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Capacity-building of Ward Committee members for community engagement in Johannesburg's Ward 68

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Master of Management in Governance, in 50% requirements for the degree of Master of Management

Declaration

I, Jabulani Hlungwana, declare that:

The research reported in this research project, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.

The research report has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

This report does not include any text, pictures, or tables that have been copied and p asted from the Internet, unless explicitly recognised. The sources of these copied and pasted elements may be found in the thesis and references sections.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to extend my gratitude to God for granting me this precious opportunity to enrol for and complete my studies at one of the biggest universities on the continent of Africa.

To my wife, Petience Hlungwana, I firmly believe that your affection and assistance guided me through the most challenging periods of my educational path, and I am eternally appreciative of your steadfast motivation. The sacrifices and understanding that you showed served as the fundamental basis for my achievements, and I count myself fortunate to have your unwavering support.

I would like to express my gratitude to my son, Nsungulo Hlungwana, and my daughter, Azania Hlungwana, for their exceptional understanding and unwavering support in helping me to persevere in following my aspirations. Their affection and understanding serve as a reservoir of resilience for me during challenging circumstances, and I am appreciative of their steadfast faith in my abilities.

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To the School of Governance and Leadership, thank you for supporting me when I was at my lowest. It was not an easy journey, but your continued support granted me strength that made me understand that student support can go a long way in achieving success.

Dedication

I dedicate this project to my parents, Ms. Tinyiko Mabunda and Mr. Thomas Hlungwana, who raised me in a manner that shaped me into who I am today. To my wife, Petience Hlungwana, and my children, Nsungulo and Azania Hlungwana, you are stars. To my brothers and sisters, your love remains the beacon of hope, from which I always garner strength.

Abstract

The dawn of democracy in South Africa brought a glimmer of hope to the people by assuring them that they would be part of the decision-making process of development that affected them. The cornerstone for this is public participation, which remains the driving principle of engaging communities when making development decisions. In the centre of this, municipalities use Ward Committees to facilitate and organise people to take part in the different platforms made available for community engagement and participation.

Ward Committees represent the needs and aspirations of the residents and for them to function well, there is a need for effective community engagement. This study investigated the capacity-building initiatives amongst ward committees in Ward 68, which is situated within the City of Johannesburg. The focus of the investigation was to establish ways of enhancing the skills and knowledge that Ward Committee members needed to build positive relationships with the communities.

The literature depicted capacity-building as a crucial component of empowering employees to discharge their duties. It presented the different types of capacity-building levels that shape frameworks that can be adopted and tailored to the Ward Committees of Ward 68. The study described the challenges confronted by ward committees while attempting to fulfil their roles and responsibilities of galvanising residents to participate and engage in issues that pertain to the development of their community. The study also detailed the context of ward committees as catalysts for community engagement.

A qualitative method was used to answer the research questions. The researcher collected data through semi-structured interviews. The researcher collected primary data by interviewing ten members of the Ward Committee, who gave in-depth views about their experiences. Secondary data were collected through analysing published journals, government reports, and the City of Johannesburg reports. The study recorded key findings about the themes and patterns that were identified during the process of thematic analysis in a quest to answer the research questions. The themes that came out of the process stemmed from the roles and responsibilities of ward committees and the challenges that they faced. The other three themes that emerged

related to the kinds of capacity-building offered by the City of Johannesburg, the effectiveness of the training in creating trust with communities and municipal officials, and the low levels of education within the community, which negatively impacted the residents' understanding of how governance operated.

The key findings of the study were as follows: the CoJ only conducted induction training for the Ward Committees, some Ward Committees could not attend the induction training due to different reasons; others attended, but they could not recall the content of the training; and several other challenges hindered the effectiveness of Ward Committees.

List of Acronyms

ANC	African National Congress
COJ	City of Johannesburg
COGSTA	Co-operative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs
DA	Democratic Alliance
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
LGSETA	Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority
SANDF	South African National Defence Force

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

This study investigated ward committee capacity-building for community engagement in Ward 68, during the 2021 local government administration. After 1994, South Africa revamped local government and introduced participatory governance, which is characterised by the participation of residents in decision-making (Piper & Deacon, 2009). Ward committees were introduced to bolster the participation of residents and they strategically act as the linkage between the community and the municipality. The committees consist of community members, who are elected to represent the specific interests and concerns of their wards. Therefore, there is a need to evaluate the efficacy of the measures that are being used to enhance the capabilities of ward committees in facilitating substantial community involvement and guaranteeing that the opinions of residents of Ward 68 are included in the decision-making procedures. Furthermore, gaining a comprehensive awareness of the obstacles encountered by ward committees in carrying out their responsibilities may provide significant perspectives for enhancing their operational efficiency and efficacy.

Public participation is an integral part of local government and it ensures that the mandate of local government to drive development and service delivery is accomplished (Mathebula, 2016). Ward governance is an important driver of public participation, because it is situated within the last layer of governance and it is expected to mobilise communities to participate in development that affects their lives. Moreover, ward committees have a pivotal function in closing the divide between the local government and communities, as it acts as a forum for discussion and cooperation. Nevertheless, certain obstacles, such as resource constraints, insufficient capacity development, and bureaucratic obstacles, might impede their capability to fulfil their duties efficiently (Duma, 2019). Hence, it is essential to tackle these barriers, in order to improve the overall efficiency and efficacy of ward committees in fostering public engagement and facilitating local progress.

To achieve this, several instruments have been implemented and these include the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), community meetings, budget planning, and public forums to boost citizen participation in decision-making. The ward councillor and the

ward committee members are tasked with providing a conducive environment for communities to form part of local governance. Thornhill and Madumo (2011) interestingly observe that, as much as ward councillors and ward committees can mobilise communities on different issues that affect them, the community only shows interest in issues that they feel are of priority to them. This observation emphasises the need for ward councillors and committee members to use efficient communication and engagement tactics. By comprehending the distinct requirements and apprehensions of the community, the aforesaid officials may give priority to tackling problems that deeply connect with the residents. This method not only promotes active citizen engagement, but it also guarantees that decision-making processes are more inclusive and reflective of community interests.

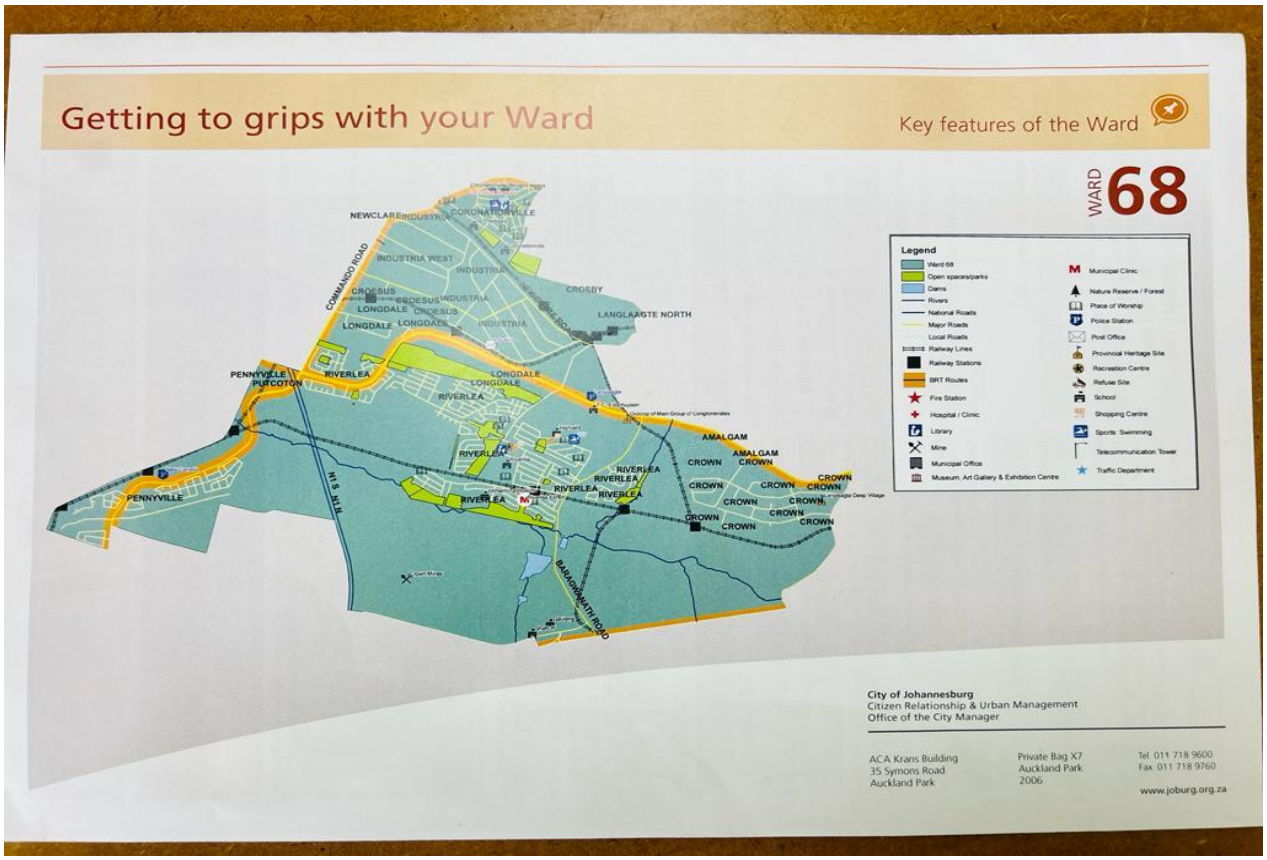
In South Africa, ward committees play an important role in ensuring participatory democracy and facilitating local governance in their respective wards (Naidoo & Ramphal, 2018). Thornhill and Madumo (2011) state that although ward committees do not have any assigned duties or executive powers, they advise the council in the process of decision-making. Their duties include ensuring proper communication between the community and the council; acting as community representatives in the IDP process; attending to issues affecting the community at large; and promoting community participation in the budget process (COGTA, 2022).

The Structures Act 117 of 1998 and the Systems Act 32 of 2000 charge the local municipalities with the responsibility of capacitating ward committee members so that they can discharge their duties effectively. This usually happens through the training and induction designed to capacitate members to perform their duties competently (Qwabe & Mdaka, 2006). A majority of the ward committee members do not understand the role of the Ward Committee, therefore, they are unable to discharge their duties in the Johannesburg Municipality (Smith & de Visser, 2009). This is solidified by the LGSETA research report, which found that councillors complain that their ward committees do not understand their roles and responsibilities (Redflank, 2020). Hence, the municipality needs to capacitate them through robust training so that they can properly serve the communities. The municipality can ensure that ward committee members are adequately prepared to fulfil their obligations by offering thorough training and induction programmes. This does not only augment their

comprehension of their responsibilities, but it also empowers them to serve the communities they represent more effectively.

This study was conducted in Johannesburg. The Citizens` Report 2021/22 estimated that the population of Johannesburg is about 6 million, and the city was the biggest economy in Africa (CoJ, 2021). Ward 68 is situated in the west of Johannesburg and consists of Riverlea, Pennyville, Zamampilo, Antea hostel, and Crown Mines. The ward has a population of 28 334, which largely consists of Blacks, Whites, and Coloureds (WaziMap, 2016).

Figure 1: Ward 68 Map



Source: City of Johannesburg (2023)

Ward 68 is surrounded by mines and industrial areas that support local employment. There are also a few abandoned mines, where illegal mining activities are causing safety concerns, given the proximity of gas, fuel, and water pipelines, which are owned by Sasol, Transnet, and Rand Water, respectively (Marshal, 2021). The public participation report for the City of Johannesburg captured illegal mining as one of the major concerns of the community of Ward 68. Recently, two groups of illegal miners exchanged fire and the skirmish left five of them dead, thereby sparking an uproar in

the community, which needed quick intervention from the relevant departments (Ngcobo, 2023). Consequently, the community and the council sought for the deployment of personnel from the South African National Defence Force. Tackling illegal mining is difficult and it requires ward committees to be trained accordingly, so that they can be equipped with skills to engage the communities and the municipality.

According to WaziMaps (2016), 95% of the population of Ward 68 consists of people who were born in different provinces of South Africa, including Gauteng, with the remainder being made up of foreigners. About 49% of the population is employed and they have an average of R57,500 in annual income. Moreover, 49% of the population completed matric and this is comparatively higher than the national average (WaziMap, 2016). The employment rate and average yearly income indicate a favourable state of economic stability in the community, while the high matriculation completion rate underscores significant educational achievements.

10.1% of the community consists of informal settlements and 5% of the households are child and female-headed. It is further reported that most of these female-headed households are in informal settlements (WaziMap, 2016). These statistics highlight the challenges faced by vulnerable populations within the community. To address housing and socioeconomic disparities, there is an urgent need for targeted interventions and support.

The above profile for Ward 68 requires the community to deal with these issues actively and decisively. When Ward Committees are properly trained, they are likely to have a positive impact on addressing service delivery issues and other community challenges (Mnqayi, 2021).

1.2 Problem statement

Ward 68 experiences low attendance and participation in public engagement forums, such as IDP and budget meetings. In addition, a few community meetings and forums are led by ward committee members. According to Qwabe and Mdaka (2011), the local structures are meant to facilitate community engagement.

There is a lack of community engagement in Ward 68, which is expected to be coordinated by the lowest structure of governance, the ward committee members. The ward committee members often have low levels of skills and education. In addition,

they appear to lack knowledge of their roles and responsibilities. Redflank (2020) states that limited knowledge of roles and responsibilities and a lack of skills render ward committees ineffective at facilitating communication among stakeholders, due to a lack of capacity to bring these parties together. Redflank (2020) further states that there is need to capacitate ward committee members to increase their education and skills level so that they can conduct their duties more effectively. Zulu (2020) believes that ward committees need to be empowered through training, information, and encouragement to facilitate service delivery. According to the Dullar Omah Institute (2021), the training of Ward Committee members may be ineffective in aiding ward committee members to execute their tasks.

Although there is significant research on the importance and effectiveness of ward committees in garnering public participation, there is need for research that explores the existing capacity-building interventions to bolster the abilities of ward committees in facilitating community engagement. There is little research on the skills, training, and support levels that municipalities provide to ward committees to enhance their effectiveness in mobilising communities to engage in issues that affect their day-to-day lives. Moreover, existing research on Ward Committees mainly focused on municipality level and randomly picked wards. There is no existing research about the capacity of ward committee members for community engagement in Ward 68. The Wits Library, Google Scholar, and various other research search engines were explored, and no study related to Ward 68 was found.

Public participation is an important foundation of democracy. To support this, ward committee structure and communities became part of the legal definition of what constitutes a municipality (Piper & Deacon, 2009). This study sought to ensure that the communities were involved in decision-making processes about the developments that affected them. To ensure that communities are engaged, there is a need to develop appropriate training on the roles and responsibilities of Ward Committees.

1.3 Research purpose

The purpose of the study was to explore the contribution of the training provided to ward committee members in capacitating them to engage with the communities in Ward 68.

1.4 Research question

The main research question is as follows:

How does the training offered to Ward 68 Ward Committee members capacitate them to improve community engagement?

From the main research questions, the study derived the following secondary questions:

- How does the training assist ward committee members in understanding their roles and responsibilities?
- How does the training contribute to the ability of ward committee members to build relationships with municipal officials and the community?
- What are the successes and failures associated with the training?

1.5 Outline of chapters

Chapter One: Introduction and Background

This chapter provided the details of the context in which the study was undertaken, including a brief overview of the problem and the objectives of the study. It also included the history of the topic and the research questions that guided the research project.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The chapter reviewed existing literature on capacity-building and ward committees. This was done in a quest to understand the knowledge gaps within the literature. The chapter further discussed the theoretical underpinnings of capacity-building and Ward Committees in order to understand how these concepts were conceptualised in previous studies.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Chapter three outlined the methods that were used to answer the research questions. The research design, data collection tools, and data analysis were discussed in this chapter. The chapter further detailed the ethical considerations and limitations of the study, as well as the positionality of the researcher.

Chapter 4: Findings

The chapter presented the findings of the study, including the analysis of the findings to answer the research questions. The chapter further elucidated the themes that emerged from the data sets that were collected from the participants and the results from the documents that were reviewed.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

Chapter 5 presented a summary of the main results, along with an analysis of the implications of the study for theory and practice. This chapter also included recommendations for stakeholders and proposals for further study to guide future research on the topic.

1.6 Conclusion

Chapter 1 outlined the introduction and background of the study. The study was situated in the City of Johannesburg, specifically in Ward 68, which is characterised by a diverse socio-economic background, ranging from formal settlements to informal settlements. That background presented a unique opportunity to explore the capacity-building that ward committees received from the municipality and how it impacted the abilities of Ward Committees' members to enhance community engagement. The communities of Ward 68 are engulfed with challenges such as crime, illegal mining, and drugs, to name a few. Given these challenges, community engagement is important, as it can address the issues that the community is confronted with. The chapter also presented the problem statement of the study, which focused on the effectiveness of capacity-building initiatives by the City of Johannesburg to support ward committees in stimulating community engagement. The chapter also outlined the research questions and the aims and objectives of the study, which provide a clear direction for the researcher to assess the impact of capacity-building initiatives on community engagement in Ward 68. The study sought to provide significant insights that might guide future initiatives for boosting community engagement and solving urgent challenges within the community.

2. Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discussed the capacity-building of Ward Committees towards community engagement. It clarified the challenges faced by ward committees in implementing community engagement initiatives. Further, the chapter reviewed various theories related to the importance of the establishment of ward committees for effective community engagement. Buccus (2021) states that the Municipal Structures Act (Chapter 4, Part 4), together with the Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000 (Chapter 4), provide comprehensive descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of Ward Committees. These committees are essential for fostering public engagement and facilitating cooperative decision-making in local governance.

Ward committees are established to increase citizen participation and promote local decision-making. They are used as vehicles for connecting community members with government officials and advocating for the needs and concerns of the communities. They play a crucial role in fostering democracy at the grassroots level. According to Muronda (2017), local decision-making can lead to more inclusive and effective policies that address the specific needs of the community. Additionally, ward committees serve as platforms for citizens to voice their opinions and contribute to the development and implementation of local projects and initiatives. Involving community members in decision-making processes helps to build trust and strengthen the relationship between the government and its constituents. This participatory approach not only empowers individuals, but also ensures that policies and projects are tailored to the unique challenges and aspirations of each community. The findings of a study by Mokale and Schepeers (2006), as cited in Muronda (2017) showed that when citizens are actively engaged in local decision-making, they are more likely to feel a sense of ownership and responsibility for the well-being of their community. This ultimately leads to increased civic participation and a stronger sense of community.

The 1998 White Paper on Local Government emphasised the importance of involving citizens in municipal programme design and delivery (SA, 1998). This ensures that the decisions that are made by the municipality align with the needs and preferences of

the citizens. By involving citizens in programme design and delivery, the municipality can gain valuable insights and perspectives that may have otherwise been overlooked. This participatory approach fosters a sense of ownership and accountability among citizens, ultimately leading to more effective and inclusive governance.

The literature examined how the various obstacles that impede community involvement impact on the abilities of the ward committees to mobilise communities to take part in local governance issues. Mnqayi (2021) shows that one of the significant obstacles to this initiative is that community members have insufficient knowledge of the presence and objectives of ward committees. The other notable hindrance to community engagement is a dearth of resources and assistance from local government officials. Redflank (2020) further suggests that lack of skills and education is also a major hindrance that hamstrung ward committee members from performing their duties effectively.

2.2 Views about ward committees and local democracy from other countries

The system of local democracy and governance is not peculiar to South Africa alone, but it is also practised in several other democratic countries. Qwabe and Mdaka (2021) highlight that the constitution of India requires the government to establish ward committee members to deliberately ensure that people are involved in governance. This is supported by Redflank (2020), who states that India mandates that ward committees be elected in all metropolitan areas that have populations of at least three hundred thousand (300 000) people. There are some similarities between South Africa and India in terms of the powers of the committee members. For example, the ward committees in both countries have limited functions, which renders them more of advisory bodies with limited powers (Redflank, 2020).

The report by the National Consultation on Urban Governance (2020) found that there was no capacity development and empowerment for the newly elected councillors and no funds were allocated at the ward committee level. The PRAJA (2020) report made further interesting findings. The report identified the most concerning issues of ward committees as lack of engagement among the participants in the local election and the Ward Committee members, who are extremely ignorant of their own roles and the

respective of duties of the state and federal governments (National Consultation on Urban Governance, 2020). Against this backdrop, the 74th Constitutional Amendment (Act of 1992) still expects ward committees to be instrumental in addressing the issues of the community and still participate in the planning, financing, and administrative functions of the ward (TERI, 2010). In the context of the study, this is similar to the ward committees in South Africa, which are elected to serve the communities without a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and lack of awareness for communities on the functionality of ward committees.

Zambia also uses the system of Ward Committees as part of local governance. Redflank (2020) states that the Village Registration and Development Act (No. 30) of 1971 guides the establishment of village productivity committees, ward councils, and ward development committees in Zambia. These committees are meant to facilitate citizen participation in the development of communities. There are also some similarities in the number of people that can be elected to the committee. Redflank (2020) stipulates that in the case of Zambia, ten people are elected to serve on the committee, and this is the case in the South African context. Furthermore, the committees in Zambia and South Africa have the same goal of ensuring that community members can participate in decision-making processes. Moreover, both nations acknowledge the significance of public engagement in promoting community development and meeting local needs.

Nigeria also has a ward-based governance system, which is aimed at enhancing public participation. One of the key responsibilities that local communities, community development committees and associations play in fostering democracy at the grassroots level in Nigeria is to ensure that residents are fairly represented in the democratic system. In addition to discussing ways to encourage civic engagement among its members and safeguard them against extortion by the state or local governments on levies, dues, or tax imposition, these groups are not intended to just represent the interests of homeowners at community association meetings (Mutereko, Fatile & Hassan, 2021). Some similarities can be drawn between the Nigerian development committees and South African Ward committees, as they both advocate for the needs and development of the communities.

The above is in line with the claim by Ofuoku (2009), who states that the role of the community development committees is to organise the rural community in order to address the demands, difficulties, and change-related obstacles so they can understand the significance of the desired change. One of the challenges for the committees in Nigeria is patronage by government officials and corporate bodies, which hinders the effectiveness of these committees (Ofuoku, 2009). The problem of patronage weakens the autonomy and independence of the community development committees, since it hampers their capacities to prioritise the needs and requests of the rural community. Furthermore, the intervention of external entities might give rise to conflicts of interest and impede the endeavours of the committees to effect substantial change. In the South African context, the effectiveness of Ward Committees is hampered by political interference, which compromises the reason for the establishment of these committees (Mtshali, 2016).

2.3 Capacity-building

Eger, Miller and Scarles (2018) describe capacity-building as a concept that many authors tend to use to include skills and knowledge, a sense of community, social structures, resources, participation, leadership, and community awareness. Gustafsson, Diaz-Reviriego and Turnhout (2020) argue that the concept of capacity-building has become more prevalent in policy discussions on international development during the 1990s. Whitle (2012) also states that capacity-building became prominent within international development and community participation. The concept of capacity-building is a contested terrain, and over the years, scholars have developed models, methods, tools, and evaluation frameworks aimed at understanding the concept (Whitle, 2012). The concepts of capacity-building, capacity development, and empowerment are sometimes used interchangeably (Gustafsson et al., 2020; Eger et al., 2018). capacity-building is also often mistaken as a synonym for training, while training is just a form of capacity-building (Mishra & Krishna, 2021). Gustafsson et al., (2020) state that capacity-building, as defined by the United Nations, refers to the process of improving the capacities of individuals, organisations or groups of organisations to carry out particular activities.

It is fundamental to understand the capacity that needs to be built. Whittle (2012) states that there are different forms of capacity, a term that refers to outcome-oriented

ability that is also composed of distinct organisational and individual capacities. Further, capacity refers to the ability of an organisation to accomplish its objectives and maintain itself over an extended period effectively. Individuals' abilities and skills are also considered to be part of their capacity. Every aspect of the work of an organisation is carried out by its "capacity", which includes governance, leadership, mission and strategy. Further, capacity entails administration (including human resources, financial management, and legal matters), development, and implementation of programmes. In addition, income generation and fundraising, diversity, partnerships and collaboration, evaluation, advocacy and policy change, marketing, positioning, and planning all constitute "capacity". Individuals' capacities are related to organising, technical, speaking, advocacy, leadership, advocacy, training, and other aspects of their personal and professional efficacy (Linnell, 2003).

capacity-building happens at three levels: individual, organisational, and institutional (Kacou, Ika & Munro, 2022). The individual capacity focuses on technical and analytical abilities, skills, competencies, and knowledge, while the organisational capacity emphasises the capabilities of an organisation in getting the teams within the organisation to get the right policy done right (Kacou et al., 2022). Prakash (2019) concurs that capacity-building at an individual level allows for people to build and enhance their skills and knowledge, whereas institutional capacity-building focuses on assisting developing countries in modernising their institutions, policy formulation, organisational structures, and effective management of their affairs. Institutional capacity is deemed to be a collective ability of different stakeholders, such as individuals, organisations, communities, states, and societies, which are all entirely aimed at addressing the challenges that they face (Kacou et al., 2022). Municipalities are sometimes deemed to lack the capacity to stimulate local economies and their inability to coordinate and manage Ward Committees (Maxegwana, Theron & Draai, 2015). Konrad, Deursen and Gupta (2022) state that other scholars are leaning towards organisational and institutional capacity-building and undermining local capacity. This approach would assist municipalities to be better positioned to build capacities for Ward Committees that are at times in need of capacity-building initiatives to discharge their duties (Maxengwane et al., 2015).

The literature advocates for the need to adopt a systems perspective that focuses on the amalgamation of the different capacity levels to understand capacity development

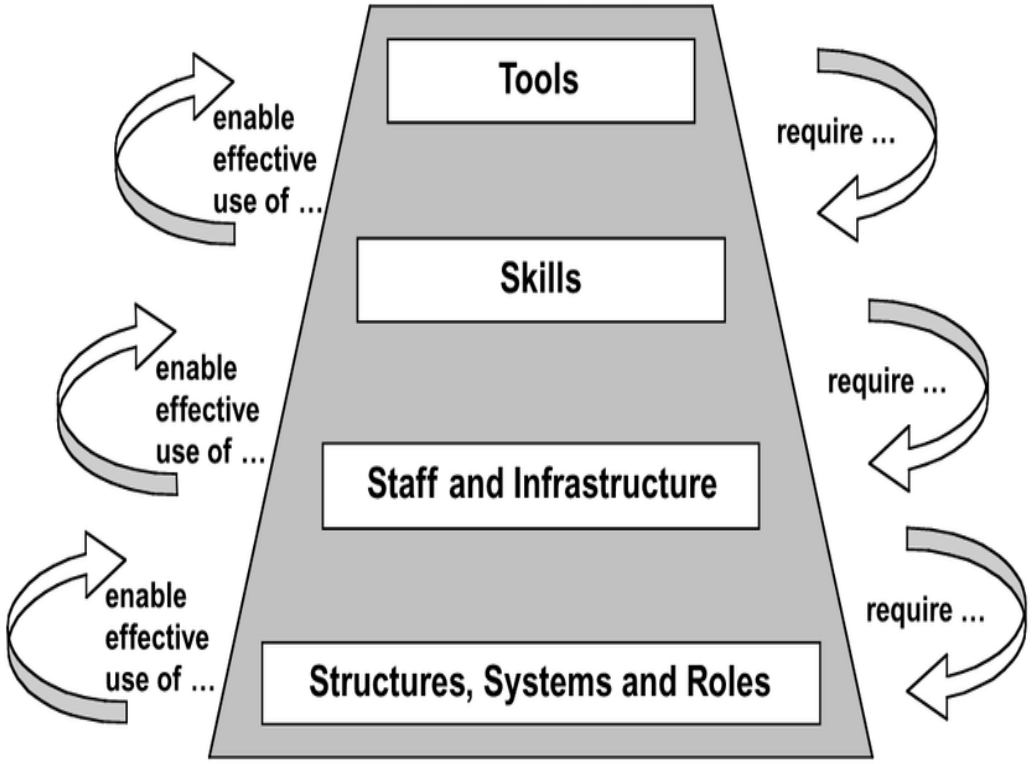
holistically (Amde, Marchal, Sanders & Lehmann, 2019). Although capacity-building is hailed as a progressive tool for improving both individual and organisational effectiveness, some scholars criticise it for creating a top-down approach because it fosters a sense of differentiation between those that are deemed to have the capacity and those that do not (Gustafsson et al., 2020).

Further, it may be inferred that the latter is a deficit relation in terms of skills and knowledge that ultimately perpetuate the old colonial power structures (Gustafsson et al., 2020). It is important to build capacity at the local level by ensuring that both ward committees and the communities are well-capacitated to deal with issues that affect them. Eger et al. (2018) state that community capacity-building is reliant on the available community resources and the capacity to build upon them. Kacou et al. (2022) stress that for capacity-building to be effective, there is a need to comprehend what capacity to build, how to build it, and who should build whose. For Ward Committees, capacity-building is done through training and workshops, which municipalities organise in order to build on the existing knowledge of the committee members (Redflank, 2020).

Training and development are acknowledged as means of enhancing community capacity through intervention (Prakash, 2019). According to DeCorby-Watson et al. (2018), capacity-building interventions may improve individuals' knowledge, skills, self-confidence, and ability to apply new practices or policies. These interventions can also lead to behaviour change and boost the overall capacity of a system (Kacou et al., 2022). The municipality has a responsibility to ensure that its employees have the necessary skills, and it should be able to identify any skill gaps so that it can offer assistance. According to Tshitangoni and Francis (2015), ineffective capacity-building and a lack of understanding of the responsibilities of Ward Committees impact their abilities to function. According to a recent study by Mnqayi (2021), the training offered to ward committees was ineffective because it was filled with generic, repetitive information that did not apply to the context of specific committees. Among other things, the levels of education and expertise of the members of the committees affect their effectiveness. According to Redflank (2020), Ward Committee members must be knowledgeable and well-trained to understand the concerns of the community, because one of the goals of the ward committees is to act as a channel for communication between the council and the community.

Ward Committee members in the Ngqushwa municipality in the Eastern Cape stated that the training interventions are supply-based rather than need-driven, which has led to the criticism that the training given to ward committees is merely a tick-box exercise (Maxegwana et al., 2015). capacity-building is one of the instruments that can be used for developing the knowledge and skills of the individuals who are appointed to strategic positions in local government (Edoun, Rameetse & Pooe, 2023). The model that can be used to understand capacity-building as the pyramid model (Potter & Brough, 2004) that elucidates the interdependencies that are found in capacity-building. See the model below:

Figure 2: Effective capacity-building pyramid



Source: Potter and Brough (2004)

The Potter and Brough (2004) model as depicted above, suggests that tools, skills, staff and infrastructure, and structures, systems, and roles are the levels of capacity-building. Edoun et al., (2023) state that in order to be utilised effectively, tools are reliant on skills, while skills come from staff and infrastructure. It further assumes that staff drive the effective use of skills, infrastructure, systems and roles, which will

ultimately enable the proper usage of organisational infrastructure and staff (Peter & Brough, 2004). According to the capacity-building pyramid, nine capacity components are capacity-building namely: performance capacity, personal capacity, workload capacity, supervisory capacity, facility capacity, support services capacity, systems capacity, structural capacity, and role capacity (Peter & Brough, 2004).

Ward committees are elected by popular vote; therefore, it can be argued that the community entrusts them with the responsibilities related to the portfolio. Although Kauzya (2003) argues that the election of Ward Committees is mainly influenced by political affiliation, it is in line with Redflank's (2020) argument that ward committee members are mostly elected by the party they represent. This necessitates that the municipality to capacitate the ward committee to be able to maintain and improve the existing capacity (Kacou et al., 2022). The assessment of individual capacity is concerned with the skills that an employee needs in order to operate the system in the organisation (Enemark & Williamson, 2004). For employees to perform their duties, they should have the requisite skills and ensure that there is continuous training and assessment (Edoun et al., 2023). This is no exception to Ward Committees; they ought to be given training on an ongoing basis to ensure that they have the skills to perform their duties (Redflank, 2020). The White Paper on Municipal Services Partnership suggests that, politically, most councils require capacity-building to fulfil their executive duties in line with societal expectations (Muller & Zulu, 2008). Political will formed the central focus of a study by Mautjane and Makombe (2014), which found that politicians may be a deterrent to proper community engagement. This can be because politicians cannot understand the importance of community engagement in the process. Kauzya (2003) states that politicians and political systems that are not inclined to democratic participation are likely not to embrace community engagement. Donaldson et al (2019) found that sub-councils that consist of two political parties tend to be hindered by mistrust, conflicting agendas, and miscommunication. The CoJ is one of the councils that are run by what the city terms "Government of Local Unity" consisting of more than two political parties.

Witesman and Wise (2012) claim that public administration literature identifies public servants as the cornerstone of reforms and public managers may be prompted to make available governance training to public servants when there is a need to upskill administrators in adjudicating their duties, and for process reforms. It remains the

responsibility of managers to ensure that they understand the training and development requirements of their subordinates so that they can recommend relevant interventions that are aimed at enhancing the skills and knowledge within the organisation (Khan & Abdullah, 2019). Othayman, Mshari, Mulyata, and Debrah (2020) state that one of the limitations of proper training and development is over-reliance on managers' reports and overlooking the inputs of training professionals who can deal with meaningful training and development.

2.4 Capacity-building for Ward Committees

Ward committees were established to drive citizens' involvement and engagement in local government issues. Thornhill and Madumo (2012) state that the purpose of these committees is to promote local democracy in matters of local government. This is in line with Mutereko et al. (2021) who believe that ward committees are established to serve as a link between the municipalities and local communities. When they fail to fulfil their mandates, it will then behoove the municipality to put in place measures that will capacitate them to perform their duties optimally.

A survey by Qwabe and Mdaka (2021) found that the introduction of ward committees has not yielded any positive change regarding meaningful engagement and the flow of information to communities, and this is attributed to a lack of capacity-building for Ward Committees by municipalities that are already budget constrained. The findings by Mutereko et al. (2021) suggest that the lack of capacity-building programmes in eThekwini municipality is one of the major issues that impede the promotion of local democracy. It is important to acknowledge that some municipalities organise training for their Ward committee members. This is supported by Mtshali (2016) who found that some Ward committee members felt that the training that was provided by the municipality was effective as it assisted them in understanding their roles and responsibilities, however, they felt that there was a disconnect between their training and that of the councillors. The Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA) is tasked with enhancing the capabilities of ward committees and ward councillors by equipping them with the requisite expertise and understanding to fulfil their responsibilities towards their communities efficiently (LGSETA, 2020). LGSETA provides ward committees and councillors with training courses and seminars to educate them with the necessary skills for making well-informed choices,

effectively engaging with stakeholders, and effectively addressing the needs of their people. In addition, LGSETA claims to offer continual assistance and mentoring to enhance the overall efficacy of local government structures and promote continued professional growth.

It is the responsibility of the municipal manager's office to organise capacity-building workshops for the ward committee members. Outside the municipality, Mnqayi (2021) claims that the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) has mandated the Centre for Leadership to take charge of ensuring that ward committee members are continuously trained to understand their roles and responsibilities within the council.

The Provincial and Local Government (Notice 965 of 2005) prescribes the capacity-building and training for ward committees as follows: Ward Committees should, with the assistance of the municipality, prepare an annual capacity-building and training needs assessment for members of the committee, an annual capacity-building and training programme should be developed for each member of the ward committee, an annual budget, taking into account any funds budgeted by the municipality, for the capacity-building and training programme should be prepared according to the needs assessment.

Ward Committees serve as the primary structures within the municipality, and they should be developed, empowered, and encouraged to contribute actively to the fostering of cooperative relationships between people and the municipality (Mnqayi, 2021). In addition, it is recommended that ward committees be provided with regular capacity development programmes that enhance their abilities to perform their duties and fulfil their obligations in meaningful and effective ways (Mnqayi, 2021). This will ensure that ward committees have the essential expertise and understanding to effectively carry out their duties and make valuable contributions to a prosperous local community.

2.5 Types of training

There are two types of training that businesses use: on-the-job training and off-the-job training (Ismael et al., 2021). These are key to equipping employees with the skills and knowledge to perform their duties. The immediate task of the human resources

department and line managers is to recommend job training that will best suit their employees.

On-the-job training is one type of formal training that is provided by employers, and it takes place in the workplace, so it gives employers the advantage of realising the solid productivity of employees (Shah, Shaikh & Pirzada, 2018). However, this type of training is sometimes ineffective, as the trainees might be unresponsive, and the coaching may not be easily translated into practice (Ismael et al., 2021).

Off-the-job training is another type of training that organisations formally sponsor in a quest to improve the capacity and capabilities of their workforce. Ismael et al. (2021) state that this training is away from the job and working environment and it is normally done through seminars, conferences, group teaching, and discussions. This gives employees exposure to new skills and knowledge about their jobs in a special environment that will enable them to apply what they would have learned. The Provincial and Local Government (Notice 965 of 2005) outlines the type of training that should be given to ward committee members to capacitate them to perform their functions. The training needs are as follows:

2.5.1 Generic training needs

Generic training needs are identified as follows: basic literacy, communication, interpersonal skills, community upliftment, democracy, community participation, leadership, conflict management, and negotiation skills; identification, monitoring, and prioritisation of needs.

2.5.2 Training needs on municipal policy and processes

The Provincial and Local Government (Notice 965 of 2005) further states that there should be training related to the following policies and processes: principles of good governance, the establishment of ward committees, their terms of reference, nature and functions; municipal structures, legislation and processes (including CMIP, PMS and IDP), intergovernmental community development; municipal service partnerships; and payment for services (indigent policy, credit and debt control policy).

2.5.3 Specialised training needs

For Ward Committees to perform their duties, they need to have a specialised training on meeting procedures and secretariat services, which includes minute taking, reports, and letter writing. Administration training includes clerical administrative skills, bookkeeping, and basic accounting. The highest tier of training is made up of budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, policy development, project management, stress management, and performance management.

Sibiya (2011) states that one of the obstacles that hamper the effectiveness of ward committees is the lack of skills, expertise, and education. This shows the need for careful planning and implementation of training to ensure that ward committee members are equipped with the necessary skills and know-how to deal with community issues and comprehending the process of council decision-making. A study by Bambeni (2017) found that the majority of the participants had low levels of education, while some had no formal education at all, which made it difficult for them to grasp the basic processes and procedures of council operations. As a result, they will not be able to stimulate effective public participation. The study further argues that even if the municipalities were to roll out training to capacitate ward committee members, it may prove difficult to capacitate those who do not have any basic education (Bambeni, 2017), they will not be able to understand budgeting, by-laws, and other municipality processes.

Budgetary constraints also hinder municipalities from conducting training for Ward Committees. The medium-term budget of 2023/24 – 2025/26 for the City of Johannesburg indicates an increase of 5.1% towards the active and engagement citizenry budget. This allocation was mainly channelled towards the training for ward councillors and ward committees in terms of increasing public participation and other stakeholder engagements on platforms like IDP and budgetary process, as well as conducting civic education on IDP and elections of ward committees (CoJ, 2023). This depicts the commitment of the city to ensuring that both the public and the Ward Committee members were workshopped about the roles and responsibilities of ward committee members. In addition, the training focuses on maximising engagement on important public participation platforms on which the community can take part in the decision-making process regarding projects that are aimed at uplifting their well-being.

2.6 Training and effectiveness of public servants

Training is increasingly becoming the norm in the workplace, and organisations are spending time and money on ensuring that their employees are productive (Shah et al., 2018). It is the concern of managers to ensure that the organisational human resources can achieve the corporate goals. Literature finds a positive correlation between training and development and the effectiveness of employees in the organisation (Ismael et al., 2021; Shah et al., 2018; Khan et al., 2019).

Khan et al. (2019) argue that training increases the efficiency and effectiveness of both the organisation and its employees. It is important to state that for employees to perform their tasks satisfactorily, they need to have the requisite skills and knowledge. These trainings do not always impact positively on the productivity of employees. Ismael et al. (2021), however, state that the impact depends on the delivery of the training, which is a crucial aspect of the transfer of skills from the trainer to the trainee (Othayman et al., 2020). Nel-Sanders (2021) found that the perennial problem of the gap between public officials and the poor continues to widen because of a lack of understanding of how local government works.

In the South African context, it is the responsibility of the municipal speaker's office to oversee the functioning of ward committees, while the office of the city manager is responsible for the training and induction of Ward Committee members (Mutereko et al, 2021). This training is meant to capacitate the committees to facilitate public participation within the ward. Mutereko et al. (2021) observe that Ward Committees in Ekurhuleni municipality still find it difficult to promote public participation, despite the training and induction programmes that are provided to the committees. This necessitates the importance of understanding why committees still find it difficult to discharge their duties, even after they have gone through inductions and subsequent training. Two questions may arise, the first one being: is the training fit for purpose? The second question would be: is there a proper foundation on which to build capacity? This is in line with the findings of Bambeni (2017), who suggested that the committee who do not have basic education may struggle to understand even if they undergo training on the process and procedures of the municipalities.

2.7 Community engagement

In South Africa, public participation is enshrined in the constitution, and it is aimed at advancing participatory democracy (Buccus, 2021). Section 152 of the South African constitution states that one of the roles of local government is to ensure participatory democracy, accountability, and transparency when decisions are taken (RSA,1996). Other legislations supplement the constitution in bolstering participation. For example, the Municipal Structure Act of 1998 further advocates for contact at the local level between the municipalities and the communities (Buccus, 2021).

Decentralisation is a democratic instrument that is used to empower local people using integrating them, together with civil society, in the formulation and implementation of governmental programmes and policies (Uddin, 2019). This can be done through enhancing community engagement. McCabe et al. (2006) posit that community engagement gives government decision-makers and policy planners the potential to improve community services through greater communication brought about by integrated involvement with the community.

Different strategies have been proposed to engage communities. Brunton, Thomas, O`Mara-Eves, Jamal, Oliver, and Kavanagh (2017) cite some scholars who put forward that communities should be involved in governance through consultations, collaboration, or community control. There seems to be consensus in the literature that the provision of information is not a sufficient method to engage communities. Communities are only involved in the beginning of the planning processes and are not continuously involved in the crucial stages of planning (Mautjane & Makube, 2014). Some successes and gains have been registered regarding public participation at the ward level. Smith (2012) found that community participation at the ward level in some parts of Cape Town is at a moderate level, thus, only a minority contributes to government decision-making processes. The study also highlights that participation in those wards is characterised by informing, consultation, placation, and partnerships (Smith, 2012).

However, in some cases, there is also lack of public participation, even in areas that have local structures for facilitating such participation. A study by Praja (2020) found that in India, public participation was not prevalent in 15 out of the 21 surveyed cities. The report further claims that citizen participation through attendance of Ward

Committees was only happening in 4 of the cities (Praja, 2020). This signifies the fact that public participation and community engagement is not only a South African problem, but an international problem.

The participation of local people is essential in development operations because it incorporates people's experiences, expertise, and commitments into the development process, while respecting democratic norms (Uddin, 2019). As much as public participation is hailed as one of the greatest initiatives of democratic governments, literature shows that the concept is met with some level of scepticism in countries like Italy and Spain (M'mbone & Gachanja, 2021). However, other scholars argue that public participation may, at some point, lead to less progressive outcomes because some stakeholders tend to rely on common sense (Cattino & Reckien, 2021). This does not mean that public participation is not important. A study by King and Cruickshank (2012) suggests that looking at the problem of community participation from the standpoint of communities engaging the government, as opposed to government engaging the community, is a more productive approach. This strategy focuses on increasing the community's ability to interact with the government more successfully to improve their community in ways that are significant to them.

Ani et al. (2017) state that individuals and groups are empowered when they use their skills and aptitudes to grasp and interpret issues and needs, which are then translated into action through active engagement. "'Empowerment' is rooted in concerns about social justice and movements promoting social and structural change by supporting people to participate, negotiate, influence control, and hold accountable institutions that affect them" (Brunton et al., 2017:14). This can create an atmosphere of increased empowerment and participation. Smith (2012) found that the ward committee system is unable to define, plan, and decide on initiatives that directly improve people`s lives, hence, it cannot be viewed as a framework that offers the community the highest degree of empowerment. This is because some municipalities are only establishing these structures for the sake of compliance. Public participation is the vehicle for local citizens to get involved in the affairs of the government (Mutereko et al., 2021). Different platforms are made available for people to actively participate in issues that affect them. M'mbone and Gachanja (2021) state that despite these platforms being made available, there is a lack of administrative and political support that hampers public participation.

The City of Johannesburg municipality has embarked on a public participation effort, for which it claims to have adopted the community-based planning methodology for public participation (CoJ, 2023). This gesture has assisted the city in identifying problems that are faced by communities. The report identified the following issues as prevalent in Ward 68:

Issues	**Possible Solutions**
A Clinic that has a Green Door for Victims of gender-based violence so that they can easily get counselling.	Need to undertake further studies
A mobile crèche where children can be taken to be taken care of while the parents are at work.	The Department will seek land within the ward for the construction of the mobile crèche to ensure that children are placed in a safe facility.
A centre to help community members develop skills.	This is for Social Development to consider.
Cleaning the Pennyville Park, restoring it to its beautiful and attractive nature. It needs to be restored so the community can use it for recreational purposes.	Feasibility studies/further studies/further actions need to be done to determine the viability of the project.
The City of Johannesburg has decided to change the IDP consultation process, but this was never communicated to the community at large.	N/A
The place is filthy due to wide spread illegal dumping. Can this be addressed?	N/A
Potholes on our main road.	N/A
Electrifying of the place, as there is no electricity connection. This leads to illegal electricity connections that endanger the community.	N/A

Allocation of stands to those who do not qualify for RDP housing, so that they can build their houses.	N/A
Influx of Illegal/undocumented people from Malawi contributes to crime and overcrowding.	N/A
Laanglaagte SAPS not helping or attending to the calls from the community.	N/A
Crime has escalated as people are dying, robbed, stabbed, and raped, whilst the police are doing nothing. Police not patrolling the area, therefore, there is no police visibility.	N/A
Zama Zama`s (Illegal Miners) have taken over the place, and their activities have led to the shacks being damaged.	N/A

Source: City of Johannesburg (2023)

The above table shows that the city might have a good grasp of the challenges that Ward 68 and other wards within its jurisdiction face through their public participation initiatives. However, this does not necessarily translate to community engagement.

2.8 Trust as an important component of community engagement

The literature shows that trust is a phenomenon that has been researched in various other fields, such as economics, politics, psychology, and sociology, and by other different authors, such as Churchhill and Mishra (2016) and Schneider (2017), who delve into its specifics, including social trust, institutional trust, and political trust. Community engagement requires trust from the different stakeholders that are involved. Magoola et al. (2023) state that the involvement of communities in projects assists in building trust and identifying problems in the communities to find solutions within the communities. Madzivhandila and Maloka (2014) argue that the municipalities ineffectively utilise Ward Committees, and this results in distrust and disgruntlement among the stakeholders, and this ultimately causes protests in the

communities. DPLG (2007) lists trust, commitment, and respect as one of the nine principles for public participation and states that it is viewed as confidence towards the process and those who facilitate it. This is echoed by Magoola et al. (2023), who stated that trust is a valuable commodity that can foster loyalty by allowing individuals to give others the benefit of the doubt in instances where their actions may not align with their stated beliefs. Ward Committees require some level of trust from the community, so that they can have positive relationships with the communities. To measure and comprehend citizen confidence in government, one can simply use trust as a factor (Kim, 2015).

The lack of trust between communities and the government often results in reluctance by communities to enter into voluntary social relationships with those who are governing (Esau, 2008). This is one of the reasons Ward Committees face rejections from communities, especially those that have witnessed poor service delivery from the local government, thereby resulting in dwindling levels of trust in government officials (Esau, 2008). One can argue that since communities still elect these Ward Committees, there is still some level of confidence and trust that they can turn things around. The municipality performance monitoring becomes an important element in restoring and mending relations between the municipality and the communities that they service (Kearney, 2018).

2.9 Legislative framework for citizen participation

South Africa, as a democratic country, has several laws that place the people at the centre of their development. These laws pave the way for citizens to be involved in the decision-making process of government programmes. In terms of the constitution, local governments must include communities and community groups in local affairs, in order to guarantee that all residents receive the essential services to meet their fundamental requirements (Van Rooyen & Mokoena, 2013). This is the supreme law of the land, which directs all affairs in the country. Bambeni (2017) states that the constitution empowers local governments to deal with community affairs because they are the ones closest to their constituents, so they ought to organise and run their administrative, financial, and planning procedures, with the needs of the community receiving top priority. By engaging communities and community organisations in local affairs, local governments may guarantee that the choices and actions that they take

are per the particular requirements and preferences of the residents. This strategy not only improves the efficiency of local administration, but it also encourages a feeling of ownership and active involvement among community members, thus, building a deeper sense of communal togetherness and empowerment.

The White Paper on Local Government (1998), in its developmental local government section, sets out a vision of putting people at the centre of development to address the community needs and sustainably improve the quality of life. This White Paper further states that one of the four developmental characteristics that are set out is the ability to build social capital by bolstering community leadership and vision in a quest to empower the marginalised sections of the community. This shows the commitment of the democratic government of South Africa to seek redress and ensure that people are driving the development of the communities in which they live.

Part 4 of the Local Government Municipal Structures (1998) provides guidelines on the establishment of Ward Committees, their powers, and functions within the local governance. Van Rooyen and Mokoena (2013) state that the councillor becomes the chairperson of the ward committee structure that consists of not more than 10 members. This structure is meant to ensure that the residents are represented in matters that are deliberated by the council, especially on matters pertaining to developing the communities and uplifting and the lives of the people.

The Municipal System Act (Act 32 of 2000) requires municipalities to come up with a culture that will encourage participatory democracy and uplift the social and economic landscape of local communities. This act showcases the commitment of the government to drive development through the participation of people, who become the captains of their development. This participation is facilitated by ward committees, as the mediators of public participation platforms between the municipality and the communities.

2.10 IDP as a tool for community participation

The Integrated Development Plan (IDP) is a municipal plan that outlines the development objectives and financial planning that are aimed at enhancing the community's developmental agenda (Molale, 2019). At the dawn of democracy, the IDP was adopted as one of the key tools for fostering participatory democracy, where the voice of the community is part of decision-making towards their development

(Mokoto, Juta & Zweni, 2023). The IDP is a guide for municipalities, and it helps to prioritise projects and put together resources to achieve the developmental goals of communities (Molale, 2019). Mokoto et al. (2023) argue that there are still prevalent challenges related to participation in the IDP process. Some of these challenges result from lack of accountability, the power dynamics at play between citizens and officials, self-serving tendencies, and official expectations that citizens are passive recipients of government programmes (Williams, 2006). This undermines participatory democracy and makes it difficult for ward committees to play their role in galvanising communities to take part in their development initiatives. The Government Gazette of 2015 indicates that ward committees are placed at the heart of consulting communities on matters related to socio-economic problems so that they can find their way to the IDP.

There is a need for Ward Committees to understand their roles in the IDP process so that they can involve communities (DPLG, 2001). This is further affirmed by the DPLG (2005), which states that ward committees need to function effectively to put together a community development strategy that is linked to the priorities of the community in order to find expression in the IDP of the municipality. This is one of the mechanisms for ensuring that the voices of the communities are heard in the process of decision-making about the projects and programmes that affect them. By actively involving ward committees in the IDP process, municipalities can ensure that the needs and priorities of the community are accurately represented. This not only promotes transparency and accountability, but it also fosters a sense of ownership and empowerment among community members. Ultimately, this collaborative approach can lead to more effective and sustainable development outcomes for the municipality as a whole. Mokoto et al. (2023) found that Ward Committee members of Greater Taung Municipality play a significant role in mobilising local communities to take part in the IDP process; they do this through community meetings and through door-to-door campaigns that enables them to reach out to community members.

The Municipal Finance Management Act of 2003 links the municipal budget with the IDP, which relies on public input for its formation. The Municipal Finance Management Act of 2003 does not specifically include provisions for ward committees. However, it strongly emphasises the involvement of the community in financial procedures, such as the creation of a municipal budget and an IDP (Madumo, 2011). In order to make

sure that the budget and IDP reflect the goals and needs of the community, this input is essential. Municipalities may better address the issues and goals of their citizens by actively soliciting for public feedback, which will result in more inclusive and efficient decision-making procedures.

A Public Service Commission report on the capacity and capability of the public service states that the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) 2019–2024 strongly advocates for the synchronisation of IDP, departmental strategic plans, and yearly performance plans to ensure the successful implementation of service delivery. Nevertheless, accomplishing this task remains challenging due to the issues encountered by several departments (PSC, 2021). This further underscore the significance of community involvement in the IDP process. Community engagement in the IDP is essential since it enables a grassroots method of identifying and resolving the difficulties that are encountered by government departments. By engaging the community, a more holistic understanding of local requirements and preferences may be acquired, resulting in enhanced efficiency in service provision and the fostering of long-lasting growth. Furthermore, active community involvement cultivates a sense of responsibility and ownership among individuals, thus, establishing a more robust basis for the effective execution of the IDP. Olusola (2021) states that the IDP process is not a solo process; it requires the involvement of forums, municipalities, role players, and the citizens who are affected by the IDP. The forums may include members of the executive committee of the council, councillors (including district councillors), traditional leaders, ward committee representatives, heads of departments, and senior municipal and government officials. The forums also consist of representatives of organised and unorganised stakeholder groups, resource people or advisors, and community representatives, such as the Reconstruction and Development Programme Forum (Mathebula & Sebola, 2019).

In the context of the city of Johannesburg, the municipality has committed to consulting its citizens on major decisions and seeking for input that will feature in the IDP process. This ensures that the needs and priorities of the community are accurately reflected in the development plan. Their meetings are held through platforms like physical meetings, webinars, hub spots, submissions, and drop-off boxes (CoJ, 2022). This is over and above the opportunity to comment on the draft before the IDP plan gets finalised. These various platforms provide multiple avenues for citizens to participate

and contribute their ideas, regardless of their location or accessibility constraints. This inclusive approach allows the municipality to gather a diverse range of perspectives and ensure that all voices are heard in the decision-making process. This is echoed by Mathebula (2016), who argues that public participation in IDP requires that the community be involved in the process of making decisions, that need to be identified, and that the community is able to influence decisions and counter objections when opinions differ.

2.11 Ward Committees as a vehicle for community engagement

Ward Committees are integral to the process of coordinating communities to participate in local affairs. They are not only instrumental in the participation of citizens in IDP processes, but they also play a significant role in other important projects of the municipality, such as naming and renaming streets and buildings (Mutereko et al., 2021). Ward Committees can empower marginalised people by mobilising them to get involved in local governance issues. Buccus (2021) suggests that making use of this democratic process could result in the establishment of civic associations and community groups that enhance civil society.

Ward Committees provide marginalised people with a forum to actively participate in and have a voice in local decision-making (Mutereko et al., 2021). Incorporating community members into IDP procedures not only ensures that community needs and issues are met, but it also cultivates a feeling of pride and ownership among locals. Ward Committees link communities with Integrated Development Planning (IDP) processes and they help to bring about the participation of residents and democratic local governance (Auriacombe & Sithomola, 2020). These committees are vehicles for participatory democracy, as they facilitate the representation of the masses in policy-making that affects the locals (Mutereko et al., 2021).

Modise (2017) argues that Ward Committees offer active discussions and decision-making by a small, controllable number of representatives, which makes them the best baseline engagement platforms in local communities. Although they do not have any legislative or executive powers, they play a significant role in advising the council and can improve communication between the council and the community (Diedericks & Seitlholo, 2018). The implementation of this participatory strategy cultivates a feeling

of ownership and authority among the citizens, and this eventually results in more efficient and all-encompassing governance. Auriacombe & Sithomola (2020) found, however, that the Ward Committees are prone to backlashes in many communities, where they are not viewed as legitimate structures of governance. Additionally, public officials are often reluctant to share power with community representatives, mainly because they are elected as representatives of certain political parties. Municipalities often do not take into account the opinions of ward committees, because they have no executive authority and only serve as advisory structures (Mutereko et al., 2021). The absence of executive authority weakens the efficacy of ward committees in exerting influence on decision-making processes within municipalities. Consequently, communities may experience feelings of marginalisation and disempowerment, which may contribute to increased suspicion and doubt towards these committees.

The Ward Committee system was introduced in 2000, after the local government election, to bolster the work of local councillors (Diedericks & Seitlholo, 2018). In South Africa, legislation paves the way for governance and participatory democracy that obliges municipalities to involve local people in the development that concerns them (Qwabe & Mdaka, 2006). This legislation promotes transparency and accountability in decision-making processes.

The Municipal Infrastructure Act compels municipalities to constitute Ward Committees in their wards, to strengthen public participation (Buccus, 2021). Ward Committees investigate the needs, interests, and objectives of community members, engage in consultations with them, and then make well-supported decisions (Modise, 2017). By including community members in the decision-making processes, these committees guarantee that the choices that are made align with the goals and objectives of the community. This not only cultivates a feeling of possession and authority among the inhabitants, but it also contributes to the development of a more robust and unified community. Furthermore, the research carried out by these committees facilitates evidence-based decision-making, thereby guaranteeing that resources are allocated proficiently and productively in order to tackle the most urgent demands of the community.

Auriacombe and Sithomola (2020) lament that municipalities constitute these Ward Committees merely to comply with and entice the communities. Ward committees

continue to play a crucial role in the development efforts of local government. They have the potential to uphold the constitutional need for increased accountability and democratisation of local government, despite the criticism that they are not fulfilling their intended functions (Diedericks & Seitlholo, 2018). Ward committees are essential in promoting citizen engagement and maintaining that the requirements and issues of local communities are taken care of. Nonetheless, it is crucial to acknowledge and tackle the obstacles and constraints that are encountered by these committees, to improve their efficiency and influence on the progress of local government.

2.12 Guidelines for establishing Ward Committees

The guidelines for establishing Ward Committees were gazetted by the Provincial and Local Government (Notice 965 of 2005), which lays out the basis of how and which municipality should establish ward committees. The guidelines state that only metropolitan and local municipalities that fall under the category of ward participatory, are allowed to establish Ward Committees, as prescribed by both the provincial legislation and section 12 of the establishment notice, which is then accompanied by a council resolution to establish the structure. Sibiya (2011) states that the core function of ward committees is to ensure participatory democracy. The Provincial and Local Government (Notice 965 of 2005) goes further to describe ward committees as follows: advisory body, which is an independent representative structure, which must perform its duties impartially, without fear, favour or prejudice.

2.13 Roles and responsibilities of Ward Committees

The handbook for ward committees (DPLG, 2005) clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of ward committees, the roles and responsibilities include Ward Committees are expected to increase public participation in decision-making, their apolitical representation of local wards,

participating in the IDP processes, municipal performance management, the annual budget, council projects, and other programmes and activities that affect people, identifying and initiating projects that improve the lives of the people, supporting the councillor in dispute resolutions, scrutinising the municipal performance and raising

related issues, where possible, playing an instrumental role in community awareness campaigns such as water, waste and sewage issues, rates payment, and many others.

The primary duty of a Ward Committee is to support democratically elected council members as they efficiently fulfil their obligation to serve the residents (Van Rooyen & Mokoena, 2013). Ward Committees are expected to perform these roles immediately after being elected to serve the community, which is often a challenge. It is, therefore, important that these roles and responsibilities are disseminated to the committees so that they can discharge them effectively (Thornhill & Madumo, 2011). As a result, municipalities need to exert efforts to capacitate the elected committee members by conducting training programmes and workshops. Regular communication and coordination between council members and ward committees may foster a harmonious partnership that is aimed at serving the community effectively.

It is also important to note that besides these generic roles and responsibilities, ward committee members are assigned a portfolio that demands their competency and understanding of the field for them to be effective. Thornhill and Madumo (2011) state that the committee should have people who represent the following portfolios: women, youth, religious groups, sports and welfare, environment, education, community-based organisations, ratepayers' associations, traditional leaders, the disabled, informal traders' associations, agricultural associations, and safety.

The findings in Muronda's (2017) study show that the ward committees in Northwest were aware of the need for a balanced representation of interest groups in the composition of Ward Committees. Muronda (2017) also established that the case study municipality had a provision which called for the inclusion of people with disability, women and youth representation. This kind of representation would make it easier for Ward Committee members to advocate for the betterment of the people in these areas, because they know the needs of the diverse interest groups. Representativity can also be strengthened by proper training programmes that are aimed at capacitating the committee to handle and champion the interest of the communities.

2.14 Challenges faced by Ward Committees

As much as Ward Committees are hailed as vehicles for community participation, there are considerable challenges that hinder their success in discharging their roles and responsibilities. Some of the difficulties that were found are linked to ignorance, illiteracy, and the lack of enthusiasm among the local community (Duma, 2019). Sekgala (2016) argues that most of the ward committee members in the City of Johannesburg do not understand their roles and responsibilities. This is in line with Duma (2019), who found that some ward councillors in eThekwini could not differentiate between their roles and those of the Ward Committee, thereby creating the impression that there are no clear lines of responsibility between the councillors and the ward committees. The presence of these problems highlights the need for further training and education for Ward Committee members and councillors, so as to provide them with a more comprehensive comprehension of their duties and obligations. Furthermore, establishing explicit protocols and communication routes between the councillors and the ward committees might assist in defining their specific duties and improving overall effectiveness in community engagement. This can ultimately lead to a more cohesive and efficient decision-making process.

One of the challenges that ward committees face is a lack of skills. Sekgala (2016) argues that this does not only affect the ward committees, but it is a major challenge that affects municipalities throughout South Africa. The SALGA document discusses the skills gap for Ward Committees and states that out of 319 Ward Committee members and councillors in the impoverished and underdeveloped municipalities that were surveyed, 20 (6 percent) were illiterate, 124 (39 percent) were semiliterate, 99 (31 percent) had Grade 12 education, and only 56 (18 percent) had post-matriculation qualifications (Redflank, 2020). The lack of skills among Ward Committee members might impede their capacity to fulfil their duties efficiently and make valuable contributions to the development of their communities. Municipalities must prioritise solving the skills gap by implementing training and capacity-building initiatives. This will improve the efficacy of Ward Committees in dealing with local problems and providing services to residents. Furthermore, it will empower community members to actively participate in decision-making processes and shape the future of their communities.

The literature also posits that political interference can harm the effective functioning of ward committees. Sibiya (2011) states that there is a perception that ward committees are just an extension of political parties, as they are often used as a means for party members to consolidate their power and influence. This interference can lead to a lack of autonomy and decision-making power for Ward Committees, hindering their ability to address local issues effectively. Additionally, political interference may create a climate of favouritism and corruption within Ward Committees, undermining their credibility and trust among community members. According to Ngumbela (2023), political parties take decisions made in their caucuses and submit them for adoption by their councils. Once these decisions are adopted, if Ward Committees are aligned with the political parties, they are more likely to be favoured and given preferential treatment. At their extreme, these decisions are likely to be imposed on ward committees, thereby leaving little room for independent decision-making. This may result in a dearth of representation and the marginalisation of varied perspectives within ward committees. Furthermore, political intervention might also deter community members from actively engaging in the endeavours of the committees, as they may see it as a forum for promoting political interests, rather than addressing their specific needs and concerns (Ngumbela, 2023).

The aforementioned demonstrates the necessity of capacity-building to guarantee that the elected ward committees comprehend their roles and obligations and possess the necessary abilities to carry them out. According to a study by Diedericks and Seitlholo (2018), Ward Committees acknowledge that the speaker's office offers short training and seminars to committee members; nonetheless, most committee members are still unable to interpret local government legislation. Qwabe and Mdaka (2006) reported that neither meaningful involvement nor enhanced information provision for communication had resulted from the establishment of Ward Committees. In turn, inadequate training of the committee members results in a skills deficit. The lack of necessary skills might impede the successful execution of local government laws and restrict the influence of Ward Committees in their respective areas (Redflank, 2020).

2.15 Composition of Ward Committees

Ward committees must have a chairperson in the form of a councillor, and a maximum of ten elected ward members (DPLG, 2005). The chairperson of the ward committee,

who is a councillor, plays a crucial role in leading and coordinating the activities of the committee. The councillor also chairs the public meetings in which ward committee members are expected to be in attendance. In addition to this, the ten elected Ward Committee members bring diverse perspectives and represent the interests of the local community in decision-making processes. Van Royen and Mokoena (2013) state that the ten members should represent the diverse demographics and needs of the local community to ensure equitable decision-making. The DPLG (2005) also emphasises the importance of including marginalised groups in decision-making processes by suggesting the inclusion of the following interest groups: youth and women, religious groupings, sports and culture representatives, health and welfare specialists, business leaders, environment activists, education sector, senior citizens, community safety forums, community-based organisations, ratepayers/civic associations, traditional leaders, agricultural associations, informal traders' associations, people living with disabilities, farmworkers, employment tourism, and Unions.

Muronda (2017) conducted a case study, wherein the participants revealed their understanding of having a balanced representation in the committees in the Northwest municipality. However, this cannot be said of all municipalities that have ward committees. This suggests that there is a need to keep a close eye on the compositions of Ward Committees, in order to ensure that all groups are indeed represented. In this case, the Northwest municipality is a good case study, because the participants suggested that the municipality was strict with regard to the composition of Ward Committees (Muronda, 2017). This shows that the municipality was diligent in maintaining equal representation among its committees. However, it is crucial to highlight that the conclusions of this research may not be relevant to other municipalities, since each may have different rules and procedures regarding committee membership. Hence, more investigation is required to ascertain the degree to which other municipalities prioritise and enforce equitable participation in their committees.

2.16 Analytical framework

The researcher looked at capacity-building through the lens of the training provided to ward committee members and how it builds their skills and knowledge, as well as how it covers the capacity gaps that may exist when the members are elected. This was used in conjunction with the public participation lens, which assisted the researcher to understand how the training assists Ward Committees to engage with the communities, council, municipal officials, and other stakeholders that are involved in service delivery. This theoretical framework provided a comprehensive understanding of the impact of training on the capacity of Ward Committee members and their ability to effectively engage with various stakeholders. Additionally, it also shed light on any potential challenges or limitations that could hinder the effectiveness of the training programme in promoting public participation and improving service delivery at the local level.

2.16 Conclusion

This section discussed the literature related to capacity-building for Ward Committees and its impact on community engagement. In this case, capacity-building refers to the process of enhancing the knowledge, skills, and abilities of Ward Committee members to be able to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively. The literature highlighted the importance of providing training and resources, such as workshops on community development strategies and governance principles. These capacity-building efforts have been found to positively impact community engagement by empowering ward committees to effectively represent the needs and interests of their constituents. Additionally, studies have shown that capacity-building helps to foster trust between ward committees and community members, thereby leading to increased participation in decision-making processes and improved outcomes for the community as a whole. The literature also showed the challenges that ward committees face in implementing capacity-building efforts. These problems include inadequate resources and financing, lack of support from higher levels of government, and opposition to change from certain committee members. However, notwithstanding these obstacles, the advantages of enhancing the capabilities of ward committees and their communities are of utmost significance. Stakeholders must acknowledge the

significance of investing in capacity-building projects and provide continuous support to guarantee the success and long-term viability of these endeavours.

Chapter 3: Research Approach and Design

3.1 Introduction

The primary objective of the preceding section was to do a literature assessment on the ability of ward committees and their capability to improve public engagement in the areas they serve. This chapter presented a detailed overview of the research methods used to gather data, including the sampling strategies and the study population. The chapter also discussed the data analysis techniques that were employed to identify the patterns and trends that emerged from the collected information. The study methodology for obtaining comprehensive information on the capacity development of ward committees and their impact on community engagement in Ward 68 was based on a qualitative approach to data collection. The evaluation instrument used in this research was a semi-structured interview schedule consisting of open-ended questions. Semi-structured interviews are best used when there is a need for consistent data and when it is not possible to categorise or rectify the data (Babbie, 2017). The semi-structured interview allowed for flexibility and exploration of respondents' perspectives and experiences.

The target audience consisted of only participants who were members of Ward Committees. A Ward Committee consists of ten representative members, with gender representation being an important factor for diversity and inclusivity. The Ward Committees provided valuable insights and feedback.

3.2 Research design

A qualitative research design was used to collect the data that assisted the researcher in answering the research question. Olejnik (2021) states that qualitative research is used when collecting and analysing data that is non-numerical to comprehend a phenomenon through the experiences and opinions of the subject under study. This study intended to elicit data pertaining to the experiences and opinions of ward committee members, with particular regard to capacity-building and its contribution to community participation in the case study ward. This was done through an open-ended questionnaire, which was used to ask respondents in an interview schedule that aimed

to gather data about the experiences, views, and opinions of the former and current ward committee members.

The researcher was aware of the advantages and disadvantages of using a qualitative research design. One of the advantages of using a qualitative design is that it allows the researcher to collect detailed information about the feelings, experiences, and opinions taking into consideration the human setting (Rahman, 2017). This allowed the study to collect detailed information from the Ward Committee members in their setting. On the other hand, Mnqayi (2021) notes the disadvantages of the design, they postulate that the success of this design is solely dependent on the skills and capability of the researcher. The researcher was experienced in dealing with qualitative research design before collecting and analysing the research data. This gave the researcher an added advantage. The researcher worked as a research intern in the Gauteng Provincial Legislature and as a fieldworker for the Human Science Research Council, over and above the academic experience that exposed the researcher to the different methods of data collection.

3.3 Target population

According to Babbie (2017), a population, is an entire group about which the study seeks to draw general conclusions. The study targeted Ward Committees members of Ward 68, in a quest to understand their perspectives on the capacity-building initiatives available to them and how they translated to the enhancement of community engagement. The population for this research consisted of the Ward Committee members of Ward 68, who were selected based on their involvement in community participation and decision-making activities. The researcher obtained valuable insights on the efficacy of capacity-building efforts in promoting community engagement and empowerment by analysing their viewpoints.

The Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000, places a responsibility on municipalities to promote community participation in local government processes. As a result, municipalities must prioritise and invest in capacity-building initiatives to ensure that members of both the Ward Committee and the community have the necessary knowledge and skills for effective engagement with local government. Ward 68 ward committee members were selected to be part of the study, because of the various

community issues that require the community to be active and united to resolve them. Ward Committees are deemed an instrumental mechanism for fostering collaboration between the government and the community. Ward 68 is one of the wards in Johannesburg that were riddled with a plethora of issues, hence, it required a functional Ward Committee that could work with the municipality, the community, and other stakeholders to address the challenges.

The study population included both male and female participants between the ages of 18 and 55, who formed part of the ward committee structures. The members of the ward committee came from the seven voting districts of the ward. The research attempted to collect a heterogeneous sample of people of different origins and perspectives. The researchers aimed to achieve gender balance and consider any variations in experiences and views within the ward committee structures by involving both male and female participants. Although not all the participants came from all seven voting districts, they represented a diverse range of backgrounds and demographics.

The targeted number of ten current ward committees that was originally set was not achieved due to low participation from ward committees. This was because some ward committees had not taken advantage of the induction and other training opportunities that the municipality provided. Some of the participants could not answer the questions about the training, citing that they did not remember anything that they learned during the induction. The researcher narrowed the pool of participants to include the four ward committees that previously served the community, in order to gain more insights into the effectiveness of the training programme and its impact on community engagement. Out of the four participants who were included, only two were able to fully participate in the study, and two indicated that they did not recall what was covered in the training. This meant that only four Ward Committee members and two from the previous cohort were able to participate in the study. This culminated in six data sets, all of which were used to answer the research questions.

3.4 Sampling

It was not feasible to study all Ward Committees in Johannesburg, due to time and resource limitations. The study focused on a representative sample of ward

committees in Ward 68, which assisted in collecting the relevant data. Making choices about sampling is crucial because it affects not just the participants of the study, but also the environment and procedures that will be used (Punch, 2014). The research attempted to enhance the generalisability of its results to other Ward Committees in Johannesburg by carefully choosing a representative sample. However, this research cannot be generalised because Ward 68 has unique challenges that may not be applicable in other wards. The sampling technique also enabled a comprehensive examination of the chosen ward committees and their operational dynamics within the specific local setting.

Olejnik (2021) states that qualitative design studies often use purposive sampling, which allows the researcher to select a diverse sample, which allows for a thorough study of a phenomenon and the achievement of the research objectives. Purposive sampling is compatible with qualitative studies because it allows researchers to select participants who possess distinctive viewpoints and experiences that are pertinent to the phenomena being investigated. Researchers may get a thorough comprehension of the phenomena and efficiently accomplish their study goals by deliberately choosing a varied sample. In the context of this study, the researcher employed a purposive sampling method to identify former and current ward committee members of Ward 68.

Purposive sampling is a non-random sampling technique that allows the researcher to select participants based on specific criteria (Babbie, 2017). Through the use of this approach, the researcher successfully focused on participants who had direct experience and expertise in the operations and intricacies of ward committees in Ward 68. This method ensured that the sample included participants who had significant knowledge and perspectives that might contribute to the achievement of the study goals. The researcher interviewed two former and four serving Ward Committee members, and this yielded valuable information about the training they received from the City of Johannesburg and its contribution to building capacity for ward committees to stimulate community participation.

3.5 Sample size

The study initially targeted a sample of ten Ward Committee members who were serving the current term (2021–2026), but due to the circumstances that were

explained in the previous section, only six ward committees were included in the study. The researcher then added four participants from the previous ward committees to compensate for the smaller sample size, increasing the total number of participants to ten. The involvement of participants from the previous Ward Committees was essential to guarantee a broad range of representation and a thorough comprehension of the dynamics inside the committees. The modification allowed a more comprehensive examination and enhanced the credibility of the results of the study.

3.6 Data collection

A semi-structured interview schedule with open-ended questions was used for the data collection process. The interviews were conducted with members of the Ward Committees to gather in-depth insights and perspectives on their experiences of the contribution of the capacity-building interventions towards community engagement. The findings from these interviews provided valuable information for improving the effectiveness of ward committees and enhancing community engagement initiatives.

Opdenakker (2006) states that qualitative research is a crucial tool for understanding the experiences and contributions of participants to the study, and face-to-face interviews constitute one of the most commonly used methods for collecting qualitative data in this context. Face-to-face interviews enabled the researcher to create a strong connection with the participants and collect comprehensive and detailed information on their viewpoints and personal encounters. Additionally, the interviews gave the researcher a chance to analyse nonverbal signals and body language, thus, augmenting the comprehension of participants' reactions.

Consent forms (Annexure E) were presented to the respondents, and they signed them before the interviews. All the completed forms were stored in a secure location, following ethical guidelines. This ensured that the participants understood the study objectives and characteristics and that their rights, as participants, were safeguarded. Furthermore, securely keeping the permission papers not only preserved secrecy, but it also guaranteed adherence to ethical norms throughout the study.

Researchers have options for acquiring two kinds of data namely: primary and secondary (Kumar, 2014). Primary data were collected through face-to-face

interviews, WhatsApp, and email. The researcher also gathered data from published books and peer-reviewed journals, published reports, and documents. This approach allowed the researcher to build upon existing knowledge and theories in the field, thus, enhancing the credibility and validity of the study.

The interview durations ranged from 20 to 40 minutes. Each interview session was recorded in audio format to guarantee precision in capturing the participants' responses. When designing the study, it was crucial to make decisions regarding the recording of data (Punch, 2014). Researchers record interview data using handwritten notes, audiotapes, and videotapes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The researcher used an iPhone 14 device to record all the interview sessions. In line with this, the researcher supplemented the recording with handwritten notes, which played a crucial role in mapping the themes. The use of multiple data recording techniques provided adaptability and furnished several information channels for analysis. Furthermore, the use of contemporary technology, such as the iPhone 14 gadget, augmented the precision and effectiveness of data gathering during interviews.

The use of semi-structured questions facilitated adaptability in investigating the viewpoints of the participants, while still keeping a coherent emphasis on the study goals. Furthermore, the researcher made efforts to build a positive relationship with each of the participants before conducting the interviews, thus, guaranteeing a relaxed and trustworthy atmosphere for candid and sincere conversation. To ensure this, the researcher had preliminary telephone conversations with the respondents to explain the study and its intentions. This enabled the researcher to clarify any questions that the respondents might have had. The participants were even more comfortable when the researcher clarified the fact that they were not compelled to answer all the given questions and that they could opt not to participate if they felt uncomfortable.

In addition to the above respondents, the researcher interacted with the manager responsible for the Ward Committee and the Region B administrator through WhatsApp and emails respectively. This found its way into the findings and analysis of the study.

3.7 Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis encompasses techniques used to analyse research data without transforming them into a numerical format (Babbie, 2017). These strategies prioritise the interpretation and comprehension of the significance, context, and regularities present in the data. Qualitative data analysis enables researchers to get profound insights and develop novel ideas or hypotheses derived from the findings.

The study collected qualitative data from Ward Committees, which played a pivotal role in gaining insight and context into the capacity-building initiatives that are offered to Ward Committees and how they contribute to community engagement. The data was analysed using thematic analysis, a method that entails the identification of patterns and themes within the collected responses. The results yielded useful insights into the efficacy of the municipality's capacity-building activities and their impact on community involvement. The analytical procedure entails dividing the gathered information into segments and then reconstructing it (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The thematic analysis allows for a comprehensive understanding of the various perspectives and experiences that are shared by the participants. By identifying common themes and patterns, it becomes possible to assess the overall effectiveness of the municipality's capacity-building initiatives and their influence on community engagement. This analytical approach provides valuable information for improving future programmes and ensuring that they align with the needs and expectations of the ward committees.

The researcher used Microsoft Excel to analyse, classify and code the data, based on the specified themes. This facilitated the identification of patterns and the formulation of significant conclusions. The following themes emerged from the study:

- roles and responsibilities,
- community engagement,
- effectiveness of training,
- kinds of capacity-building initiatives,
- challenges faced by ward committees,
- stipend,

- community education.

All the above-mentioned themes were included in the data analysis and they helped the researcher answer the research questions.

The study adhered to the procedures for conducting a research analysis, as outlined by Creswell and Creswell (2018). The researcher organised the data collected from the field and read through them, in order to establish the extent of the ward committee capacity-building and community engagement in Ward 68. The responses were then coded, based on the collected data, generated descriptions, and themes. This was followed by a detailed description of the events that would help in discussing the findings. After organising and coding the data, the researcher proceeded to analyse the material in order to discern emerging patterns and themes. The method facilitated a more profound comprehension of the enhancement of ward committee capability and community engagement in Ward 68, therefore, establishing a complete foundation for debating the findings.

3.8 Limitations, feasibility, and positionality of the study

The study had several limitations that the researcher must openly acknowledge. Theofanidis and Fountouki (2018) assert that the shortcomings of a study pertain to inherent problems that may develop and are beyond the researcher's control. Limitations do not invalidate research (Akanle, Ademuson & Shittu, 2020). Instead, they function as a reminder that research is a multifaceted process, with several aspects that might impact the outcomes. This underscores the need for future research to tackle these obstacles and further augment the comprehension of the subject matter. Researchers can contribute to the body of knowledge already in existence and obtain a more thorough understanding of the subject matter by addressing these limitations.

The researcher must reveal the elements that are likely to influence the conclusions of the research. One of the limitations of the study was that the researcher could not interview all of the initially sampled ten Ward Committee members, which would have resulted in a more comprehensive understanding of their perspectives and experiences. This limitation could be attributed to some Ward Committees' unable to

recall the topics that were covered during the induction. In addition, some of the committee members claimed that they had not participated in any of the workshops and training sessions that were offered by the municipality. Two out of the ten members who had been recently elected relocated to another province, while two could not recall attending any training. Of the four who had previously served as Ward Committees, only two were able to participate, while the other two indicated that they could not recall the content that was covered in the training.

Due to the reasons highlighted above, the number of Ward Committee members who eventually participated in the study was trimmed to six. However, this limitation did not affect the research findings because data saturation was reached, and the fact that four Ward Committee members could not recall anything was also a crucial finding for the study.

In addition, the researcher used WaziMap data from 2016 and one may argue that the data were not the most recent, given the interval between the year of publication and when this study was conducted. The researcher attempted to get the latest statistics for Ward 68 from the CoJ, with no success. A CoJ official indicated that WaziMap (2016) had the most recent data that the municipality had at its disposal. The official also indicated that the municipality did not have a service provider who could assist with collecting the most recent data. This may have negatively impacted on the study, because the information that was used in the introduction and background may have changed between 2016 and 2024.

Positionality refers to how a person perceives the world and how the social and political setting influences the research (Holmes, 2020). Positionality influences research procedures and, ultimately, study findings. The researcher is a member of the African National Congress (ANC), who holds the position of deputy secretary, and the majority of the ward committee members are members of the ANC. The branch meetings of the ANC have an agenda meeting for governance, where all ANC-affiliated Ward Committee members and the councillor account to the branch leadership about their performance. This depicts a relationship between the respondents and the researcher. However, this did not, in any way, impact on the findings of the study.

The interpretivism ontology was used for this study because the researcher's assumption is that the world under investigation is characterised by human beings,

who have varied viewpoints, meanings, and interpretations of reality. The research was a qualitative inquiry that tried to elicit people's perspectives, which are informed by their experiences, thereby demonstrating the importance of interpretivism. The research employs constructivism as its epistemology. The researcher believes that meaning is created through the interplay of humans and the environment. The researcher conducted interviews to elicit people's experiences, and no one interpretation was regarded as valid in this scenario.

3.9 Ethical considerations

When conducting research, particularly one that involves individuals, it is essential to address ethical considerations and make informed decisions. Van Wyk (2017) asserts that researchers must maintain honesty throughout the research process. The researcher must comply with a set of ethical guidelines, in order to guarantee that the volunteers are not exploited. The guidelines may include getting informed permission from participants, guaranteeing the confidentiality of their personal information, and minimising any possible injury or discomfort that they may encounter throughout the study process. Furthermore, researchers need to exhibit transparency about their motives, divulge any potential conflicts of interest, and duly recognise the contributions made by the participants in their studies.

The study went through the University of Witwatersrand Ethics Committee, which scrutinised its compliance to ethical standards. The researcher received ethical clearance to conduct the study from the Ethics Committee (Annexure E). The clearance guaranteed that the research complied with ethical principles and safeguarded the rights and welfare of the respondents. Furthermore, the acquisition of the ethical clearance served as evidence of the researcher's dedication to conduct research responsibly, in order to yield reliable findings. In addition to the ethics clearance, the researcher also obtained a permission letter from the municipality. The letter allowed the researcher to interview Ward Committee members and municipal officials, and access any documents that were not of public record. Kumar (2014) stresses the fact that it is not ethical to collect data without proper permission and consent from the relevant participants and authorities.

The researcher sought consent from the Ward Committee members who participated in the study. The respondents were made aware of the intentions of the study, and that their participation was voluntary. The Ward Committee members signed the consent form (Annexure H), which explained everything about their participation. The consent form also assured the Ward Committee members that their identities would remain confidential and that their responses would only be used for research purposes. Additionally, the researcher informed the municipal officials about the study and obtained their permission to access any relevant documents that were not publicly available. This is corroborated by Kumar (2014), who stated that the data collected for research should not be shared with anyone or used for something that it was not intended for. Therefore, it is crucial to follow ethical guidelines and ensure the confidentiality of the collected data.

3.9.2 Information management

All the information that was gathered from the Ward Committee members was stored in a cloud storage and secured with a password, to allow access to the researcher and the supervisor only. This measure ensured that only authorised persons could access and examine the gathered data, therefore, preserving the confidentiality and security of the information. Periodic backups were also conducted to mitigate the risk of any possible data loss or damage. This information will be deleted after five years to comply with data retention policies.

3.9.3 Confidentiality and anonymity

The anonymity of research participants is crucial. It guaranteed that the Ward Committee members could openly articulate their ideas, viewpoints, and encounters without apprehension of criticism or consequences. Moreover, anonymity enhances the veracity and uprightness of research by mitigating the likelihood of prejudice or social desirability bias in participant responses. The respondents were not asked for any personal information. Although the researcher met and interviewed the respondents, the findings did not divulge their details. The respondents are named as respondents 1 to 10, thus, anonymising their identities. This method guaranteed that

the respondents would feel at ease while expressing their opinions and experiences, since they had been assured that their identities would not be disclosed.

3.10 Conclusion

The chapter discussed the qualitative approach of the study, which was used to gain more insight into the experiences of the Ward Committee members and their perspectives on community development. This approach involved conducting in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with the committee members, which explored their experiences and viewpoints about the capacity-building and community engagement initiatives that the CoJ provided in Ward 68. The chapter further discussed the usage of sampling methods and the population of the study by justifying the selection of Ward Committee members from Ward 68 as the primary respondents. Furthermore, the chapter emphasised the need to ensure diversity in the sample by including a wide array of viewpoints and experiences. This included taking into account variables such as age, gender, and tenure on the committee to guarantee a thorough comprehension of community development endeavours in the ward. Furthermore, the chapter examined the ethical aspects of the research and highlighted the need to obtain informed permission from the respondents and safeguard their privacy and confidentiality.

The research also addressed the possible risks and advantages of participation, along with the measures used to mitigate any adverse effects or discomfort for the committee members. In summary, this chapter included a comprehensive examination of the sample techniques, population selection, diversity factors, and the ethical issues that were associated with conducting the research in Ward 68.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

This chapter presented the findings and analysis of data that were collected through interviews. The researcher combined both findings and analysis in the same chapter. The study aimed to explore the contribution of the training provided to ward committee members in capacitating them to engage with the community in Ward 68. The study aimed to address the following important questions in presenting the findings and analysis:

- How does the training assist ward committee members to understand their roles and responsibilities?
- How does the training contribute to the ability of ward committee members to build relationships with municipal officials and the community?
- What are the successes and failures associated with the training?

During the process of gathering data, the researcher found that the existing Ward Committees had only engaged in an introductory workshop that had been specifically created to establish connections with different stakeholders within the city. The primary objective of this was to ensure that Ward Committees had a comprehensive understanding of the institutions that were tasked with addressing service delivery concerns. The absence of ongoing capacity-building programmes potentially contributed to the limited understanding that the Ward Committee members had of their roles and responsibilities, subsequently impeding efficient engagement between the community and the municipality. A CoJ representative highlighted that the city had not provided any skills development training to the current Ward Committees (Tladi, 2023). This is extremely concerning, as the committees were elected in 2021, thus, suggesting a lack of support for equipping them to effectively carry out their duties and obligations.

The induction and training, if provided, were region-based and not tailor-made to the specific requirements and contexts of the Ward Committees. A wide range of communities with distinctive characteristics make up Region B, which has about twelve wards. Each one of these wards has its own unique challenges, therefore, Ward Committee members need proper training, so that they can be in a better position to respond to challenges and involve themselves in the developmental agendas of their

respective communities. This is supported by Millen (2001), who states that a “one-size-fits-all” is not ideal for capacity-building, because these programmes must consider the context of the audience that they are targeting. Furthermore, Ward Committees must have ten to fifteen members only (DPLG,2005). As a result, assuming all of them attend the meeting, the induction training would bring a minimum of 120 Ward Committees under one roof. This would lead to ineffective training because participation would be suppressed due to time constraints. After all, such training sessions are normally done in one day, thus, resulting in information overload, which would render the training ineffective. Perhaps this was the reason some of the committee members could not recall what was discussed during the training. Respondents 7 and 8 highlighted that they attended the induction workshop, but they could not remember what was covered during the all-day event.

Two Ward Committee members indicated that they had relocated to another province, which effectively meant that they no longer performed the roles and responsibilities that they were elected for, although the municipality continued to pay them. One respondent highlighted that during one of their meetings with the Region B administrator, they raised this issue and the administrator had indicated that action would be taken against those who were no longer active. In addition, two members from the current elected committee indicated that they could not recall the content that was covered in the induction, thus, making them ineligible to answer some of the interview questions. This could suggest that the ward committee induction that was offered lacked structure and was not relevant to the needs of the Ward Committees. The inability to recall was also noted in the case of two previous Ward Committees. Their reason for failure to recall was that the induction had happened several years back.

4.2 Contextualising Ward 68 committee members

4.2.1 Composition

According to the DPL (2005), the composition of Ward Committees is crucial because it ensures effective representation and involvement of local communities in decision-making processes. It helps to ensure that the needs and concerns of different communities are taken into account. Three young people between the ages of 18 and 55 are members of the Ward Committee in Ward 68. The inclusion of these young

people enriched the decision-making process by introducing new views and ideas and ensuring that the viewpoints of the younger generation are acknowledged and taken into account. Furthermore, the participation of young individuals in ward committees facilitated intergenerational communication and cultivated a sense of ownership and accountability towards the progress of their community.

The committee also consisted of seven individuals, all of whom are between the ages of 35 and 55 and they all possess a wealth of insight and experience. The broad makeup of the committee enabled it to effectively address the interests and concerns of both the younger and older generations, thereby fostering a more inclusive decision-making process. The inclusion of individuals from various age cohorts in the ward committees enabled the committees to access a broader spectrum of viewpoints and specialised knowledge. This eventually resulted in more comprehensive and efficient community development endeavours. It is worth noting that the committee also constituted of seven females and three males, ensuring gender diversity and representation (Mohlala, 2024). This gender representation facilitated a comprehensive approach to decision-making and guaranteed the consideration of the interests and viewpoints of all community members. The diverse nature of the committee not only ensured fairness, but it also cultivated a feeling of cohesion and cooperation among its members, thereby eventually resulting in more efficient and influential community efforts.

The committee lacked representation of people with visible disabilities, thus, emphasising the need for further endeavours to enhance inclusion and accessibility within the community. Proactive incorporation of persons with disabilities into the committee may address the distinctive difficulties and viewpoints of this marginalised group more effectively and this may culminate in a more inclusive and representative decision-making process (Mohlala, 2024). Incorporating various viewpoints from persons with disabilities would augment the capacity of the committee to adopt efficacious policies and activities that cater for the needs of all community members.

4.2.2 Education

The education profile of the ward committee plays an important role in ensuring that the committee members have the necessary knowledge and skills to address

educational issues within their jurisdiction effectively (Redflank, 2019). This entails comprehending municipal policies, by-laws, projects, and initiatives, as well as possessing the ability to assess data and provide well-informed choices. Furthermore, a knowledgeable ward committee may also function as a beneficial asset for parents and community members, thus, furnishing them with precise information and counsel on educational affairs. Of the five serving ward committee members who responded to the questions, only one held a post-matric qualification. The other four held grade 12 qualifications. Also, of the four former Ward Committee members, only one had a post-matric qualification, one had a Grade 12 certificate and the other had no qualifications.

4.2.3 Capacity-building initiatives

This theme assisted the researcher in understanding the kinds of capacity-building initiatives that the municipality provided to the ward committees. All respondents attended the induction sessions; some attended follow-up training, while others did not do so. Only one respondent suggested that he/she attended workshops that aligned with his/her portfolio.

> *The only training that was provided was provided was an induction and there was no other training thereafter (Respondent 1, 12,2023).*

Respondent 2 indicated that he/she managed to attend an induction and another training that was meant to link ward committee members with various stakeholders in their respective portfolios.

> *The city provided us with an induction and a training that was aimed to give us contacts about the different department related to our portfolios (Respondent 2, 12,2023).*

Respondent 6 indicated that he/she was only provided with a once-off induction that gave him/her valuable information, but he/she wished that this could be done yearly, as a refresher course to remind them about their roles and responsibilities. Millen (2001) states that capacity-building initiatives need to be followed up, and ongoing support may result in a greater impact of the initiatives.

> *We did receive an induction once. it was just once off. Maybe it should be done yearly to remind and refresh us about our roles and responsibilities (Respondent 6, 12,2023).*

Remarkably, respondent 4 revealed that he/she had attended several other workshops related to his/her portfolio.

> *Yes, we are mostly got the training on according to the safety of the people in the community. Okay. with your disaster management. It was also part of the workshop that was in Gatheses, was with JMPD and had also received induction training (Respondent 4, 12,2023).*

When prompted about how many other capacity-building initiatives he/she had attended, Respondent 5 had the following to say:

> *Two or three workshops I think that we had because most of the other things you know was mostly a lot together you know on one day. It was shared with us and then on the other day then we just go to different departments you know your safety goes that side, your environment goes there, different departments and then we have a discussion amongst ourselves there (Respondent 5, 12,2023).*

The above demonstrates that the incumbent Ward Committee members only attended an induction session, as alluded to before, whereas the previous members seemed to have attended multiple capacity-building initiatives that capacitated them with how to deal with community and service delivery issues. Respondent 4 was a serving Ward Committee member, and he confused capacity-building initiatives by the municipality with meetings that he attended as a member of the community safety portfolio. This confusion can be attributed to the unstructured municipal training and lack of clarity in terms of the expectations and responsibilities of Ward Committee members. The municipality provided neither clear guidance nor ongoing support to ensure that Ward Committee members were properly equipped to address the needs of the community more effectively (Tladi, 2024). It is important to note that training should not be viewed as a once-off thing, but as something that must be done on an ongoing basis, so as to ensure that Ward Committees are well-capacitated to engage and address community issues (Mtshweni, 2009).

The training that the Ward Committee members would have liked to receive should have focused on the following areas:

- local government,
- legislation and policy,
- portfolio management,
- roles and responsibilities of a Ward Committee members.

The municipality did not attempt to provide any of the training, despite the fact that the Ward Committees had been in office for three years and they were expected to perform their duties efficiently. This was a cause for concern, because the municipality did not sufficiently support the Ward Committees in terms of building their capacities, bolstering their confidence, and enhancing their capabilities.

4.2.4 Roles and responsibilities

This theme helped to determine whether the municipal capacity-building initiatives had helped the Ward Committee members understand their roles and responsibilities. The study aimed to assess the effectiveness of the municipal capacity-building initiatives in enhancing Ward Committee members' understanding of their roles and responsibilities. By examining this theme, the researcher sought to provide insights into the impact of such initiatives on the overall functioning and decision-making processes of ward committees.

Respondent 2 highlighted that the municipal capacity-building initiatives did not yield any results because they were generic, so they did not specifically address service delivery issues in his/her portfolio.

> *No, no, I had to go and ask the councillor about the roles and responsibilities. That is why you can even find a ward committee member who is relaxed and has never done anything in their portfolio. They did not say these are your responsibilities in your portfolio; they just generically spoke about the responsibilities. I had to ask some questions about my portfolio, like the log of calls for electricity, where they said it was not your responsibility, but you could assist them because there are old people who cannot use the latest technologies or advanced devices like the web and stuff like that. There was another training also, but it was not attended due to work commitments. I only sought feedback from those who attended, and they told me the meeting just gave them contacts of the departments and stakeholders within the portfolio they serve (Respondent 2, 12,2023).*

The respondent further stated that in order to understand his/her roles and responsibilities, he/she had to be inducted further by the councillor.

> *We had to sit with the councillor as the ward committees to understand our roles and responsibilities, not them, giving us the proper training to say this is a how you should build the relation with the community (Respondent 2, 12,2023).*

Respondent 1 and 6 stated that the capacity-building induction played an important role in making them understand their roles and responsibilities.

Respondent 1 mentioned that the induction provided valuable knowledge and skills that have greatly contributed to his/her effectiveness in his/her role. Respondent 6 also expressed appreciation for the induction by stating that it helped him/her to gain a clear understanding of his/her duties, thereby enhancing his/her confidence in carrying out his/her responsibilities.

> *We had a training that was spread across two days in Kibler Park; our term was 2016–2021 with professors; I just forgot the name of the institution. They started by inducting us, and thereafter, we started with a course of leadership that was aimed at capacitating us on how to deal with community members; it was a leadership skills module. It was just training that was about our roles and responsibilities, what we should do, and what we should not do. It was just about our roles and nothing much. The induction was once-off, and after that, we were expected to submit a portfolio to the ward governance because they promised that they would give us certificates of completion as this is an accredited course, but we have been waiting for the certificates since 2016. The training was very fruitful because, dealing with the community, they did not understand our role; they took us as implementers, so the training taught us how to deal with them. It taught us that we must show leadership, be as truthful as we can, and not promise things that we cannot deliver. It was a fruitful (Respondent 1, 12,2023).*

> *We did receive an induction once, and they outlined how we work with the councillor. The training assisted me. First, I know that my role as a ward committee is that I do not work against the councillor; I work with the councillor even if we do not belong to the same political organisation. The second role, as I was speaking to the councillor, is that now that I do not report to WhatsApp groups, I report to the speaker, and I need to stick to my portfolio and not overreach to other people's portfolios. It also assisted us on how to deal with people, as we have different political parties in the community, and the expectation is that we need to assist all people regardless of their political affiliation; you don't just assist a person because they belong to your political organisation. It assisted, but it was just once off. Maybe it should be done yearly to remind and refresh us about our roles and responsibilities (Respondent 6, 12,2023).*

Respondents 4 and 5 did not seem to agree or disagree with the impact of the capacity-building initiatives on ward committees. They indicated that the various workshops that they attended had assisted them in discharging some of their duties. However, they suggested that the theoretical approach to the induction was not helpful, as the content was not tailored to their specific roles and responsibilities in the city.

> *In a way training did, but I think I need a little bit more, and we did not do it practically. Look, we need to deal with the officials; if you can't do it practically, then it is not*

purposeful. We were told that if we don't understand something we need to escalate to the councillor. As a member of the ward committee, I do understand my roles and responsibilities, but I can't deliver them to the people because when I try to have a meeting with them, they do not understand my role, like I was in the crime scene as a safety ward committee, and the people were asking who I am because they do not understand but the officials understand. With this portfolio that I am running, the training that I got was good, but I don't think I can transfer the skills to practical use. I always depended on the relationships that I had during my previous employment to do my duties. They did provide us with a manual talking about the roles and responsibilities of a ward committee, but I did not get any chance to read it because the ward committee duties are demanding (Respondent 4, 12,2023).

I can simply say partly so because, given the way it was run, I believe the training should be more informative and engaging. They will put you in one space as a ward committee for the region and be unable to engage with the person who is training. The training would take the whole day; for each module, it would take almost an hour. There were no training manuals that were provided to enable the ward committees to go through them in their own spare time; it was a once-off training and nothing after that (Respondent 5, 12,2023).

Respondent 5 further emphasised that they relied more on political training to engage with the community, as opposed to the capacity-building initiatives that were provided by the municipality.

Most exposure that I've got. I've got it through political training. Yeah. And other than being a ward committee, because there's a lot of teachings also in politics, you know, community engagement, how do you engage people, you know, and how to stay composed towards the community or public? (Respondent 5, 12,2023).

The respondents experienced the induction training differently, with some stating that it was helpful, while others, particularly newly elected ward committee members, indicated that it was not relevant to their needs, because it only focused on the escalation points of reference for service delivery-related issues. The municipality did not offer any training that specifically dealt with the roles and responsibilities of the Ward Committees and how they should work with the community. It appeared they were dependent on the councillor to furnish them with the knowledge and skills they needed to perform their day-to-day duties. Thus, the lack of structured training was a major contributing factor to the poor performance of ward committee members in Ward 68. This is echoed by Qwabe and Mdaka (2021), who posit that lack of skills among Ward Committees effectively.

It might not be much of a surprise that the CoJ municipality had not done a capacity assessment for the Ward Committee. One of the strategies for capacity-building is capacity assessment, which helps an organisation to understand the existing capacity (Edoun et al, 2023). In this case, the CoJ seemed to have taken no action in terms of rolling out skills training, which suggested that the municipality was not investing much in understanding the training needs of the ward committees. The latter may fail to understand the capacity that needs to be built for Ward Committees to function effectively. The second strategy for capacity-building has to do with enhancing the capabilities of individuals and teams by equipping them to perform their functions effectively (Enemark & Williamson, 2004). Sadly, the municipality had not done much to enhance the capacity of Ward 68 committee members.

4.4 Effectiveness of the training in creating trust and relationship with community and municipal officials

For service delivery to happen at the grass-roots level, there is a need for the stakeholders to establish mutual trust and good relationships. This can help in effectively tackling any challenges that may erupt in the communities (Madzivhandila & Maloka, 2014). This theme assisted the researcher to understand the relationship between municipal officials and ward committees, as well as the trust between ward committees and the community.

> *In my portfolio, people trust that when they come to me, their housing-related issues will be solved. I was speaking with the councillor just today about the fact that yesterday I was in phase four and there was a housing problem. The problems that I encounter are similar, which makes people trust me because of my experience, and if I do not understand the problem, I will escalate it to the relevant people. We are still waiting for the list of contacts for the MMC office and other relevant stakeholders. I will give you an example: I have a problem with title deeds, and the community is tired of the issue of not getting their title deeds. I did go to Region D to ask when the title deeds were coming, and I was told that things have changed; title deeds are no longer distributed, but people need to fetch them at 222, of which people do not know where or what 222 is. I also went to Region B to seek intervention from our administrator to try and bring officials to explain the new process, but I believe if it comes from the officials, it will carry more weight, but I am still waiting, Jabu. This will enable people to trust me even more (Respondent 6, 12,2023).*

The foregoing citation indicated that there was a trust deficit between the officials and the members of ward committees, as well as the police and the community. The

respondent also stated that he/she had a cordial relationship with the municipal officials because he/she once worked for an entity of the municipality.

> It's in between, you know. I am saying so because there are only certain people that you can share the information with, and there are others that you can't, especially with the crime that is taking place in our community and its drug-related issues. There are certain workshops provided to us on how to work with these officials, but unfortunately, you cannot trust the officials. especially the SAPS, which you can't trust. You can't tell them that that person shot another person because they will come back and give information to that person, which puts your life in danger. I have a relationship with all the officials in the city. These relationships I have created them because I used to work for the city, all the managers who were in the training I knew them (Respondent 4, 12,2023).

Respondent 1 argued that people resort to service delivery protests, which are characterised by the burning of tyres. Such protests are mainly caused by a lack of information pertaining to the departments or entities that can address service delivery issues. The participant disclosed that the induction training assisted him/her in knowing the various stakeholders who could deal with different community problems. However, the participant strongly believed that municipal officials and representatives from various entities were supposed to be part of the induction process, as this would have allowed them to meet with members of the Ward Committees.

> *Yes, it really helped because, in most cases, when we have a public meeting where you see that people lack information, I will guide them in terms of what doors to knock on for them to get proper information. Remember that our communities burn tyres when they have problems. At least I have gained the skill from the training that if the community is angry, you calm them down by telling them the truth. The training itself is supposed to create relationships with officials; I think this is one of the things that is lacking. In the workshop, officials were supposed to be part of the training so that there could be a relationship between the ward committees and the entities of the city (Respondent 1, 12,2023).*

> *It was not easy, as I've indicated that, uh, there's more assistance or support from the municipality on itself because you have to, you have to build those relationships yourselves and also have a database of the municipal entities that you have to, uh, work with. Like for instance, I've been in the portfolio of infrastructure and services which deals with mainly you know the basic service deliveries of the community, which is what are the two city, where is the environment. And so those are the basics, day-to-day things that needs to be there, which are also basic rights to the, to the, to the public. So, I had to make sure that I open doors for myself without any assistance from the municipality. Yeah, from the municipality and. Yeah. So that's how I can be able to run my portfolio. It is so that I have a direct to the supervisor of City Power had to make those means that I have the contacts and so that I can interact and be proactive in terms of service delivery to the community (Respondent 5, 12,2023).*

The municipality covered the issue of stakeholder relationship between the entities and the Ward Committee members during their training. Ward Committees were introduced to the different entities of the municipality that deal with service delivery-related issues. It appeared that this was not enough because the respondents indicated that they still did not have the contact details of the specific officials. Some respondents indicated that they had built relations with officials on their own because the training did not sufficiently address this. It should be noted that not all Ward Committee members were able to build relations with officials on their own. This would result in the members being stuck with service delivery issues that they would be unable to escalate to the relevant entities, especially in cases where they did not have a good relationship with the councillor.

4.5 Challenges faced by Ward Committees

This study explored the challenges faced by ward committees. The respondents stated the challenges and suggested how they could be resolved.

The respondents stated the following challenges:

> *I think the ward committees need to be improved because they were introduced to assist councillors. Remember, the ward is big; it is very vast. The ten ward committees need to assist the councillor in the different areas, but at the same time, ward committees do not report to the ward councillor, and the ward councillor does not report to the ward committees. So, it's like two different systems: the ward committees report to the ward governance directly, and then it escalates to the speaker's office (Respondent 1, 12,2023).*

In the citation below, the respondent further pointed out the confusion and lack of collaboration between the ward councillors and the ward committee, which affected service delivery in the communities.

> *If they can be given the same powers as councillors to do oversight, for example, in region B, the ward committee for economic development can be put in one class in one workshop per portfolio and discuss how they can do oversight. I was part of economic development, and when you visit businesses, they normally ask for the councillor or a letter with a stamp and letterhead from the municipality, and ward committees do not have access to this, so I regard a ward committee as just an activist who works directly with the community without support (Respondent 1, 12,2023).*

Sekgala (2016) argues that the majority of ward committees in the city of Johannesburg have no understanding of their roles and responsibilities. In addition,

the findings by Duma (2019) suggest that councillors in eThekwini were unable to differentiate their roles in contrast to those of the ward committee members. This resonated with the observation below, which was also made by respondent 1:

> *In some instances, you find that the ward councillor and the committee are fighting, which creates a situation where ward committees are unable to escalate issues to the councillor. Sometimes the ward committee thinks they must monitor the councillor, and the councillor may also think they have to supervise the ward committees. So, if the councillor and the ward committees do not have a relationship, issues may not be escalated (Respondent 1, 12,2023).*

The respondent also suggested what could be done to resolve the above challenge. Respondent 1 stated the below:

> *To solve this, there should be a walk-in office for ward committees to raise their frustrations and problems so that there can be some sort of coordination between the councillor and the ward committees. This will prove who is not doing their job between the ward councillor and the ward committees because there is this fight between the two, which hampers service delivery (Respondent 1, 12,2023).*

The issue of the stipend allocated to the Ward Committees was prominently highlighted. Respondents emphasised that the stipend was insufficient to cover the voting areas that constituted Ward 68. In their findings, Duma (2019) argued that a salary of R1 000.00 was barely enough to cover travel expenses and fulfil the responsibilities of the Ward Committees.

> *As I've said, we find that the ward committee doesn't have resources to move around, to run to offices, some even go to beyond, of assisting in the in terms of uh, going to those offices. So that services can be provided. 68, as the ward is bigger (Respondent 5, 12,2023).*

The respondent further expressed concern that the stipend was not even enough to buy the necessary resources for communicating with the community and the officials.

> *So on my side I can say it was much easier, but the point is the city on its own, the municipality doesn't provide much resources and support to the what committees. Umm. Meaning in terms of finances and administratively, because we use your cell phone, the only give your stipend that is less that cannot even buy you a monthly data because now we are at the at the at the moment where we use much of a social network or Internet. So, they don't. They don't have such much support regarding to that, so it really makes one's work difficult and is because one thousand rands gets depleted. Another difficulty is using your own handset. If you get lost, you are unemployed, unable to maybe another one, insurance is not there. So, it means after you have lost that one, you're going to*

struggle then in terms of communicating without a mobile cell phone (Respondent 5, 12,2023).

Another respondent pointed out that the stipend was too meagre to enable them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.

Our stipend is too little, our ward is very big. You understand we start from here (Pennyville) to Crown Mines, not to mention Riverlea, its very big with many extensions. Sometimes I have to go to all these areas to address housing issues (Respondent 6, 12,2023).

The same respondent also expressed dissatisfaction with some members of Ward Committees who were not active but continued to receive stipends from the municipality.

I raised the issue with the municipal officials during our meeting that they need to look at the issue of ward committees that are not working because they are getting the stipend without doing anything. We are insulted in the community groups as ward committees that we are not working and its painful because it is not all of us (Respondent 6, 12,2023).

The respondents also raised the issue of accountability by municipality officials, with regard to service delivery. The participants hinted that some municipal officials were reluctant to deal with any service delivery issues that would have been raised by ward committees.

One of the respondents said the below:

If an official is lazy uh you cannot discipline that officially direct maybe you say OK I have proof and a person logged the call and the turnaround is 4 hours but now the turnaround for city power is after 10 days you must take that to the office of the Ombudsman the Office of the Ombudsman man you will take long to do things is very long and all of that and all of that (Respondent 2, 12,2023).

The respondent further alluded to the attitude of officials towards service delivery, which could be attributed to the nature of their employment contracts.

There's nothing that you can do. Umm, so it becomes difficult to get services to the people. It becomes difficult to get a direct the responsibility to say no. This person is responsible for this thing and he or she must account to this thing. If this thing didn't happen, this person must account or he's going to take this disciplinary action. City Power Officer will tell you I am permanent me and there's nothing that you can do (Respondent 2, 12,2023).

The lack of training for Ward Committees resulted in inability to address some challenges, however, others are beyond the scope of training. For example, such

challenges could be attributed to lack of support from the municipality officials. There also seemed to be conflation and conflict between the duties of the ward committees and those of the ward councillor. Duma (2019) states that councillors could not make a difference between their own roles and those of the Ward Committees. This was exacerbated by lack of continuous training initiatives that could clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Ward Committees thus, capacitating them to work together with the councillor and the community in Ward 68.

The respondents further bemoaned that Ward 68 was too big, given that it had eight voting districts, which the ward committee was expected to represent. This brought the issue of the inadequacy of the R1 000.00 monthly stipend into focus again. The participants unanimously pointed out that they could neither afford to travel across the ward nor buy data to connect with the residents on the various social media platforms. The participants also shared their frustrations about municipal officials who were not attending to their calls of duty, as they seemed reluctant to attend to the service delivery concerns that would have been raised by the ward committee. This led to a deficit in trust between community members and the Ward Committee.

4.7 Ward Committees and community engagement

This theme assisted the researcher in comprehending how the ward committee members engaged with the community, particularly in terms of checking if the capacity-building efforts of the municipality enabled ward committees to engage with communities with ease.

One respondent indicated that the only platforms that he/she used to engage with the community were public meetings and direct contact, especially when the residents brought service delivery queries that were within the purvey of his/her portfolio.

> *What I normally do and then it has since I was a ward committee for infrastructure, obviously the community in public meetings were told that, umm, I am a ward committee under infrastructure and services. Normally what gives us the problem with the most is the electricity. So, they just say if you if you don't have power then just contact me then maybe will log the call for you. Or rather, I share the reference number, then maybe you just connect, so that's the relationship with the community, because normally, even from the Riverlea, because this community is very large, they actually do the very same thing they sent are they call when they call (Respondent 2, 12,2023).*

Respondent 6 indicated that the capacity-building initiatives in the form of induction assisted him/her to master how to engage with the people.

> *Yes, it really assisted me. The training assisted me on how to approach people and how I speak with people. My portfolio is too demanding, I was busy with a couple yesterday as I said before (Respondent 6, 12,2023).*

The respondents further indicated that the training somehow assisted them in understanding how to engage with communities. This was despite an indication by the municipal official responsible for ward committee training that the municipality only offered induction training to Ward Committees. Ward Committees engage with the community on issues that are related to their portfolios, however, they did not receive any training related to community engagement.

4.9 Educating the community

This theme looked at the reasons why the community seemed to have no interest in engaging on issues that affected them. The respondents stressed that the community appeared not to comprehend that, following their election, the councillor and Ward Committees were no longer representatives of political parties, but they had become servants of the community. Modise (2017) argues that the lack of knowledge of local and international political processes is a substantial hurdle to participatory democracy in South Africa. Service delivery demonstrations and marches serve as a considerable sign of the challenges of participatory democracy in democratic South Africa (Modise, 2017). The participants had the following to say:

> I *think even if the city can train us, I think it is where they need to train communities because even the communities don't understand what are the duties for what committees. They can say, I mean, this is your responsibility, but when you come to the community and then do exactly that responsibility, then they will say, hey, you are not a councillor, who are you? you know so things like that because these things of what committees I mean they become a bit of political you get me because on the initial stage where we actually doing those door to door like trying to put these ward committees, each party put their own members, so if you win as an EFF or as an ANC, so when that person wins, those for EFF won't be listening to you, those for ANC will be listening to you because we are in the ANC, you know, things like that (Respondent 2, 12,2023).*

The respondent further noted that there was a lack of knowledge regarding the role and responsibilities of elected councillor and Ward Committee members within the

community, since some community members viewed them as representatives of their political parties.

> *I think even the community, our communities need to be educated about the judges of the whole community, after elections it's no longer political but now those people that won those elections then they are there to assist the community now, they must just put those things aside because even the councillors find it difficult because they will say you are an ANC councillor not our councillor, you know things like that they don't just happen to us, but they happen to even a councillor (Respondent 2, 12,2023).*

Another respondent stated the following:

> *The community does not understand. Like we had no one else shooting there. And I was arguing with the people of the house. They are walking around the place where the crime scenes, things like that. But as I explained to them what is happening, you don't tell us what's happening, who are you, and things like that. Your counsellor did not introduce us to the people in the community, they say this is the right community for this portfolio, for that portfolio. So that's why also it's in between. Things are fine, things are not fine. As we can see, the people know me- as a member of Enviro-Parks, which was an NGO that we used to have. That is why people are knowing me actually. But when it comes to the official of SAPS, the committee member for public safety, no, they don't know me as that Respondent 5,12,2023).*

The respondents indicated that there should be an education programme aimed at educating the community about the Ward Committee and local government, in particular. This is due to the backlash that they normally receive from the communities. The community could not differentiate between Ward Committees and the political party to which respective committee members belonged. Ward committees are regarded as a mouthpiece for their political organisation because they are elected on party tickets (Sibiya, 2011). This creates confusion for community members because they are not aware that once party representatives are elected to office, they cease to represent their party, but the community at large. This confusion results in dissatisfaction and mistrust between Ward Committees and community members, as the latter feel that their interests are not being adequately represented.

4.8 Conclusion

The section presented the research findings and the documents that the CoJ made available to the researcher. The Ward Committee was a combination of young and old people, but it did not include people with visible disabilities. The composition further included people with and without formal education. The participants claimed that the municipality only provided them with induction training and that no other training was

available to them. They also voiced their frustrations about their roles and responsibilities. One of the municipal officials in charge of Ward Committee training also confirmed that the committees received induction training only. As a result, the Ward Committees in Ward 68 were negatively affected because they did not know their roles and responsibilities clearly and this dealt a blow to community engagement. The community generally lacked an understanding of how local government functioned. This was vividly one of the factors that deterred engagement between the community and Ward Committees because the former viewed the latter as extensions of their political parties.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

Ward Committees were introduced by the government to bolster the efficiency and effectiveness of municipalities. These committees collaborate with ward councillors and work closely with both the community and the municipality to address service delivery issues. The main aim of establishing Ward Committees was to ensure that the voice of the community was part of decision-making on matters of local development. The study explored how the capacity-building initiatives, particularly training, offered to Ward Committees contributed to community engagement in Ward 68.

The study made several findings that were worth noting. One of the major findings was that CoJ only organised an induction training for the Ward Committee The sole purpose of the induction was to link the Ward Committee members with service delivery stakeholders within the municipal structures. The committee was already in its third year, yet no other training had been offered to them. The CoJ had not offered any support to the Ward Committees except for the meetings that Ward Committees held with the regional administrators. This is despite the 5.1% budget allocation that the CoJ dedicated towards public participation (CoJ, 2023). The CoJ had a record of not supporting their Ward Committees effectively. For example, 44% of the participants in another study indicated that Ward Committees felt that there was a lack of support from the municipality (Redflank, 2020). Although an induction meeting was aimed at introducing the municipal entities, the respondents felt that this was not enough, because it did not assist them in creating relationships with the officials responsible for those entities. The respondents recommended continuous training to engage with the communities and address the challenges faced by the communities effectively.

Thus, the lack of continuous training led to the creation of a situation where Ward Committees were not sure about their roles in the community. Some of the Ward Committees were reliant on the Ward councillor to explain their roles and responsibilities to them. The lack of clarity about their roles and responsibilities was a major hindrance to their effectiveness in the community.

Consequently, the municipality needs to perform a needs analysis for Ward Committees This can help the city authorities to understand the skills gap and then design training programmes that empower Ward Committees. CoJ, as one of the biggest municipalities in Africa, can do better and invest resources and time in ensuring that training for the committees is done on time.

The study also revealed that the training provided by the municipality is organised through a region that has about twelve wards, each with different developments and needs. This approach on its own fails to deal with community-based scenarios. As a result, there is a clear disconnect between the training and the expectations and training needs of the Ward Committee members. The disconnect hinders community engagement and, ultimately, the effectiveness of Ward Committees. The CoJ needs to find ways to group wards that have similar needs so that the training can be tailored to the needs of specific communities, as it might not be feasible to administer training for each ward. An example can be that communities that have squatter camps are likely to face similar challenges. This approach can be effective in tailoring the training to benefit the Ward Committees.

The study also found that municipal officials were not responsive when Ward Committees escalated service delivery issues. This exacerbated the challenges that were faced by these committees in terms of addressing issues within the community. Even when the Ward Committees are trained, they still require the support and cooperation of municipal officials to effectively deal with service delivery challenges in their communities. It was also revealed that this created mistrust between the municipal officials, communities, and Ward Committees, thereby hampering progress and collaboration between these stakeholders. To promote effective communication and cooperation in tackling service delivery difficulties, the CoJ needs to prioritise the establishment of strong links among municipal officials, communities, and Ward Committees. One may do this by conducting frequent meetings, and training sessions, and establishing explicit protocols for escalating and resolving concerns within the community. Moreover, the cultivation of open lines of communication and the promotion of transparency may contribute to the establishment of confidence and the enhancement of cooperation among municipal authorities, communities, and Ward Committees.

The study revealed that regardless the Ward Committee cannot do their work effectively if the communities do not know how local government works. In addition, when communities know their roles in the decision-making process, they can contribute to effective collaboration between committees, communities, and municipal officials. Hence, it is essential to enhance education and awareness initiatives to enlighten communities on the roles and responsibilities of every stakeholder engaged in local government. The municipality needs to create a conducive environment for better communication, understanding, and cooperation among all the stakeholders who are involved in the decision-making process, in order to improve community engagement and participation in local governance. This will play an important role in ensuring that community needs are addressed effectively.

It was also revealed that some Ward Committee members could not recall the content that was covered during the induction training that was organised by the municipality. The lack of retention of content and information offered in the course may be attributed to the training being too brief, cluttered, unstructured, and not engaging. This underscores the need for the implementation of more extensive and engaging training sessions to ensure that Ward Committee members possess the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively execute their duties and obligations within the municipality. Furthermore, the implementation of frequent follow-up sessions or refresher training might be advantageous in strengthening fundamental knowledge and competencies.

The Ward Committees can also take it upon themselves to educate their communities about the functions and roles of the municipality, the community, and the Ward Committee in dealing with matters related to service delivery. This can only happen if the Ward Committee itself is capacitated and has clarity about the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders so that they would be in a position to educate the communities. This illustrates that, if the Ward Committees do not have a clear understanding of their roles, there may be more confusion when the community does not comprehend their role because there will be no one to clarify this. In a case where Ward Committees are clued up regarding this, they can organise workshops with the community to explain their roles and responsibilities and how they can work with the communities to address the challenges that might be prevalent.

The study aimed to explore the contribution of the training provided to ward committee members in capacitating them to engage communities in Ward 68. To achieve this, three questions were used to conclude. The first question was about how the training assists Ward Committees in understanding their roles and responsibilities. The study revealed that the COJ has done little to capacitate Ward Committee members in Ward 68 about their roles and responsibilities. The respondents indicated that they had to rely on the councillor to understand their role and responsibilities as Ward Committees. The training that the COJ provided was only an induction workshop that was aimed at linking the Ward Committee with the service delivery entities for the city. One of the respondents indicated that they were provided with a book that detailed their roles and responsibilities, but the respondent had not read the book because of their commitments. This lack of support has left the Ward Committees without clarity on what they are elected to do and rendered them ineffective in engaging the community and resolving service delivery issues in the Ward.

The second question was about the training's contribution to building relationships with municipal officials and the community. The study revealed that, as much as the COJ tried to create a linkage between Ward Committees and entities of the city that deal with service delivery, the respondents felt that they still do not have a relationship with municipal officials because when they want to reach out to them to escalate service delivery issues, the officials do not respond positively. This in turn affects the relationship of the Ward Committee with the communities because the community loses trust when they report issues to the Ward Committee, and they do not get resolved. The COJ was not doing enough to strengthen the relationship between the municipal representatives, community, and Ward Committees, which led to trust deficits among the stakeholders. This affected the effectiveness of Ward Committees and hampered service delivery, which ultimately may have affected the effectiveness and functioning of the municipality when it comes to service delivery matters. This means the COJ was confronted with a challenge and needed to ensure that it guarded jealously on communication and fostered trust among the stakeholders to improve service delivery backlogs.

The third question was to investigate the success and failures of the training provided to Ward Committees by the COJ. The study found that the COJ had not provided any other capacity-building training except the induction. This is concerning because it

means the Ward Committees were not receiving enough support from the municipality to execute their mandate. In this regard, the COJ did not prioritise the support and training for Ward Committees, which could have been the cause of the ineffectiveness of the Ward Committees in Ward 68. The only success factor is that the induction was conducted and attempted to link the Ward Committees with entities of the municipality so that Ward Committees can escalate service delivery issues. As stated, prior, this had not yielded the intended results due to the lack of ongoing training beyond the induction.

The COJ had a mammoth task in its hands to ensure that Ward Committee members performed their duties effectively, although not insurmountable. By providing the necessary support and training, the COJ could potentially improve the effectiveness of Ward Committees in Ward 68 and ultimately enhance service delivery to residents. It is crucial for ongoing training and support to be prioritised to address any challenges or gaps in knowledge that may be hindering the success of the Ward Committees.

Lastly, drawing from the discussion above, the COJ did not put effort into ensuring that Ward Committees are capacitated to effectively work with communities. One might have concluded that they were not committed to seeing these Ward Committees succeed because of the lack of ongoing training and support for Ward Committees. This, on its own, had the potential to make one wonder if there is even a mechanism to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of Ward Committees. The COJ must invest time and resources in capacitating Ward Committees if they deem them an important structure for local government in the city.

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Annexure A: Questionnaire for Ward Committee Members

Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Age: 18-30 ☐ 30-42 ☐ 43 and above ☐

Race:

Black		Colored		White		Indian		Other

Name: ..... (Optional)

Highest Qualification.....

SECTION A: SECTION A: The training and how it assists ward committee members in understanding their roles and responsibilities

1. What training and support do you get from the city?

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

2. Would you say that the training and assistance you received enabled you to impact trust and cooperation in the community?

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

3. What specific aspects of the training have helped you to understand your roles and responsibilities as a ward committee member?

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

……
……

-

4. What topics should be included to assist you in your role?

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……
……
……
……

5. What new skills have you learned after attending the training provided by the City of Johannesburg?

……
……

Section B: The training and its contribution to the ability of ward committee members to build relationships with municipal officials and the community.

1. Did you receive any training related to public engagement? What topics were discussed?

……
……
……
……

2. How has the ward committee training benefited you?

……
……
……
……

3. What specific aspects of the training have helped you to build relationships with the community?

……

……

……

4. What specific aspects of the training have helped you to build relationships with municipal officials?

……

……

……..

6. How has the training helped you to develop a better understanding of how you can advocate for community needs?……
……..

7. How has the training helped you to improve community engagement

……
……

Annexure B: Permission Letter

UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG
WITS School of Governance
Faculty of Commerce, Law & Management
1 Jan Smuts Avenue,
Braamfontein, 2000
Republic of South Africa
Cell: +27 (0)66 234 6942
E-mail: 1747008@student.wits.ac.za

RE: **Request for Permission to Undertake an Academic Research Study at City of Johannesburg Municipality**

Title of study: **Ward Governance Training and Public Participation In 8 Voting Districts of Ward 68 Greater Johannesburg**

My name is Jabulani Hlungwana, A part-time student (No. 1747008) undertaking an academic research study with the supra mentioned title. The study is in fulfilment of the academic requirements for a Master's degree in Governance (Development and Economics) at the University of Witwatersrand. The research paper aims to collect data on the training provided to ward committees and its contribution to equip ward committee members in mobilising communities, with the aim of contributing to a conceptual public participation framework for ward committees to promote effective public participation. Fundamentally, the paper examines the training of ward committees and the nature of public participation in Ward 68. The data that will be collected will be used to answer the research questions of the study, subsequently reaching the objectives of the study. This letter requests permission to allow the researcher to conduct semi structured interviews and distribute semi-structure questionnaires to the relevant office-bearers, officials and or ward committee members. The researcher vows to adhere to professional and ethical principles throughout this study, as such, privacy and confidentiality are guaranteed. The researcher expects the study to be beneficial to City of Johannesburg and other municipalities in the country. On completion, the findings of the study will be made available to City of Johannesburg and other interested groups upon request. The findings will further be published in an academic thesis as well as academic journals.

Your assistance and cooperation will be appreciated.

Annexure C: Permission to Conduct Study

City of Johannesburg
Department of Corporate & Shared Services
Office of the Group Head: Group Human Capital Management

8th Floor, B Block
Metropolitan Centre
158 Civic Boulevard
Braamfontein

PO Box 1049
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South Africa
2000

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Fax +27(0) 11 339 1878

www.joburg.org.za

06 December 2023
Jabulani Hlungwana
Student No: 1747008
Masters in Management
University of the Witwatersrand

Ref: Permission to conduct research study

This letter serves to acknowledge receiving the letter requesting permission to conduct research in the City of Johannesburg under the title: **"CAPACITY BUILDING OF WARD COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN JOHANNESBURG'S WARD 68".** I am aware that the study entails the collection of information from the City, city officials and participants from communities through semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, observation participation and other fora of the city.

The research study is promoted by the City of Johannesburg because it helps both students and practitioners to gain an understanding of the sociology of the City, as it evolves and contributes towards the building of developmental local government.

I, Tersia Johanna Groenewald, as delegated authority of the City of Johannesburg Municipality (the City), hereby give permission to the primary researcher, Jabulani Hlungwana, the following:

To collect and publish information about the City is publically not available, for the research project titled: **"CAPACITY BUILDING OF WARD COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN JOHANNESBURG'S WARD 68".**

- This authorisation is based on mutual understanding that the City's name can be revealed in her/his project; and
- The researcher contacts the relevant department for arrangements pertaining to the research; and
- The information provided by the employees or any other means (such as company's archived documents or reports) of the City is purely for academic purposes and cannot be used for any other purpose.

Please note that on completion of the study, a copy of the research report should be submitted to the City of Johannesburg in honour of your commitment.

I urge you to present this letter of permission whenever you come across officials and participants in the research study. I thank you for choosing the City of Johannesburg to conduct the study.

Kind Regards

Ntombozuko Lufungo (on behalf of Tersia Groenewald)
Acting Manager: Human Resource Development
Tel: (011) 407- 6064
Email: NtombozukoL@joburg.org.za

Annexure D: Ethical Clearance Certificate

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND JOHANNESBURG

SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE: **WSG-2023-109**

PROJECT TITLE: **Capacity building of ward committee members for community engagement in Johannesburg's Ward 68**

INVESTIGATOR	Jabulani Hlungwana
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR	School of Governance
DATE CONSIDERED	27 November 2023
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved unconditionally
RISK LEVEL	Minimal Risk
EXPIRY DATE	Date of submission of the Research Report

ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE 07 December 2023 **CHAIRPERSON** Rekgotsofetse Chikane
Rekgotsofetse Chikane

cc: Supervisor: Murray Cairns

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Chairperson of the School/Department ethics committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

_____ **Signature**

_____/_____/_____ **Date**

Annexure E: Consent Form

Consent Form

Title of project: Capacity building of ward committee members for community engagement in Johannesburg's Ward 68

Name of researcher: Jabulani Hlungwana

I, ..., agree to participate in this research project.

I agree to the following:

(Please circle the relevant options below)

The research study was explained to me. I understand what this study is about.	YES	NO
I understand that I can volunteer to take part in the study	YES	NO
I agree that the interview/focus group/other activity may be audio recorded	YES	NO
I agree that direct quotations from my interview/focus group/other activity may be used by the researcher in their research report/ manuscript/book chapter	YES	NO
I agree that my participation will remain anonymous (my name will not be used by the researcher in their research report/manuscript/book chapter)	YES	NO
I agree that other researchers may use the information I provide in my interview/focus group/other activity (depending on their own ethics clearance being obtained) but my name and any personal information will not be used or passed on	YES	NO

....(signature)
.....(name of participant)
....(date)


(signature)
Jabulani Hlungwana (name of researcher/person)
2023/12/07 (date)