

**A COMMUNICATION PERSPECTIVE OF HOW LOCAL
GOVERNMENT IS EQUIPPED TO INTERACT WITH ITS
PUBLIC:
A STUDY OF THE ULUNDI MUNICIPALITY**

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**A Communication Perspective of how Local Government is
Equipped to Interact with its Public:
A Study of the Ulundi Municipality**

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ETHICAL STATEMENT BY RESEARCHER

I, Nobuhle Elizabeth Ndaba, hereby declare that the work that I present in this thesis is based on my own research, and that I have not submitted this thesis to any other institution of higher education to obtain an academic qualification.

Nobuhle Elizabeth Ndaba

Date

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ABSTRACT

A Communication Perspective of how Local Government is Equipped to Interact with its Public: A Study of the Ulundi Municipality

By Nobuhle Elizabeth Ndaba

This study investigates the effectiveness of communication strategies used by local government with the hope of improving service delivery. Municipalities around the country have been continuously facing challenges with regard to service delivery. According to the Centre for Policy Studies (2010) protests are common in municipalities across South Africa. For example in 2010, the Minister of Local Government announced that 38 municipalities were under investigation for fraud and corruption.

The 2011 local government elections were marked by service delivery protests which turned violent and led to the destruction of property. According to Department of Provincial and Local Government (2009), angry residents blocked roads and began burning tyres and throwing stones against the lack of services in their communities. This led to clashes with the police. Dissatisfaction with service delivery is the primary cause of civil unrest. Nepotism in conjunction with bribery and corruption are key reasons for the presence of unqualified staff at most public and social service departments.

This research provides a comprehensive study of how local government operates in rural areas of South Africa. This study also exposes profound observations about current service delivery initiatives by local municipalities. Further, the study demonstrates how challenges faced by local municipalities through poor, ineffective communication techniques caused it to fail to meet its intended purpose. The findings identified the need to enhance public participation and effective communication in local government.

WRITING CONVENTIONS

The following conventions are used in this study:

- The abbreviated Harvard style of referencing in this study, for example Hindi et al. (2004:13), meaning Hindi, Miller & Catt 2004 page 13.
- Illustrative tables and figures are all given as Figures 1-17 and Tables 1-3 in their chronological sequence of appearance.
- Relevant materials relating to investigate a communication perspective local government to interact with publics are used. Website addresses are included in the dissertation, both for verification and for acknowledgement of the source information. An example of a typical website is: <http://www.adac.co.za/articles/councillor-handbook/>
- The World Wide Web (www) is transient and ever changing, therefore one should expect that websites from which information is gathered will be offline or may alter the contents of the website over a period of time.
- In instances where the electronic document has been downloaded from a website, the author is mentioned, followed by the year as in Szabo (2010).
- This thesis adopts the American English writing style.

ACRONYMS

AIDA:	Attention Interest Desire Action
ANC:	African National Congress
BBC:	British Broadcasting Corporation
CDE:	Centre for Development Enterprise
CNN:	Cable News Network
CPS:	Centre for Policy Studies
DNPFPF:	Draft National Policy Framework for Public Participation
DPLG:	Department of Provincial and Local Government
GGLN:	Good Governance Learning Network
IDP:	Integrated Development Plan
KZN:	KwaZulu Natal
LED:	Local Economic Development
MDB:	Municipal Demarcation Board
MEC:	Member of Executive Council
NPA:	National Prosecuting Authority
SALGA:	South African Local Government Association
SAMDI:	South African Management Development Institute (presently known as PALAMA)
SMS:	Short Message Service
ULM:	Ulundi Local Municipality
ZDM:	Zululand District Municipality

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ORIENTATION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the entire study, and it introduces the concepts that will be discussed in the research. It also provides the outline of the importance of the study and research aims. Primary and secondary sources relevant to the research are discussed. Service delivery is an important part of local government. Communities in South Africa want services to operate smoothly and without disruption. This study is based on various forms of communication tools used primarily by local government in rural communities. Watson *et al.* (1999:60) state that local politicians use informal channels of communication to facilitate their everyday tasks. Good communication is needed to ensure good service delivery. According to Pretorius & Schurink (2007:23) local government should practice good communication in order to strengthen their ward committee structures. This practice will enhance local government's transparency, credibility and integrity. Community participation is therefore vital to establish a good functional communication strategy.

The South African Local Government Association (2006:12) points out that it has a direct connection to the people of the country. This provides the ideal opportunity to efficiently carry out many tasks dealing with service delivery and community development. It further emphasizes that locally elected councilors should have a better understanding of issues that affect their constituencies. Centre for Development Enterprise (2007:3) has indicated that frustrations over poor service delivery and the quality of governance in certain municipalities have fuelled a wave of dispute since 2004.

MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

According to the Centre for Policy Studies (2010:3), democracy in 1994 brought the necessary political transformation as well as the institutional reforms that were vital for dealing with the socio-economic and developmental challenges in South Africa. Ngubane (2005:28) mentions that there have been many research conducted in municipalities but none of these studies examines the process of communication especially in rural municipalities. Most of these research projects tend to focus on service delivery issues whilst the processes of communicating service delivery is omitted.

Khosa (2000:258) admits that local government is faced with a great task to improve the quantity and quality of basic services that delivered primarily to communities in South Africa. The above statement is supported by the project carried out by Russell & Bvuma (2001:241) stating that local government in South Africa has experienced many changes in order to meet the needs of democracy and the development of rural communities. These challenges include underdeveloped rural municipalities, fostering public participation governance at a local level and merging municipalities to facilitate sustainable development to improving service delivery. Ulundi Municipality has been chosen for this study since it is one of rural municipalities within KwaZulu Natal. The municipality is also consolidating its projects; it is still in the process of recovering from cash flow problems. Harmse *et al.* (2004:17) believe that these problems may result in high rate of poverty and unemployment, shortage of industries, insufficient infrastructure and lack of suitable farming land for agriculture. Ulundi Municipality is underdeveloped and therefore still has an opportunity for development.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

All spheres of local government should work together in mutual co-operation to reach all their members of the community. Service delivery operations are important to improve the lives of members that live in rural communities; however this does not occur as expected. The core question of the study is:

How can important messages from local government reach all its stakeholders effectively?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are:

- To assess the communicating strategies employed by local government.
- To evaluate whether community related information is easily accessible to different publics of the municipality.
- To determine how municipal activities are managed within local government.
- To evaluate the effectiveness local municipality councilors' methods of communication strategy when interacting with their constituents.
- To evaluate constituents' feedback with regards to local government's communication practices.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study was undertaken using qualitative as well as quantitative research techniques. The qualitative aspect of the research involved undertaking a comprehensive literature study on bureaucratic operations and communication techniques at local government level. The literature was measured against communication and social theories in order to design a conceptual model. The conceptual model was used to as a yardstick to measure the communication efforts by local government as well as customer satisfaction.

The quantitative aspect of this study involved the use of questionnaires to measure the effectiveness of communication strategies employed by the local municipalities from the community point of reference. Data was collected using random sampling. The population of this study includes households based within Ulundi Municipality. These sampling categories play a vital role in gathering data relating to the study area. Data was collected and analysed using the statistical software programme called MoonStats.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to ensure that a thorough study of the concept of communication strategies for local government is fully understood, the literature review for this study has been divided into the following key areas:

The main theme of this study relates to communication strategies for local government in rural communities.

- Chapter 2 deals with organizational communication
- Chapter 3 deals with the structure and state of local government in South Africa
- Chapter 4 deals with ethical issues in government
- Chapter 5 deals with service delivery issues

According to Creswell (2009) literature review is a critical, logical summary and combination of the current knowledge of a topic. Therefore it should compare and relate different theories and findings. It should not focus on summarising theories or incidents individually. However there must be a particular focus or theme to organize the review.

DEMARCATON & LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The access to research sites and availability of participants was not guaranteed as a result this created difficulties and caused challenges to conduct field work. The findings of the study is only restricted to Ulundi Municipality and cannot be generalized to other

municipalities since each municipality's circumstances differ; however relevant recommendations can be used as a guideline for other municipalities.

ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS

Collection of data for the study was constituted by seeking permission from the respondents. Participants were respected as human beings who are capable of creating their own meanings and have capacity to relate these meanings to their own personal beliefs.

This allowed voluntary and free participation by the respondents. Important issues as far as this study was concerned, were to ensure that:

- Information sheets were given to all respondents.
- A consent form was used to secure permission from respondents.
- No harm was done to participants in the study.
- Participation was voluntary.
- Respondents' information and response remains private and anonymous.

CONCLUSION

This chapter gives a descriptive overview of the research environment. The problem statement, background, aims and objectives are critically discussed, with the inclusion of limitations, challenges and ethical issues. The aim of this chapter was to introduce the study. The next chapter outlines communication in organizations aligned with local government. Various forms of communication channels are discussed.

COMMUNICATION IN ORGANIZATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter explained the orientation of this study. In this chapter the researcher provides an overview of the various communication methods used by local government organizations. This is the core chapter of the study, investigating communication in government institutions. It is relevant to the study in the sense that it will assist local government to identify relevant channels that will make their communication with the community to be effective. Communication in organization occurs in a structured manner and it is based in leadership and trust with specific norms (Chalmers & Keown, 2006). Based on the above statement this chapter discusses the process of communication in local government. This chapter synthesizes different communication strategies for community development in municipalities and further looks in various forms of communication.

In order to ensure that a thorough study of the concept of communication strategies for local government is fully understood, the literature review for this study has been divided into four chapters. These are:

- Chapter 2 deals with organizational communication
- Chapter 3 deals with the structure and state of local government in South Africa
- Chapter 4 deals with ethical issues in government
- Chapter 5 deals with service delivery issues

COMMUNICATION

According to Altinoz (2009:223) communication is a social process that allows a constant exchange of information among components of the organization. Banerji & Dayal (2005) state that communication includes the following: expressing, listening and understanding the message from the source. Altinoz (2009:219) defines organizational communication as “the exchange of messages through internal and external environments of the organization”. Organizational communication has a vital role which can be gathered. Duck (2007:86) mentions that it is impossible for the organization to perform a successful

activity without communication. Therefore, communication within an organization assists in bringing organizational vision and mission into reality (Hindi *et al.*, 2004:13).

EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

According to Ince & Gul (2011:106) communication is an inseparable piece of life and has a vital role in all activities. All organizations need information which is channeled through the process of communication. Communication assists in planning, organising and controlling so that the organization will fulfill its duties. Communication ensures proper interaction of all structures in the organization and achieving integrity (Banerji & Dayal, 2005). Nordin *et al.* (2011:617) indicate that there is a major need for communication in organizations for connecting workers and allowing the organizations to function effectively. One of the duties of an organization is to build up relationships with the external world by strategising the information.

Communication in the organization is very important for administrative functions and it is essential for the implementation of organizational functions. Japp *et al.* (2005:183) note that communication plays a significant role in decision-making and without the appropriate messages conflicts cannot be solved. Communication is an investment an organization. A study conducted by Kandlousi (2010) shows that if members of the organization are satisfied with the communication, they acquire a positive attitude and feel more engaged. Hence, communication mobilizes decision-making and is needed to strategize employees' participation.

According to Wood (2009:201), organization will never fulfill its mission and activities unless senior management informs the employees as to what needs to be done, how, and why. The exchange of messages is considered the basic function of communication. De Wet (2010) states that information is necessary for every organization to have a harmonious relationship with the environment. It is vital for executives to communicate with their subordinates. Staff training is necessary in order for subordinates to perform according to the goals of the organization. For trainings to be successful, good communication between the trainers and trainees is the key (Altinoz, 2009:218-219).

Zaremba (2003:5) mentions that "communication is a central component of the organization". Mazzei (2010) believes that trust creates quality communication and quality communication creates trust. Effective communication is the main device for

implementation of administrative and organizational activities. This depends on executives' communicative skills. Communication process is affected by various situations daily (Sethi & Seth, 2009:32). Healthy communication in an organization helps increasing the level of productivity and helps to identify lack of information (Hargie *et al.*, 2004).

Ivy & Wahl (2009:50) points out that one of main functions of communication is to create a mutual understanding and to build a spirit of solidarity among the members. Organization has a responsibility to set up formal channels to ensure effective communication (Altinoz, 2009:222). Planned communication contributes to the improvement of administrative functions. Functional communication is compulsory and guarantees the organizational change (Petronio, 2002:419).

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

The structure of an organization determines the flow of communication (Argyris, 2011; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008). According to Sethi, & Seth (2009:35) communication channels are the media chosen by the organization to send the messages to its stakeholders. Organizational structure assists in making effective flow of communication and ensures that communication channels are followed.

Bidya (2009:37) & Sinickas (2001:296) concur with each other that communication channels should be administered since it may cause detachment with members of the organization. A research conducted by Kurokawa (2007), discovered that a fundamental tool for communication is whereby colleagues from institutions share information in a mutual and understandable manner. The prime factor in achieving high levels of organizational effectiveness is sound communication (Nordin *et al.*, 2011:617). Altinoz (2009:219) state that the existence of departments gives rise to organizational structure.

PHATIC COMMUNICATION

Van Staden *et al.* (2002:24) define phatic communication as the use of words to pass feelings rather than meaning. It serves to establish and combine the interpersonal relationship in the organization. Words are used as a formula for opening a conversation and to establish good relations. The conversation in phatic communication keeps good interpersonal relations within the organization. Phatic communication is a complex part of

highly skilled communicative behavior whose function is to facilitate the management of interpersonal relationships (Byron & Baldrige, 2007:148)

VERTICAL COMMUNICATION

Quintanilla & Wahl (2011:195) describe vertical channel of communication as one of the important channels in any organization. When a good flow of communication is maintained in all levels, a healthy working environment is ensured. These are the examples of vertical channel of communication: suggestion boxes, memos, meetings, newsletters, mentoring programs and lunches with the management. Vertical communication begins at the management level to the subordinates (Jovin, 2007). Altinoz (2009:222) believes that effective decisions are made through vertical communication. The communication between the executives and subordinates need to be unobstructed. A successful vertical communication requires an environment of trust and openness (Van Staden *et al.*, 2002).

HORIZONTAL COMMUNICATION

Mersham & Skinner (2001:42) state that horizontal communication refers to messages equal especially to people holding the same positions. The flow of horizontal communication is more frequent than other forms of communication. The above authors further insist that this type of communication assist in bringing insights and new ideas. Message distortion in horizontal communication is not likely to happen. Van Staden *et al.* (2002:22) list the following as examples of horizontal communication: organizational lunches, team building exercises and interdepartmental meetings.

According to Duck (2007) the advantages of horizontal communication are as follows:

- It is time saving.
- It facilitates co-ordination of the task.
- It facilitates co-operation among team members.
- It provides emotional and social assistance to organizational members.
- It helps in solving various organizational problems.
- It is a means of information sharing.
- It can also be used for resolving conflicts of a department with other departments or conflicts within a department.

DIAGONAL COMMUNICATION

Diagonal communication happens at different levels of authority. It does not take place in formal channels of communication. Altinoz (2009:222) states that diagonal communication regulates, controls, and ensures good relationships among departments. To improve good flow of communication across different levels of communication, the following tips should be followed (Duck, 2007):

- Communication should not pass through many intermediaries before reaching the final destination.
- There should be few possible management levels.
- Coaching and mentoring programs should be implemented.
- Staff in lower structures must have an easy access to the superiors.
- Communication channels routes should be kept open constantly.

ORAL COMMUNICATION

Oral communication is used when giving instructions or listening to instructions (Van Staden *et al.*, 2002). This type of communication is used when directly communicating face to face with one up to five people. Smith & Brainbridge (2006:115) regard telephonic conversation and public addressing as an indirect form of oral communication. Oral communication is regarded as easier because it allows an immediate feedback.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Westhues (2006) believes that written communication can be direct or indirect. Written communication form a minor part in communication but it is a very effective way of communicating because it is planned and worded carefully. It includes e-mails messages, newsletters, memos, notices and reports that are directed to a specific individual. It is advantageous to have a written proof of communication (Ivy & Wahl, 2009:82).

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

This is a form of communication that includes the use of gestures to get the message through. Kalla (2005:308) notes that non-verbal messages should support and reinforce the verbal messages. Non-verbal communication is mostly used involuntarily and unaware by the speaker in many cases. This type of communication is culture-specific according to

Japp *et al.* (2005:184). It can contradict, strengthen or complement for a verbal message. People are more inclined in believing non-verbal messages than verbal messages. Recent studies show that non-verbal communication covers the 70% or even the 90% of workplace communication (Dumbrava & Koronka, 2009; Gabbott & Hogg 2001).

INFORMAL SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

According Subramanian (2006), informal communication is described as the unofficial type of communication taking place among the members of the staff. Informal communication is a part of organization which uses channels such as informal social groupings and grapevine to strengthen relationships (Altinoz, 2009:218). According to Van Staden *et al.* (2002) informal social groupings refer to the groups formed amongst the workers met during lunch time or during working time to discuss organizational matters. These groups are very important for they create a friendly environment. Jovin (2007:182) notices that communication network develops within informal communication. Communicating via informal communication allows employees to speak directly to subordinates. However, Quintanilla & Wahl (2011:90) caution that when communicating through professional excellence is essential.

COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

The shortage of proper message between source and receiver is a barrier towards effective communication (Johnston & Joyner, 2005:14). Communication barrier is a factor that distorts message or hinders a message to be delivered. Such factors can be physical, physiological, perceptual, semantic and intercultural. Lack of proper communication that occurs in higher levels and spread to whole organization may cause the barrier. This barrier interrupts organizational activities and organizational production (Ince & Gul, 2011:109).

OVERCOMING COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

Ivy & Wahl (2009) provide the following points that assist in overcoming barriers:

- Avoid offensive and subjective language.
- Take note of other peoples' background.
- Use simple, unambiguous and direct language.
- Listen attentively.

- Use face-to-face communication where possible.
- Be open and flexible to suggestions.
- Build an atmosphere of trust and mutual understanding between the receiver and sender.

MEETING AS A WAY OF COMMUNICATING

Meeting is a legal gathering that is convened according to the organization's constitution and culture. Van Staden *et al.* (2002:147-159) state that meeting is a complex event that includes persuasion and mutual communication. In many organizations people are gathered together to discuss crucial organizational matters. According to Petronio (2002:106) for the effective communication in a meeting, the organization should understand its role and expectations. The organizational constitution determines the aim, description and composition of the organization.

Public meetings are held if circumstances require it and are open and free to any member of the public (Wood 2009). Byron & Baldrige (2007:148) mention that it is the organization's responsibility to appoint the chairperson who will convene the meeting. The meetings are usually conveyed according to the procedure and to general custom. A resolution taken in a meeting does not have a final word but is submitted to the executive as a suggestion and recommendation. Notices of public meetings should be given on the official notice boards, newspapers, magazines, and over the radio and television (Westhues, 2006). Date, time, venue and agenda must be stipulated at least seven days prior to the meeting. According SALGA (2006), report-back meetings are an opportunity for the organization to give feedback to the community.

TYPES OF MEETINGS

Kalla (2005:302) believes that when an organization grows it becomes more complex and communication becomes harder and broader. People are very careful about how they are treated and whether enough attention is given to their recommendations.

- General meetings

Nordin *et al.* (2011:617) recommend every organization to hold meetings regularly after a certain constitutional period of time. A special general meeting can be held periodically to discuss organizational matters. The general meeting determines the policy, vision and

mission of the organization. Each member in the organization is expected to attend this type of meeting (Quintanilla & Wahl, 2011).

- Committee meetings

In committee meetings, executive members act as the main authority of an institution. The office bearers of committee meetings include: the chairperson, the vice-chairperson, the secretary, the treasurer and two or three additional members. The executive committee is a permanent sub-committee that forms a part of administrative structure of the organization (Altinoz, 2009:222).

- Ad hoc committee meetings

According to Bell & Martin (2008:125), ad hoc committees are temporal and are appointed to carry out a special agenda. This committee functions temporarily and once their duties are completed it dissolve.

ISSUING A NOTICE FOR A MEETING

Ng *et al.* (2006) point out that convening a meeting appropriately involves issuing out a valid notice. The notice can be oral, written, be telephonically, by media or via e-mail, post or internet. A notice should be sent twenty one days before an annual general meeting and seven to fourteen days before other meetings (Bidya, 2009 & Sinickas 2001:290). A meeting is declared invalid if the notification is not issued in time. The notice should have the following:

- The name of the organization
- The address of the organization (secretary's address)
- Forwarding date
- Telephone number of the secretary
- Indication of the type of the meeting
- Day, time and venue where meeting will be held
- Signature of the executive, council or a committee member.

THE AGENDA OF A MEETING

The agenda is a list of items to be presented and discussed at the meeting. It is the secretary's duty to keep all proposals and matters to be included in the agenda (Mazzei, 2010:93). Japp *et al.* (2005:183) & De Wet (2010:4&10) suggest that the agenda has to be

brief, simple and list of items must be arranged in an appropriate order. The agenda has to be sent out to any parties involved and only the chairperson has the powers to change the agenda. The following has to be included in the agenda:

- Organization name including the type of a meeting with time, date and venue of the meeting.
- Opening and welcoming by the chairperson of the meeting.
- Constituting the meeting.
- The attendance register
- Minutes arising from previous meeting.
- New proposals, discussions and subjects.
- Any other business (shortly after the reading of the proposed agenda, notice should be issued out that new proposals must be submitted).
- Announcing date, time, and venue for the following meeting.

CONCLUSION

The researcher in this chapter outlined the importance of communication in organization and various forms of communication. The researcher further mentioned the importance of communication using various types of communication channels and strategies that will enhance the smooth functioning between the organization and its' stakeholders. The following chapter continues with the literature review and deals with the structure and state of local government in South Africa. This chapter is essential for the understanding of the communication processes which are used by these organizations.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the researcher discussed various forms of communication channels which provide a foundation for the study. This study examines communication as a tool to enhance service delivery in Ulundi Municipality. The significance of this chapter is to give a background of local government in South Africa. It is relevant to the topic because the operation of a democratic government begins with feedback from people who are in contact with local government.

AN OVERVIEW OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Local government is believed to be the essence of democracy through public participation and proper communication. SALGA (2011: 12-13) state that local government exists within provincial boundaries. When the process of democratic took place in 1990, local governments were legally introduced. Local government in South Africa became functional after the adoption of the 1996 constitution.

One of the major innovations of the constitution was the adoption of local government as government institution. This gave a right to municipalities to govern local government affairs within communities. Reddy, Sing & Moodley (2003:54) state that local government needs a developmental role to perform inequalities and backlogs in effective communication. According to the White Paper on Local Government (1998), local government is responsible for basic services and infrastructure to improve the lives of the citizens. It further ensures the growth and development of communities by enhancing community participation.

OVERVIEW OF ULUNDI MUNICIPALITY

The place Ulundi is located in north-eastern KwaZulu-Natal. According to Ulundi Municipality (2012) there are 24 wards with 47 councilors and the largest part of the area is rural and underdeveloped. Approximately, half of the municipal area consists of commercial farms and substantial agricultural community. The town of Ulundi represents the only urban center in Ulundi Local Municipal accommodating approximately 40 000

people. The Ulundi Municipality is one of the five local municipalities that constitute the area of jurisdiction of the Zululand District Municipality. The area is approximately 3 250 square kilometers including the town and settlements.

Ulundi town is the only area that focuses on economic activities. It is surrounded by a number of large and densely populated tribal areas characterized by informal settlements. These areas are dependent on Ulundi town for employment and services. In terms of population density and service demands, large sections of these tribal areas can be classified as emerging urban settlements. There is a lack of structure, no clear hierarchy of nodes and complex movement patterns (Zululand District Municipality, 2006-07).



Figure 1: Ulundi Municipality

Source: Zululand District Municipality, (2006-07)

THE FORMATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Koma (2012:54) states that through community members are able to directly communicate with their elected government from national, provincial to local government. Local government was adopted in South Africa to extend democracy to all. However, Malefane & Mashakoe (2008:474) reveal that local government is characterized by laziness in terms of service delivery and failure to attract community participation. These authors further mention that local government in recent years has not been able to fill up the expectations of community members. The problem is explained in terms of lack of capacity and technical efforts. Odendaal (2000:85) identify the role of local government as promoting economic growth and poverty alleviation. This has positioned the local government to become a developmental institution.

The Centre for Development Enterprise (2007) mention that the end of apartheid government in South Africa meant the end of authoritative administration, the government that defined itself against the larger part of the population. During 1994 most people were passive citizens. The citizens could not question anything but they were only receivers from the government. After 1994 government built good relations with the citizens (Reddy, Sing & Moodley, 2003:58; Odendaal, 2000). SALGA (2006) indicate that the current local government is well known by lack of community participation, corruption, poor communication and service delivery. The national government emphasizes lack of ability as the main problem. Local government elections held in 2006 were the most contested and there was a wave of mass protests that were referred to as service delivery protests. The protests were widely broadcasted on BBC and CNN (Malefane & Mashakoe, 2008:479).

Koma (2012:58) believes that both government and citizens have a blame to bear. Government argues that citizens do not attend meetings through which government programs are communicated. According to Ngubane (2005), local government has a constitutional mandate for especially rural communities. A number of legislations have been adopted to set up the necessary institutional framework for disadvantaged communities (SALGA, 2011:18). The White Paper on Local Government 1998 was introduced in order to satisfy the constitutional mandate for local government. It established the basis for a new developmental local government system, which is committed to working with citizens (Craythorne, 2006:27).

THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

According to the Department of Provincial and Local Government (2008) apartheid left a remarkable imprint on South Africa's human settlements and municipal institutions. The transformation, therefore, requires a historical role in creating local separation on municipal institutions. Smit (2000:82) mentions that social separation in local government did not begin during the apartheid. It was initiated through Group Areas Act of 1966 which instituted compulsory removal of black people in their own areas. Apartheid aimed to limit the extent to which white municipalities bear the burden of servicing black communities (Craythorne, 2006:105).

The Group Areas Act restricted the permanent presence of Blacks in urban areas through the pass system. This was done through the separation of townships, industrial and commercial development (Department of Provincial and Local Government, 2007).

According to Vyas-Doorgapersad (2010:45), the Coloured and Indian committees were established as advisory bodies to white municipalities. In 1977 councils were introduced.

Odendaal (2000:52) states that the watershed in local government was a mass disaster leading to the national reform process which began in 1990. National debate about the future of local government took place. The forum negotiated the legislations that did not provide a blueprint for a new local government system (Koma, 2012:58). The process put forward for the act was negotiated and resulted in wide diversity forms of local government. The Local Government Transition Act of 1993 provided three-pronged phases according to (Cloete, 1995:4):

- **Pre-interim phase:** The phase that covered the period from the passing of the Local Government Transition Act of 1993 until the first local government elections took place. In 1993, the Local Government Negotiating Forum was established to negotiate the transition to the new form of local government. The forum confirmed the division of membership in transitional local authorities. Each Transitional Local Council would have a non-statutory membership of 50% selected under the banner of the South African National Civics Organization. A statutory half which consisted of representatives of existing segregated local government authorities, representatives of local government associations, white provinces and the National Party.
- **Interim phase:** This phase started with the first local government elections and ended with the implementation of the final constitutional model in 1997. This implied that elected transitional councils would still reserve 30% seats for whites in the municipalities. In May 1994, the ANC dominated and Government of National Unity faced a major challenge. As part of the forum principle, existing racial councils were replaced by interim non-racial structures representing former white councils and ANC-dominated civics in equal numbers.
- **Final phase:** This phase began with the final constitutional model of local government in 1997. Some of the constitutional provisions only became effective after the 2000 local government elections. The Constitution provided for strong and entrenched local government. It made provision to exercise powers and perform their functions in a manner that there would be no violation on the geographical and institutional integrity.

It was through this process that the citizens of the country were involved in shaping the legislation between 1994 and 1999. According to Govender & Reddy (2011) the ANC-led government believed that the successful implementation of Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) will improve the process of service delivery. There was a great concern that the newly established municipalities will achieve this objective.

Williams (2006:1999) reports that after 1994 most municipalities were failing within a chaotic administration process. A National Development and Planning Commission were appointed to spearhead this process. The period between 1998 and 2000 was the introduction of a number of policies related to local government. There are three types of municipalities according to (SALGA, 2011:43):

- Category A municipalities (Metropolitan municipalities): they have exclusive legislative and executive authority throughout their area of jurisdiction.
- Category B municipalities (Local municipalities): they share executive and legislative authority with Category C municipalities (District municipalities).

According to Local Government Municipal Structures Act No. 117 of 1998, each provincial local government MEC must then determine whether an executive mayor or executive council should perform the executive functions of the municipality. The Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) appointed by former President Nelson Mandela, determined Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town, Pretoria, East Rand and Port Elizabeth as metropolitan areas (Koma, 2012:60). The board also reduced the number of municipalities from 843 to 284 to ensure cost effectiveness. There are currently six metropolitan cities, 46 district municipalities and 234 local municipalities (Ruhinga, 2009:1095; Craythorne, 2006:82). The Municipal Demarcation Board has recently demarcated two new metropolitan municipalities the Buffalo City and Mangaung. The White Paper on Local Government (1998:38) lists that local government was characterized by four critical development imperatives:

- Maximization of social and economic growth.
- Integration and co-coordinating.
- Democratization of development.
- Leadership and learning.

White Paper on Local Government (1998) points out the following key outcomes that are relevant to all municipalities:

- The provision of sustainable household infrastructure and services

Local government is responsible for the provision of household infrastructure and basic services. Basic services include the provision of water, sanitation, roads, electricity and drainage. The provision of basic services is essential to enable people to develop skills. Service delivery should be prioritized as a basic level to all members of local communities.

- Creating integrated local areas

Challenges facing urban areas and rural areas are sometimes different. Most of the challenges facing urban areas are those of integration of towns and townships. Rural areas are concerned with infrastructure development and service delivery. Many rural residents travel for many kilometers from their homes to work and back on a daily basis.

FIRST DECADE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The end of 2012 marks 18 years of local democracy in South Africa. The restructuring and transformation process is almost complete (Naidoo, Pillay & Reddy, 2005:45). According to Szabo (2010) extensive emphasis is placed on two of the biggest challenges, namely service delivery and poverty alleviation. Local government is a peculiar theme and is recognized in developing and developed countries. Khoza (2001) and Reddy (2003:108) describe local government as a major structure of government. It is created to bring government to the people. Local government signifies a political system in which the eligible people participate actively (Koma, 2012:60).

According to StatsSA census 2011, the population of South Africa is 51 770 560 million people of diverse ethnic, cultural and political groups. The need for effective local government as a vehicle for public participation and poverty alleviation is essential. The country has currently nine provinces and 283 non-racial and democratic local governments (Department of Provincial and Local Government, 1999). Williams (2006:745) mentions that the first and second democratic local government elections held in 1995, 1996 and December 2000 respectively were indeed a political crisis. The elections held on 5 December 2000 completed the process of transition period and reduced the number of municipalities nationally from 843 to 284. Since 1995 remarkable progress is made in transforming local governance (Naidoo, Pillay & Reddy 2005:48).

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation is defined as ‘. . . an open, accountable process through which individuals and groups at selected communities can exchange views. It is further defined as a democratic process of engaging people and playing an active part in the development and operation of services that affect their lives’ (Draft National Policy Framework for Public Participation, 2005). Koma (2012:58) states that public participation is vital in local government. Malefane & Mashakoe (2008) believe that it is obligatory for communities to participate in local governance through ward committees. Constitutionally, municipalities have to set up ward committees to ensure effective and efficient community participation. Local government regulations provide guidance on the operations of municipalities (Naidoo, Pillay & Reddy 2005:45).

According to SALGA (2011:42), the functioning of local government has much to do with service delivery. It depends on how citizens perceive the working structure regarding participation. For local government to be free from the protests, public participation should be strongly encouraged. This proves that sidelining traditional leadership structures the level of community participation becomes poor (Koma, 2012:53). The active public participation of the community is driven by the following factors:

- People are motivated by protecting privileges and use their vote to keep parties that are looking for equality out of power.
- Previously disadvantaged citizens believe that their vote will ensure a better quality of life.

Odendaal (2000:103) observes that the level of participation of the rural communities is problematic. The South African Local Government hand book gives out guidelines for public participation in terms of service delivery. Local government is obliged involve public when taking any decisions. This allows municipalities to initiate innovative ideas to ensure community participation. The culture of participation has to be established by municipality (SALGA, 2006:33).

The Draft National Policy Framework for Public Participation (2005) compels municipalities to a form of participation which is genuinely empowering.

The following are basic assumptions concerning community participation:

- Endorsing good governance and human rights.
- Recognizing the ultimate right of all people.

- Reduction the distance in electorate and elected institutions.
- Distinguishing the importance of all people.
- Combining together the participation of different groups together in a community.
- Acknowledging ward committees in playing a central role in associating elected structures with people with various forms of communication through *izimbizo*, roadshows and *makgotla*.

Local government is able to initiate their own by-laws through inter-government relations. Govender & Reddy (2011:75) contend that term such as ‘openness’ and ‘transparency’ in local government context endorse successful development. These authors further state that the psychology of these terms brings sustainability in development. This theory state that ‘most powerful collective decision-makers are selected through fair elections whereby candidates freely compete for votes’ (Good Governance Learning Network, 2007).

SALGA (2011:28) state that democracy includes choosing leaders through participation. As a result local government should be perceived as a stronghold of democracy where politics meets people. According to the Department of Provincial and Local Government (2009), political agendas and outcomes should be the result of a participative process of the community. Local government relies upon national government for policy direction and other administrative obligations. According to Good Governance Learning Network (2007:5) Community is expected to partake actively at four levels of local government: as voters, as citizens, as clients and as stakeholders.

Williams (2006:208) for example, studies Area Co-ordinating Teams in Western Cape as a model of participation to access the level of community participation. The author notes that theoretically, any policy which encourages transparency involves citizens in local government. It further seeks to facilitate an ongoing discourse between citizens and their elected representatives.

Williams (2005:22) further condemns slight participation that give out to what he calls administered society, not democratic society. He clarifies that perfect participation is not earned through debates and arguments but through political agreement that is acquired through the skillful manipulation. Govender & Reddy (2011) believe that participation is achieved by pre-designation of consulting. This leads to directed programs aimed to empower local communities. Ward committees have a great potential to ease community

participation. Cape Town Municipality for example, evaluates community participation in its IDP process as follows:

Benefits of public participation:

- It gives out empowerment to the community.
- It increases legitimacy of political process.
- It motivates transparent process for allocation of resources.

Drawbacks of public participation:

- It costs.
- Lot of time needed to participate.
- Representativeness of participants (City of Cape Town, 2005).

CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined a careful observation of how local government structures in rural areas operate. It further pointed out that community participation in service delivery may offer opportunity to raise broad concern regarding how the system functions. Local government alone as an institution cannot only provide services but together with political structures by drawing participation from within communities. This chapter revealed that as a result most communities in rural areas have no trust in the new local government system. The following chapter will deal with ethical conduct expected from local government.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION ETHICS

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the researcher discussed the evolution and a continuous development in local government. This chapter outlines the institutional portrait of local government as a structure upon the conduct of public functionaries and the perceptions of its publics. This chapter is necessary for this topic as it outlines the acceptable ethical conduct that is expected from local government employees. This assists employees to enhance service delivery as well as to overcome maladministration in local government.

Transparency and responsibility are most significant factors in local government. Nkosi (2006) states that code of ethics are essential in any organization to control the environmental accountability. The cases of misconduct are controlled by each municipality. Bhorat & Kanbur (2006:92) mention that there is a need to form committees with publics to fight against unethical conduct. Public reporting is essential to be the art of municipal daily routine. The hearings by Provincial Public Accounts Committees and Audit Committees need to be open in public. Auditor-General seminars should be conducted in order to uncover municipal unethical conduct (Ababio & Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2010: 420).

Bhorat & Kanbur (2006:124) further indicate that service delivery is mostly linked with the concept of government to satisfy the needs of the community. This resulted in the development of the *Batho Pele* principles in order to foster both the impression of good governance and service delivery. Piombo & Nijzink (2005:201) observe that local government should offer services that will satisfy members of the public who are its clients. The threat in local government has always been about corruption, nepotism, fraud, bribery and self-enhancement.

DECEPTION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Ruhinga (2009) points out that South African government have initiated a number of anti-corruption strategies to improve the concept of good governance and service delivery. There are several limitations that restrict the effectiveness of such structures. These include the end of integrity by the Department of Justice whereby cases of corruption are being

attended slowly. According to Davids, Theron & Maphunye (2005:304) the political intervention in corruption cases where a high profile individual is charged with corruption has made the effectiveness of these strategies to be inactive. There is also prejudice in reporting by state departments in terms of financial misconduct by high community profile individuals. Stiglitz (2002) adds that the government-monitoring institutions such as the Public Service Commission experiences difficulties which are connected with bureaucratic problems which forbid accountability. Their existence therefore tends to make little impact on the concept of good governance and service delivery. There is no assurance if their recommendations are implemented.

AfriMAP & Open Society Foundation for South Africa (2007) note that institutions of service delivery have expressed their dissatisfaction with the failure of government sectors to implement their recommendations. Such instances could be argued that independent institutions may judiciously oversee the activities of the public sector with a critical eye (Seloba, 2012:412). There has been an increase in unethical conduct and corruption in local government. This is an international occurrence experienced in both developed and developing countries (Department of Provincial and Local Government, 2008). According to Prakash & Selle (2004), it has been acknowledged that the matter has to be addressed urgently. These structures will address challenges to both councilors and officials by setting up the ideals of an ethical and corruption-free environment in local government.

According to Naidoo, Pillay & Reddy (2005:50) KwaZulu-Natal, despite the fact that the provincial Department of Local Government and Traditional Affairs has an anti-corruption strategy, acts of corruption continue to overwhelm local governance. However, the strategy seems ineffective or is not being implemented appropriately. The department has decided to act robustly against corrupt practices by initiating municipal fraud hotline. The following alliances were tasked: Scorpions, Asset Forfeiture the Unit, the South African Police Service, the Special Investigations Unit and the NPA in ensuring the appropriate prosecution of offenders. The South African Local Government Association (SALGA) representing organized local government was formally launched on 20 November 1996. It brought a satisfactory conclusion and complete restructuring of organized local government in South Africa.

The objectives of SALGA are as follows:

- To represent, promote and protect the interests of local government.
- Transform local government to enable it to meet its developmental role.
- Enhance the role and status of its nine affiliate members provincially and nationally;
- Ensure the full participation of women.
- Serve as the National Employers' Organization for all municipal and provincial member employers.

The policy on local government acknowledges citizens as major partners in decision making. Citizens participate actively in various dimensions as voters, as citizens who express their views and as organized partners (Department of Provincial and Local Government, 2009). Citizen participation is a strategic phenomenon and crucial in local government. The local government system has adopted an equivalent system of elected representatives and direct participation. This development requires an innovative public administrative system (Govender & Reddy, 2011:75). Gildenhuis & Knipe (2000:176) state that local government is developing agreements outlining the values and principles of participation with international trends. Public participation is both legislated and constitutional. Consequently, local government is the center of the system where public participation intends to support local decision-making processes.

Sindane (2009:460) believes that the establishment of an effective and efficient local government system is a challenge in any country. South Africa has currently embraced participative forms of democracy. There is overwhelming evidence that introducing participatory democracy was an appropriate step in the development of South African local government (Govender & Reddy, 2011:60). According to Cashda (2002) there were a number of lessons learnt when it comes to the readiness of local municipalities to develop and implement anti-corruption strategies. Although some municipalities especially the district municipalities and metropolitan municipalities have anti-corruption and fraud strategies, those are proven to be inadequate and ineffective fight against corruption (Department of Provincial and Local Government, 2008). The Local Government Anti-Corruption Strategy initiated by the Department of Provincial and Local Government emphasizes various principles. In order to achieve those objectives, there is the need to

strategize the implementation of plans and conduct sustainable assessments against corruption and fraud.

The following are recommendations according to Ababio & Vyas-Doorgapersad (2010:411) in order to further assist in enhancing ethical requirements of public servants:

- Education and training should be used in creating awareness in ethical issues. This calls for regular and obligatory training sessions of public officials on ethics. In a number of Commonwealth countries, there exists the parallel institution of South African Management Development Institute (SAMDI, presently known as PALAMA) which makes it compulsory for every public servant to enroll for a Diploma in Public Administration. The requirement is that each candidate should submit research essay on fighting against unethical conduct, corruption and fraud.
- The United States of America (USA) statutory system requires all political members to be examined by the Senate Appointments Committee. Considering the importance and level of ethics in South African public sector, it will be appropriate that South Africa to adopt such strategies into its system. Such a committee examines the entire history of the alleged and once is recommended, there is a hope that an ethical will take its course.

PRINCIPLES GOVERNING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Ethical considerations and personality expectations of public officials are recorded in code of ethics and regulations. According to Ababio & Vyas-Doorgapersad (2010:423) ethical conduct is implied in a sense that may create an act of transgression. The code of ethics is mandatory for good local governing. The purpose of Municipal Code of Ethics is to safeguard transparency and acceptable conduct by government employees. It also helps to restore trust in citizens and to demonstrate a formal ethical behaviour.

The code of conduct is issued by the office of the Public Service Commission. The code gives out procedures to public officials on what type of conduct is expected of them. This further gives an indication of the route in which public servants should execute their duties (Cameron & Stone, 1995: 80). According to Public Service Commission (2010), a code of conduct at national, provincial and local government level includes the following guidelines:

Relationship with the legislature and the executive: An employee ought to be authentic to the state by putting the public interest first. An employee should faithfully fulfil the policies of the government.

Relationship with the public: The public servant must promote unity and well-being in executing duties. The official should be helpful and easily accessible to the public. Members of the public are eligible to receive high standards of service. An employee should have affection and does not portray any act of racism in terms of gender, ethnic or language.

Relationships among employees: An employee should communicate with other employees to improve public interest and use relevant channels to voice out objections.

Performance of duties: An employee should make every effort to attain the following goals:

- To be punctual in the execution of duties,
- To perform duties in a professional and proficient manner,
- To accept the responsibility to be available in trainings and workshops,
- To support sound and transparent administration,
- To report to the appropriate channels the act fraud, corruption, nepotism and maladministration.

Personal conduct and private interests: An employee during the execution duties shall:

- Behave in a manner that enhances a good reputation,
- Act responsibly as far as the use of substances is concerned,
- Not use the position to receive any gifts as a form of bribe,
- Not disclose any state information without approval.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CODES OF CONDUCT

Ababio & Vyas-Doorgapersad (2010:418) state that ethical standards in local government are implemented under the code of conduct:

Creation: The process of producing ethics part of legislation. It includes all members in the organization. This process requires setting out specific progressive agreements in a way that the final result is recognized by representatives of all groups.

Determining jurisdiction: Local government needs to mobilize individuals responsible for establishment of guidelines procedures.

Propagating code of ethics: it is essential for local government to understand the rules and responsibilities in order to enhance the good governance.

Coordinating inter-government support: municipal stakeholders need to manage enforcement, communication and administrative structures.

According to SALGA (2006:92) South African municipalities have executed a code of conduct for local councilors to improve service delivery. This compels all councilors to abide by the code of conduct and needs them to report back to the communities at regular intervals. Councilors are elected to represent the interests of local communities. This ensures that municipalities have a structured direction of responsibility to communities and to meet the needs of the communities. To fulfill this duty, councilors need be responsible to their communities by reporting back at least quarterly to publics (Ababio & Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2010: 415). According to SALGA handbook (2011) the elected councilor is guided by the following guidelines:

General conduct of councilors: A councilor must execute the functions during the term of office honestly and in a transparent manner. This will assist to act in the best interest of the public such that the integrity and reliability.

Attendance at meetings: A councilor should attend each meeting summoned by the municipal council except when leave of absence is approved.

Sanctions for non-attendance of meetings: A councilor who failed to be present from three or more consecutive meetings must be removed from office as a councilor. The removal of a councilor must be conducted in accordance with relevant structures following legislations which each municipal council must adopt.

Disclosure of interests: A councilor must disclose confidential information to any structure of which that councilor is a member.

Personal gain: A councilor shall not use the powers or privileges of being a councilor to reveal confidential information for private benefit. Except a councilor has a consent from

municipal assembly, a councilor may not be a beneficiary under no circumstances obtain a financial support in any business related with the municipality.

Declaration of interests: An elected councilor must declare within 60 days in writing to the municipal manager the following financial benefits: bonds in any company, involvement of any close organization, allowance, donations and patronages by any organization. Any change of details of the financial interests should be communicated in writing to the municipal manager yearly.

Full-time councilors: A councilor who is resuming duties full-time may not accept any other paid work, except consent is given by the municipal assembly.

Rewards and gifts: A councilor may not bid, lobby and receive any prize, gift or courtesy for voting.

Unauthorized disclosure of information: A councilor may not without consent disclose any confidential information of the assembly to any unauthorized personnel. Confidential information includes any information regarded by the municipal assembly to be private, discussed in closed meeting only. This item does not hinder the right of any individual to access information in terms of national law.

Intervention in administration: A councilor may not unless otherwise stated by law to interfere administration of any department unless executed to give instruction to any employee of the municipality.

Council property: A councilor may not utilize, yield, and benefit from any property or asset possessed, controlled and managed by the municipality.

Breaches of code: the municipal assembly may investigate any alleged breach on code of conduct or deploy a special team to probe and make a report. If the special team finds that a councilor has breached any of the rules, the assembly may issue a formal warning letter to the councilor. Any councilor who has been given a written warning or fined may within 14 days of having been notified of the decision may request to the MEC for local government in writing, stating out the reasons on which the appeal is founded. A copy of the appeal must be available to the municipal council. The MEC for local government may appoint an individual or a special committee to investigate any alleged breach of a provision and to make a recommendation on whether the councilor should be suspended or removed from

office. If the MEC is of the opinion that the councilor has not followed the rules, the MEC may suspend the councilor for a period of time or remove the councilor from office.

Application of code to traditional leaders: If a municipal assembly or a special committee finds that a traditional leader has breached the code of conduct, the assembly must issue a formal warning letter to such traditional leader. The MEC for local government may appoint a committee to investigate any alleged breaking of rules and to make a recommendation on whether the traditional leader should be suspended or not. Any investigation in terms of this item must be in agreement with the rules of justice. The suspension of a traditional leader's rights does not affect the traditional leader's right to address the municipal council.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher noted a need to investigate the factors that leads maladministration and corruption in local government. The researcher included this chapter to outline a number of factors that hinder local municipalities to develop and implement anti-corruption strategies and ethical conduct. The following chapter outlines local economic development (LED) as a backbone and foundation in developing projects and basic services in local government.

IMPROVEMENT OF SERVICE DELIVERY

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the researcher discussed acceptable ethical conduct expected from local government employees as a means to enhance service delivery. This chapter outlines local economic development as a core in enhancing service delivery and development in local government. This is relevant to the topic as it suggests effective and proper communication as a tool to improve service delivery. Local Economic Development (LED) programme is an important wing of development in local government.

Local government role is to simplify the lives of all through proper service delivery. According to the mandate of local government, rural communities are the primary recipients of service delivery. Effective local government is relative to various communities. Steytler (2003) states that services in rural areas are measured by poverty alleviation and development of infrastructure. Smit & Cronje (2003:209) add that the quality of living is simplified by the provision of sanitation, roads, housing, water and electricity. The national government supports district and local municipalities in delivering these basic services. The provision of free basic services is funded through prioritization towards services delivery.

EFFECTIVENESS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government should rate their services through feedback from the community members. Residents are to make decisions and take part in the municipality. Based on the above statement Naidoo, Pillay & Reddy, (2005:47) suggest that the measurement of usefulness must be done from the community members. Effective local government has to be measured by the positive impact it has made to rural communities (Van Wart, 2003:87). The provision of services must be responsive to the needs of local communities.

National government makes available support grants to assist municipalities with the provision of services. High level of poverty is one of the main reasons for non-payment for basic services. According to Cooke & Lazzarotti (2007:292), when the president visited some of the provinces after the 2011 April by-elections, he was overwhelmed by complaints from residents that the councilors were neglecting them and that there was no

service delivery. Some of the councilors failed to respond to the needs of communities. The Minister of Provincial and Local Government pointed out that government has produced a balance sheet which is a source of pride to government based services (Eliassen & Sitter, 2008).

LEADERSHIP TO IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY

It has been 20 years into democracy but leadership in the public service remains a challenge. This is characterized by high demands for improved service delivery by vocal and impatient citizens. Government needs to be aware that this situation is as a result of a lack of capacity and appropriate leadership (Cronje & Willem, 2010; McLennan & Seale, 2010). The government of South Africa identifies that its public service structures requires effective leadership. However, there is a great concern about poor and ineffective leadership on service delivery. Berkley & Rouse (2004) states that provincial government has undertaken much leadership and management training to avoid the reputation of the matter. These initiatives appear to have failed to improve service delivery. According to Eliassen & Sitter (2008), challenges in South African public service have a direct impact on effective service delivery. Service delivery has not led to satisfaction of many communities.

According to Fraser-Moleketi (2007), previous leadership approach was adopted by the South African public service has been imported from western countries. Successful and sustainable performance in any organization is linked to its effective leadership (Sullivan *et al.*, 2006). Naidoo (2010) and Rowe (2001) suggest that public service will be more sustainable if an integrated leadership approach is properly followed. Freedman & Tregoe (2003:301) acknowledge that leadership should be strategic with an integration of managerial and transformational skills. The combination of managerial and strategic leadership approaches will promote long-term organizational effectiveness (Rowe, 2001). Naidoo & Xollie (2011:8) argue that this is insufficient in ensuring that municipal leaders are competent enough applying these skills in their communities. The implementation of effective leadership is suggested for the public in government sector. This approach takes into consideration of the challenges leaders face. This makes a positive contribution in promoting effective service delivery (Malan & Smit, 2001).

In the “State of Nation Address” in 2009, President Zuma indicated a number of challenges in local government. The citizens of South Africa are impacted by unstable state of leadership in the public service. This is proven by on-going protests by communities

against lack of service delivery. Cronje & Willem (2010) argue that most public service leaders do not work together for the common good of the society. There is a lack of proper communication in local government. Furthermore, concerted efforts have been made to engage citizens in meaningful consultation in order to address service delivery problems. Instead, matters drift along until communities explode in chaotic behavior and protests. According to Moynihan & Ingraham (2004) lack of proper communication is demonstrated by the lack of effective engagement by those in leadership. Lack of coordination during trainings, training needs are addressed by a wide variety of providers from local and international, public and private sectors.

McLennan & Seale (2010) indicate that leadership development in local government is currently adopting the international approach. The greatest challenge is that it is likely that the municipal managers are selected into positions with great political affiliation. The public officials appointed to government positions serve the agenda of the ruling party in this country (Naidoo, 2009). Malan & Smit (2001) refer to these political affiliated appointments as incompetence and a lack of exposure. Lack of performance is highly related to ineffective leadership which negatively impacts service delivery.

Denhardt & Grubbs (2003) oppose that government should consider helping citizens to “articulate and meet their shared interests rather than attempt to control or steer society in new directions”. The main role of government in this regard according to Schwella & Rossouw (2005:7) should be to direct its citizens and not to manipulate and convince them. Local government is sometimes outward instead of inward, looking in critical issues of service delivery. Sullivan *et al.* (2006) made it clear that government tends to protect its own interests instead of promoting the well-being of communities.

However, one could argue that government should do both, protect its interests and promote the affairs of the society. At the provincial scope of government, the Premier of Mpumalanga, Mr. David Mabuza, articulated that many service delivery protests are as a result of financial management and leadership (Mail & Guardian, 2010). The Premier further stated that some individuals in government positions are doing little if not nothing. The Premier then acknowledged that some municipalities that need to change their administration. This example clearly relates to President Zuma’s (2010) address whereby he indicated that disciplinary measures would be taken against non-performing leaders in the public service. This also highlights the point of personal development. The leaders

themselves may consider leading by example instead of imposing rules on others. President Obama (2009) highlighted the importance and relevance of effective public leadership in the lives of citizens.

TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Bekink (2006:103) states that during the transition of democracy very little attention was paid to education. Most of municipalities have councilors and officials who have a good grasp of the challenges facing local government ((Lukkarinen, 2005:420). There is crucial need to improve managerial and practical implementation skills of councilors. According to De Visser (2005:32), a more productive relationship has to be developed between councilors and officials in local government. Traditional leadership is an important part of local government in South Africa. At present, traditional leadership is participating in local government as the national government clarifies its role.

Kershaw (2009) and Steytler & Baatjies (2006:435) suggest that any temptation which seeks to interpret traditional leadership as a threat to democracy should be avoided. Traditional leadership is greatly accepted by institutions that support democracy. The culture of doing things in terms of tradition and according to democratic principles is supported. Developments at the local level should be guided by a cultural ethos in line with the African Renaissance. A major challenge for the new municipalities is financial management and development.

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Local government focus is much on developing initiatives on basic services. Cooke & Lazzarretti (2007:292) state that through the provision of good quality and effective services good profile of the local municipality can be achieved. The implementation of local economic development by South African municipalities was unconditional. The initiative is intended to benefit local communities.

Malefane & Mashakoe (2008:5) state that the constitution serves as a foundation to the institutionalization of local economic development. Local economic development programme is an important wing of development in local government (Hindson, 2003:145). It is aimed at increasing economic growth and a more equitable distribution of development. According to Cornelissen (2005:81) the policies and strategies followed by local authorities are considered additional to economic growth and development goals.

However, local economic development brought negative factors such as urban decline, high unemployment rates and factors contributing poverty.

Malefane & Mashakoe (2008:474) affirm that the challenges facing cities were decaying central business and rural areas that were lacking basic infrastructure. Hence, economic growth and job creation are vital. Local economic development is not a new innovative concept. Since 1960 it passed through developmental stages. Local government has contributed to local economic development. It should be considered that there are various constraints in each local area that could influence local economic development goals. Opportunities should for example, be determined by the physical nature of a specific local government area (Lukkarinen, 2005:420).

Odendaal (2000:224) identifies the following roles that could be assumed by local government to promote local economic development:

FACILITATING ROLE

Facilitation helps local government with the local economic development system. Local government through the facilitating role can make a major contribution in service delivery. Networking should be initiated to promote local economic development. The Indlovu Regional Council is a good example of a local council through which facilitating role is displayed. It has established important networks in various spheres of government to enable all stakeholders in the area to share and exchange information.

COORDINATING ROLE

The multi-dimensional nature of local economic development suggests local government to have a co-coordinating role to fulfill. The co-ordination role in local government is a requirement to ensure that all the various stakeholders are pulled together to ensure that local economic development is achieved (Odendaal, 2000:225)

CONCLUSION

The researcher in this chapter discussed Local Economic Development (LED), effectiveness of local government and proper leadership as an important wing of development based on the concept of mobilization of resources. The aim of this chapter was to explore various aspects in local government that will enhance service delivery. The

following chapter gives two theories chosen by the researcher in giving an ideal solution to the problem of the study.

CONCEPTUAL MODEL

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlines the role of local economic development, effectiveness of local government and proper leadership as an important part of development. It also reflects the significance of traditional leaders in local government to deliver services. In this chapter, the researcher discusses the theory of Shannon & Weaver and Uses & Gratifications. This is significant to the study so that there will be ideal solutions to the problem in local government. By using these two theories, the researcher creates an ideal environment based on current problems for the study (a model). According to Duck (2007:86) it is impossible for the organization to perform a successful activity without conflicts. Hindi *et al.* (2004:13) state that the role of communication is preparing the community for public engagements.

DEFINING A MODEL

The model is the most basic element of the scientific method or a representation of a system that allows for investigation of the properties and prediction of future outcomes. They are used to make and test predictions and they may come in different shapes, sizes and styles. According to Sherry (2004:244), models are often used in quantitative analysis and technical analysis and sometimes used in fundamental analysis. Ivy & Wahl (2009) add that models are used to help us know, understand or simulate the subject matter they represent. Thus a model of communication refers to the conceptual scenario used to explain human communication process. The first major model for communication came in 1949 by Claude Elwood Shannon and Warren Weaver for Bell Laboratories. Following the basic concept, communication is the process of sending and receiving messages or transferring information from one part (sender) to another (receiver).

This study applies Uses & Gratifications theory as well as Shannon & Weaver's theory of communication to conceptualise a model for municipal communication.

SHANNON & WEAVER

Claude Shannon, an engineer for the Bell Telephone Company, designed the most influential of all early communication models. Shannon introduced a mechanism in the receiver which corrected the differences between the transmitted and received signal; this monitoring or correcting mechanism was the forerunner of the now widely used concept of feedback (Hartley & Bruckmann, 2002:22).

In summary, Shannon and Weaver indicate that when a message is sent from the sender to the receiver, the message is likely to be distorted. This is what they refer to as the noise or disturbance. The theory is very valuable today when it is used to understand why a communicated message does not reach its destination or is not understood in its intended context (Quintanilla & Wahl, 2011).

Feedback about the message is important to determine whether the message has been received and understood in its correct context. In the quest to address issues relating to noise reduction and receipt of the message, it is important that the governing structures take cognisance of the quality of the channel of the message also.

According to Duck (2007:86) the concepts of this model are important in communication research. It prompts us to examine the following issues in communication:

- Entropy-the measure of uncertainty in a system.
- Redundancy-the degree to which information is not unique in the system.
- Noise-the measure of information not related to the message.
- Channel capacity-the measure of the maximum amount of information a channel can carry.

These concepts would be used to address the communication gaps within municipalities.

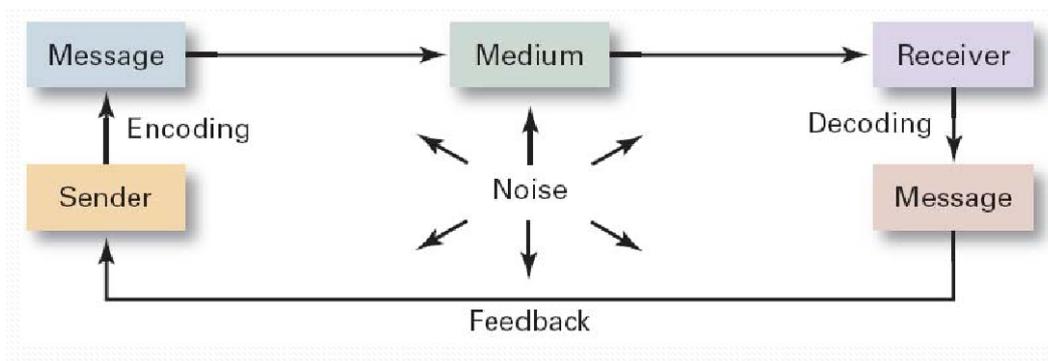


Figure 2: Diagram showing communication process
 Source: Hartley & Bruckmann, (2002:18)

USES & GRATIFICATIONS THEORY

Uses & Gratifications theory suggests that people play an active role in choosing and using what they need to use. Greene & Kremer (2005) believe that users take an active part in the communication process and are goal oriented in their media use. These theorists say that consumers seek out a source that best fulfills their needs. Uses & Gratifications assume that the user has alternate choices to satisfy their need. Uses & Gratifications theory takes a more humanistic approach to looking at media use. According to the theory, consumers have a free will to decide how they will use their commodity and how it will affect them.

According to Quintanilla & Wahl (2011), Uses & Gratifications theory consists of several elements. One element is that the audience is viewed as active and not passive. Local government should consider community members as business partners and stakeholders. This means that community members are the decision makers in whatever medium of communication they want to use. Not only are they decision makers but they are purposeful and intentional in their selection of mediums. For example, the community will prefer and be more comfortable with certain medium over another. The second element suggests that the link between the effects of media on a person is limited since it is their choice regarding which medium they use. This simply means that there can be a link between the medium chosen and the need that is being fulfilled. Using loud addresser or distributing pamphlets to notify community members about the ward meeting.

The third element is the media battle with other outlets, sources, etc. that could meet a need of a person. This could be more traditional sources such as television and radio. The fourth element of the theory is that people are able to identify and support their own interest and motives in a verbal way. The last element is cultural significance which can be postponed while audiences explore their orientation of the subject. This illustrates the power of the audience by being able to suspend cultural significance until the audience forms an opinion about it (Hartley & Bruckmann, 2002:37).

Ivy & Wahl (2009) state that Uses & Gratifications theory is an ideal solution to the problem that gives a framework and a starting point from which the real situation can be examined. This will assist to provide a more realistic solution to the problem. Shannon & Weaver's communication model helps to understand communication problem which exists within local government and probes to identify distractors of communication which hinders effective communication. Possible problems in communication could arise from the following:

- Ineffective communication channels.
- Communication barriers.
- Geographical location differences between the municipality and the community.

Finally, from a theoretical perspective the following would be an 'ideal' solution to the problem:

- Trained staff that will handle community matters.
- The use of effective communicating channels.
- Transparency, faithfulness and trust from both the municipality and community.

DESIGNING A CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR COMMUNICATION AT LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

The communicator is the originator of the message. This can be an individual or several people working together. Wood (2009:52) considers that the communicator can also be an institution or an organization. In most cases individuals are ultimately the sources representing or acting on behalf of the organization. The main responsibility for preparation of messages relies with the communicator; hence communication is characterized by mutual understanding and interchange. According to Bolarinwa &

Olorunfemi (2009:5), “message sent by resource should be short, clear, plain and understandable; noise should be reduced as much as possible during communication”.

Rudansky-Kloppers (2002:26) emphasizes that before sending the message, the source must first plan and decide what to say. This will make the central idea to be clear to the receiver. Mixed-up messages results in confusion and noise. The sender should be credible because credibility affects the way in which message is perceived. Greene & Kremar (2005:80) indicate that the credibility of a sender is influenced by status, appearance and expertise. In municipality for example, the municipal manager usually sends information flowing down the organizational structure. Subordinate staff can, in turn communicate the messages with the community using formal communication channels.

MESSAGE

According to Westhues (2006), message is the ideas and information that the communicator conveys to the recipient with an intention to initiate, support or ensure any form of behavioral action. Most messages are expressed in a form of language. For good communication to occur, the communicator and the recipient should have at least one minimum degree of mutual experience. The two should have the same experiences; hence the language used may have different meanings for the recipient and the communicator. Message contains data and information. Rudansky-Kloppers (2002:28) believes that the objectives of the message are to inform and persuade receivers to react in a particular way. The message consists of codes combined in a certain way so that the intended meaning be clear. Codes in the message contribute to give meaning to the message and obtain the objectives. According to Quintanilla & Wahl (2011) to convey effective message, AIDA model should be adopted. According to AIDA model message must attract the (A) attention, arouse the (I) interest, in it, evoke (D) desire and lead to (A) action.

- **Attention**

The message should arouse the receiver’s attention. Communication codes are used in a creative way to attract attention. Bright colors, beautiful pictures or loud sound can be used to grab the attention.

- **Interest**

It is important for the message to draw the receivers' interest to impart the information. Without interest, it is impossible for the receiver to react in an intended manner. Interest is vital for understanding the meaning of a message.

- **Desire**

Receivers consider the message according to their own desires and needs. Desire, however does not lead to action.

- **Action**

Action process should be made as easy as possible for the recipient.

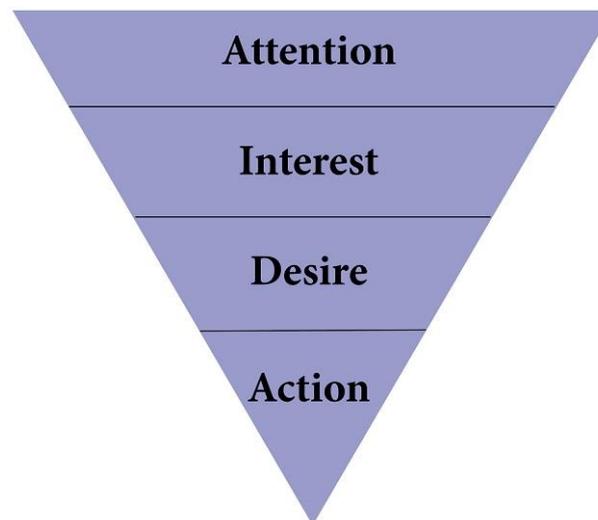


Figure 3: Diagram showing AIDA model

Source: Olivares, (2011)

ENCODING

Quintanilla & Wahl (2011:119) state that encoding is form of expression by the communicator of an already conceived idea into a message appropriate for transmission. To send turns a meaning into different series of signs and symbols, such as language. Decoding can therefore be an interpretation of received stimuli into a translated meaning. A recipient receives messages by changing the symbols and signs into a meaning. Rudansky-Kloppers (2002:28) refers encoding as the core idea of the message that includes the use of various codes. The codes can be in the form of pictures, words or sounds.

CHANNEL

Dutta-Bergmanb (2004:601) states that channel is a transport through which a message travels from a source to a recipient. It is a means by which the message is physically communicated. Channels can be classified into mass and interpersonal channels. Mass channels are those paths of encoding the messages; such as radios, televisions and print media to reach mass recipients. Other organizational communication can be meetings, memos, reports and discussions. In most institutions and organizations multiple e-mails, newsletters and annual reports are the means of mass channels representing a 'one-to-many' channel.

Interpersonal channels include a face-to-face exchange of information between a source and a recipient. According to Rudansky-Kloppers (2002:30) face-to-face communication is regarded as the best medium to convey message. In face-to-face communication, message can be reinforced with all kinds of gestures. A combination of verbal message and gestures makes communication to be effective (Ivy & Wahl, 2009). The municipalities can communicate their messages through loud addresser, distributing pamphlets, radio announcement or local newspaper advertisement.

DECODING

Rudansky-Kloppers (2002:31) states that decoding is a term for the recipient's thought process. The process of translating the message from coded form into meaning involves decoding. This is easier in face-to-face communication where there is only one receiver, but the problem arises where there is more than one receiver.

RECEIVER

Recipient is the most significant element in the process of communication. According to Rudansky-Kloppers (2002:30), the receiver sends messages in according to their own need. Maslow classifies human needs from physiological, safety, social, ego and self-actualization needs. Human needs are classified in a sequence whereby the lowest needs must be met before the next and higher needs can be addressed. Needs influence human behavior and affect the reception of all communication messages. Greene & Kremar (2005) mention that it is the senders' responsibility to take note of the receivers' experiences, emotions and

attitude. For example, for a starving community, their first basic need is food, then shelter, social needs, ego needs as well as self-actualization needs according to Abraham Maslow.

FEEDBACK

Feedback is a recipients' response to the communicators' message. Feedback therefore can be a measure of the effectiveness of a past communication. Dutta-Bergmanb (2004:601) states that feedback is a two-way communication process in which the communicator takes an account by modifying messages thus making a communication to be effective and dynamic. According to Zaremba (2003), positive and negative feedback respectively informs the communicator that the intended message was achieved or not achieved. In an organizational communication a negative feedback can cause hostility between the source and the receiver.

Wood (2009) believes that negative feedback is more crucial for achieving effective communication than a positive feedback. It is important for the organization to know its audience because if a source has false assumptions the recipients; the efforts to communicate are likely to be less effective. Rudansky-Kloppers (2002:33) suggests that one way communication does not provide feedback and is considered as ineffective communication. It is recommended that organizations and institutions use two-way communication. If a ward councilor is having a meeting with the residents, then he will take suggestions, requests, or complains from the community to municipal council.

Similarly when local government sends out a message, they need to have strategies in place to examine the impact of their message. This would help them understand whether their communication is effective or not.

NOISE

Noise is anything that can distract the message. Noise can be physical distractions. For example, when a councilor is addressing people in a meeting and people are unwilling to concentrate because they harbor negative feeling about the speaker and this hinders their listening skills.

SUMMARY

In view of Shannon & Weaver's advice (theory), as well as the Uses & Gratifications theory, one would expect the following communication strategy to be in place at local government level:

- Personnel – People who prepare messages for public consumption must be qualified. This means that strict principles of employment must be adhered to. Especially in South Africa, tough measures to eradicate nepotism and political deployment must be enforced to ensure that adequately qualified staff are employed to ensure that messages for public consumption are feasibly constructed.
- Strategic planning for a particular municipality must include all the people who will be affected by the policy/plan.
- The communication strategy must address contentious issues which may arise. This means that the public must be given sufficient time to examine and comment on future plans. This takes into account the Uses & Gratifications theory.
- The plan must be meaningful to all the residents of a municipality. The residents must appreciate and accept the change or the policy which would propose change for the future.
- Presentation of the message must be in simple terms for the residents to understand it.
- Bulletin or pamphlets distribution is one of the best tools to keep members informed of local municipality projects. It must contain useful information for the readers and be appealing to them and can be distributed monthly or quarterly.
- Feedback is the most important issue when sending out public messages. It helps one understand whether the message has accomplished its goal. Strategies need to be in place to examine feedback from the public. This will assist the municipality reshape the message if necessary until their entire population is well informed.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher used Shannon & Weaver and Uses & Gratifications theories to address and to give ideal solutions to the problem within local government. By using these two theories the researcher was creating an ideal environment based on current problems for the study. The following chapter outlines research procedures that are used for the study. It further elaborates instruments used as a means of collecting data, sampling methods, the selection of respondents as well as data analysis.

RESEARCH PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined two communication models in relation to the current study on local government. This chapter outlines research procedures that are used for the study. It further elaborates instruments used as a means of collecting data, sampling methods, the selection of respondents as well as data analysis. The importance of this chapter is to give the reader a clear portrait of how was this study conducted. Social research involves interaction with participants, asking them questions and be together with them in the field.

Babbie & Mouton (2001:4) point out that researchers use variety of methods and techniques in empirical study. These methods vary according to the tasks performed, from measurements and techniques to collection of data and analysis of data. The ability to produce knowledge and to use it effectively is one of the most features in research. Research is based on the collective and validated experiences of members of the scientific community rather than individual experiences (Grinnell & Unrau, 2008).

Bernard (2013:15) refers research methodology as the manner in which a researcher plans to collect data. To design the methodology of research, the researcher has to understand and grasp the logic of the study. Research involves collecting large masses of data. This chapter gives an in-depth insight on different research procedure and how this study was conducted using various research methods and design. Data collection, sampling methods and data collection methods will be discussed. The chapter will further outline unit of analysis and coding of data.

UNIT OF ANALYSIS

Babbie & Mouton (2001:84) say unit of analysis refer to the “*what*” of the study: what object, phenomenon, processes or events the researcher investigates. Rubin & Babbie (2005:138) perceive unit of analysis as things or people that researchers observe and describe. This may include organization or programs. Unit of analysis are also referred to as units of observation. The selection of a unit of analysis occurs spontaneously at the problem identification stage. A close look at a unit of analysis may lead a researcher to

decide to modify the unit to suit the interest of research objectives. De Vos, Strydom & Delport (2011:93) emphasize that the choice of a unit of analysis is inevitable and should be established in the process of formulation. There should be one unit of analysis, it can be the institution, hospice, church, community or identified government institution. Bernard (2013:44) suggests that one of the first things to be done by a researcher is to decide on the unit of analysis. For this study, the unit of analysis was the community members within Ulundi Municipality.

FIELD NOTES

Bernard (2013:346) recalls that human memory is a very poor recording device, especially for the kind of details that makes difference. It is therefore necessary for the researcher to carry along a writing pad. This applies to both formal and informal interviews. Taking notes provides with vital information to recall when transcribing. However, Cresswell (2007:37-39) acknowledges that every field worker taps into situations where it is impossible to write notes. It is ethical to be sensitive towards peoples' feelings and it is a good idea to just listen attentively and not write anything. Notes are based on explanations and form the basis of results. The researcher took field notes for two participants who asked not to fill the questionnaire but willing to take part in the study.

ETHICS IN RESEARCH

The following issues are important considerations which a researcher needs to keep in mind when conducting research.

AVOIDANCE OF HARM

The fundamental ethical rule of research is that it must bring no harm to respondents. Babbie (2007:27) states that subjects can be harmed physically and emotionally. The researcher has an ethical compulsion to protect respondents from all possible limits from any form of physical discomfort that may emerge during the course. De Vos, Strydom & Delport (2011:115) caution that emotional discomfort to respondents is more difficult to predict and to determine than physical discomfort. Respondents should be thoroughly informed beforehand about the impact of the investigation. For this research respondents were informed beforehand about the whole objectives of the research to avoid harm

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Rubin & Babbie (2005:71) recommend that participation of respondents should always be voluntary and no one should be forced to participate in the study. If the researcher does not ask for participants' permission in the study, the results will be biased and not genuine in a sense that participants will act differently if they know what is being studied. De Vos, Strydom & Delport (2011:116-117) noted that even if participants are told that their participation is voluntary, they might still think that they are somehow pressured to participate. The consent form was attached to the questionnaire and both the researcher and respondent had to sign that they have read and agree with what is written in the form.

INFORMED CONSENT

Grinnell & Unrau (2008:37) state that respect for respondents requires that subjects be given an opportunity to choose what shall or shall not be done to them. Having obtained informed consent implies that adequate information on the aim of investigation be rendered to potential participants. Babbie (2007:64) says the information of voluntary participation and no harm to participants have become adapted. Patton (2002:407) suggests that during the introduction, it should be communicated to participants that the information is important and the purpose of the interview should be clear. Babbie & Mouton (2001:382) stress that participants must be official and psychological competent to give their consent. The researcher remains obligated at all times to give a complete explanation of the total investigation, without pressure, in clear and understandable language. As for this study the researcher elaborated the nature of the study and gave consent forms to respondents as a proof that the respondents agree to participate.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

Privacy means to keep to oneself that which is normally not intended for others to know or observe. De Vos, Strydom & Delport (2011:119-120) mentions that every respondent has a right to privacy and it is his or her right to decide when, where, to whom and to what extent his or her attitudes, beliefs and behavior will be exposed. Privacy implies the element of personal secrecy, while confidentiality indicates the handling of information in an intimate manner. According Alston & Bowles (2003:23), confidentiality can be regarded as a continuation of privacy, which refers to agreements between persons that limit others' access to private information. The privacy of participants can be revealed by using hidden

devices such as video cameras, one-way mirrors and microphones. Section A of the questionnaire clearly indicated that personal identity of the participant will not be revealed; this ensured privacy and confidentiality of the respondent.

RELIABILITY

Blanche, Durrheim & Painter (2006:152) state to reliability as a degree of dependence of an instrument to yield the same results on consistent times. Salkind (2006:106) refers to dependable, consistent, stable, trustworthy, predictable and faithful as synonyms for reliability. If something is reliable, it will perform in the future as it has in the past. Reliability occurs when an instrument process the same thing more than once and results in the same outcomes. The reliability of measurement procedure is thus, the stability or stability of the measurement. De Vos, Strydom & Delpont (2011:177) consider that it is rare to have perfect reliability. An instrument can be reliable but not valid, but an instrument cannot valid without first being reliable.

VALIDITY

Blanche, Durrheim & Painter (2006:147) view validity as the level whereby the measurement does what it is intended or designed to do. To create a good validity, a researcher should determine whether the instrument is well suitable for the purposes it is designed for. Bernard (2013:45) argues that validity is the correctness and credibility of instruments (such as questionnaires), data as well as findings in a study. Validity in research is very crucial. Once the questionnaire is valid then data can be confirmed.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Blanche, Durrheim & Painter (2006:484) define questionnaire as a set of written questions aimed to gather information respondents. Babbie & Mouton (2001:232) mention that a term questionnaire suggests a collection of questions. Babbie (2007:246) identifies questionnaire as a document containing set of questions designed to lobby information appropriate for analysis. A typical questionnaire will contain many statements of questions, especially if the researcher is interested in determining the extent to which respondents hold a particular attitude or perspective (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:233). Questionnaire is the most generally used instrument. Questionnaire is regarded as one of the most used tool to collect data. Normally, a questionnaire consists of several of scales for qualitative evaluation. De Vos, Strydom & Delpont (2011:186) note that there are various types of

questionnaires, but for this project self-administered questionnaires were used. Blanche, Durrheim & Painter (2006:485) emphasizes that development of questions is a crucial aspect of developing any data collection instrument. Questions are developed by the main researcher with the assistance of people with extensive knowledge in the subject area. Questions should be short, simple and relevant to the objectives of the study however; a questionnaire can be too long when the study has a broad scope.

RATIONALE BEHIND THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire was the instrument to collect data to obtain the following objectives as stated in chapter 1:

- To assess the communicating strategies employed by local government.
- To evaluate whether community related information is easily accessible to different publics of the municipality.
- To determine how municipal activities are managed within local government.
- To evaluate the effectiveness local municipality councilors' methods of communication strategy when interacting with their constituents.
- To evaluate constituents' feedback with regards to local government's communication practices.

The questionnaire was divided into two i.e. section A and B. Each questionnaire was accompanied by the information sheet and consent form as attached in annexure 1-4. The information sheet consisted of guidelines to fill the questionnaire. This was done to clarify to the respondent the rationale behind the questionnaire. The consent form was attached to each questionnaire as a proof that the respondent voluntarily agreed to take part in the study. Both the researcher and the respondent had to sign the consent form.

Section A of the questionnaire seeks the respondents' biographical information including, age, gender and ethnicity. Section B includes the core questions of the study according to the objectives. Questions in section B evaluates how local government is communicating with the community. The questions were developed in order to assess the activeness and efficiency of communication channels to enhance service delivery. Some of the questions seek to know the role played by councilors in engaging into meaningful messages with the residents.

PILOT TESTING OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Barker (2003:327-328) defines pilot study as a process of testing and certifying an instrument by administering it to small group of participants of the intended sample. Rubin & Babbie (2005:219) recommend that participants of pilot study should not participate in the main investigation. Mitchell & Jolley (2001:13-14) emphasize that pilot study assist the researcher to fine tune and restore the process for a smooth main inquiry. Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee (2007:184) provide the most accurate definition of pilot study: a study conducted prior to the main research to check whether the methodology, sampling process, instruments and analysis are suitable and appropriate. The selected participants should be asked about ways of improving the questionnaire and provide as much opinions as possible. The pilot study should be executed and administered in the same manner as is planned for the main study.

Babbie (2007:256) recommends that it is better for the researcher to ask people to fill in the questionnaire than to read it through by looking for errors. Pilot testing achieves two objectives firstly, to improve the validity of the instrument and secondly, to estimate how long it takes to complete the questionnaire. A pilot testing can be conducted on either potential respondents to assess reading levels or on experts when the emphasis is more on improving content. Only after necessary adjustments have been made following the pilot test should the questionnaire be presented to the actual sample (Grinnell & Unrau, 2008).

CLOSED QUESTIONS

According to Maree & Pietersen (2007:161), a closed question provides a set of responses from which the participants has to choose more than one response. These questions offer respondent the opportunity of selecting one or more response varieties from a number given. Blanche, Durrheim & Painter (2006:487) stress the fact that closed questions save time, not allowing respondents to provide their own opinions but compel them to select from the provided. De Vos, Strydom & Delpont (2011:198) note that closed questions have an advantage of eliciting responses allowing for easier comparative analysis. Closed questions are advantageous in that the result of the investigation can become available very quickly (Neuman, 2006:287).

SAMPLING

Blanche, Durrheim & Painter (2006:49) describe sampling as the selection of participants from the population and deciding on what attributes, age group, race, socio-economic status or gender to observe. Babbie & Mouton (2001:164) define sampling as the process of selecting participants. Sarantakos (2000:139) indicates that the major reason for sampling is feasibility. The use of sampling may therefore result in more accurate and relevant information than might have been obtained if one had studied the entire population. This is because with sample, time, money and effort can be determined to produce better quality research, better instruments, more in-depth information and better trained interviewers. The core idea of sampling is representativeness by selecting a sample that will represent the entire population (Grinnell & Unrau, 2008). Respondents were randomly selected for this study.

DRAWING A RANDOM SAMPLE

Blanche, Durrheim & Painter (2006:134) say drawing a random sample indicates that each subject within the sampling parameters has an equal and independent chance of being selected for the sample. Jackson (2003:15) believes that simple random sampling is the easiest of the sampling methods where every individual in the population practically has an equal chance of being selected for the sample. Random sampling, also known as probability sampling is that method of drawing a sample of population so that each member has an equal chance of being selected (Monette, Sullivan & DeJong 2005:134). De Vos, Strydom & Delport (2011:226-228) illustrate random sampling as a method of drawing a sample of a population so that all samples have the same probability of being selected.

The population of Ulundi Municipality is 803.575 according to Statistics South Africa census conducted in 2011. Although five hundred and fifty questionnaires were distributed, only four hundred and sixty four un-spoilt questionnaires were available for analysis.

DATA PREPARATION & CODING

Having collected data, the researcher must be prepared for data entry (Blanche *et al.*, 2006:252). Coding means systematically reorganizing raw data into a format that is computer readable. Rubin & Babbie (2005:253) believe that there are many ways to code data depending on the manner at which it is collected. The simplest form of data analysis is univariate analysis whereby one variable is analysed. In qualitative research themes are used whilst quantitative consist of numbers. Data analysis goes through preparatory stage

whereby raw data is transcribed electronically using computer analysis programs. Raw data consist of collection of unprocessed measurements such as questionnaires. Raw data is disorganized and must be transformed into order before the analysis process (Cresswell, 2009).

Data preparation includes coding and interpretation. Coding involves applying set of themes to transform information from one form to the other, for example the computer can transform data into numbers by coding female = 1 and male = 2. The scores for all coded data are added up to give a total score (Neuman, 2006). The totals for all the items added together to give a total score. The score have an advantage of producing a reliable measure of an individual score. Codes written in the questionnaire should be entered in a computer to be used by statistical computer data. Coding and entering data are intensive and boring tasks and errors may easily occur. However, if there are any errors in data, all data must be re-entered but if there are no errors the researcher can continue. De Vos, Strydom & Delpont (2011:246) claim that a researcher can process data collected during the pilot study to address obstacles one by one.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher discussed research design, the process of data collection and analysis of results. The research design for the study and methodology were discussed in to detail. The researcher further explained various kinds of interviews, sampling methods, ethical conduct in research as well as the process of data analysis. This chapter is a pre-overview before the actual data collection and interpretation in chapter 8. The following chapter gives the illustrated figures results and interpretation.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter gives detailed measures of how data was collected. This chapter gives effect to the research objectives as stated in chapter 1 by presenting the empirical findings. The objective of the survey was to assess attitudinal responses to aspects such as communications' institutional strategies of the Ulundi Local Municipality to deliver services. The researcher proceeds to interpret, discuss and analyse the findings for each item. It is important that the researcher justifies, supports and contradicts the findings by linking the primary findings to the secondary findings. Discussions of findings follow under each graph or table.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Cresswell (2009) states that data analysis and interpretation is the process of assigning meaning to the collected information and determining the conclusions, significance, and implications of the findings. Data analysis consists of examining, classifying, tabulating or otherwise re-combining the evidence, to address the initial propositions of a study. According to De Vos, Strydom & Delport (2011) data analysis is considered to be an important step and heart of the research in field work. After collection of data with the help of relevant tools and techniques, the next logical step, is to analyse and interpret data with a view to arriving at an empirical solution to the problem.

The following analysis is conducted under sub-headings which are related to the question which is under scrutiny:

GENDER OF RESPONDENTS

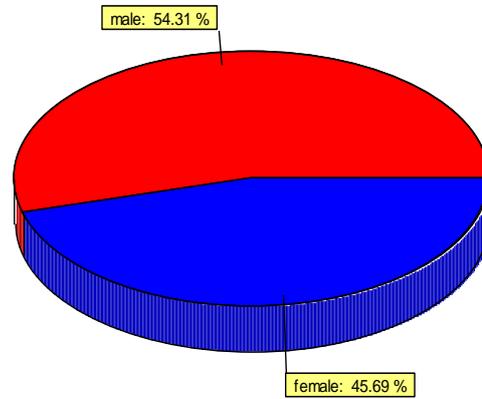


Figure 4: Gender distribution of participants

Of the total sample of respondents interviewed in Ulundi Municipality 252 (54.31%) were males, and 212 (45.69%) of respondents were females. Both genders are presented in the study however there were slightly more males than females (as illustrated in figure 4 above).

AGE OF RESPONDENTS

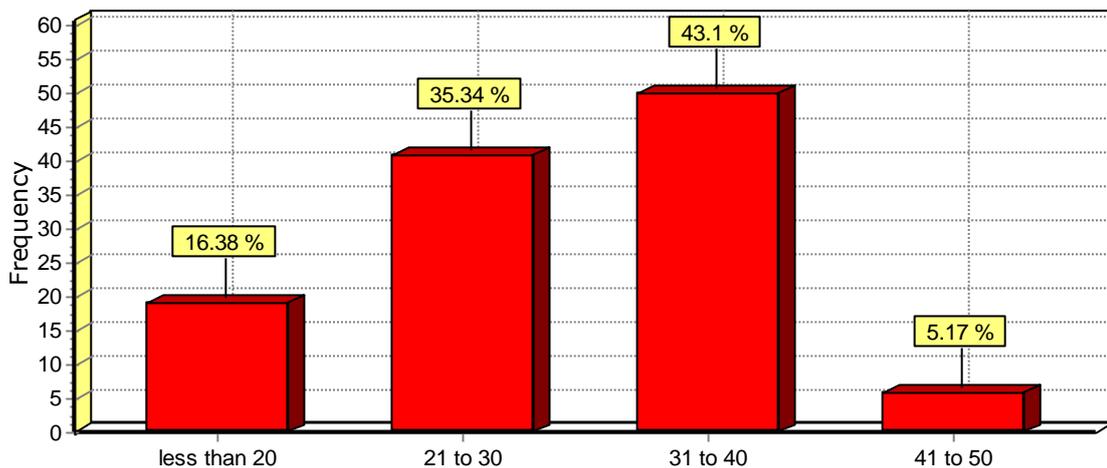


Figure 5: Age distribution of respondents

Twenty four respondents ages from 41-50 (5.17%) is the least age group that participated in the survey. Those who were less than age 20 (76 respondents) were (16.38%) followed by 164 respondents from ages 21-30 (35.34%). The majority of respondents that

participated in the study were 200 respondents between the ages 31-40 (43.1%) as illustrated in the graph. It is important for all groups to participate in issues concerning service delivery and development in the area. Young people should be more interested because when service delivery and development come, it opens opportunities for them. For example, if a project comes in the area it provides employment opportunities to young people of that area.

ETHNICITY OF RESPONDENTS

Ethnicity	
African	98.28%
Other	1.72%

Table 1: Ethnicity of participants

Table 1 shows ethnicity of participants, 456 (98.28%) of the respondents were Africans and only 8 (1.72%) were from other races. It is indicated in chapter 3 that the place Ulundi is surrounded by a number of large and densely populated tribal areas characterized by informal settlements. It is historically and culturally the center of the Zulu nation and home to the king of the Zulus. The area around Ulundi has been the domain of Zulu royalty.

KNOWLEDGE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONING

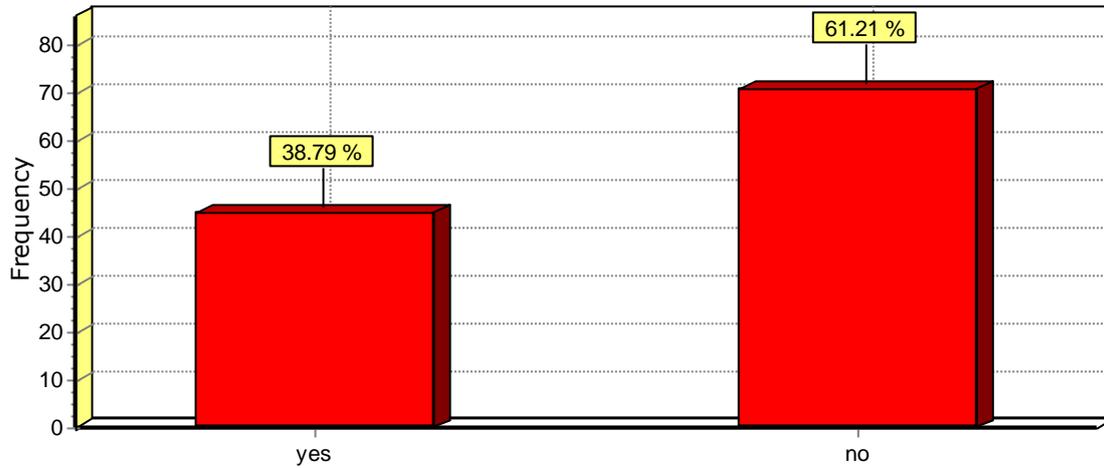


Figure 6: Local government functioning

Participants were asked whether they know how local government functions or operates. The graph above reveals that 284 (61.21%) of the people do not know local government functioning and 180 (38.79%) know local government operation. It is the responsibility of the municipality to consult with the community on public engagements that municipality has. The vision and policies of how local government should work must be made known to local communities. This should target especially those members within communities that are most marginalized and excluded, such as women, disabled people and poor people. Furthermore, Ulundi Municipality should be serious about their responsibility to meet basic needs of the poor in communities in a cost-effective and affordable manner.

WARD COUNCILLOR INFORMATION

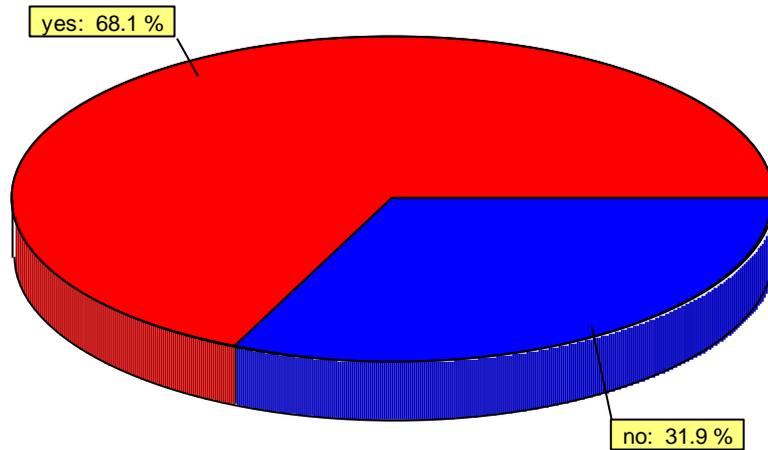


Figure 7: Ward councillor

Figure 7 shows that 316 (68.1%) of participants know their ward councillor and 148 (31.9%) respondents do not know their councillor. It is unexpected to know that there are community members who do not know their councillor. It is the responsibility of each community member to know his councillor. A councillor is a representative of the people and one of his responsibilities is to work with local communities to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs. Councillors do not act as individuals and do as they wish. Their actions are visible to the public so that the public is able to object them.

MEETINGS WITH RESIDENTS

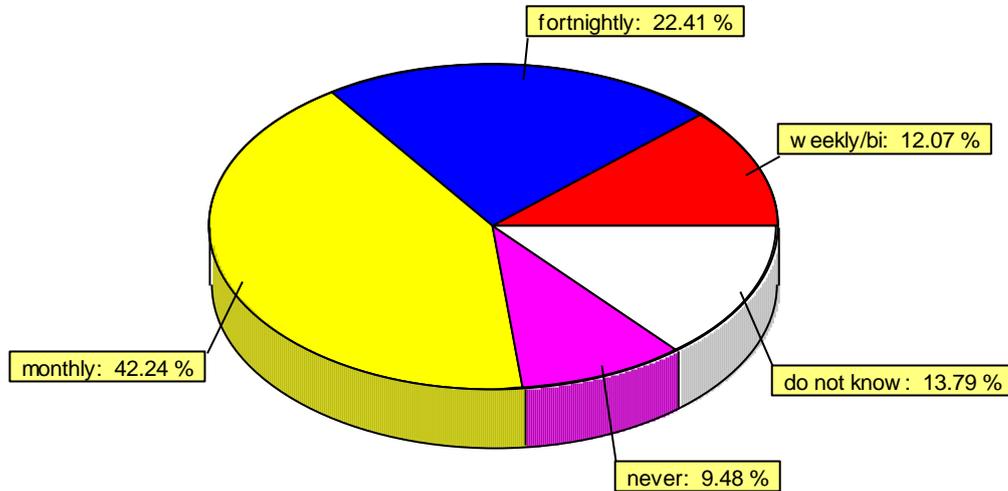


Figure 8: Percentage of meetings with community members

Participants were asked how often they hold meetings with their ward councilors. Figure 8 illustrates that 44 (9.48%) of community members never had a meeting with their councilor, 64 (13.79%) do not know whether they had a meeting with their councilor whilst 56 (12.07%) meet with the councilor weekly. One hundred and four (22.41%) participants said that their councilor meets them fortnightly and the large proportion of the sample 196 (42.24%) indicated that their councilor meets them once in a month. The above responses were not from one ward, the researcher used different participants within Ulundi Municipality. Councilors must attend all meetings, unless leave of absence is granted. They can be fined for not attending. If they do not attend three or more meetings in a row, they must be removed from office according to South African Local Government Association (SAGLA). This involves consulting with people about service levels, problems and proposals for new developments.

CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

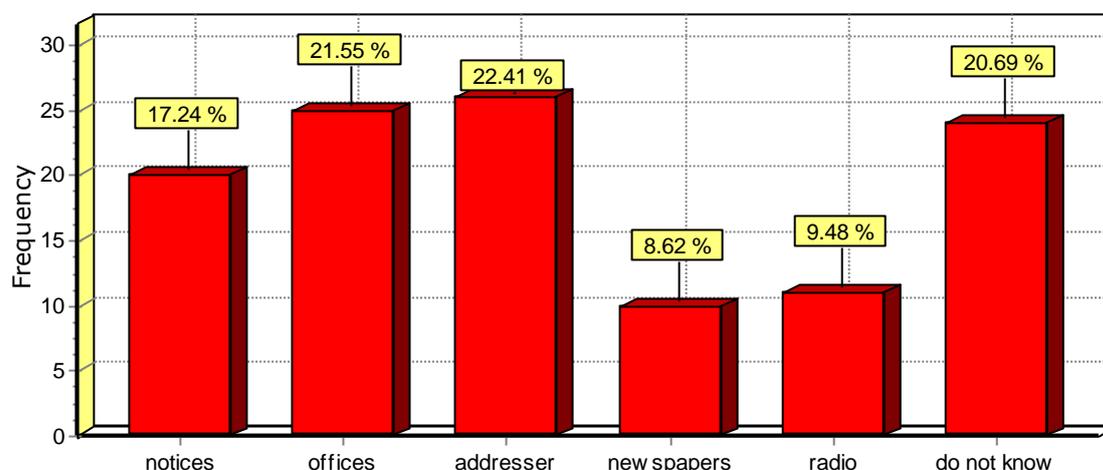


Figure 9: Various forms of communication used by the municipality

Figure 9 graphically shows rates of various forms of communication that the municipality is using. Of all the sample 80(17.24%) participants revealed that municipality is using public notice boards to communicate with them, 100 (21.55%) said municipality uses their offices whilst 104 (22.41%) claim that loud addresser is used and 40 (8.62%) preferred newspapers. 44 respondents (9.48%) showed that they listen to radio if they want to get updates from municipality and 96 (20.69%) of the population do not know what does the municipality uses to communicate with them. The researcher advises that Ulundi Municipality can also use modern social networks such as Facebook and Twitter especially to reach out large population of residents. All existing channels of communication should be used to disseminate information. Municipal reception area has to be filled by well trained and conversed personnel.

MEETINGS ATTENDANCE

Attendance of meetings	
Yes	95.69%
No	4.31%

Table 2: Percentage of participants that attend municipal meetings

Table 2 illustrates that 444 (95.69%) of the participants have attended meetings held by the municipality and 20 (4.31%) never attended these meetings. Residents are encouraged to respond positively when the municipality is calling a meeting with them. In such meetings, there are multiple opportunities for public comment. However, municipal council have duties as well as rights to exercise their powers and use their resources in the best interests of the local community and ensure that municipal services are provided to the local community in an equitable and environmentally sustainable manner.

PARTICIPANTS IN MEETINGS

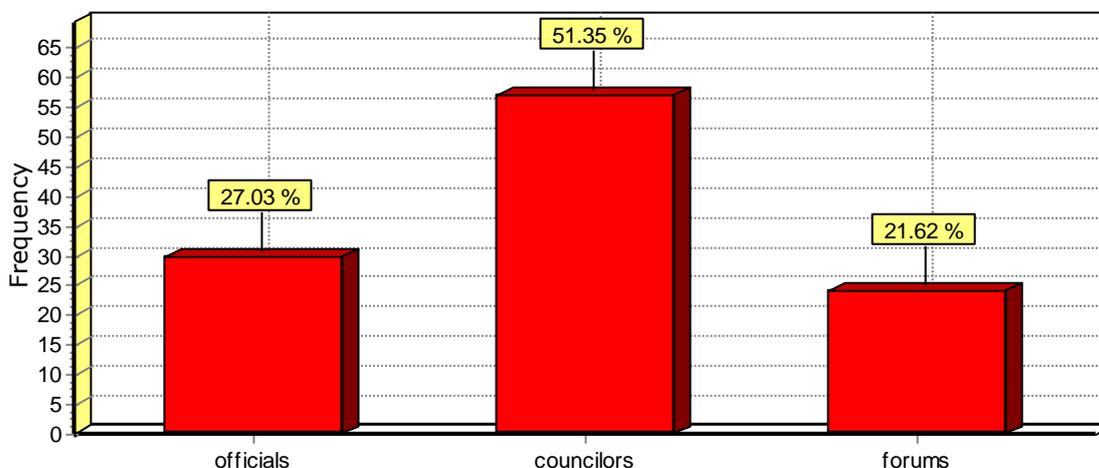


Figure 10: Graph showing those who participate in meetings

Figure 10 is the continuation of table 2; respondents were asked that who participates in meetings that are called by the municipality. Of the total sample 125 (27.03) of the participants indicated that municipal officials participates in meetings; 238 (51.35%) said councilors participate in meetings and 100 (21.62%) said it community form members that participate. Community meetings accommodate all ordinary people of the village or ward, thus allowing every voice to be heard. Councilors are required to attend and chair meetings on a regular basis as part of their responsibilities. Officials may hold meetings with the aim

of consulting, to receive inputs, comments, concerns and recommendations on the proposed subject.

CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

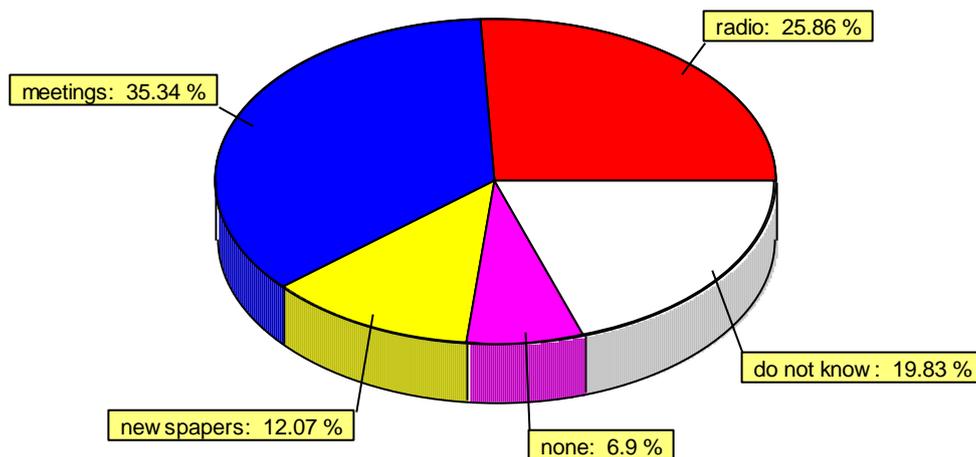


Figure 11: Communication channels used by the municipality

Figure 11 above shows different forms of communication that are being used by the municipality to interact with public. Of the total sample 120 (25.86%) listen to radio if they want to hear from the local municipality, 164 (35.34%) attend local meetings, 56 (12.7%) read newspapers for municipal notifications, 32 (6.9%) participants reveal that they do not receive communication for the municipality and 92 (19.83%) do not know as to whether the municipality communicate with them or not. It is important that the communications department within the municipality formulate effective strategy to assist, support and guide councilors and heads of departments who communicate government programs with the public.

KNOWLEDGE OF PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES

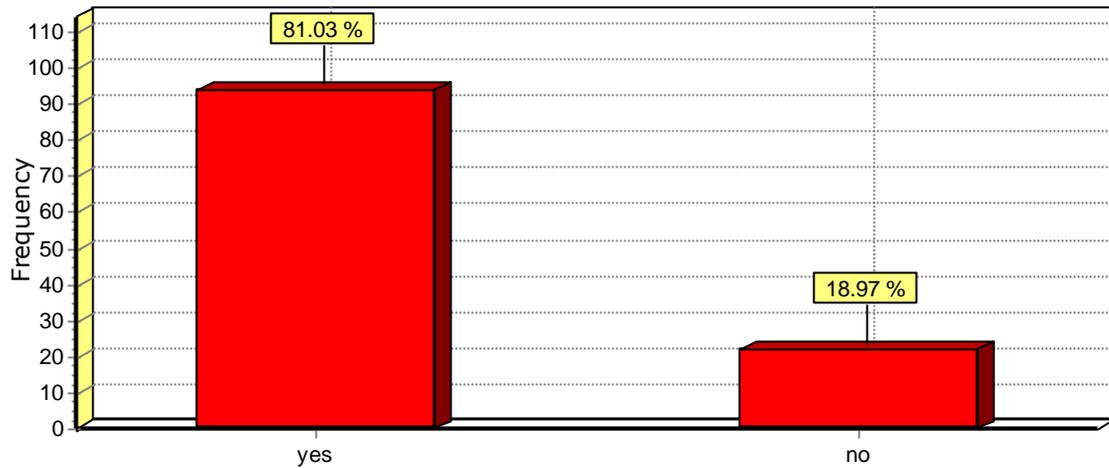


Figure 12: Percentage of participants who know their ward committee or community forum members

The graph illustrates the figures of participants who interact with their ward committee members or community forums. It is interesting that 376 (81.3%) of the respondents communicate with their ward members and only 88 (18.97%) do not interact with these committees. This shows that the public attend regular meetings of the ward committee members that are held on a regular basis. These meetings sit at least 6 times a year, preferably monthly so that issues can be tabled and reported on regularly. It should be noted that these committees increase the participation of local residents in municipal decision making, as they are a direct and unique link with the council and can monitor the performance of the municipality and raise issues of concern to the local ward.

MUNICIPALITY ENGAGEMENTS

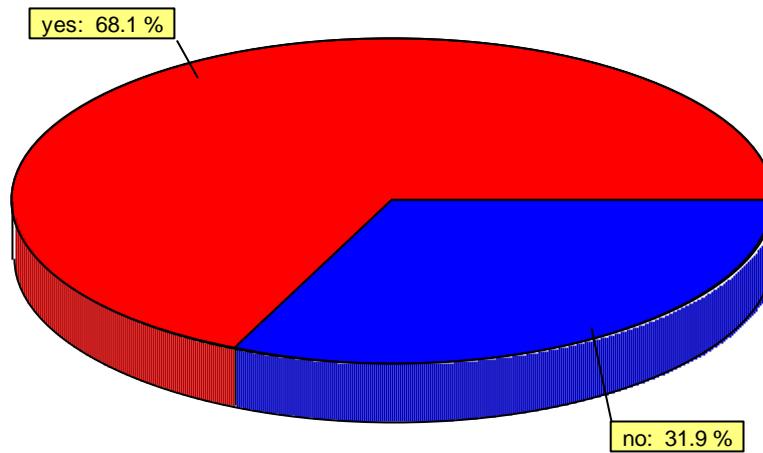


Figure 13: Involvement of municipality in community engagements

Figure 13 reveals community engagements in municipal events, 316 (68.1%) of the participants agreed that local government involves them in their projects and only 148 (31.9%) of the participants said they do not participate in municipal events. The large percentage of respondents who participated in municipal affairs is an indication that people are willing to work together with the municipality. There should be an on-going communication, debates, engagements and participation between the municipality and its community. These results are the good indication of improvement in communication between councilors, ward committee members and the community. However, the municipality needs to improve the development of communication strategy.

PEOPLE THAT ADDRESS ISSUES OF SERVICE DELIVERY

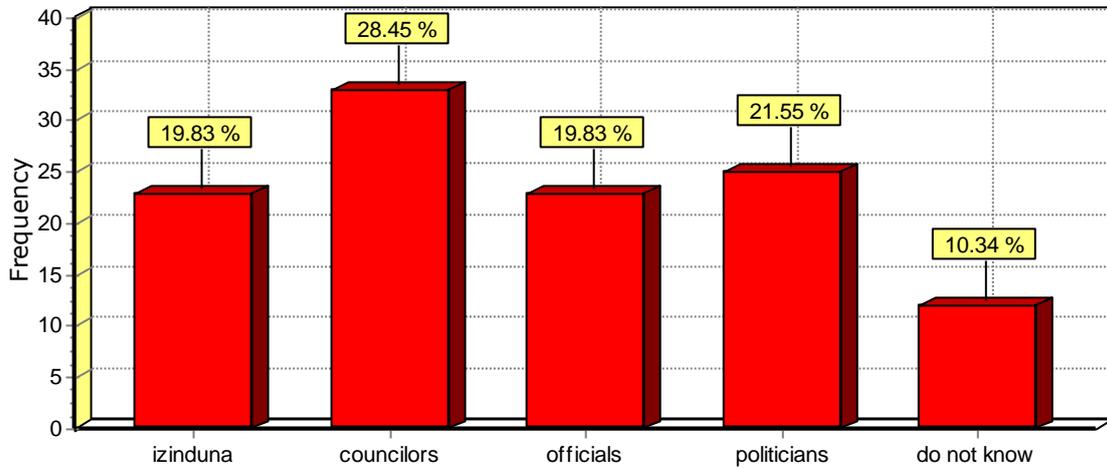


Figure 14: Opinions from participants for people to address issues of development

Figure 14 graphically shows the opinions of the participants that the community feels that should address their needs. Most respondents 132 (28.45%) prefer their councilors to address their needs, 100 (21.55%) chose politicians to address service delivery issues, followed by 92 (19.83) for both *izinduna* and municipal officials and 48 (10.34%) of the participants do not know who should address their needs. Communities in local government are assets and have a right to determine people who should govern them and on what principles. A successful local government is a collaboration of the above structures, working together with a common goal to improve their communities. This will require the entire municipality and its citizens in finding the best solutions to achieve good long-term development. The municipality may also outsource their services by hiring someone else to deliver the service but it remains the responsibility of the municipality to choose the service provider and to make sure that they deliver the service properly.

POLITICAL CONNECTIONS

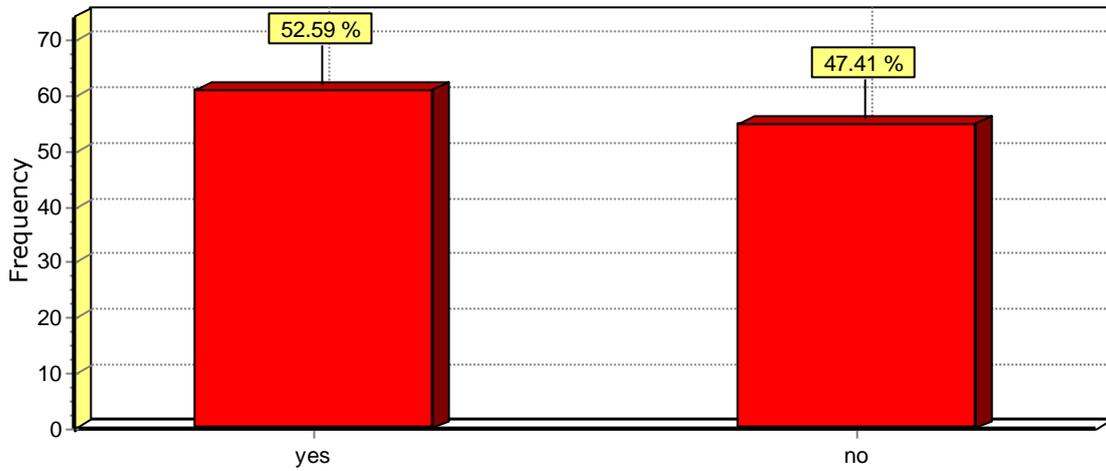


Figure 15: Political affiliation with delay of service delivery

Figure 15 illustrates that 244 (52.59%) of the respondents believe that politics in local government is likely to delay service delivery and 220 (47.41%) of the participants claim that service delivery delay is not affiliated with politics. The role of politics and administration is not the issue of a single municipality. The fact about local government is that most administrators in local government are politicians or are politically active in one way or another. The issue of politics seems to be prevalent throughout the African continent. It is therefore, important to analyze how the interface between politics and administration affects service delivery.

ACCESSIBILITY OF MUNICIPAL OFFICES

Access of community members to municipal offices	
Yes	51.72%
No	48.28%

Table 3: Access to municipal offices

The table above reveals that 240 (51.72%) of the participants access municipal offices without any interruptions for any kind of assistance and 224 (48.28%) of the participants show that it is not easy to access the municipality for assistance. Based on these results, the South African government has clear policies that local municipalities and councilors should be sensitive to the community and be responsive to local problems. Partnerships should be built between society and local government to address service delivery issues. Local government has the responsibility to bring different developments in the community. This involves identifying community structures such as ward committees and community policing forums. Public participation should be seen as a strategic tool that is meant to assist municipalities in reaching out to the wider communities.

COMMUNICATION GRATIFICATION

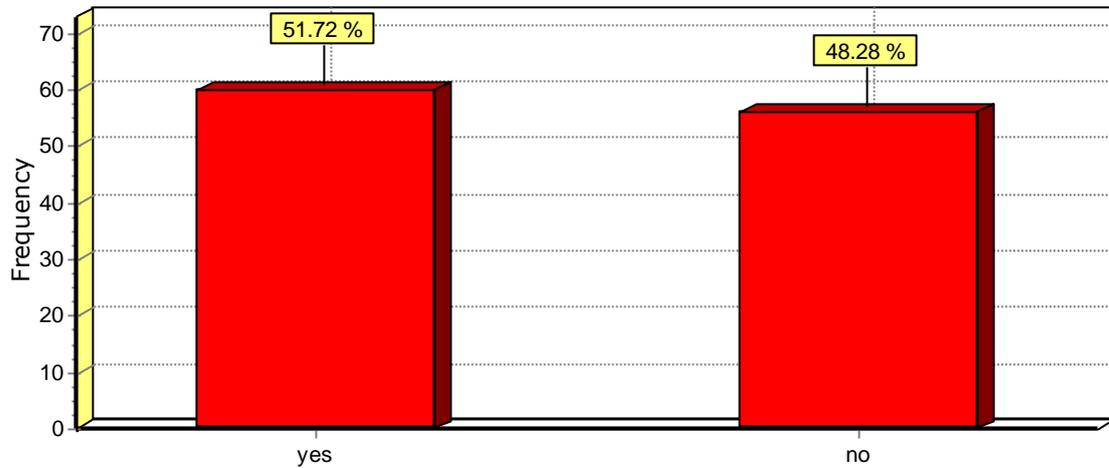


Figure 16: Percentage of participants on communication satisfaction

Figure 16 graphically shows that 240 (51.72%) of the respondents are satisfied with the way information is communicated to them and 224 (48.28%) of the respondents are not satisfied. Effective communication is recognized as a key element any organization. To launch efficient communication programme, local government must first get a clear understanding of its communication environment. It will define communication policy and establish the objectives and priorities of communication strategies that carry the vision, the mission and the priorities of the organization.

LANGUAGE OF COMMUNICATION

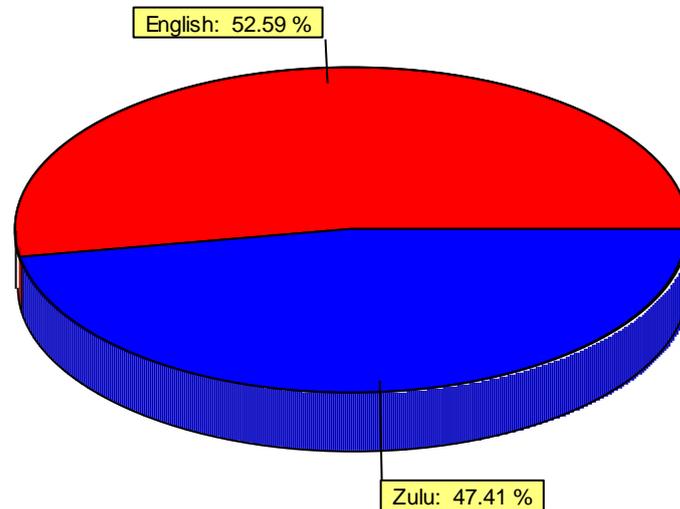


Figure 17: Language used

Figure 17 shows that 244 (52.59%) of the participants says the municipality uses English when communicating with them and 220 (47.41%) of the participants shows that the municipality uses isiZulu to address community members. The Ulundi municipal area includes settlements, the largest part of which is rural and underdeveloped and level of literacy is low. Local government should take note that if messages are communicated to the community they use language that will be understood by every community member.

CONCLUSION

From the data interpretation and analysis in this chapter, the researcher will be able to draw recommendations in the following chapter on a study on local government communication. This chapter has provided a brief explanation of the relevant research methods used in conducting this research. This was necessary, as the analysis gave direction to the tools used for the empirical survey. The principal research method used was a standard questionnaire prepared to guide the interviews with all categories. The following chapter will outline recommendations for the whole study.

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the researcher presented results from respondents presented in graphs and tables. This chapter focuses on integrating and offering phenomenal practical framework for the responses generated from the previous chapter. The core idea of this study was to explore the effectiveness of communication strategy that is used by Ulundi Municipality to interact with their publics. One of the objectives of this research was to assess different forms of communication tools used by local government in rural communities.

The first step in achieving this objective was an in-depth theoretical study. The second step was an empirical survey that was conducted among the community members in Ulundi. This study had some limitations. The researcher wishes to mention that the study intended to use both municipal employees and community members from Ulundi Municipality as indicated in chapter one. An access letter was received from the municipality but there was lack of support from potential participants because of their tight work schedules from municipal employees and ended up using only community members.

OBSERVATIONS

These observations are formulated in line with the objectives of the study. In certain instances more information is provided to strengthen some arguments.

In this study, both genders were adequately represented. The majority of respondents that participated in the study were respondents between the ages 31-40. This creates the impression that the income generating groups are keener on participating in governmental issues. It would be encouraging to motivate younger people to become more involved in service delivery at government level since their input could assist in job creation.

Ulundi is surrounded by a number of large and densely populated tribal areas characterized by informal settlements. It is historically and culturally the center of the Zulu nation and

home to the king of the Zulus. The area around Ulundi has been the domain of Zulu royalty. A large number of people do not know how local government operates. It is important for all people to understand how local government operates. Ignorance will result in corruption and poor service delivery. Local government should take the initiative to educate people about local issues.

This study indicated that many people know their ward councilor. Generally, the onus is on each community member to know his councilor. A councilor is a representative of the people and one of his responsibilities is to work with local communities to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs.

The study also revealed that many people do not know how often meetings are held between the community members and the councilor. Community members are supposed to attend these meetings. This is possible when notices of meetings are publicized. Although, many people were unaware of how often these public meetings occur, many people attend the meetings. This would indicate that many people attend these meetings when their family or friends invite them along. These meetings assist the communities to raise issues that concern them. Councilors are duty bound to attend all these meetings, and can be fined for not attending.

Most people believe that municipalities should create an environment whereby the process of governance is accessible and available to all citizens. To accomplish this, the municipality should eliminate barriers preventing access to proper decision-making and maladministration. Notices of meetings must reach every household timeously and people must be given the freedom to express their concerns in a non-threatening environment. These meetings are important for all residents to consult, comment and receive feedbacks.

Members of the community prefer various forms of communications. However the municipality will have to identify the most effective channel to pass their messages. This will ensure that all residents are well informed. The study also revealed that most people communicate with their ward committee members. This is an indication that people do have the opportunity to interact with ward councilors. These committees increase the participation of local residents in municipal decision making and raise issues of concern to the local ward.

The impression created is that that local government involves their citizens in their projects. This means there should be an on-going communication and participation between the municipality and its community. This is a good indication of improvement in communication. Most respondents prefer their councilors to address community needs. Communities have a right to determine people who should govern them. People believed that for Ulundi municipality to be successful, residents should work together with their councilors with a common goal to improve their local communities.

Although we live in a democratic country, political affiliations have a negative impact on service delivery. Dominant political party members (councilors and municipal workers), have a tendency to marginalize opposition supporters. The issue of politics is dominant in most municipalities in the country. It is therefore, important to analyze how the interface between politics and administration affects service delivery. There is a great need to find a balance between political interference and service delivery. Political interference is a major source of poor service delivery and needs urgent attention. From a bird's eye view, all would seem normal since the theoretical practices of hosting meetings and discussions are set in place yet the practical aspect of satisfactory service delivery is missing. This study has revealed that strong political interference play a major role in distorting good practice.

Although meetings are held and decisions are taken, there is always a lack of anticipated action thereafter. It is normally impossible for residents to gain access to municipal managers (or workers) to find reprieve from their problems however, certain politically privileged individuals have no problems in getting the attention of crucial municipal workers. The *Batho Pele* principles are posted boldly on municipal building yet they are blatantly compromised. Community members should be able to access municipal departments, its personnel and councilors during the allocated office times, yet this is not possible. The culture of many municipal employees' non-compliance needs urgent attention. Many respondents are of the view that majority of the people who go to the municipality to resolve problems are continually passed from pillar to post.

According to this study, most residents are satisfied with the way information is communicated to them. This may include information about municipal projects about development. However, there is a major problem with the manner in which transactions are managed and with the manner in which problems are resolved.

Many respondents are of the opinion that the medium of communication to the people is compromised. There is the impression that a central agency supplies the same generic posters to all the municipalities and these generic posters or fliers are used to speak to the locals. This means that the level of understanding of the target population is not given due consideration. For example, a poster in Chinese language is posted in a Xhosa village. The poster may get a lot of attention without the relevant understanding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

With regards to the research findings, several recommendations pertaining to the selected municipality and future research has been identified:

The Ulundi Municipality embraces or needs to embrace of all its citizens; these must include many families who live in isolated rural settlements. Only people, who live close to the municipal offices or close to the dominant political party sections, are given priority in terms of regular service delivery. The large numbers of families who live in the isolated rural districts are very often forgotten. It must be noted that a third of South African's live in rural areas. This translates to a large number of human beings who also require basic services which they are entitled to. In a democracy such as South Africa, political affiliations should not be criteria for provision of service delivery.

South African society is characterized by high social and economic inequalities, especially in rural areas. According to Borat & Kanbur (2006) rural areas have high rate of poverty and unemployment which can affect the ability of municipalities to fulfill their service delivery. Municipalities on the other side should create an environment whereby the process of governance is accessible and available to all citizens. To accomplish this, the municipality should eliminate barriers preventing access to proper decision-making and maladministration. Community members should be able to access municipal departments, its personnel and councilors.

There must be a combined decision on the choice of medium to transfer the message, for example, one medium such as communication by email may not be usable by everyone in the community. More than one means of communication need to be used so that no single person or groups of people are at advantage or disadvantaged. Piombo & Nijzink (2005) also confirm this recommendation by adding that the municipality must first get a clear understanding of its communication environment. It will define its communication policy

and establish the objectives that carry the vision and mission of local government. The only way local government can develop appropriate services and policies is by listening to its members. In most national departments, a link to a website and an email address are displayed. There are many more possible devices for communicating, both internally and externally. However, it is important to choose tools that are appropriate for community members. Culture of certain municipal employees' not accepting responsibility needs to be addressed. This is evident when community members are passed or referred from one person to another.

To promote interactions among community members, the municipality can prepare a functional plan of communication. This must include keeping and maintaining a directory of every family under their jurisdiction. Communication occurs when parties share information. Its effectiveness depends on the level of accessibility that exists between those parties. It is a critical component because it facilitates interaction and dialogue. The exchange of knowledge and ideas allows for the integration of concepts resulting in informed decision-making.

An effective communication strategy has to be designed to assist and guide councilors and heads of departments who communicate with community members as part of the execution of their duties. Sindane (2009:601) also confirms this recommendation by indicating that communication strategy requires an action plan that spells out in detail what is to be done. Communication is recognized as a key element in any institution, whether it is a multi-national corporation or a local government. Efficient communication is more than a simple transfer of information. It must ensure that the message is received and understood.

This recommendation is further strengthened by Piombo & Nijzink (2005) who add that preparing the communication strategy requires time and attention, because this strategy will act as the backbone of the organization. The communication strategy should be consulted regularly, especially while preparing a new communication plan. It should also be updated when necessary, for example, after a change in the constitution or a major shift in the national political landscape.

This is possible when communication specialists are employed to undertake government communications. There is no shortage of communication specialist since many universities produce communication graduates on an annual basis. It is unfortunate to see secretaries

and matriculants hired as communication, marketing or advertising specialist in municipal offices. This problem is much deeply entrenched in South Africa because of political deployment and nepotism. Further research needs to be undertaken to find ways of eradicating political deployment and nepotism to ensure that this country becomes economically strengthened.

Local government needs to design and implement a well-structured Public Relations plan to improve the relationship between its employees and its public. This will also include managing and maintain a healthy Human Resources programme which is free of political innuendoes. McLennan & Seale (2010), also confirm that if local government wants to grow, it must listen to people and adapt itself in reaction to what it hears. Many organizations present their communication activities in an unstructured method or repeat the same communication projects year after year without analyzing the effectiveness of the outcomes. This result in wasting lot of time, energy and money on communication activities that is not relevant anymore. Similar to any other administrative function, communication programmes must be driven in a strategic way. This process can be used through research, planning, action and evaluation.

According to Ramachandran (2008) cellphone/internet connectivity rate has drastically improved in rural areas of South Africa. This pattern has also been observed in this study. In this regard, local government must consider using new social media as a means of communication to its public. Almost every household has one cell phone which has internet connectivity and this would augur well for efficient, fast and reliable communication. This can be done by using of modern forms of communication tools for example, creating Facebook page or Twitter handle for Ulundi Municipality to have access to most young residents. New media technology affects every aspect of society. Throughout the twenty first century, people received most of their information from e-mails, blogs, broadcasters, websites and social networking. However, it is important to note that the choices about forms of communication are not necessarily the same in all communities. For instance, it might be the case in rural areas that the local newspaper and broadcast outlets have a very limited online presence and that is a determinant in whether residents get local information online or not. The researcher recommends also that Ulundi Municipality should improve their website as other links are non-functional or have long outdated articles.

The communication strategy must address contentious issues which may arise. Residents must be given sufficient time to examine and comment on communication strategy for the municipality. This takes into account the Uses & Gratification theory as detailed in chapter 6 of this document. This theory provides an approach that is audience-centered. It deals with how and why people adopt specific media to satisfy their needs. Application of the Uses & Gratification theory would ensure that people's needs are addressed and they would find gratification in local government's efforts to appease its public. It further identifies what people do with the media to discover underlying motives and to identify the positive and the negative consequences of specific media use.

CONCLUSION

This chapter provides an overview of the viewpoints of the respondents. It was also used to provide recommendations for the improvement of the communication strategies employed by the local municipalities. This chapter also concludes the formal aspect of the thesis.

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ADDENDUM 1: CONSENT FORM



CONSENT FORM

Project Title: *A Communication Perspective of how Local Government is Equipped to Interact with the Publics it Serves: A Study of the Ulundi Municipality*

Name and contact details of researcher:

Nobuhle Ndaba

Cell no: +27- 83 863 9785

E-mail: ndabanobuhle@gmail.com

Please tick box

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.

I agree to take part in the above study.

Name of Participant Signature

Date

Name of Researcher Signature

Date

ADDENDUM 2: INFORMATION SHEET

INFORMATION SHEET

A Communication Perspective of how Local Government is Equipped to Interact with the Publics it Serves: A Study of the Ulundi Municipality

University of Zululand

Department of Communication Science

Researcher: Ndaba Nobuhle Elizabeth (200806133)

Supervisor: Prof. H Rugbeer

Co-supervisor: Dr. G.M Naidoo

Note to the respondent

I would like to know your opinions on communication perspectives used to evaluate external communication process at Ulundi municipality. Kindly note that you are not forced to participate in this study. Your remarks will remain private and confidential and no one will be able to see or access them. Please answer the questions truthfully.

- Please use a pen to mark your responses by placing a tick (✓) or a cross (X) in the appropriate column. Please do not change any of your responses this includes scratching out or using tippex.
- The questionnaire will take ten (10) minutes to complete.

Thank you for agreeing to assist.

Contact details: Nobuhle E. Ndaba

Cell no: +27-83 863 9785

E-mail: ndabanobuhle@gmail.com

ADDENDUM 3: QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire to Municipal Residents

A Communication Perspective of how Local Government is Equipped to Interact with the Publics it Serves: A Study of the Ulundi Municipality

SECTION A: Personal Information

Please fill the following information. Your personal identity will NOT be revealed when the results of the study are published.

1. Gender

	A tick (✓) or a cross (X)	Office use only
Male		1
Female		2

2. Age

	A tick (✓) or a cross (X)	Office use only
Less than 20		1
21 to 30		2
31 to 40		3
41 to 50		4
Above 51		5

3. Ethnicity

	A tick (✓) or a cross (X)	Office use only
African		1
White		2
Indian		3
Other		4

Section B: Evaluation of Communication Process

This section evaluates how local government communicates to the community. Your responses will assist the municipality to improve their communication with the community.

Please indicate your response by a tick (✓) or a cross (X) on the appropriate box.

4. Do you know how local government functions or operates?

	A tick (✓) or a cross (X)	Office use only
Yes		1
No		2

5. Do you know your ward councilor?

	A tick (✓) or a cross (X)	Office use only
Yes		1
No		2

6. How often does your ward councilor have meetings with people in community?

	A tick (✓) or a cross (X)	Office use only
Weekly or bi-weekly		1
Fortnightly		2
Monthly		3
Never		4
I do not know		5

7. How does the municipality inform you about local meetings?

(You may choose more than one option).

	A tick (✓) or a cross (X)	Office use only
Public notice boards		1
At municipal offices		2

Loud addresser		3
Local newspapers		4
Radio announcements		6
I do not know		7

8. Have you attended any of the public meetings hosted by the municipality?
(For example: ward meetings, forum meetings or council meetings)

	A tick (✓) or a cross (X)	Office use only
Yes		1
No		2

9. If your answer is YES to question 8, who participates in these meetings?

	A tick (✓) or a cross (X)	Office use only
Municipal officials		1
Councilors		2
Community Forum members		3

10. How does the municipality communicate their general messages?
(You may choose more than one option).

		A tick (✓) or a cross (X)	Office use only
10.1	Radio		1
10.2	Meetings		2
10.3	Newspapers		3
10.4	None		4
10.5	I do not know		5

11. Did you ever interact with the following community structures: ward committee, community forum and steering committee?

	A tick (✓) or a cross (X)	Office use only
Yes		1
No		2

12. Does the municipality engage the community to participate in events?

	A tick (✓) or a cross (X)	Office use only
Yes		1
No		2

13. In your opinion, who do you think is responsible to address the needs of the community?

(More than one tick is acceptable).

		A tick (✓) or a cross (X)	Office use only
13.1	Izinduna		1
13.2	Ward councilors		2
13.3	Municipal officials		3
13.4	Political parties		4
13.5	I do not know		5

14. Do you think political affiliation is likely to delay service delivery and the development process?

	A tick (✓) or a cross (X)	Office use only
Yes		1
No		2

15. Is it easy to access municipal offices or officials for any form of assistance?

	A tick (✓) or a cross (X)	Office use only
Yes		1
No		2

16. Are you satisfied with the way information is communicated to you?

	A tick (✓) or a cross (X)	Office use only
Yes		1
No		2

17. What language does the municipality use when communicating with the community? *(More than one tick is acceptable)*

		A tick (✓) or a cross (X)	Office use only
17.1	English		1
17.2	Zulu		2
17.3	Afrikaans		3
17.4	Xhosa		4
17.5	Other (specify)		5

18. Considering your responses thus far, do you have any other suggestion/s that may improve effective communication between municipality and community?

.....

Thank you for your assistance

ADDENDUM 4: ACCESS LETTER TO MUNICIPALITY

Miss Nobuhle E Ndaba
P. O. Box 488
University of Zululand
Private Bag X1001
KwaDlangezwa
3886
22 May 2013

Attention: Municipal Manager
Ms Sibuyiselwe Angela Buthelezi
Ulundi Local Municipality
Private Bag X17
Ulundi
3838

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Dear Ms Buthelezi

My name is Nobuhle Elizabeth Ndaba (200806133), and I am a Communication Science student at the University of Zululand. I wish to conduct the research for my Master's dissertation with the following topic: *A Communication Perspective of how Local Government is Equipped to Interact with the Publics it Serves: A Study of the Ulundi Municipality*. The objectives of this study are:

- i. To develop and propose operative strategies for the improvement of good communication and good governance.
- ii. To ensure sustainable, effective and efficient municipal services.
- iii. To make sure that information is accessible to different audiences of the public including illiterate residents.
- iv. To enhance and raise the profile of the Ulundi municipality.

I am hereby seeking your consent to approach community members, municipal officials, ward committees and councilors within the municipality to provide responses for this project. I have provided you with copies of questionnaires which include consent form to be used during the research process. This project will be conducted under the supervision of Prof. V Rugbeer and Dr. GM Naidoo.

Upon completion of the study, I undertake to provide the Ulundi municipality with a bound copy of a full research report. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0838639785/ndabanobuhle@gmail.com. I kindly request that any form of communication or feedback should be kindly communicated to the above e-mail or number.

Your approval to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,
Nobuhle E Ndaba

ADDENDUM 4: LETTER FROM MUNICIPALITY

**UMASIPALA
WASOLUNDI**

Private Bag X 17
Ulundi
3838

" The City of Heritage "



**ULUNDI
MUNICIPALITY**

Tel: 035 8745100
Fax: 035 874 1164

06 May 2013

Ref : 4/2/3/1/4

Enq: E.N. Mcanyana

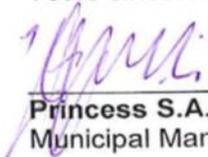
Miss Nobuhle E. Ndaba
P.O. Box 488
University of Zululand
Private Bag X 1001
KWADLANGEZWA
3886

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: YOURSELF

Dear Nobuhle

Please be informed that your application to conduct a research, using Ulundi Municipality as your research topic, has been granted.

Yours sincerely



Princess S.A. Buthelezi
Municipal Manager

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A
Aristotle,

