%
Uncertain	22%
Disagree	26%
Totally disagree	22%

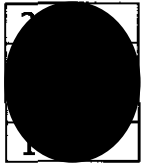
3. Municipal councillors offer me the best treatment on services

Totally agree	4%
Agree	16%
Uncertain	22%
Disagree	32%
Totally disagree	36%

4. I know my councillor

Totally agree	40%
Agree	36%
Uncertain	16%
Disagree	2%
Totally disagree	6%

The community:



- Is not consulted by the councillor about problems
- Is sometimes consulted by the councillor about problems
- Is regularly consulted by the councillor about problems
- Is always consulted by the councillor about problems

Interpretation of councillors' participation

There are reasons of concern regarding this activity. Statistics indicate that the role that municipal councillors play is not up to standard.

Only 44% (16% + 28%) of the respondents revealed that they knew how municipal councillors operate, while 26% were uncertain and 30% (16% + 14%) did not know how councillors work. This should be a great concern to the municipality of the Maluti-A-Phofung council because a figure of 56% to the negative is unacceptable. This means that more than half of the inhabitants do not know how the councillor system operates.

Another area of concern is the fact that only 30% of the people believed municipal councillors to be concerned about them, while 48% believed councillors did not care about their concerns. Worse still, 22% were uncertain about municipal councillors' concern over them. The question is whether the councillors are doing enough to engage the people in developmental activities?

While inquiring about services, 20% of the respondents believed that councillors offered them the best treatment available. A total of 58% were of the opinion that councillors did not offer the best treatment to the community.

It is encouraging that at least 76% of the people could tell who their councillor was. But in the same breath, 58% of the people felt they were not consulted by the councillor about their problems.

According to these statistics it would seem that there certainly is scope for improvement as far as the relation between the councillors and the community is concerned. It may even be stated that the activities of councillors in Ward 28 can be singled out as a problem that needs urgent attention.

4.4.4 Community structures and participation

It is important for a municipality to know whether its community structures are in place and whether they function efficiently.

Table 4.4: Community structures and participation

1. Are you aware of the ward committee in your area?

Yes	82%
No	18%

2. If yes, how did you know about it?

Through my councillor	40%
Through the radio	0%
Through a news paper	0%
Through people talking	60%

3. Do you understand the ward committee system?

Yes	46%
No	54%

4. Do you trust that ward committees could help people?

Yes	32%
To some extent	24%
Not at all	20%

Interpretation of the effectiveness of community structures

It is noteworthy to state that 82% of the respondents were aware of the existence of ward committees in their area, but, surprisingly enough, 60% of this population came to know about ward committees through people talking. Only 40% got it from the mouth of the councillor. Fifty-four per cent of the residents, as opposed to 46%, indicated a lack understanding of the ward committee system, and therefore could hardly trust that ward committees could assist people. This is a clear confirmation of the hypothesis advanced in this study with regard to the reasons for the community not utilising the ward committee system to make their needs known to the municipality. According to the responses members of the community do not understand the ward system and would, therefore, not be aware of the advantages entailed.

4.4.5 Attending the meetings

It is important for a municipality that members of its community attend meetings. Successful development and the attendance of meetings go hand in hand.

Table 4.5: Attendance of meetings

1. Do you attend meetings called by your ward councillor?

Always	26%
Sometimes	66%
Not at all	8%

2. Do you attend meetings called by ward committee member?

Always	26%
Sometimes	62%
Not at all	12%

3. Best method preferred for calling of meetings

Through radio	12%
Through notices	84%
Through adverts in local newspaper	4%

4. Convenient times for the meetings

Weekdays (from 17hrs)	38%
Saturdays (from 09hrs)	10%
Saturdays (from 15hrs)	0%
Sundays (from 09hrs)	38%
Sundays (from 15hrs)	14%

Interpretation of the attendance of meetings

Statistics obtained from the research revealed that residents neither regularly attended meetings called by the ward councillor, nor meetings convened by their ward committee member. Sixty-six per cent of the population indicated that they attended meetings when it suited them. One of the objectives of the study was to establish why people do not attend meetings.

The following reasons have been confirmed by the research through the replies supplied by the respondents:

- ❖ Short notices for the holding of meetings.
- ❖ Meetings not well marketed by the convenors.
- ❖ Promises that are never fulfilled.
- ❖ Significance of particular meetings not mentioned (for example, the Agenda).

- ❖ Lastly, other commitments (for example, church activities that clash with the meeting times).

Most people (84%) indicated their preference for notices as being the best method of informing them about meetings and they prefer meetings to be held from 17H00 on weekdays and/or Sunday mornings at 9H00.

4.4.6 Community development

Wards must play an important role in the development of communities and information in this regard is useful to a municipality.

Table 4.6: Community development

1. Does the municipality create opportunities for participation through its structures?

Yes	26%
No	52%
Don't know	22%

2. Does the municipality listen to my voice?

Yes	18%
No	50%
Don't know	32%

3. Do you believe ward committees are necessary for development?

Yes	86%
No	8%
Don't know	6%

4. Do you believe commitment may lead to ward development?

Fully agree	90%
Partially agree	5%
Do not agree	-
Don't know	-

The study shows that only 26 % of the respondents appeared to believe that the municipality would create opportunities for them to participate in developmental activities. As many as 52% of them believed that the municipality created no opportunity for them, while 22% responded by indicating that they did not know. According to the results 50% of the respondents believed their voices fell on deaf ears, while 32% indicated that they did not know.

Once again, the hypothesis that the Maluti-A-Phofung community does not understand the ward system and its advantages has been positively tested since no opportunities exist for the people to participate. It stands to reason that this state of affairs would hamper their participation and this can be regarded as a problem that needs to be addressed.

However, a more positive aspect is that 86% of the population believed that ward committees were necessary for development and an overwhelming 90%

were of the opinion that commitment of the people may increase the quality and quantity of development within the ward.

The statistics, as recorded in this chapter, will further be analysed in the next chapter and specific recommendation will be made to address problem areas.

4.5 SUMMARY

In the chapter an overview of the research methodology employed in the study was presented. Methodology can be described as the collection and analysis of data, for example, the case study. A questionnaire was used as the main tool for the collection of data. Advantages and disadvantages of the questionnaire were given. A discussion of evaluation research as the type of study under investigation, was also discussed. In short, evaluative research is that field of social science which entails the use of scientific methods to measure the implementation and outcomes of programmes for decision-making purposes.

The chapter concluded with the results obtained from the data that were collected during the research, as indicated in the form of tables presenting the response-related percentages with regard to the different aspects. From the tabled data certain findings could be derived and related implications could also be formulated. The results of the empirical study will be discussed in the next chapter and recommendations will be made.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter a discussion of the findings of the empirical study will be presented. The general implications of the study research will receive attention. The chapter will be concluded by formulating the outcomes of the study and the recommendations on the aspects that should receive attention, based on the findings of the study in order to address the problems relating to community participation by the residents of Ward 28 in the Maluti-A-Phofung Town Council.

5.2 GENERAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The background to the study and the statement of the problem were introduced in chapter one. Chapter one also outlined, *inter alia*, the objectives of the study, which played a critical role in this study, as they were the guiding principles for the planning of the study. Furthermore, the significance of the study, methods of investigation, the statement of hypothesis and organisation of the study were introduced in chapter one.

Chapter two dealt with development and community participation on municipal level. Local government constitutes that part of the public sector that is closest to the inhabitants and is therefore indispensable in its role of promoting their general welfare through, *inter alia*, undertaking various development initiatives. Furthermore, legislation imposes upon local authorities the obligation to promote the social and economic development of local communities and to participate in implementing national and provincial development programmes. The efficiency

and effectiveness with which local government fulfils its developmental role will largely depend on the ability of local authorities to manage development projects (Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000).

Characteristics of a developmental local government were discussed in depth as these are contained in the White Paper on Local Government, March 1998. This White Paper serves as a guiding document for the creation and the existence of municipalities as governments closest to the people in South Africa.

Development at municipal level cannot be regarded as complete without the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), which is a document, enshrined in the Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000. The necessity for all municipalities in South Africa to have IDPs in place were extensively discussed with reference to the applicable legislation which makes provision for community participation.

The chapter was concluded with a brief description on Non Governmental Organisations and sustainable development. The significance of these organisations worldwide on sustainable developments cannot be overemphasised.

Chapter three dealt with community participation as a phenomenon. A brief introduction of Ward 28 in Maluti-A-Phofung was given. In order to realise the implications of community participation as a phenomenon and to understand the term 'community participation' more clearly, a literature study was undertaken which specifically dealt with the definition of the term 'community participation' and the rationale for community participation.

In chapter three the conceptual framework for community participation was discussed. The main reason was to explore the processes that lead to a successful, real and active participation by the people in any developmental

project destined to uplift the social status of the community. Much emphasis was placed on macro-environmental issues that lead to the empowerment of the individuals, real participation and social changes as outcomes.

The Local Government Municipal Structures Act, Act 117 of 2000 was referred to in depth since this Act encourages community participation through various established committees that serve as platforms for deliberations. The paramount idea was to put into perspective the advantages that can be derived from community participation at local level.

The research design as well as the methodology was presented in chapter four. The rationale behind the methodology employed, the advantages and the disadvantages of case studies, the questionnaire as a research tool, population sampling and data analysis were explained in the same chapter. This followed the pattern of the objectives as outlined in chapter one. The research design can be summed up as an action plan for getting from one phase to another while methodology can be described as methods of collection and analysis of data, for example, the case study. An explanation of this type of study as an evaluation study entailing the use of explanation of scientific methods to measure the implementation and outcomes of programmes for decision-making purposes was also presented.

The empirical research part of chapter four dealt with the presentation of data in the form of tables as percentages accompanied by the interpretations of the implications at the end of each section. The interpretations revealed the lack of an effective and functional relationship between the authorities and the community. The ignorance of the community about the ward system and its advantages could be detected and it was possible to determine that this state of affairs mainly resulted from insufficient communication between the councillors and the community, especially on the part of the councillors who need to supply

the community with adequate information. This is a confirmation of the hypothesis as advanced in chapter one.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion will show whether the purpose of the study has been met. It will show whether the study succeeded to achieve what it initially purported to gain. This will be done through the evaluation of the objectives of the study as stipulated in chapter one.

The first objective, "To determine what the phenomenon participation and development means" was extensively exhausted in chapter three. This objective was realised through the presentation by means of literature study that covered topics such as the definitions of the terminology; rationale for participation; conceptual framework for community participation; and advantages of community participation.

Chapter two dealt with development and community participation on municipality level. It is crucial to know whether Maluti-A-Phofung Municipality can be regarded as a developmental municipality that allows community participation in its affairs. The need for the existence and the objectives of the municipalities were briefly discussed. Characteristics of developmental municipal government and core values for development were discussed in depth. The chapter was concluded with a discussion on the necessity for municipalities to have an Integrated Development Programme (IDP) plan in place. This document is very important and all municipalities in South Africa are bound by legislation to have it in place (Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000).

In chapter four certain conclusions could be made in connection with objective two of the study, namely to determine the reasons why members of the

community do not utilise the ward committee system to make their needs known to the municipality. Apparently, not enough was done by the authorities to sell the idea of a ward system to the communities, thereby emphasising the advantages to be derived.

The hypothesis of this mini-dissertation was stated as follows: "The community of Maluti-A-Phofung does not understand the ward system in Ward 28 and is not aware of the advantages that the utilisation of the ward system holds for them to make municipal development needs known to the municipality."

This hypothesis was tested in depth in the empirical study and was addressed in chapter 4. The results of the study emphasised that the hypothesis was true and that the community indeed does not understand the ward system and the advantages of the system. Certain recommendations could therefore be made to address the problem.

It can further be concluded that the empirical investigation in chapter 4 determined the reasons for the people not to attend public meetings (objective three of the study). The residents themselves supplied these reasons during research study investigation.

It can be stated that development of any community is tantamount to active participation of the people. Satisfaction of community needs can hardly be accomplished at a satisfactory or tolerable level without the active involvement of the people in decision making at all levels. Planning decisions are often of a nature that affects the lives and well-being of the people – individually and collectively. Lisk (1986: 19) argues that popular participation must be identified as a major feature of the basic needs approach to development.

Participation and capacity building of the communities remain salient ingredients for the creation of a development- orientated society. People are capable of

leading their own change processes. They can be the real actors and not merely the subjects of change. Methods to improve community participation (objective four of the study) will receive attention under the recommendations of the study that follow below.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Firstly, the ward system is the local government constitutional creation and as such its successful implementation remains the prerogative of the local authorities and ward councillors. The research study has revealed that most people are ignorant about the existing ward committees and how they operate. It is obvious that people will not trust that ward committees could be helpful because they lack the necessary information on which to build such trust. It is thus recommended that the local authorities in collaboration with the ward councillors should use every available means and/or resources to market the ward system to the people. They should further emphasise the advantages that are entailed in the ward system.

Suggestions for marketing a ward system and alerting the residents' awareness to the significant role it can play with regard to their own quality of life, could include the following:

- ❖ The utilisation of the local radio station (Qwaqwa Radio) to broadcast activities taking place in the area.
- ❖ Introducing a Newsletter (weekly or monthly) from the municipal council's information desk that explains the municipal council's intentions, its operations and projects that are or will be taking place in the future.
- ❖ Establishing ward councillor's call centre where residents may gain access to information about the activities in the ward.

- ❖ Attending of workshops and seminars by the ward councillor and ward committee members. People attending these workshops must ensure that knowledge gained is relayed to the people at grassroots level.
- ❖ Having youth camps and training youth to become councillor's foot soldiers. The youth will assist with the distribution of notices and other information to the people. Young people, as future leaders, are an essential component of the society and must never be left out when it comes to development.
- ❖ Organising social events that bring people together (e.g.soccer matches, fun runs, music competitions, to mention a few). These events must be accompanied by incentives, such as, awarding trophies and price money to the winners.
- ❖ Evaluating the performance of the ward councillor and ward committee members on a quarterly base. Ward committees are constituted according to the applicable legislation but ward committee members are not remunerated. It is recommended that some incentives be provided for the ward committee members for work done. This will motivate them to perform optimally. This will further ensure that community meetings are regularly held as mandated by the municipal council and residents are informed about the developments.
- The marketing of these activities will require funding. It is thus highly recommended that the Maluti-A-Phofung Municipal Council set aside funds that will be used for marketing purposes from its annual budget.

Secondly, the communication and relationships between the councillors and the community need to receive attention. Workshops and seminars are vital for this purpose. A close working relationship between the councillors and the people will teach people about the operations of the councillors, show that councillors are concerned about their welfare and that people are consulted regularly on issues that affect them. This will further address some communication discrepancies, for example, people coming to know about community structures

from other people talking and not directly from the responsible authorities. This might lead to spreading of wrong information about certain community matters.

Thirdly, councillors and ward committee members should schedule meeting programmes. The research study shows that most people prefer meetings to be convened through notices to be delivered door to door. Though this method could prove to be costly as it will need people to be hired to deliver notices, it is recommended that these notices can be left in bulk at places or centres of interest for distribution, for example, shops where most people buy, taverns where most people come to drink, and any other places of attraction to people.

Fourthly, times for calling of meetings have a profound effect on the subsequent attendance by the community. To most people time is money and attending meetings that are characterised by empty promises is frustrating. It is recommended that public meetings be held either on Sundays at 09:00 or weekdays from 17:00 as shown by the research study. Convenors of the meetings must come to these meetings fully prepared and meeting times should be strictly observed. People must gain from attending such meetings. This will serve as motivation for them to attend subsequent meetings to be called.

Lastly, the Maluti–A-Phofung Council must not lose sight of the fact that residents in this ward are eager for development and given the right opportunity, would show much commitment. Residents must be engaged in all developmental activities to the benefit of Maluti-A-Phofung Council and Ward 28 at large.

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ANNEXURE A

QUESTIONNAIRE: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

Researcher : A. T Leboea (M.A. in Public Management
& Governance Na KGG/Potchefstroom University

NAME:**QUESTIONNAIRE NO :**.....

The questionnaire must be completed by the breadwinner.

SECTION A : BIOGRAPHICAL

Indicate your choice.
Mark with an **X** in the appropriate box.

The respondent is a

Male
Female

(i) What is your age?

17 to 24 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
25 to 34 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
35 to 44 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
45 to 49 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
50 to 59 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over 60 years	<input type="checkbox"/>

(ii) For how long have you lived in this Ward?

Under 5 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approximately 6-10 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approximately 11-15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approximately 16-20 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over 20 years	<input type="checkbox"/>

(ii) Are you employed?

Yes	
No	

If yes, please name your profession/type of work

.....
.....

(iii) What is your level of education?

Primary School Level	
Secondary School Level	
Tertiary School Level	
Other	

SECTION B : POLITICAL FREEDOM

Mark your choice with an **X** inside the box where your views are best represented

- 5 = very important
4 = important
3 = uncertain
2 = unimportant
1 = very unimportant

1 How important is voting to you?

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

2. How important is it for you to belong to a political party?

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

3. How important is it to you to participate in political activities?

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

4. Do you have any comments about your political freedom?

.....
.....
.....

Use an **X** to indicate where you think your views are best represented.

- 5 = totally agree
- 4 = agree
- 3 = uncertain
- 2 = disagree
- 1 = totally disagree

I am satisfied with the way municipal councillors operate

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

The municipal councillors are concerned about me and my area

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

Municipal councillors offer me best treatment when I enquire about some services

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

I know my councillor

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

I am satisfied about decisions taken regarding development in my area

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

I know what municipal elections are about

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

SECTION: C: COMMUNITY STRUCTURES.

Indicate your choice by inserting an **X** in the appropriate box

1. Are you aware of the ward committee in your area?

Yes	
No	

2. If yes, how did you come to know about it?

Through my councillor	
Through radio	
Through news paper	
Through people talking	

3. Do you understand the ward committee system?

Yes	
No	

4. Do you trust Ward Committees could assist people?

Yes	
To some extent	
Not at all	

SECTION D: PARTICIPATION

1. Do you attend community meetings called by the Ward Councillor?

Always	
Sometimes	
Not at all	

2. Do you attend community meetings called by your Ward Committee Member?

Always	
Sometimes	
Not at all	

3. I do not attend meetings because :

I do not get invitations	
I do not know about scheduled meetings	
I have other commitments to attend to	
I get bored because of promises	

4. The best method I prefer for calling of meetings is :

Through radio	
Through notices (to be delivered door to door)	
Through Advertisement in local newspaper	

5. I regard convenient times for the meetings as :

Week days (after working hours from 17 hrs)	
Saturdays (morning sessions from 09h00)	
Saturdays (afternoon sessions from 15hrs)	
Sundays (morning session from 9hrs)	
Sundays (afternoon session from 15hrs)	

SECTION E: GENERAL

1. My municipality creates opportunities for me to participate in developmental activities through its structures

Yes	
No	
Don't know	

2. The municipality listens to my voice

Yes	
No	
Don't know	

3. I have free access to municipal activities

Yes	
No	
Don't know	

4. Which is applicable to you?

The community

= is not consulted by the ward councillor about problems

= is sometimes consulted by the councillor about problems

= is regularly consulted by the councillor about problems

= is always consulted by the councillor about problems

5. Do you believe ward committees are necessary?

Yes	
No	
Don't know	

If your answer is no, what do you suggest?

.....

.....
.....
.....

6. Commitment of residents may lead to ward development. Do you agree?

Fully agree	
Partially agree	
Do not agree at all	
Do not know	

7. Lastly, do you have any suggestion on how to improve your area?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you very much for your valuable time sacrificed to participate in this questionnaire.