

The nature of Participatory Democracy Practices in Madibeng Municipality

By

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A thesis submitted to the faculty of management at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of masters of management in public and development management.

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March 2016

DECLARATION

I, Moyagabo Louisa Sephai: 692986, declare that **the nature of Participatory Democracy Practices in Madibeng municipality** is my own work, and that all sources quoted are acknowledged by means of complete references. I further declare that the report has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at another university.

Moyagabo Louisa Sephai

.....

Date:.....

DEDICATION

This research report is devoted to my beloved late Mother, **SCENTY MMABJALWA SEPHAI**, and Guardians, Uncle **SAMSON SEPHAI-AKA- SINGAPORE**; late Uncle **MAKGATHO JAN SEPHAI** for their endeavors in ensuring that I have a better life. I cannot thank them more.

May their soul rest in peace!!!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to my supervisor, Dr MDJ Matshabaphala, for his willingness to provide guidance and support throughout the research report writing process. His guidance simplified the frustrating research process in many ways. The staff (academic & non-academic) of Wits School of Governance played a crucial role toward my completion of studies, especially this report, by always availing their services whenever I needed them.

It will be improper for me not to acknowledge the contribution of the NWPL for providing financial assistance during my period of study as well as leave days for me to fully concentrate on my studies. Similarly, my sincere gratitude is also extended to the librarian, Susan M'Belle, and assistant librarian, Mmamotsatsi Mafora, from the North West Provincial Legislature, for their dedicated assistance whenever requested.

I am grateful to all respondents who responded positively towards my request to use them as my sample for this study. Their contribution remain the cornerstone from which this study drew conclusions. My husband, Mamatsepe Mamabolo, remained in full support of my studies despite occasional neglect he got subjected to due to my studies. Lastly, I extent my deepest gratitude to my child minder and aunt, Grace Malahlela for taking a good care of my children; Puno & Letlotlo while I study. I further acknowledge the support and experiences shared by my friends and former university mates, Constance Malefahlo, Mpho Legodi and Lele Moraba. My colleague, Thenjiswa Matrose (Duku), thank you for the assistance and courage you gave whenever I was in need.

ML Sephai

ABSTRACT

This report sought to determine the nature of participatory democracy practices in Madibeng municipality. In order to achieve the intension of this study, two research questions were formulated (1) what is the nature of participatory democracy in Madibeng municipality? (2) To what extent does the implementation of participatory democracy mechanisms influence municipal policy decisions? A hypothesis was formulated in respect of the second question that: The implementation of participatory democracy mechanisms in Madibeng is limited to compliance with existing laws and regulations.

Data was drawn from two strata's (population samples), [ward councillors and community members] from Madibeng municipality. A probability simple random sampling was used to collect data from a total list of 36 ward councillors, whilst a non-probability convenient sampling was used to collect data from 27 community members. In respect of ward councillors, the study targeted 26 respondents and only achieved 52% response rate, whilst a total of 11 respondent was targeted and 27 responses were attained, indicating 145% response rate in respect of data collected from community members.

The general finding in relation to the first question is that participatory democracy practice in Madibeng municipality is characterised by the implementation of five mechanisms; IDP, Ward committee structures, Mayoral imbizos, Policy public hearings and Petitioning system. A revelation was made that communities prefer to participate in IDP and ward committee structures meetings than the other three mechanisms reflected in the report. However, it remained unclear as to how effective and efficient is the exercising of the two preferred mechanisms.

The general arguments found in various literature sources, that the practice of participatory democracy in South Africa's local municipalities seem ineffective and often do not often yield positive results, was also confirmed by this study. This conclusion was based on the revelations made from the contradicting responses given by ward councilors and community members.

In general, ward councilors considered the implementation of available participatory democracy practices in Madibeng as effective and strongly believed such practices informs the municipal Executive Council's policy decisions to a large extent. On the other hand, community members seemed unsure or inadequately informed about the influence, their participation in policy decisions has on the overall service delivery by the municipality.

Having noted the argument made in this report, the study made several recommendations that;

1. The Madibeng municipality must conduct a series of community outreach programmes on public participation in order to enhance community knowledge and increase their participation in municipal governance affairs.
2. The Madibeng municipality should put more emphasis on educating its communities about all possible mechanism they may use to influence Municipal Executive Council decisions.
3. The Madibeng municipality must always organize feedback session to inform the communities on decisions made by council after consideration of inputs submitted by various committees.
4. A full comprehensive study on the extent to which the implementation of participatory democracy mechanism influences municipal policy decisions should be undertaken.

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ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
DA	Democratic Alliance
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IQR	Interquartile Range
PD	Participatory Democracy
Mdn	Median
SD	Standard Deviation

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide background on the concept of participatory democracy and its application within the South African local municipalities. Importantly, this chapter serves as the basis of the basic descriptive Mixed Methods study conducted on the nature of participatory democracy practices in Madibeng Local Municipality. Participatory democracy as a concept, is here referred to as a governance system, which encourages involvement of communities in government policy planning and decision making.

A preliminary evaluation of the literature on Participatory Democracy revealed extensive stock of knowledge mostly indicating the potential benefits any democratic country could derive, through its effective application, of improving the state governance (Drazkiewicz, Challis & Newig, 2015; Hassenforder, Smaigl & Ward, 2015 Francis & James, 2003). Given its popularity, Participatory Democracy practices continues to be critically assessed in order to determine whether it achieves the expected goals (Lazar & Paus, 2013). It is therefore against this backdrop that the conducted study wished to determine the nature of Participatory Democracy practices in Madibeng municipality.

This chapter therefore, provides a global background to the concept of participatory democracy, followed by the statement of the problem which informed this study, and the main purpose for conducting the study. All this will be followed by an extensive reflections and discussions on the literature and methodologies used to gather data in the succeeding chapters.

1.1. Background to the Study

Participatory democracy is widely regarded as one of the key democratic principles which enables citizens to be involved in state governance affairs. Although, there are numerous mechanisms of public participation, participatory democracy appears to be the most prevalent mechanism used in the global sphere, (Pateman (2012; Wandera, Naku & Afrane, 2013). Globally, a history of participatory democracy can be traced back to the 1960s adopted from theorist such as Arnold Kaufman (Cunningham, 2002:123). Many nations, including South Africa, Brazil and Greece adopted participatory democracy as the key concepts that drives their democratic ruling.

Based on the increased adoption of the concept of participatory democracy by most democratic countries, including South Africa, this study wished to determine the nature of participatory democracy practices within the Madibeng local municipality so that reflections can be made in relation to the hypothesis of this study that implementation of participatory democracy mechanisms in Madibeng local municipality is limited to compliance with the Constitution of South Africa and the municipal systems Act of 2000.

Subsequent to the adoption of the principle of participatory democracy, countries began to make provisions, in their Constitutions, for the practice of participatory democracy. In the South African local government system the provision is cited in section 152:1(e) that 'municipalities must encourage the involvement of communities and community organizations in the matters of local government' (Constitution, 1996:152:1). It is through this provision that government developed various participatory democracy mechanisms in order to enhance this Constitutional objective.

By large, these participatory democracy mechanisms are based on the three critical theories - (1) Participatory budgeting; (2) Citizens' involvement and (3) Participatory planning. Although all of the reflected theories advocates for public participation in the state governance affairs, their approach in implementation differs. The theory of participatory planning is emerging as the new model for development across numerous regions of the world including; Africa, Europe and Latin America (Wandera, Naku & Afrane, 2013). This theory can be traced back to the ancient Greece and New England of the 1960s advocated theorists of social theory. The notion of participatory planning is strongly believed to ensure maximum participation of communities into government policy decision making affecting them (Houston & Liebenberg, 2001; Kauzya, 2007; Wandera, Naku & Afrane, 2013).

It is within these basis that the South African government currently exercises several participatory democracy mechanisms, including participatory planning, through Integrated Development Plans (IDP) hearings and public consultation meetings. This is achieved largely through ward committee structures and public hearings within the local sphere of government. The integrated development planning in South Africa is strongly believed to be the best platform for communities to participate in local government service delivery decisions.

However, based on the hypothesis of this study as well as some emerging arguments found in the literature, the effectiveness of participatory democracy mechanisms including participatory planning remains questionable. Of equal importance, arguments against the effectiveness of the ward committee structures and the IDP plenary meetings in ensuring maximum involvement of communities in state governance affairs were identified in the literature (Nyalunga, 2006; Piper & Deacon, 2009; Raga & Taylor, 2006 Spink & Best 2009).

On the other hand, the theory of participatory budgeting appears amongst the preferred participatory democracy mechanisms, particularly in the South American continent. Participatory Budgeting evolved during in 1989 in Porte Alegre, capital city of Brazil, and remain the utmost fruitful long-term case in point of today, and is strongly believed to have the necessary economic power which is likely to reduce inequalities within a country (Aragonès & Sanchez-Pages, 2008).

In South Africa and several developing nations, adopted the principle of participatory budgeting across all spheres of government, in order to potentially enhance good governance and improve accountability on public spending (Buccus, Hemson, Hicks & Piper, 2007). Imperatively, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa necessitate the notion of accountability and transparency (RSA, 1996:195 (e) (f)). Though government's approach to the implementation of these participatory democracy mechanisms seems to be the same, through public hearings and community ward meetings, they serve different purpose. For example, in an IDP meeting only services delivery priorities gets discussed and entertained, while in budget public hearings/ community ward budget meetings only matters of finances are entertained. This is where allocated funds for municipalities is prioritized per programme and accounted for at a later state in a particular financial year.

In order for municipalities, in South Africa, to achieve the Constitutional objective, of fostering maximum participation of communities in local governance policy affairs, Legislation, Municipal Systems Act (2000), and the ward committee handbook and guideline (2007), have been adopted for enforcement. The legal framework for the establishment and introduction of such could be found in DPLG, (2005); Municipal Structures Act, (2000) as amended.

The third theory is very clear-citizens involvement. By principle this simply refers to a government system which afford all citizens from all walks of life an opportunity to make contributions on how government is run. The citizens' involvement mechanism is largely achieved through various approaches including verbal consultation, written submissions and petitions government legislation. In the South African local government, ward committees are also charged with the duty of ensuring that community concerns and inputs gathered through regular meetings held by respective councilors reach municipal council. These inputs and concerns are supposed to be considered by council prior to any policy whenever council sits for a particular policy decision.

However, the extent to which municipal councils positively considers the concerns and inputs gathered, from communities, through existing participatory democracy mechanisms is not easy to trace. Importantly, arguments in the literature indicates that to a large extent efforts made by ward committees are very difficult to trace (Buccus, Hemson, hicks & piper, 2007; Houston & Liebenberg, 2001:93-96 Napier, 2009; Spink & Best, 2009). This report therefore, shares similar contentions with other scholars, including Houston (2001), that there is critical need for evaluation and assessment of the influence participatory democracy mechanism has over government policy decisions.

The South Africa government is currently channeling its resources towards the enhancement of community participation into matters of state governance. The National Development Plan (NDP) known as the 'Vision 2030', was adopted as the key government policy, which is likely to drive South Africa towards attaining its developmental aspirations. Although there were some contradicting ideologies, amongst government policy makers, regarding to the adoption of the NDP and its likeliness to effectively drive the country where it is set to be, majority remained in strongly belief the set results are attainable should proper implementation and monitoring of government programmes be enforced. The NDP pioneers amongst others, the necessity to enhance citizens' participation on state governance affairs. This is indicated in outcome 9 envisaging - a developmental local government which focuses more on citizens priorities through the practice of participatory democracy (POA, 2016).

Subsequent to the adoption of the NDP, Presidential local government summit adopted the back to basics policy (B2B) in 2014 (Government, 2016). This programme was set to ensure, amongst others, maximum delivery of services informed through maximum participation and involvement of communities into local governance matters – ‘Putting people first’ (COGTA, 2016; Government S.A, 2016; S.A News, 2016). Crucially, the adopted back to basics policy was to be complied with by all municipalities across the borders of South Africa, including Madibeng municipality, hence both the national and provincial departments of co-operative governance closely monitor its enforcement.

Amongst the requirement and targets set in the back to basics programme is the need for ward committees to hold at least one community meeting. Imperatively, the North West province also pledged to enforce this notion across all its municipalities (NWPG, 2014:25). This reflections indicates the basis in which this report considered the back to basics programme as a point of reference in the discussions about participatory democracy practices in Madibeng municipality.

Having identified this government acknowledgement on the need to enhance the relationship between communities and government policy makers, this report therefore argues that participatory democracy mechanisms are not practiced maximally in South Africa, particularly in Madibeng local municipality. Most importantly, prioritization of participatory democracy enhancement in South Africa, by its nature, implies that government revenue is likely to be reserved for the implementation of participatory democracy programmes across all spheres of government, particularly within the local sphere.

For example all municipalities across the borders of South Africa, including Madibeng, have been allocated ward committees, community development workers and ward councilors, whose duties are basically to foster community participation and involvement in government decision making such as passing legislations and budgets and prioritization of service delivery to their communities within a particular period.

Although, ward committee members are not necessarily on the payroll of various municipalities, their stipends and other related costs, such as workshops and transport to attend meetings should be budgeted by the office of the speaker in various municipalities (SALGA, March:43 p2). It is therefore against this backdrop that Madibeng local municipality was selected to determine nature of participatory democracy in South Africa’s local municipalities.

Madibeng local municipality remains one of the troubled municipalities in the North West province. Despite the provincial and national interventions into its governance affairs, some elements, of poor communication and lack of information on the affairs of the local sphere of government, are constantly prevailing in several communities across the municipalities (PMG, 2016). Reference could be made as far as the prevailing service delivery protests, in which some turned very violent and claimed lives for some residents across various communities (PMG, 2016). This report wishes to point out reflections made by Artkins, (2007:53), that one of the causes of protest in South Africa is related to the 'municipal ineffectiveness in service delivery'.

Madibeng Municipality falls under the "B" category and is demarcated into 36 wards, with a council establishment of up to 72 councilors (IDP, 2011-2016). Population statistics is said to be around 477 381 with unemployment rate sitting at 31%. Majority of its population is youth (Auditor-General, 2014). The municipality has a combination of suburbs, such as Haartebeespoort and townships such as Lethlabile, whilst mostly it comprises of rural villages such as Fafung and others.

There are challenge of access to basic services is prevalent across the municipal communities, often resulting in protest by communities affected. According to the 2011 census, about 15% of households did not have access to basic water whilst 37% of households did not have access to electricity (Auditor-General, 2014). Disturbingly, the municipality continuously fails to spend its total allocation for the bulk infrastructure, which could potentially improve the level of access to water for the community (See Auditor-General, 2014).

Despite these tremendous government interventions to enhance community participation on matters of governance affairs and improve service delivery levels, Madibeng municipality seems to not be doing well on this aspect. While other municipalities were recording progress on the implementation of B2B policy, Madibeng municipality remained battling with stabilizing its municipality and adequately discharge their constitutional mandate. The municipality, again, was put under section 139 provincial administration in 2015 and continued witnessing unpleasant community protests (Mail & Guardian, 2015; SABC-news, 2015).

Most importantly, Madibeng municipality had been in and out of provincial interventions for the past four consecutive years. However, its financial performance and service delivery levels remain stagnant. This argument is supported by the history of qualified audit opinions obtained by the municipality in the past two years, in which provincial intervention was invoked (AG, 2014). Essentially, according to the auditor general's report (2014), the municipality Given this disturbing information, it became interesting to study the nature of Participatory Democracy practices within the Madibeng municipality. Discovery of this notion may help raise new arguments and reflections to the existing literature on participatory democracy, with particular reference to local municipalities.

1.2. Problem Statement

The South African government continues to emphasis the notion of Participatory Democracy. Various mechanisms of Participatory Democracy were adopted and are being implemented across all spheres of government. Participatory Democracy stresses the importance and relevance of community involvements in government policy decisions. This emphasis also emanates from the constitutional provisions of the "right to consultation and participate in governance matters" (RSA, 1996).

Literature on democracy identifies Participatory Democracy as a progressive way of ensuring effective and efficient delivery of government services. Additionally, the practice of Participatory Democracy is strongly believed to enhance accountability and transparency (Gilla, 2013; Francis & James, 2003). Essentially, other pieces of legislation were introduced, to ensure compliance across all three spheres of government, including the Municipal System Act (2000), which serves as the pillar of the need for public consultation and engagement on municipal governance affairs. As a result, local municipalities allocates funds, for public participation programmes, in their annual budget to ensure proper implementation of the identified Participatory Democracy mechanisms.

These mechanisms includes amongst others the; (1) Integrated Development Planning (IDP), (2) Ward Committees Structures, and the (3) Public Hearings. For example, Madibeng municipality has been reserving funds in their annual budget .The IDP is a popular practice across S.A's municipalities where service delivery prioritization and planning is done by both the municipality and communities. Ward committees' structures serves as the municipal public participation agent, in various communities which they serve, as introduced by the national department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs

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(DLTA, 2005). Public hearings serves as policy formulation and deliberations mechanism, especially when introducing or reviewing municipal by-laws.

In note of the above, it becomes critical to assess and evaluate the extent to which the above mechanisms are implemented. Madibeng municipality is chosen for this assessment. Since the adoption of Participatory Democracy in S.A's local government, a wide stock of knowledge had been created in the literature (Drazkiewicz, Challis & Newig, 2015; Francis & James, 2003; Hassenforder, Smajgl & Ward, 2015). Existing literature on Participatory Democracy in the local government reflects on the potential mechanisms have to improve service delivery through integrated planning between government and the community.

Only few (Gilla, 2013) relates the subject to the extent to which implementation of the existing mechanisms influences government policies and decisions. Gilla (2013) concludes that Participatory Democracy processes in Uganda do not have a great influence over local government decisions. Again the paper goes on to indicate that, the "the system failed to reflect the priorities of local communities or even disseminating information from top management for accountability purposes.

Similarly, the review of Participatory Democracy practices in the South African local government, focuses more on the functionality and effectiveness of ward committees' structures. However, the reviewed literature emphasizes more on the role of members of ward committees and the performance of local municipalities (Piper & Deacon, 2009; Raga and Taylor, 2006).

Although the role of ward committees in S.A municipalities, has been extensively reflected on, little, (Mubangizi & Gray, 2011:217; Shehu; Dollani & Gjuta, 2013), is known on the capacity and capabilities of communities to make a, meaningful, contribution in governance matters, using existing Participatory Democracy mechanisms. In these two articles, reflections are made, in relation to two local municipalities; one in S.A (Msunduzi) and the another in the African continent (Kukes region) ,where citizen participation in local governance matters were conducted and included perceptions of the citizens, on the local governance matters concerning their municipalities .

According to the findings of the study conducted in Msunduzi, citizens reported to have not participated in the local councils meetings, precisely because they did not have information concerning the said meetings nor they had any interest in participating, because they perceived council meetings as private and formal gatherings which do not concern them.

The challenge with Madibeng municipality is that, more resources are allocated on the implementation of Participatory Democracy mechanism (i.e. IDP, Ward committees, public hearings), however the benefits for such expenditure are yet to be seen. This article, wishes to reflect the continuous reports on the community dissatisfaction about municipal services and governance within Madibeng, as an illustration that community consultations, engagements and accountability measures are not effective. This study therefore wishes to build on the existing knowledge on the concept of Participatory Democracy and also determine how such practices influence government policy and service delivery decisions

1.3. Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to investigate the nature of Participatory Democracy practices within Madibeng municipality and determine the extent to which existing Participatory Democracy mechanisms influence municipal policy decision making. Importantly, the study was conducted as a requirement for the completion of Masters of Management programme, in the field of Public and Development Management. Additionally, the researcher wished to demonstrate her knowledge and understanding in relation to social research studies.

1.4. Research Questions

The following questions were identified as the main focus of the study and therefore will be deliberated more on chapter four and five of this report;

- What is the nature of Participatory Democracy practices in Madibeng municipality?
- To what extent does the existing Participatory Democracy practices influence policy planning and decision?
 - Related hypothesis to this question is that the implementation of Participatory Democracy mechanism is limited to compliance with existing laws and regulations.

1.5. Conclusions

Participatory democracy practices in South Africa's local government remain the critical concern for government. More resources are provided to local municipalities in order to foster participation and involvement of communities in government decision making. These resources ranges from human capital, in the form of ward committees and community development workers, to annual budget allocation. The practice of participatory democracy in various countries is based on pillars of three identified theories- namely, Participatory budgeting; Citizens' involvement and participatory planning.

The greatest intention of this study was to determine the nature of participatory democracy practices in the Madibeng municipality. This determination is anticipated to make contribution into the existing body of knowledge on the concept participatory democracy. Given the intention of this study, more emphasis in this report is put on the practice of participatory democracy within the South Africa local government.

The choice to conduct this study in the local sphere of government owes to the fact that local municipalities are closer to the people than any other sphere, hence an interesting point in this study. More reflections on the literature on participatory democracy is made in the following sections, where an explicit review and discussions of the three identified theories is presented. Most importantly, it is within the next section where the main argument and hypothesis of this study are extensively discussed.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to review and discuss literature on participatory democracy within the local governance systems. Prior to extensive reflection about the literature on participatory democracy, it is important to explain what the concept “literature review” refers to in this report. Borrowing from Rhoades (2011), literature review refers to a summary of reflections and arguments previously indicated by various researchers within a particular discipline. This review enabled the researcher to provide different perspectives to the nature of participatory democracy as practiced across the World, particularly within South African local government. Based on this information, the general argument that participatory democracy practices, in Madibeng local municipality, is limited to compliance with the Constitution, Act 108 of 1996, and other pieces of legislation requiring enforcement of participatory mechanisms - will be discussed as the main position for this report regarding the nature of participatory democracy.

In reviewing the existing literature, the largest sources for literature search were extended from the university of Witwatersrand electronic database on peer reviewed journal in the field of political science, public administration and policy and development studies to books and articles relevant to the subjects in library of the North West Provincial Legislature, some relevant legislative prescripts and reports, as well as Google scholar search engine. The material used for this review is limited to the years between 2000 and 2015. In discussing the literature, this report first outlines some basic and common understanding of participatory democracy across the world, then moves to the discussion of various theories of participatory democracy that are practiced in various regions of South Africa. A critical analysis and comparison of the arising theories allowed the researcher to formulate a substantive argument for this research report.

The above procedure was selected in order to enable the researcher to make informed and credible reflections in relation to the nature of participatory democracy. It is against this backdrop that this report start by reflecting on the basic understanding of participatory democracy.

2.1. Legislative framework for participatory democracy

Legislative framework in this chapter, set the context in which participatory democracy is practiced in South Africa.

2.1.1. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996

The Constitution is recognized as the supreme law in the Republic of South Africa and most importantly, it sets out parameters in which the country must be governed, including the need for transparent and accountable state through implementation of participatory democracy mechanisms across all spheres of government. Essentially, this report base its argument of the constitutional provision, (in ss 152:1(e)), that the local sphere of government need to “*encourage involvement of communities and community organizations in matters of local governance*”.

2.1.2. White paper on local government, 1998

The local government white paper as adopted on the 09th of March 1998 envisaged amongst others, ‘a developmental local government in which sustainable service delivery is achieved through citizens involvement in municipal governance affairs’ (White paper, 1998). Most importantly, it served as the basis for many other legislation applicable within the local sphere of government today.

2.1.2. Municipal Systems Act no. 32 of 2000

Amongst other provisions, Municipal Systems Act recognizes the need for community participation in local governance affairs (see chapter 4:17). This Legislation strongly encourages municipalities to develop mechanisms in which its community will effectively be involved and participate in municipality’s policy decision making. The Legislation also indicate some possible mechanisms such as petitioning, holding of community consultative meetings, including as IDP and budget briefings and ordinary accountability meetings where municipality provide feedback at the end of financial year.

2.2. Understanding the Concept of Participatory Democracy

This section make some reflections relating to the concept of participatory democracy. As reflected by most scholars and writers (e.g. Houston, 2001; kauzya, 2007; Sinwell, 2008; Nyalunga, 2006a) participatory democracy refers to an inclusive democracy which sufficiently provides platform for all citizens, from all walks of life, to make contributions in the Country's governance matters. Importantly, the practice of Participatory democracy is gaining popularity both in internationally and within the borders of South Africa. Its practice is strongly believed to have a positive bearing in improving a country's governance system (kauzya, 2007).

Participatory democracy is largely aligned to the concept of democracy, which is commonly practiced and exercised through regular elections and other existing public participation programmes in various countries, including South Africa. It is within this backdrop that several African countries, particularly African Union member states, are now engaging on these two types of participatory democracy practices [elections and participatory democracy mechanisms].

It is through the notion of participatory democracy that communities are strongly encouraged to actively participate in governance matters (e.g. regular consultation processes prior to policy decisions and service delivery planning). This notion of regular consultation will be extensively reflected in the succeeding sections of this chapter.

This chapter is therefore categorized in three theories of participatory democracy-(a) participatory budgeting (b) theory of citizen involvement (c) participatory planning theory. Although three themes are covered in the literature more emphasis is on the theory of participatory planning and its relation to the other two themes. Reflections are first made from an international context then follows the South African context. This process was critical for the researcher to later relate and adequately respond to the research questions reflected in chapter 1 of this report. The succeeding section reviews participatory democracy literature from the international perspective with consideration of its implication on governance systems.

2.3. Theoretical framework - Participatory Democracy Theories

Scholars including, Solon and Cleisthenes, saw it beneficial to pioneer for the practice of participatory democracy in order to limit powers of those in authority and introducing some partial decision making by the Citizens. Emanating from this theories a series of mechanisms to involve communities in state governance matters as a way of democratizing the state evolved. To this day, many developing countries adopted the principle of involving communities in government policy matters, thereby creating an environment where those in power cannot make strategic policy decisions without consulting communities.

2.3.1. Participatory Budgeting Theory

Literature, identifies several methods of practicing participatory democracy. Several regions, including Brazil, Canada and South Africa, of the world have now adopted the notion of Participatory Budgeting as a mechanism for participatory democracy, (Marquetti, 2012; Pateman, 2012). This mechanism is strongly believed to have influence on economic power, hence reducing the level of inequalities. Participatory Budgeting evolved during 1989 in Porte Alegre, capital city of Brazil, and remain the utmost fruitful long-term case in point of today (Aragonès & Sanchez-Pages, 2008).

Houston, (2000) and Marquetti, (2012:65) believes that successful implementation of the principles of democracy, particularly the inclusion of members of the communities, in government policy planning and decision making have a positive relation to good governance and sustainable development. This report argues that enforcement of such principle is limited to compliance with available national policies and guidelines, particularly for those depending largely on donor funding's. Expanding this connotation, the work of Van cranenburgh (2011) with be used to illustration on this point.

Participatory Budgeting is implemented to ensure that the interests of communities at large are well represented in the budget allocation and implementation. In Brazil, stakeholders in the implementation of Participatory Budgeting includes; Council of the participatory budgeting (COP), forum of community delegates, and the regional and thematic assemblies. It is through the assemblies, where maximum participation of citizens is realized, hence the actual prioritization of services deliverables occur during this sitting. Subsequently, election of delates for the forum and councilors for COP occurs. These regional assemblies takes effect on an annual basis (Aragonès & Sànchez-Pagès, 2008).

The researcher, however, argues in this report that participatory budgeting theory is founded on Rousseau's theory of general will (Cunningham, 2012), where the voice of the majority takes preference over the minority. Given the fruitful nature of participatory budgeting theory, numerous regions across the world, including Latin America, Europe, Asia Africa and North America have now adopted this theory model (Aragonès & Sànchez-Pagès, 2008, McNulty, 2013:72). In South Africa, the integrated development planning (IDP) could be considered as an example of participatory budgeting in Brazil. IDP refers to the service delivery framework known as the integrated development planning framework adopted and currently enforced in all municipalities across the borders of South Africa (Cogta, 2012).

Though it might be tempting to consider IDPs as an approach similar to the participatory Budgeting, their application differs slightly. Participatory budgeting model as indicated seems to be more formalized, whilst the IDP model is largely based on municipal officials conducting service delivery assessment and develops documents to be deliberated in IDP meetings scheduled for the public. Here, the municipality relies more on information gathered through the Ward committees, which enormous studies ruled them ineffective (DLGT, 2005; Nyalunga, 2005)). Importantly, the final decision on the prioritization of services lies on the municipal council, where ward committees are not yet afforded an opportunity to participate.

A similar mechanism in South Africa which could be used here as an example of a Participatory budgeting is the municipal budget allocation public hearings. These meetings affords communities to make contributions on municipal expenditure plans for a given year. Participation for such gatherings is open for every interested party within the society, including civic organization, community representative forum and individual members of the community. However, the Brazilian participatory budgeting model focuses more on civil society organization for participation on behalf of the community at large (McNulty, 2013). There is still an area of concern regarding capacity of communities to make a meaningful contribution in municipal policy using the budget public hearing mechanisms.

This report therefore concurs with other scholars that participatory budgeting model serves more as a public accountability and transparency measure than participatory democracy mechanism (Bingham, Nabatchi & O'Leary, 2005; Burger, 2005; Connelly, 2010; Houston, 2000; Piper & Deacon, 2009; Rodger, 2005).

2.3.2. Theory on Citizen Involvement

There are various mechanisms used to involve communities in government decision making processes. The preceding section already highlighted some of the mechanisms for ensuring citizen involvement including public hearings and community engagements meetings. Citizen participation is here explained as a system of government which affords citizens an opportunity to participate in government affairs, in order to influence government policy decisions.

Similarly, Houston (2001), acknowledges the need for evaluation and assessment of the influence participatory processes has over government policy decisions. This notion is largely based on the municipal ward committee systems, where elected councilors are empowered with a pool of human resource to continuously help with the consultation of communities on governance matters. The critical role and function of these structures is to enhance and promote public participation within the local sphere of government. This mandate is currently executed through ward committees meeting, in which inputs gathered informs municipal council's agenda through the respective ward councilors.

It is however importantly to note that to a large extent efforts made by ward committee members are very difficult to trace, (Buccus, Hemson, Hicks & Piper, 2007; Houston & Liebenberg, 2001:93-96 Napier, 2009; Spink & Best, 2009), plausibly due to methods used by researchers and scholars in this area, (in Sinwell, 2010). Similarly, Houston (2001), acknowledges the need for evaluation and assessment of the influence participatory processes has over government policy decisions.

While reviewed literature shows general consensus that ward committees are ineffective in their performance, (Nyalunga, 2006; Raga & Taylor, 2006; Piper & Deacon, 2009; Spink & Best 2009), these arguments are largely based on the roles and functions as stated in the policies and some public participation guidelines. This therefore neglects important aspects of the relationship existing between ward committees and communities. It is within this backdrop that this report make some reflections on the extent to which ward committees' foster public participation in Madibeng municipality.

Following the acknowledgement of the existing lags, from ward committee structures, numerous reviews of the ward committee roles and functions have been conducted by the South African local government authorities. The review longed to improve the level of performance and effect they make on improving service delivery within their various constituencies amongst others, (ward committee handbook and resource book, 2005). Although Smith (2008), argued that ward committees have been proved ineffective in some municipalities which was sampled for the purpose of Smith's study, this report make additional reflections on this knowledge and brings new element which will shared light on the community perceptions as well as capabilities of communities to utilize the services of ward committees.

Most importantly, the literature reviewed could only indicate a limited amount of studies that have been conducted focusing on the community perceptions. One particular study that shares similar elements with the proposed study was conducted in three local municipalities in the Kukes region by Shehu, Dollani & Gjuta (2013) where community perceptions on local good governance, transparency and their involvement in decision making was assessed. The general findings of the study was that, a fair proportion of respondents, about 65% - mean average, are well informed about the affairs of all municipalities (Kukes, Kruma & Bajran Curri).

2.4. Conceptual framework

2.4.1. Participatory planning theory

The concept pf participatory planning is emerging as the new model for development across numerous regions of the world including; Africa, Europe and Latin America (Wandera, Naku & Afrane, 2013). Participatory Planning concept can be traced back to the ancient Greece and New England of the 1960s advocated theorists of social theory. This concept is strongly believed (Houston & Liebenberg, 2001; Kauzya, 2007; Wandera, Naku & Afrane, 2013) to ensure maximum participation of communities into policy decision making affecting them.

Participatory Planning in this report refers to a mechanism of involving the communities in government decision making regarding the provision of services to them. Participatory planning has been in practice in most developing countries since the 1960s. This notion is largely based on the social participatory theory, which was invented by the socialist including, Solon and Cleisthenes during the ancient Greece and the Rome history.

The history, however, lost attention and came back around the 1980s. Solon was regarded as one of the seven state wise man of his days. He pioneered for involvement of people in matters affecting them. As the South African government continue to strive for improvement of community participation mechanisms, effective service delivery becomes critical. It is against this background that assessment of participatory planning in Madibeng municipality is selected for the purposes of the proposed study.

Given that the focus of this study is within South African municipalities, discussions in this report are limited to the practice of Participatory Planning within South Africa local government sphere. The South African government as measure of promoting and enhancing democracy, decentralized some service delivery agents, thereby creating three spheres of government known to be; (1) National Government, (2) Provincial Government and (c) Local Government as a way of enhancing the concept of Participatory Democracy. Pycroft, (2008); kauzya, (2007); Wandera, Naku & Afrane, (2013:186) notes the importance of decentralization as a way of bringing institutions closer to the people in order for improved community development planning.

Similarly, decentralization in South Africa, resulted from the notion of developmental local governance, which hoped for improved service delivery and afforded municipalities' autonomy (Kauzya, 2007; Mubangizi & Gray, 2010; Pycroft, 2000). This is the ideology of the new democratic government, and mainly the current ruling party. Local government in South Africa as the third sphere of government, and understood to be the nearest service delivery agent to the people within the service delivery chain, is largely expected, in the Constitution (Act 108, 1996), to amongst others: ensure and promote the notion of public participation and public involvement (refer ACT 108, 1996:152; Buccus, Hemson, Hicks & Piper, 2007) into matters of local governance within communities which they serve.

Subsequently, the system of Integrated Development Planning (IDP) was adopted in South Africa as a way of realizing the theory of Participatory Planning. The practice of IDPs in South Africa could be traced to the Constitutional precautions (sec 151; 152 & 195) that, municipalities should encourage involvement of communities in municipal affairs and ensure maximum participation in policy decision making processes. IDP is defined as a municipal strategic document outlining community service delivery and infrastructure plans for the period of five years.

The IDP document is compiled in consultation and involvement of the communities affected, and reviewed on an annual basis. This arrangement complies with the concept of participatory planning theory (Houston & Liebenberg, 2001; kauzya, 2007; Van de Walle, 2006).

However, the effectiveness and the extent to which communities are involved is yet to be established, particularly for Madibeng municipality. This study wished to establish the nature of Participatory Democracy in Madibeng municipality following the Aronstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation. Aronstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation is largely based on the ancient Greece and colonial New England which could be traced back to the 1960s. Using this model citizen participation in the IDP planning processes will be assessed for madibeng municipality.

This report also reflect some element of the work by councilors and revealed that majority of the respondents fairly believed that councilors are not committed to improve the lives of ordinary community members they represents and put more interest in their political interest than community development. A Similar contention was noted in the literature, that community members remain doubtful whether to trust and take ward committees serious that they exist to make a meaningful contribution into their lives (Piper & Deacon, 2009).

2.5. International concept of participatory democracy

Participatory democracy generally refers to governance system that enables and effectively encourages inclusive decision making and participation by all relevant stakeholders, including ordinary members of the society into matters of governance. In order for countries to successfully achieve this, transparency and accountability in government must be extensively exercised to allow criticism (by stakeholders) and feedback reporting (to stakeholders) on all actions of public office bearers (see Houston, 2000; Van cranenburgh, 2011).

Subsequently, Houston, (2000) believes that successful honouring of the principles of democracy, particularly, the inclusion of members of the communities in government planning and policy decisions have a positive relation to good governance and sustainable development. It is in this contention that many donors across the world put more emphasis to the necessity for good governance practice by the underdeveloped and developing nation as criteria for allocating financial Aid grants.

This requirement therefore encourages compliance by affected nations. As a result several donors are willing and continue to provide financial assistance to needy countries in order to enhance this. Also see Van cranenburgh (2011) illustrate for more on this approach.

In this regard government will be able to deliver quality improved services that creates value to its citizenry through effective inclusive participation on service delivery planning processes. There are various forms of inclusive planning within different spheres of government. The most common practices across the nations is what in South Africa is known as the integrated development planning system, often conducted at the local government sphere. The literature also reflects on the importance of inclusive planning as it generally affects government policy decisions and implementation thereof (Van de Walle, 2006). Therefore, the researcher believes that there is a positive relation between public value and economic growth and sustainable development of a country at large.

For example, if a country effective mechanisms for good governance, thereby improving the level of ordinary citizen's participation in to matters of service delivery planning processes that ultimately informs country policy decisions and implementation strategies, then the country's level of poverty and service delivery dissatisfaction is likely to decrease and improve the living standard and thereby boosting the economy. On similar reflection, Mkandawire (2007) explains extensively on how bad governance impacts negatively on several African countries economic growth and sustainability.

2.6. South Africa's inclusive participation

The concept of participatory democracy in South Africa emerged with the transformation from the apartheid system to the new and current democratic system of governance, which is embedded in the current ruling parties development policies (see Houston, 2001; kauzya, 2007; Sinwell, 2008; Nyalunga, 2006 (a)). This resulted in government adopting this concepts of inclusive participation as its first priority for successfully achieving democracy and good governance as noted in (Mubangizi & gray, 2010). The ultimate goal therefore, for this notion lies behind the necessity to enhance accountability and transparency in the matters of governance where every citizen is also afforded Constitutional rights to be consulted and involved in decisions that affect their lives. This is also reflected in several local government legislation and policies including the Municipal Structures Act 32, 2000.

Further, South Africa amongst the developing nations emphasizes the concept of public participation as an element of good governance, democracy and public value (Bingham, Nabatchi and O'Leary, 2005:550; Burger, 2005; Connelly, 2010; Piper & Deacon, 2009; Rodger, 2005). Importantly, this concept is also extensively considered in the country's development plan (refer to NDP, 2011:414).

Subsequently, the South African government as a measure of promoting and enhancing democracy, decentralized service delivery patterns, thereby creating three spheres of government known to be (1) national government (2) provincial government and (c) local government which is the focus of this article. See Pycroft (2008) and kauzya (2007) for further example on decentralization and improved public participation.

Decentralization in South Africa resulted from the notion of developmental local governance which hoped for the improved service delivery hence afforded municipalities' autonomy (see Kauzya, 2007; Mubangizi & Gray, 2010; Pycroft, 2000). This is the ideology of the new democratic government, and mainly the current ruling majority party. Local government in South Africa, as the third sphere of government is generally understood to be the nearest service delivery point to the people of South Africa, as far as basic service delivery is concerned (in the Constitution 108, 1996) and also expected to amongst others: ensure and promote the notion of public participation and public involvement (refer to Constitution, 1996:152; Buccum, Hemson, Hicks & Piper, 2007) into matters of local governance within communities which they serve.

As a result, local government structures across the country had to devise participatory democracy mechanisms, including the now popular integrated development planning (IDPs) and institutions of ward committees. These mechanisms are well known of their positive intention to enable effective inclusion and empowerment of communities into local governance matters and at the same time allow for accountability and transparency to take effect (Bingham et al, 2005; Burger, 2005; Connelly, 2010; Kauzya, 2007; Piper & Deacon, 2009; Rodger, 2005). Integrated development planning is the most common form of participatory democracy mechanism followed by the institutions of ward committees within the local sphere of government. Moreover, it is through the IDP that municipalities draft service delivery priorities and plan for a particular period.

According to the available prescripts (see Municipal Systems Act, 2000 as amended) the prioritization and budget plans for service delivery project should to be informed by inputs gathered through community consultations and engagement processes. It is therefore, the intension of this research to determine the extent to which such consultations takes effect through the practice of the IDP within the Madibeng local municipality. This notion was assessed, contested and verified, hence presentation of the findings is reflected in the succeeding chapters of this report.

Again the same prescripts (Municipal Systems Act, 2000) talks to the promotion of public consultations and involvement of citizens in policy decisions affecting them. Subsequently, the ward committee institutions was introduced in 2001 by the Ministry of developmental local government and traditional affairs (now called co-operative governance and traditional affairs COGTA) and made compulsory for all 283 municipalities across the country for implementation (see DLGT, 2005; Nyalunga, 2005). The major and critical role and function of these institutions is to enhance and promote public participation within the local sphere of government.

This mandate is currently executed by ward committees engaging with their constituencies on service delivery matters. In reference to the back to basics government programme, ward committee guidelines, each ward committee are now expected to hold meetings with the community at least once a month and report back to the Municipal Council. It is also crucial to reflect that the implementation of ward committee mandate and the success thereof varies from one municipality to another. Political stability is here reflected as the major influencial factor toward functionality and performance of ward committees across municipalities.

Moreover there have been reports in the literature (in Raga and Taylor, 2006) that some ward committees fight with their Ward Councilors. This situation therefore compromises the interest of the community and undermines public participation. However, there are some prevalent shortfalls (see Raga and Taylor, 2006; Piper and Deacon, 2009) within various ward committee institutions, which largely are related to the nature of the formation of ward committees and how they are generally governed.

There have been numerous reviews of the ward committee roles and functions by the South African local government authorities with the hope of improving performance and effect they make on improving service delivery within their various constituencies (refer to ward committee handbook and resource book, 2005). Although Smith (2008), argued that ward committees have been proved ineffective in some municipalities that have been sampled for the purpose of Smith's study, the results are here believed to be outdated as only few of municipalities had fully established ward committee structures.

The recent policy development in the local governance, which now requires that ward committees strictly report to council at least once a month on their engagements with communities, also warrant some further reflections. Importantly, in the North West province the Premier, Honourable Mahumapelo, proclaimed that council should report to the province on a weekly basis on their back to basics reports (see NW-SOPA, 2015). Additionally, given the period in which the research was conducted, several developments into the functionality of ward committees had been effected since Smith (2008) report was published.

Therefore, this report strongly believes that different findings will be made with regard to the Madibeng local municipality. The DLGT (2005) and Nyalunga, (2005) explains in details some of the challenges and their implications into the effectiveness and successfulness of these structures using samples from some municipalities and metros across the country.

Importantly, ward committees contribution to the council's decisions are reported to be limited to advisory (see DLGT, 2005; Nyalunga, 2006 (a)) which can only reach the municipality council through the ward councilors. As a result this provision raises doubt and distrust of the ward committee system by communities which they serve.

This reflection is similar to Burger (2005) argument that generally there is a lack of confidence from communities on the current ward committee structures; and that the existence of ward committees does not necessarily make a meaningful contribution into the lives of country's citizenry. As a result communities continue to receive poor basic services and not participate actively in policy planning and decisions concerning development of their communities.

Although some countries (in Mkandawire, 2007) contend that the good governance is a necessary principle for improved service delivery, and provide that such principle is often used as donors' security for enhancing compliance. This report argues that democracy could bare more fruits to communities if the elements of participatory democracy can be implemented effectively and extensively within the local sphere. Therefore, this research into the nature of participatory democracy in the Madibeng local municipality will reveal some of the realities of the practice of participatory democracy within South Africa's poor performing municipalities. The revelation could contribute meaningfully to the existing bodies of knowledge as far as participatory democracy is concerned. The contribution could either by confirming or contending the currently known.

2.7. The story of inclusive service delivery planning

One of the African National Congress (ANC) economic policies pioneered for what they termed 'government for the people by the people' instilling that civil society must be adequately informed and represented in government policy decision making (see Houston & Liebenberg, 2001; Kauzya, 2007). Having based our discussion on the local governance system, this section reflects on some planning and policy making processes and procedures that are currently being practiced across the South African municipalities. Integrated development planning is continuously gaining momentum within local government service delivery planning. The IDP is referred here as a policy documents wherein municipalities strategize and outline their medium to long term service delivery goals. In preparation of this documents civil society is needs to be extensively consulted and involved so to allow inputs and decision sharing on how respective municipalities will deliver services to the communities they serve (Houston & Liebenberg, 2001; kauzya, 2007).

Further, effective integrated development planning have a direct relation to the 'public value'-a concept that was explained by Benington (2009) as a measure of communities satisfaction and acceptance of services they receive and are entitled of receiving from government entities. Given that ward committee, structures in South African local municipalities, are generally regarded as ineffective and incapacitated (see Nyalunga, 2006; Raga & Taylor, 2005; Piper & Deacon, 2009; Spink & Best 2009), this report determines the extent to which their existence and non-functionality affect effective and inclusive intergraded development planning within the chosen area of rural municipality.

Similarly, Houston (2001), acknowledges the need for evaluation and assessment of the influence participatory processes has over government policy decisions. This will be evaluated using the IDP planning and implementation processes in the Madibeng local municipality for the medium term period 2010-2015 and determine its effect of the general societal wellbeing.

Additionally, inputs submitted to the municipal council from ward councilors across all 36 wards of Madibeng local municipality will be assessed and evaluated on the basis of influence they made towards the drafting of final IDP documents. Assessment of this nature is necessitated by the recent shift from the initial municipal planning to the local ward based planning. The shift was meant to ensure equal share of budget and municipal services. This assessment and evaluation is necessary and critical in order to adequately determine whether the dependency of ward committee members on ward councilors does exist within the Madibeng local municipality ward committee structures as reflected in Piper & Deacon (2009).

Importantly, the efforts puts by ward committee members often are very difficult to trace (see Houston & Liebenberg, 2001:93-96; Hemson & Buccus, 2009; Napier, 2009; Spink & Best, 2009) plausibly due to methods used by researchers and scholars in this area (in Sinwell, 2010). This report is however, more concerned about the extent to which public participation processes in the form of IDP and ward committees affect the delivery of services. Though, extending of this research to the capacity and interest of communities in participating through available participatory democracy mechanisms would be beneficial for the report to draw more informed conclusions about the nature of participatory democracy in the Madibeng local municipality, the time frame and scope of the research do not allow. However, it is worth noting of the reflections made in Bingham et al (2005:550) that often these (IDP & ward committees) processes only represents the elitists' views and needs. This provision leads us to the next discussion on the concept of public value and its implications following in the next section.

2.7.1. Different mechanisms of participatory democracy in the local government.

Public consultation and involvement is a constitutional right for most developing countries including South Africa. Moreover it is one of the concepts that are regarded as best practice for good governance. The literature outlines various mechanisms of public participation ranging from, imbizos, and public hearings on proposed policies, regular elections and community meetings. For the purpose of this report, only the public consultation through community meetings arranged by ward councilors and members of ward committees is given attention.

5. Critical analysis

The literature discussion revealed some general consensus that participatory democracy practices are necessary for the effective delivery of services and also instill confidence of communities towards services they receive. However, the benefits for the existence of participatory democracy mechanisms, particularly within the local government space is yet to be enjoyed. This argument is largely based on the evidence brought forward, by other scholars, that popular ward committee's mechanism have been proven ineffective in several local municipalities (see Nyalunga, 2006; Piper & Deacon, 2009; Raga & Taylor, 2006; Spink & Best 2009). It remains to be seen at the results analysis section of this report, if the situation in Madibeng municipality is different.

This is in reference to the limited roles provided for in the legislations underpinning these structures. One critical point to note is that this reflection was made just after the establishment and commencement of ward committee structures which warrant a further study into the current state of affairs, particularly after adjustments and review of the operations and functioning of these structures as outlined in the ward committee handbook, 2005.

Additionally some scholars (Napier, 2008; Piper & Deacon, 2009) argue that the nature of elections of the members of ward committees normally compromises their effectiveness and does not consider expertise rather the interest and availability, hence the incapacity and partisan challenge. As a result, participation by communities becomes ineffective due to lack of community trust over these structures and expertise of candidates. There is less extensive work in the literature, reflecting on the capacity and ability of citizens' to robustly engage government on service delivery matters. Napier (2009) has a good illustration of this notion.

6. Literature conclusions

The purpose of this chapter has been to provide a discussion around public participation within the local sphere of government in the form of reflecting on the existing and emerging literature on the subject. The literature reveals the necessity of inclusive participation and how it has become the new concept in the era of development and good governance practices. Based on this, the integrated development planning and roles and functions played by communities in preparations for this strategic document has been discussed. In doing so, various themes and key arguments emerged as critical and important for this study as follows:

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- One, the concept of participatory democracy in the local government continues to get more attention, particularly by developing nations in order to enhance development through inclusion of affected communities in decision making processes for services they are entitled to receive.
- Two, the South African local government has established the wards committees' structures which are charged with the responsibility and roles of facilitating community participation into matters of local governance and service delivery. This is generally conducted by members of ward committees' continuously meeting with communities in order to determine on service delivery lacks and areas of potential growth. Ideally, these concerns must be presented to the local council prior to policy decisions such as municipal integrated development plans, which is the framework that will be assessed and evaluated in the final research report. However, the existing argument on the literature reviewed is that this structures has proved ineffective and that they do not make any meaningful contribution whatsoever to the improvement of service delivery. Therefore this report wishes to test this theory and verify the existing knowledge or contest against it.

Because the literature mostly covers the effectiveness of the municipal ward committees in facilitating public participation in general, the research will focus on the extent to which municipal ward committees facilitate public participation using one of the public participation mechanisms within the South Africa's local government. This will be measured through assessment and evaluation of the integrated development planning processes for the Madibeng municipality against inputs provided by the community and ward committee members. The actual implementation and communities perceptions on the matter will also be considered. This methodology and framework will be extensively dealt with in chapter three of this report.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the framework for the methodology used to conduct this study. In this report, research methodology is explained as the general belief underpinning the study on the nature of participatory democracy practices in Madibeng municipality (Adams, Khan, Raeside, White, (2007); Leedy & Ormrod, (2010)). Importantly, this chapter outlines the overall tools used for data collection and analysis.

The structure of the methodology of the conducted study reflects the positivism epistemology, because the main intention of this study was to describe the nature of participatory democracy practices in the Madibeng municipality. Bryman (2012), explains the term “epistemology” as a concept that has to deal with ‘how the social world should be studied and whether the scientific approach is the correct stance to adopt’. The selected choice for positivism susceptible epistemology is further narrated in the succeeding sections.

3.1. Research approach

3.1.1. Research Strategy

Research strategy in this report refers to ‘the general orientation of the conduct of research’ Bryman (2012:715). Other scholars across the literature refers to this as research methods, however, Bryman (2012), explains research methods as the general framework underpinning the data collection and analysis of any research project. According to Bryman (2012), there are three research strategies for researchers ‘consideration prior to the selection of final appropriate strategy for a particular study. These strategies are known as; Qualitative, Mixed methods and Quantitative research strategies (Adams et. al, 2007). An extensive discussion of these strategies is presented in the succeeding section of this chapter.

3.1.1.1. Qualitative research strategy

Qualitative strategy is one of the three available research strategies which largely focuses on investigations and descriptions of social relations in order to capture and interpret social relations from the respondent’s idealisms (Adams et. al, 2007; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). According to Leedy & Ormrod, (2010), a qualitative strategy is not suitable to be used whenever researchers wishes to establish the causes and effects of a particular phenomenon.

There are standard methods in which quantitative research study can be conducted, including ethnography, grounded theory and content analysis, case study and phenomenological research approaches (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). This standard methods are briefly explained below;

- **Ethnography**

Ethnographic research is about researching a particular group within a given period of time in order to uncover common behavioral patterns arising within the selected group (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:142-143). This group could either be a community or matric class within a given school.

- **Case study**

Unlike the ethnographic research, Case studies are used where researchers' wishes to explore an in depth understanding on a particular individual subject for a defined period of time (see Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:141).

- **Phenomenological study**

A phenomenological study is here explained as any research focusing on capturing perceptions and perspectives of a particular population sample. This enables researchers to try and understand the world from the population samples view point as compared to what it seems to be in the external world (see Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:145).

- **Grounded theory study**

The simplest explanation for a grounded theory is to say, it is a study where researchers first collect data and formulate a theory based on the findings of the research study. This is unlike the other indicated principles where a theory forms the basis for the researcher's conclusions (see Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:146-147).

- **Content analysis**

Content analysis studies often are those researches made following a standardized procedures and frameworks to uncover a particular pattern in the body of literature of a particular discipline (see Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:146-148-149). This could either be done by analysing books, journals, newspaper articles for a particular topic of interest.

3.1.1.1.1. *Preoccupation of qualitative researchers*

Having outlined various methods to be considered when conducting a qualitative research in the above paragraph, this section now presents a discussion on some preoccupations of qualitative researchers as highlighted by Bryman (2012:399-404).

- **Interpretation of the social worlds based on participants views**

Qualitative researchers strongly believes that understanding of issues from the perspective of those affected is very critical in the social research discipline as compared to the use of scientific techniques to solve people's problems.

- **Abductive reasoning**

Arguments often raised by qualitative researchers' is that; theory should be grounded and based on the understanding and findings gathered through the participants perspectives on the social world. Bryman (2012:401) also consent to the argument that, although abduction process seems more likely as the induction approach, abductive reasoning remain the critical point in the qualitative research and qualitative researchers should ensure that the findings registered based mainly on participants worldview should always form the basis for the theoretical framework and therefore social scientific accounts.

- **Description and emphasis on context**

The notion of understanding the social behavior, by qualitative researchers, has now come up clearly in this discussion. Having noted this, qualitative researchers, unlike quantitative researchers also put more emphasis on a detailed description when presenting their research findings. Importantly, presentation of a detailed report is arguably of a critical approach, which often enables contextual explanation of social behaviors (see Bryman, 2012:401-402).

- **Emphasis on process**

Given that qualitative researches largely focus on discovering or exploring the social behaviors, the use of process becomes critical to enable proper reporting of a particular social behavior over time. As Bryman (2012:402-403) put it, the use of process enable researchers to "*observe the ways in which events develop over time or the ways in which different elements of social system interconnect*".

- **Flexibility and limited structure**

This preoccupation implies that qualitative researchers' prefers a non-structured research methods which allows the researchers to employ flexible techniques in order to ensure successful discovery of the social behavior from the eyes of participants in a particular research study (see Bryman, 2012:403-405).

Having noted the above reflections on the preoccupations of qualitative researchers, this chapter now moves to the discussion on some critical considerations to be made in relation to the use of qualitative research strategy in the succeeding section.

3.1.1.1.2. *Critical considerations in qualitative research*

Though qualitative research possesses the above discussed qualities, there are some critical considerations to be made prior to selection of this as a strategy to be used in one's research. The most given argument by quantitative researchers is that qualitative strategy tend to be too imprecise. This indication is based on the notion that methods used to conduct qualitative research are often unsystematic and also possesses little techniques to eliminate the researchers' biasness when reporting findings of the study (Bryman, 2012:405).

Another argument provided against the use of qualitative research is that qualitative studies are not easy to replicate due to lack of systematic procedures. As a result, the findings of qualitative research are often not generalizable, considering the fact that data collection and its interpretation by another qualitative researcher may yield different results altogether. This indication speaks to the third argument provided by qualitative researchers that qualitative researches by their nature are not generalizable (Bryman, 2012:406).

The previous argument presented against the use of qualitative researches is that they often '*lack transparency*'. This simply means that although a qualitative research report provides data collection methods and analysis, the methods do not always come clear, especially when an unstructured interview was used to collect data (Bryman, 2012:406). The data collection, even though interview scheduled are provided, largely depends on the researchers' ability to relate the questions and probe, which therefore strongly suggest that some of the probing question may not be included in the data collection report for other researcher's reference.

3.1.1.2. Quantitative research strategy

Quantitative research strategy is another research strategy which is largely based on the positivism and neo-positivism methodological principles. Equally important, this strategy complies with the use of strict research designs principles and often make application of statistical tools and measures to present the findings of the study (Adams et. al, 2007; Bryman, 2012). It is important to note that this research was largely conducted on the parameters of a quantitative research strategy with few elements of qualitative methods. Prior to the consideration quantitative strategy as one of the strategies employed, critical considerations were made on all three available strategies; quantitative, qualitative and the mixed methods, in the social research discipline.

Unlike qualitative strategy, which was discussed in the preceding section of this chapter, quantitative strategy enabled a proper description of the nature of participatory democracy practices in Madibeng municipality. As already indicated that this study was collected using mixed methods, the use of quantitative strategy, as one of the strategies enabled testing of the research hypothesis, that the implementation of Participatory Democracy mechanism is limited to compliance with existing laws and regulations. This determination and inferences made in chapter 4 of this report was possible by using available statistical tools of analysis such as SPSS, Microsoft excel.

Based on the techniques used to gather and analyze data, the findings of the study could be generalizable to the precinct of Madibeng local municipality. Moreover, the use quantitative strategy eliminated any elements of biasness, the researcher may have regarding the notion of participatory democracy practices either in Madibeng or South Africa in general. Further, quantitative strategy enabled proper deduction of the existing theory to the research hypothesis; the practice of participatory democracy in Madibeng municipality is limited to compliance with relevant legislation. The deduction of this hypothesis was made following standardized principles and procedure relevant to quantitative studies discussed in the section 3.2. Below.

Similar to qualitative strategy, quantitative strategy also have some standard methods to consider prior to the actual operationalization of the research project. These methods includes observational studies, correlational research, developmental designs and survey research, and are here briefly explained;

- **Observational studies**

According to Leedy & Ormrod, (2010), an observational study is a research where all things, such as humans, “*dynamic physical phenomenon, plant species and non-living*” could be studied using a systematic framework within a given time frame.

- **Correlational research**

A correlational research is a study where researcher’s intention is to discover the correlational effects of one or more variables (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:185). For example, determining how individual’s salary increase affect his/her financial behavior.

- **Developmental designs**

Any research following principles of a developmental designs would be focusing on determining how one variable may have a correlational effect to the other (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:188). For example, establishing how employees’ salary correlates with their overall performance

- **Survey research**

Survey research in this reports is identified as a study where one or more sample subject is studies in order to gather either opinions, attitudes, and past experiences (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:189).

3.1.1.2.1. *Preoccupations of quantitative researches*

Like the qualitative researchers, quantitative researchers also have some concerns which must be focused on during the planning, conducting the research as well as presenting of research findings. These preoccupations are reflected below and the explanations borrowed from Bryman (2012).

- **Measurements**

One of the preoccupations for quantitative researchers is measurements, which are believed to carry much value in the quantitative research discipline. Measurements enables researchers’ to properly analyze the collected data and provides degrees of differences or relationships (Bryman,2012:175).In this study ,Likert scale was used to measure the nature of participatory democracy practices in Madibeng municipality for example.

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- **Causality**

Another critical concern of quantitative researchers is to be able to explain the reasons for the findings in their studies than simple description of their findings (Bryman, 2012:175-176).

- **Generalization**

One of the important goals of a quantitative researcher is to be able to demonstrate in His/her report that the findings of her study may be generalizable within the borders of a particular context in which the study was conducted (Bryman,2012:176). In this report, we will find that the findings of this study could be generalizable to the Madibeng municipality sample population because a probability sampling method was used.

- **Replication**

Replication is often regarded as the quality of the quantitative study, in that the standard procedures and systematic framework normally followed should be explicitly reflected in the report so that other scientists can be able to replicate what was done in the previous study (see Bryman, 2012:177).Having noted the above preoccupations, the following section reflects some critical consideration to be made by quantitative researchers prior to the selection of this strategy.

3.1.1.2.2. *Critical consideration for quantitative researchers*

- **Failure to distinguish people and institutions from social world**

Quantitative studies are often criticized by qualitative researchers as failing to differentiate between people or institutions and the natural world.

- **Use artificial and spurious sense of precision and accuracy**

Qualitative researchers also argues that often the findings of a quantitative study are based on assumptions attained though statistical measures than the real matters as raised and viewed by participants of a particular study.

- **Reliance on instruments and procedures hinders the connection between research and everyday life**

The use of research instruments such as questionnaires is believed, by qualitative researchers, to be disempowering the researcher to adequately capture contextual perspectives of research participants, which would enable the researcher to make tight conclusions in her report (Bryman, 2012:179). However, quantitative researchers themselves believe the use of research instruments is a best way of eliminating any biasness.

- **Analysis of relationships between variables creates static view of social life that is independent of people**

Another critical view by qualitative researchers in relation to the use of quantitative studies is that quantitative studies often ignore the fact that people are always parts of the social world, by “*creating a static social world that is separate from the individuals who make it*” (Bryman, 2012:179p4).

3.1.1.3. Mixed Methods

Mixed methods is basically a combination of the two research strategies, qualitative and quantitative strategies (Bryman, 2012:628). There are contradicting ideas presented in the literature for the use of mixed method in research studies. Those on the left strongly believe that the use of mixed methods would compromise epistemological commitments of the two strategies, since they are seen as separate concepts. However, there seem to be little evidence in support of these claims (Bryman, 2012:629-630).

Based on the nature of this study, the Researcher found it best to combine elements of above discussed two strategies (Qualitative & Quantitative) for data collection and analysis. This allowed the testing of the research hypothesis and the use of statistical tools as well as simultaneous discovery of the concept of participatory democracy from respondents/participants point of view. The selection for a mixed method strategy was deemed the most appropriate, because the Researcher was able to describe the nature of participatory democracy practices in Madibeng municipality as well as gather some understanding why such nature exists.

3.2. Research Method

Given the nature of this study, the best method to be employed was the administration of a self-completion questionnaire to representative sample of both chairperson's of the ward committees and community members across the Madibeng municipality as reflected in section C below.

3.2.1. Research Design

This report identifies research design as the guiding principle and procedure for 'data collection and analysis' (see Bryman, 2012:46). In order to adequately describe the nature of participatory democracy practices in Madibeng municipality ,a Cross-Sectional Survey design was identified as the most appropriate, of the five available options discussed by Bryman (2012:76); [experimental, cross sectional, longitudinal, case study & comparative].

While experimental design is most appropriate in a correlational research, where its techniques would allow a researcher to properly determine the cause and effects relations of two or more variables (Bryman (2012:76-82), Leedy & Ormrod, (2010:226), Longitudinal becomes relevant when a researchers intent is to focus on sampling a group for a defined period such as months to a year.

As a result, a closed ended structured self-completion questionnaire was administered to both ward councilors as well as the community of Madibeng municipality. This cross-sectional survey instrument is extensively discussed in the succeeding section B.

3.2.2. Data collection

This section addresses the manner in which data was collected and arranged in this study. Both primary and secondary data were used to gather information for this study. Although primary data remains the key data collection method, the use of secondary data was considered, particularly for supplementing the information gathered through the primary data. Accordingly, scholars (Adams et.al, 2007:117-127; Bryman, 2012), acknowledges the beneficial role secondary data has on any study. It is therefore against this back forth that this section focuses more on the primary data collection methods used.

a) Research instrument

As already indicated in the preceding section, that two sets of structured self-completion questionnaires were used. One set of questionnaire was completed by chairpersons of ward committees and another set completed by community members. These questionnaires were all based on a five point Likert scale, with 1 indicating 'Strongly Disagree' and 5 indicating 'Strongly Agree' (See **annexure A**), and categorized into three section. The first section addressed issues of demographics aspects (i.e. Age, gender & political affiliation). The need for inclusion of such section was beneficial to this study and also serve as an introductory part which made respondent comfortable and prepared them for the more relevant questions. Political affiliation was used as a dependable variable in an attempt to determine its effect on the participatory democracy practices as independent variable in a questionnaire completed by community members.

The second section of the questionnaire responded to the first research question about the nature of participatory democracy practices in Madibeng municipality, while the third and the last sections responded to second research question about the extent to which the available participatory democracy mechanism influences government policy decisions. This questionnaire was therefore administered using a probability sampling as discussed in the succeeding sub-section.

3.2.3. Sampling

This section gives attention to the sampling choices used in this study. A probability stratified random sampling, as one of the possible types for conducting probability sample, was selected as the best sampling method for this study. Bryman (2012:187;190) explains a probability sample as a data collection methods which provides equal opportunity for all relevant sample to be selected for inclusion in the survey. This therefore implies that two strata's were selected, i.e. ward councilors and community members. Each strata was then subjected to a different sampling technique for the final selection of individual sample. In the case of the first strata (Ward Councilors), simple random sample was employed, whilst in the case of community members a non-probability convenient sample was used.

The decision to consider the two strata's owes to the fact that limited ward councilors are politicians and also have duties to strengthen participatory democracy within their respective territories. The inclusion of community members will then provide a different perspective to the ones of ward councilors.

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Although the scope of this study only required a sample of about 25-30 samples, as per the university requirements for a 25%, the researcher saw it necessary to also capture the views of community members in addition to the ward councilors. There is a total of thirty-six (36) community wards in Madibeng municipality. This therefore, suggests that there were 36 ward councilors to consider in the simple random sample selection. Using the sample fraction method (see Bryman, 2012:190-191) every 2nd ward councilor will be sampled as reflected in the fraction below;

Sampling fraction

$$\frac{n}{N} = \frac{26}{36} \text{ i.e. } 1 \text{ in } 2$$

Bryman, (2012: 190)

With regard to the sampling of community members, a non-probability convenient sampling was used, where the first fifteen community members visiting the municipality for services were selected for the completion of the survey instrument. Critical consideration was made on the lags associated with the use of non-probability sampling methods in a quantitative study, however, given the nature and scope of this study as well as the university requirement, the researcher saw it fit to use this methods for sample selection of community members. Moreover a probability sampling method was not be feasible under the circumstances the researcher was faced with.

The study achieved a 145% response rate from community members whilst 52% response rate was achieved from ward councilors. Though the study achieved a lower response rate than anticipated, the simple random sampling method used for distribution of questionnaires to ward councilors ensured a fair and equitable chance for all ward councilors to be included in the study. The low response rate from ward councilors was due to the busy and tight schedule for councilors as they were preparing for the upcoming local government elections in 2016. Moreover, this sampling method tried to keep the sampling error to a minimal as reflected in Bryman (2012:187). Interestingly, though data from community members was collected based on a non-probability sampling methods, the results were found to be more useful in the study as indicated in chapter 5 of this report. Further reflections on the selected research methods is categorized and discussed in the succeeding sub-sections.

This study was conducted in Madibeng municipality which is situated in the Bojanala platinum district of the North West Province. This municipality is demarcated into 36 ward comprising of urban, villages and informal settlements. Madibeng municipality has an estimated population of 456,209 (Madibeng-municipality, 2015). The diagrams below indicates the position of Madibeng municipality to other municipalities in the Bojanala district.

A map of the Rustenburg Local Municipality, showing its various wards and their names. The map is divided into several colored regions, each representing a ward. The names of the wards are written in bold, black capital letters. The wards are: MOSES KOTANE (top left), MORETELE (top right), MADIBENG (middle right), KGETLENGRIVIER (bottom left), RUSTENBURG (center), and SWARTBOOISTAD (bottom right). Within these wards, specific locations are marked with black dots and labeled: SWARTRUGGENS, KOSTER, RUSTENBURG, HARTBEESFONTEIN-A, MARIKANA, MOOINOOI, BRITS, and HARTBEESPOORT. The map is set against a light gray background with a white border.

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- **Ward councilors**

- **Community members**

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3.3. Data Analysis

The data collected using the methods and techniques indicated in the preceding sections was analyzed using both Microsoft excel tools and statistical techniques on the SPSS software. Additionally, the principles of univariate analysis was used to measure all variables in the two sets of questionnaires. The findings therefore, are here presented in diagrams in chapter 5 of this report.

The findings of this study are presented using graphs in chapter 5 of this report. The use of graphs allowed an easy interpretation and gave thorough understanding of the research findings. This formed the basis for the descriptive approaches which were used to present and interpret the findings of the study using excel graphs. Importantly, an application of the chi-squares was also used to validate or invalidate the research hypothesis.

3.4. Consistency Matrix.

Research Question/ Hypothesis	Source of the data	Specific question/ item numbers	Statistical test
What is the nature of participatory democracy practices in Madibeng municipality?	self-completion Questionnaire 1 & 2	4 - 9	Independent two-group t test graph of means? Cronbach's alpha
To what extent does the existing participatory democracy mechanisms influence policy planning and decision Related Hypothesis to this question is: The implementation of participatory democracy mechanism is limited to compliance with existing laws and regulations	self-completion Questionnaire 1 & 2	9-15	Chi-square Graph mean

3.5. Validity and reliability

3.5.1. Criteria for Evaluating Social Research: Validity, Reliability and Replication

Quantitative strategies in this study focused more on measures and numbers for description of causality. This approach enabled the use of measures and numbers to describe the nature of participatory democracy practices in Madibeng municipality. As a result, the findings of the study could be generalizable for the Madibeng municipality. In order to ensure this, available quantitative research methodology protocols were followed.

3.5.2. Internal validity.

As already stated in the preceding sections of this chapter, that probability sampling method was employed for data collection, an application of the test for statistical significance was made to the findings of the study. This enabled proper determination of all statistical inferences made out of the findings of this report.

Again, because the researcher personally administered the issuing and collection of the questionnaire to the Ward Councilors, an element of sample error was reduced to a great extent. It is for this reason that the sample response rate of 145% from community members and 52% from ward councilors was achieved. This indication was determined using the following response rate calculation formula;

$$\frac{\text{number of usable questionnaires}}{\text{Total sample—unsuitable or uncontactable members of the sample}} \times 100$$

(Bryman, 2012:199)

3.5.3. Reliability.

In order to ensure reliability in this study, the questionnaire was piloted to five Ward councilors from Mafikeng municipality of the North West Province. The sample for the pilot was selected using non probability convenient sample to save time, since the result was only to test the reliability of the instrument and not to be used in the final analysis of the research findings.

Again the questions which was asked in the self-completion questionnaire were designed in a two way approach; a group of negative and positive statements. providing a group of negative and positive statements enabled proper measuring of responses of positive statements against the negative

statements of respondents (see attached questionnaire). Importantly, Cronbach's alpha was also used to measure the internal reliability and results for this are reflected in chapter 5 of this report.

3.6. Research Limitations

The scope of this study was confined to the guidelines for a 25% thesis, which then means time and mark allocations had a large bearing on the choices of the methodologies used to conduct such study. For example, only a maximum sample of 30 responses was allowed for the scope of this study as per the University of Witwatersrand guidelines. As a result, the application of test-retest method was not considered, although its application could have strengthened the reliability of this study. Given the low response rate with regard to the data collected from ward councilors, analysis of such data using Chi square was not possible as intended.

3.7. Research Procedure and Ethical Issues

This research study adhered to the University of Witwatersrand rules and regulations on acceptable procedure required prior to conducting the study. A research proposal was first submitted for defense and to the university research and ethics committee, and approved. Given the nature of the study conducted, the Researcher did not see any prospective threats and harmful activities that may put the lives of respondents/participants in danger. As a result, the proposal for this study did not undergo critical ethics committee considerations. Most importantly, noting the nature of the research exercise, respondents permission was only requested upon administration and distribution of the questionnaire.

Notably, all respondents participated on their free will and understood the nature of their participation in the study. As a result, there was no consent letters issued to respondents. However a brief introductory letter clearly outlining the purpose of the study was included in the questionnaires. A draft questionnaire (**Annexure A**) is here submitted together with this report. Questionnaires were distributed to all 36 ward councilors in Madibeng municipality.

3.6. Research Methodology Conclusions

A comprehensive framework underpinning this study was laid in this chapter. Although the study is based on the mixed methods, more emphasis was put on quantitative elements and less on qualitative approaches. Importantly, non-probability sampling method was also used in addition to the probability stratified sampling method. The chapter also acknowledged the lags associated with the use of non-probability convenient sampling used for collecting data from community members.

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It is empirical to fourthly indicate that this choice had not jeopardized the validity of the entire study, as the main data collection method for the data required by the university was collected using the probability sampling method.

Of equal importance, data gathered through the non-probability convenient sampling was found more useful during the data interpretation and analysis stage. It is against this backdrop that the researchers strongly believes that the combination of sampling methods yielded positive results as intended.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

As noted from the previous chapters of this report, this study sought to determine the nature of participatory democracy practices in Madibeng municipality. Two research questions were posed in section 1.3 of chapter 1; (1) what is the nature of Participatory Democracy practices in Madibeng municipality? ; (2) To what extend does the existing Participatory Democracy practices influence policy planning and decision? The researcher developed a hypothesis in relation to the second question saying the implementation of Participatory Democracy mechanism is limited to compliance with existing laws and regulations.

This chapter therefore presents the findings of the study, as conducted using self-completion questionnaire for both ward councilors and communities of Madibeng municipality. Chapter 3 dealt comprehensively with various methods employed throughout the data collection phase. The findings in this regard are presented categorically, where section 4.2. Presents findings from ward councilors and section 4.3. Presents findings from communities.

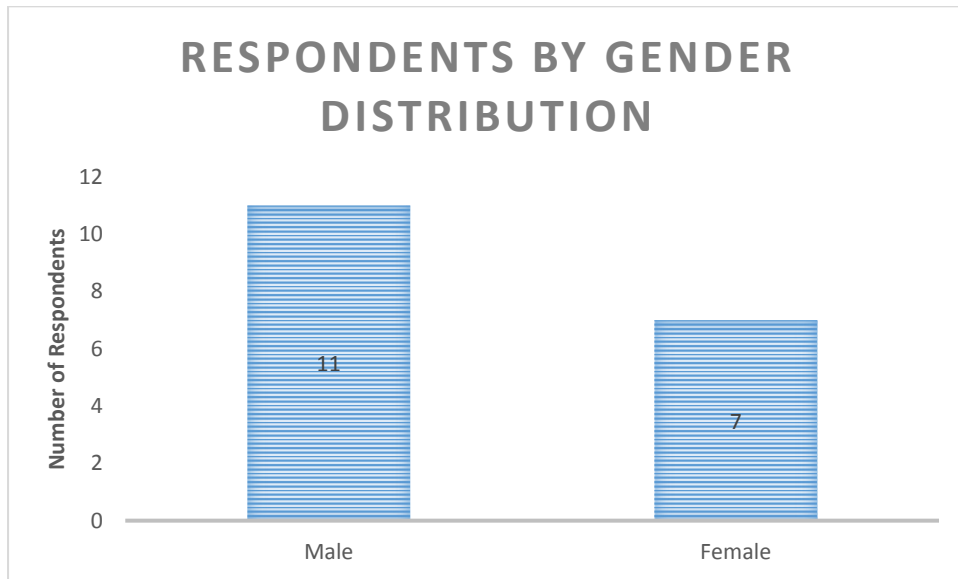
4.2. Presentation of findings: Ward councilors

As per the Madibeng municipal records and demarcation at the time the study was conducted, there were a total of 36 community wards. The self-completion questionnaire was distributed to the 26 selected respondents and only 17 of them managed to successfully complete their questionnaire. This therefore implies that the study achieved a 52% response rate. Following is the categorized findings as per the three sections included in the questionnaire.

$$\frac{26}{17-0} \times 100 = 52\% \text{ response rate}$$

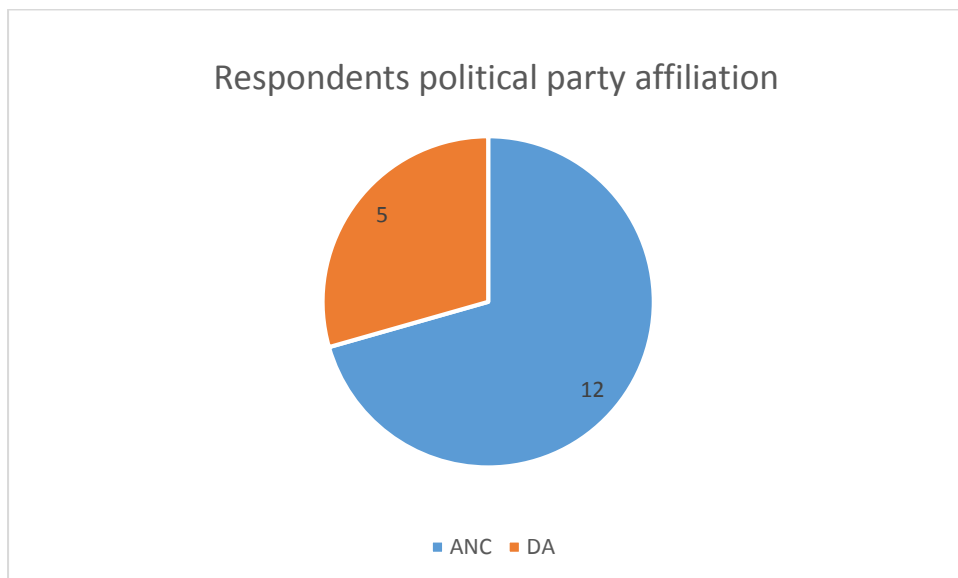
4.2.1. Section 1: Demographic information

Figure 2: Respondents by gender distribution



According to the diagram above, from the seventeen responses gathered, seven (**41.2%**) were females and eleven (**64.7%**) were males.

Figure 4: Respondents political affiliation



From the diagram above we learn that two political party affiliates were represented in the survey. The ANC had a higher proportion of twelve respondents (**70%**) whilst the DA had five respondents (**29.4%**).

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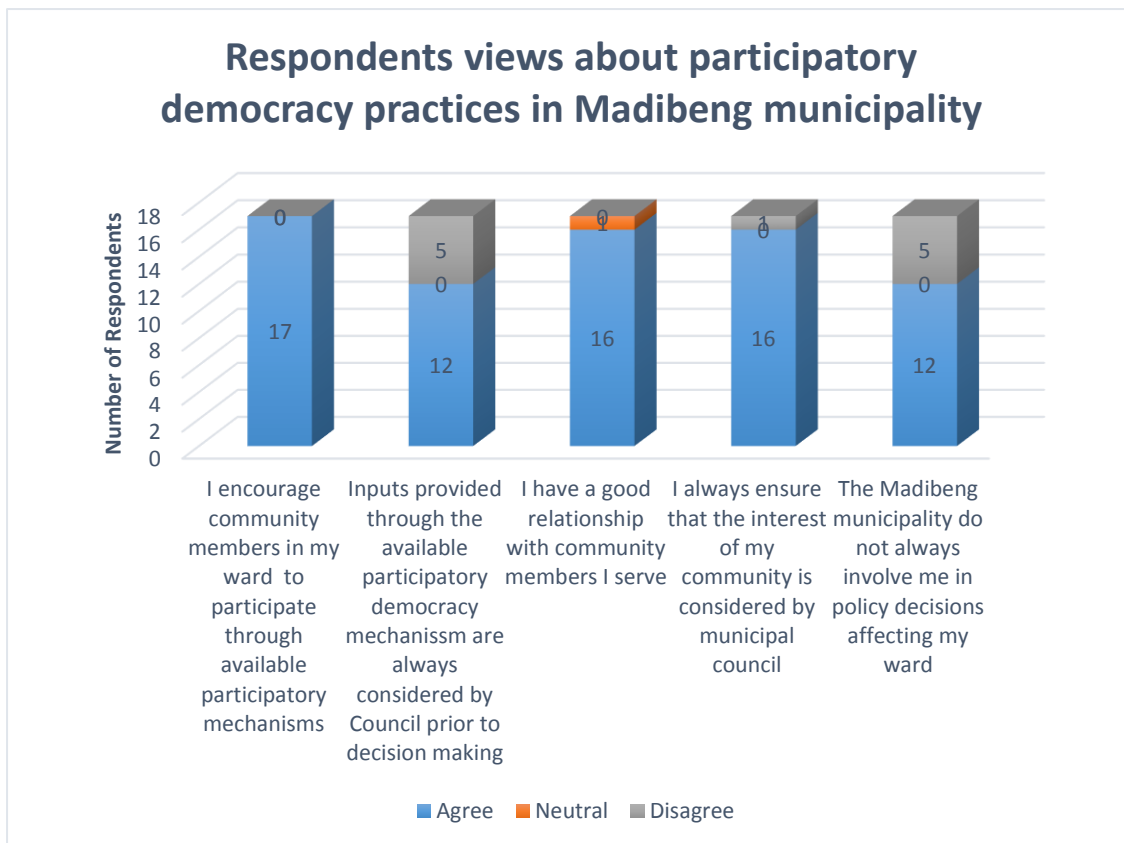
4.2.2. Section 2: Participatory democracy practice

According to the responses to the statement about existing participatory democracy mechanisms, the following list of mechanisms do exist within the Madibeng municipality.

Figure 3: Existing participatory democracy mechanisms in Madibeng municipality

IDP
Ward Committees
Petition system
Policy public hearings
Mayoral Imbizos

Figure 4: Respondents views about participatory democracy practices in Madibeng municipality



The above diagram summarizes the results captured in section 2 of the research questionnaire, about participatory democracy practices. The first bar of the graph presents the respondents' views about their role in fostering participatory democracy within communities they serve. A total of **100%** indicated that they encourage communities to participate in municipal governance affairs through various participatory democracy mechanism.

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The second bar of the graph presents results relating to the statement that inputs provided through various participatory democracy mechanisms are always considered by the Madibeng council prior to decision making. A total of **70.6%** agreed with this connotation, whilst the remaining **29.4%** of did not agree.

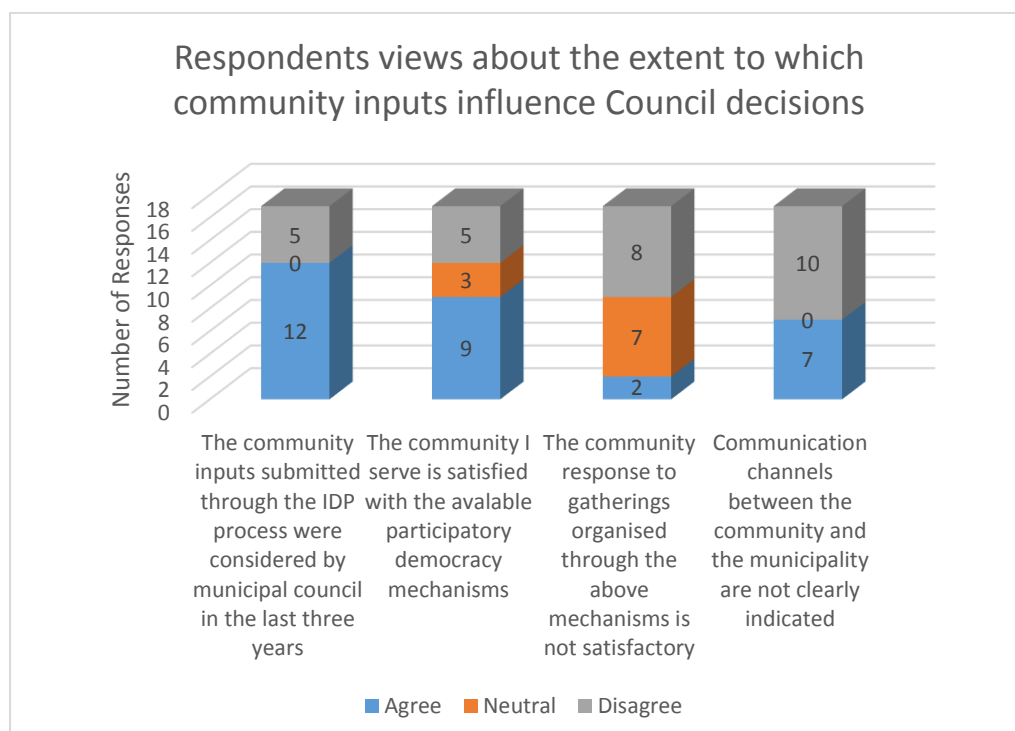
The nature of relationship, ward councilors have with their respective communities is captured in the third bar of the graph. A total of **94%** of respondents strongly agreed that they have a good relationship with communities they serve and only **5.8%** of them reported to be unsure.

Furthermore, the role of ward councilors in representing the interests of their respective communities was also captures and presented in the fourth bar of the graph. A total of **94%** of respondents indicates that they do always ensures that the interest of communities they serve is considered by the Madibeng council and only **5.8%** of them disagreeing with this statement.

The last bar of the graph presents the results captured from the statement that the Madibeng council do not always involve them in policy decision making. A total of **70.6%** of respondents were in agreement with this statement, whilst the remaining **29.4%** of them did not agree with this suggestion.

4.2.3. Section 3: Extent to which participatory democracy mechanisms are used in Madibeng municipality.

Figure 5: The extent to which community inputs influence Council decisions



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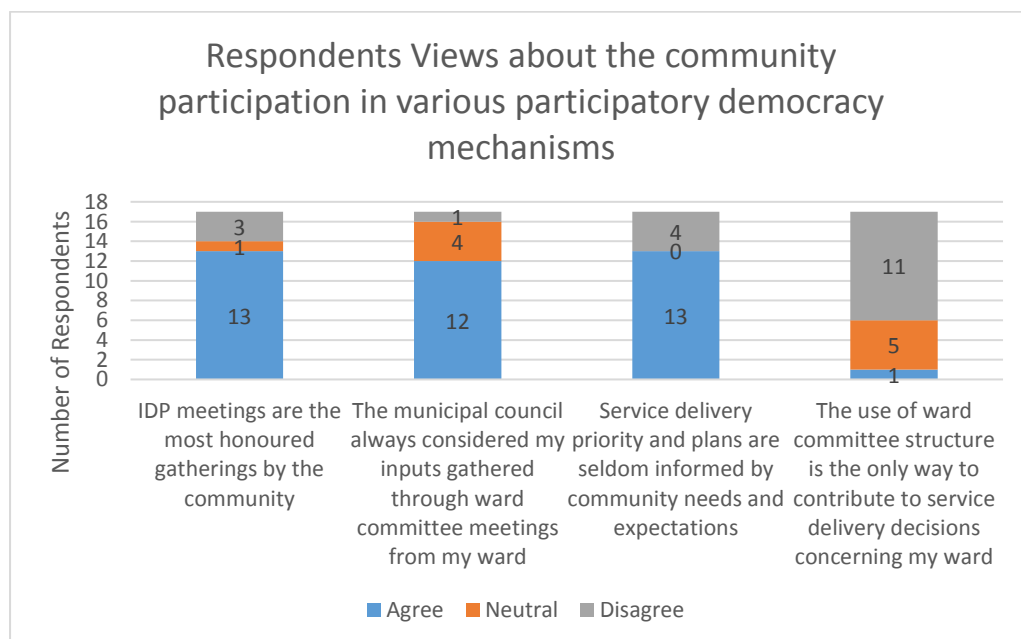
The diagram above present findings on the respondents views about the extent to which community inputs influence the Madibeng Council policy decisions. With regard to the first statement depicted in the first bar of the graph, a total of **70.6%** of respondents agrees that community inputs gathered through the IDP process were considered by the Madibeng municipal council in the last three years. Only the remaining **29.4%** contended to this statement.

In the second bar of the graph, it is presented that **59.4%** of respondents believe the communities they serve are satisfied with the current practice of participatory democracy, whilst **29.4%** did not agree with this statement and the remaining **17.6%** of the indicated that they are neutral on this statement.

The respondents view about the community responses to the implementation of the available participatory democracy mechanisms are highlighted in the third bar of the graph above. Only a total of **11.8%** respondents indicated their agreement that such responses are not satisfactory, whilst **47%** of them disagreed with such connotations. The remaining **41%** of respondents chose to be neutral on this statement.

The last statement presented in the diagram above is in relation to the communication channels which are believed not to be clearly indicated. In the last bar of the graph, a total of **58.8%** of respondents disagreed with this suggestion, whilst **41%** of them were in agreement with the statement.

Figure 6: community participation on various participatory democracy mechanisms



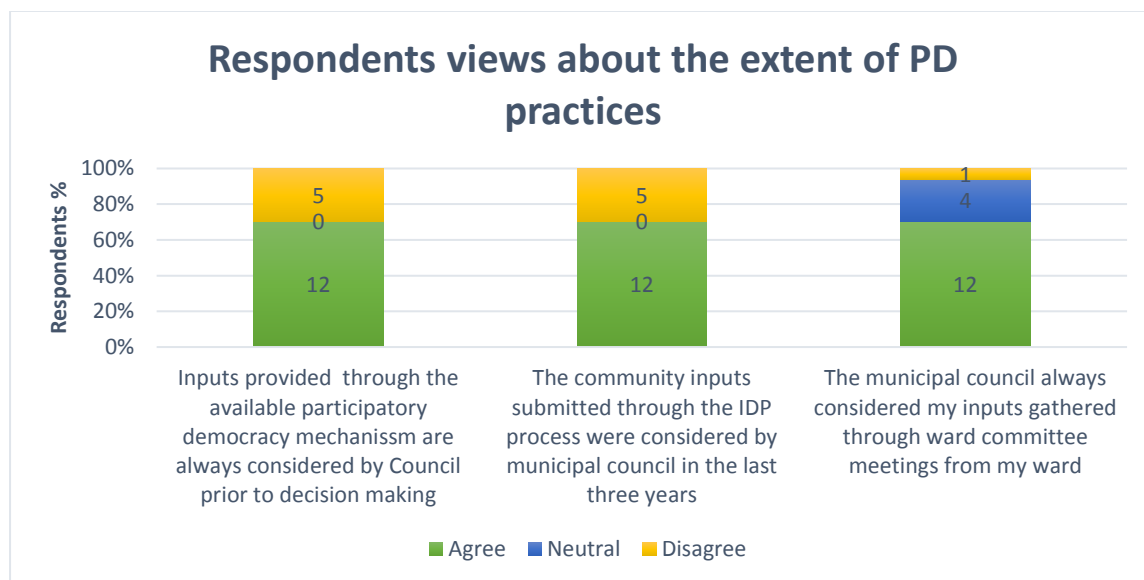
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The diagram above presents the results of the last four statements in the research questionnaire. The first bar graph relate to the statement that IDP meetings are the most attended by communities. A total of **76.5%** of respondents seems to agree with this statement, whilst only **17.6%** of them did not agree with the statement and a mere **5, 8%** chose to be neutral on this matter.

The study also uncovered the respondents' views on the statement that the Madibeng municipal council always considers community inputs gathered through ward meetings. The findings in this regard reflect a total of **70.6%** of respondents corresponding with the statement, whilst **5.8%** of them had a descending view and the remaining **23.5%** were Neutral.

The third bar in the graph presents findings of the statement about the extent to which community needs assessment influence the municipal service delivery priorities and plans. In this statement a total of **76.5%** of respondents were in agreement with this statement, whilst the remaining **23.5%** had a descending views about this.

The fourth and last bar of the graph presents respondents views on the statement that ward committees are the only participatory democracy mechanism in the Madibeng municipality. A total of **64.7%** of respondent did not agree with this stamen, whilst **29.4%** of them chose to be neutral and just above **5%** of respondent were in agreement with this statement.



4.3. Presentation of findings: Communities

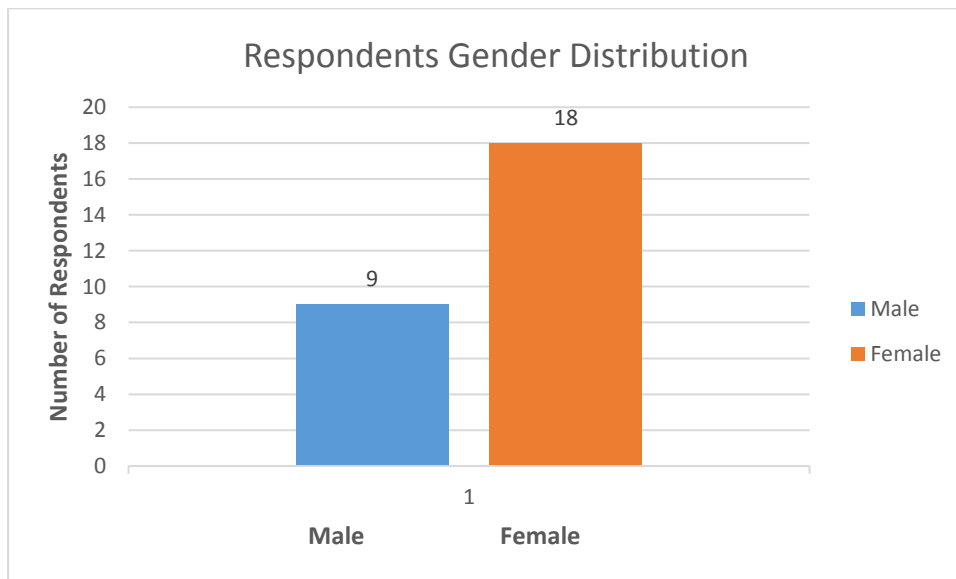
4.3.1. Demographic information

This study targeted 11 community members to participate in the survey and have managed to reach 27 community participants who were interested to participate. This therefore indicates that the study reached a response rate that is more by 145%.

$$\frac{27 \text{ community members}}{11 \text{ community members targeted}-0} \times 100 = 145\%$$

(Bryman, 2012:199)

Figure 7: Respondents by Gender Distribution



The diagram above indicates the total number of respondents who participated in the community member survey. The results indicated formed the basis for the analysis and interpretation of the research findings in chapter 5.

Figure 8: Respondents political activeness

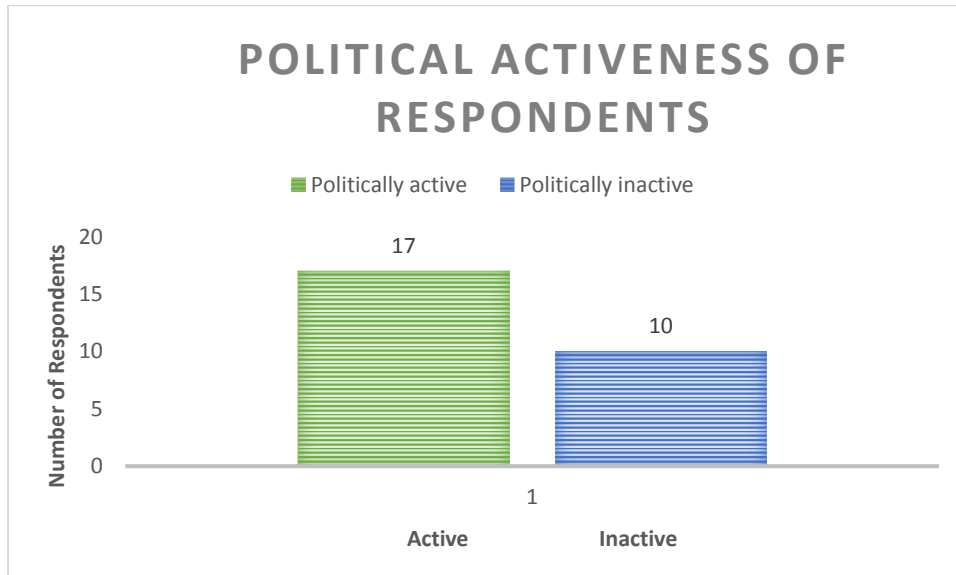
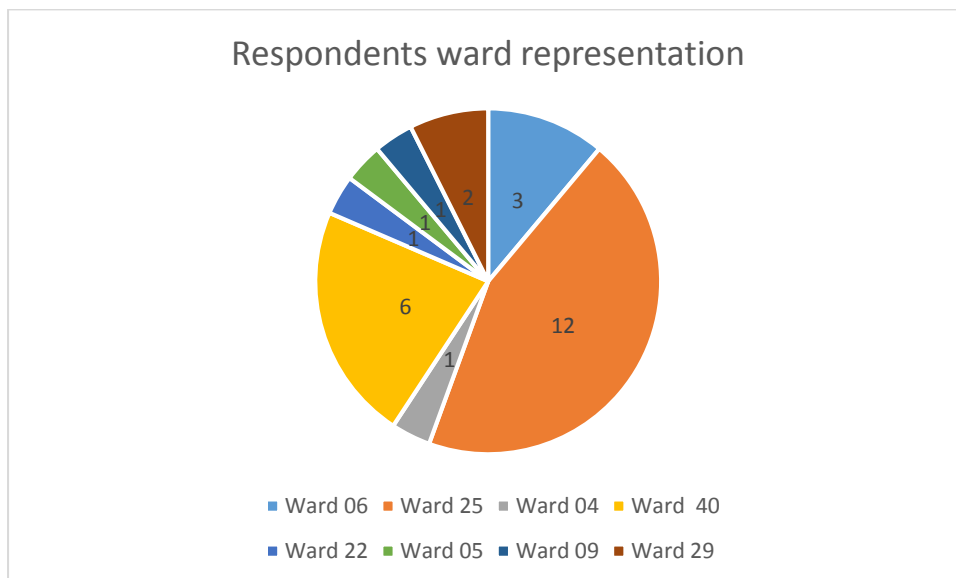


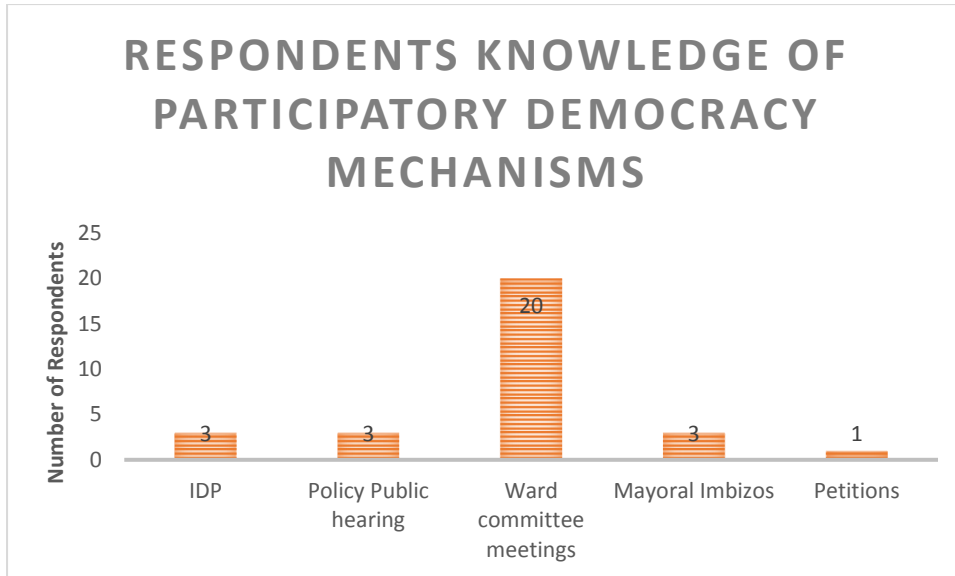
Figure 9: Respondents ward representation



The diagram above depict the distribution of respondents by ward representation. Accordingly, ward 25 had the largest representation by 12 participants' equivalent to **44%** of the total sample. Ward 40 is the second largest ward represented in this study by 6 respondents which is equivalent to **22%** of the total sample.

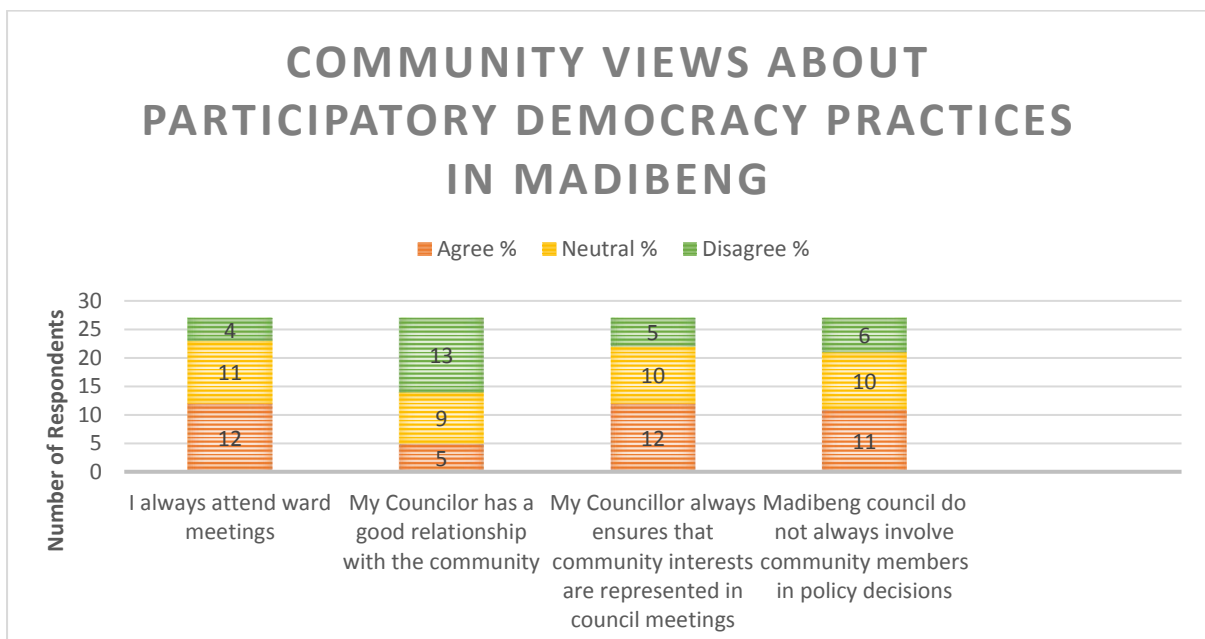
4.3.2. Understanding of participatory democracy practices

Figure 10: Participatory democracy mechanisms



The above diagram depicts the extent to which respondents know of the five participatory democracy mechanisms currently in practice at Madibeng local municipality. From the diagram it is clear that majority (74%) of the respondents are familiar with the ward committee mechanism, while fewer respondents know of the petition system. The remaining three mechanisms namely; public hearings; IDP and mayoral imbizos have equal share (11%) of the respondents' awareness on their existence in Madibeng municipality.

Figure 11: Community views about Participatory Democracy Practices in Madibeng Municipality



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According to the above reflected diagram, a higher proportion (**44.4%**) of respondents indicates their interest and regular participation to ward meetings in the first bar of the graph as compared to the **14.8%** of the respondents who indicated their lack of interest in partaking in such activities. An interesting matter is that a fair proportion (**40.7%**) of the respondents were neutral about their interest.

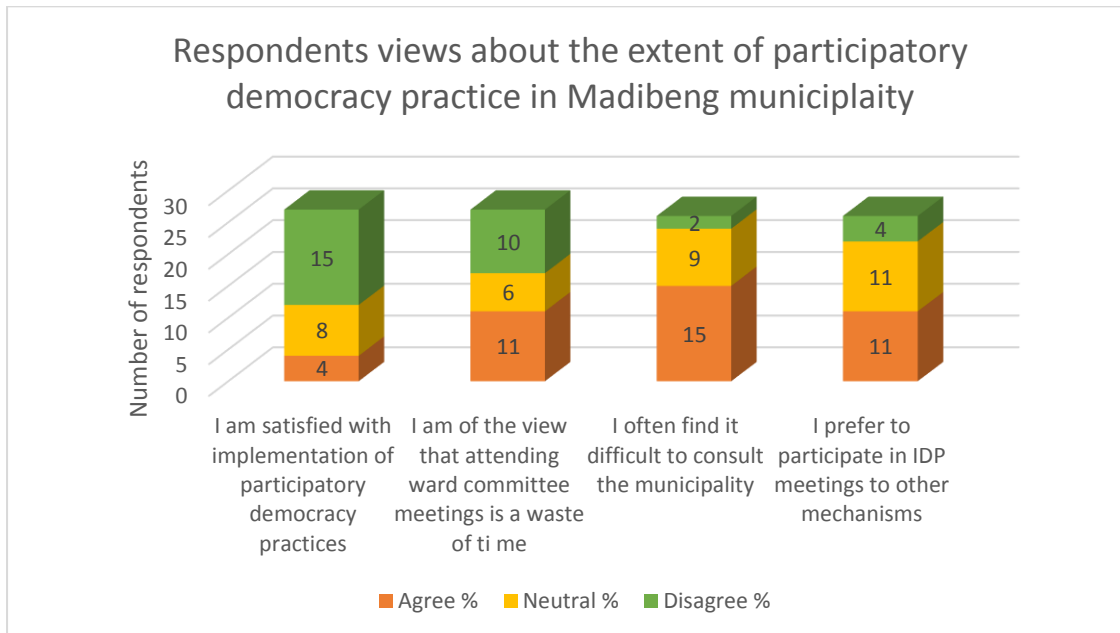
Another reflection from the diagram above is in relation to the respondents view about the relationship of councilors and community members, where majority of respondents had a negative view in that, a total of **48.1%** disagreed with the suggestion that ward councilors have a good relationship with their communities. Only **18.5%** of respondents believed ward councilors have good relationship with their respective communities.

The results of this study reflects some contradicting views from respondents, where a total of **44.4%** agree to the suggestion that ward councilors always ensures that community interests are fairly represented in council meetings. Respondents who believed that ward councilors are not representing community interests to the best of their abilities were at minority, as indicated by **18.5%** of respondents in the third bar of the graph.

The results further indicate in the fourth bar of the graph, an equal proportion of respondents who agree and who are neutral to the suggestion that the Madibeng council do not always involve communities in policy decision making. The two groups registered **40.7%** and **37%** respectively. Only **22.2%** disagreed to this.

4.3.3. Participation through available participatory democracy mechanisms

Figure 12: Respondents views about the extent of participatory democracy practice in Madibeng Municipality



The diagram above reflects result captured from section 2 of the research instrument. The first bar of the graph indicates respondents' views on their satisfaction regarding the implementation of participatory democracy mechanisms in Madibeng municipality. Only **14.8%** of the responded agreed that they are satisfied with the current practice of participatory democracy, while a higher proportion of **55.5%** disagreed to this submission and the remaining **29.6%** chose to be neutral about the suggestion.

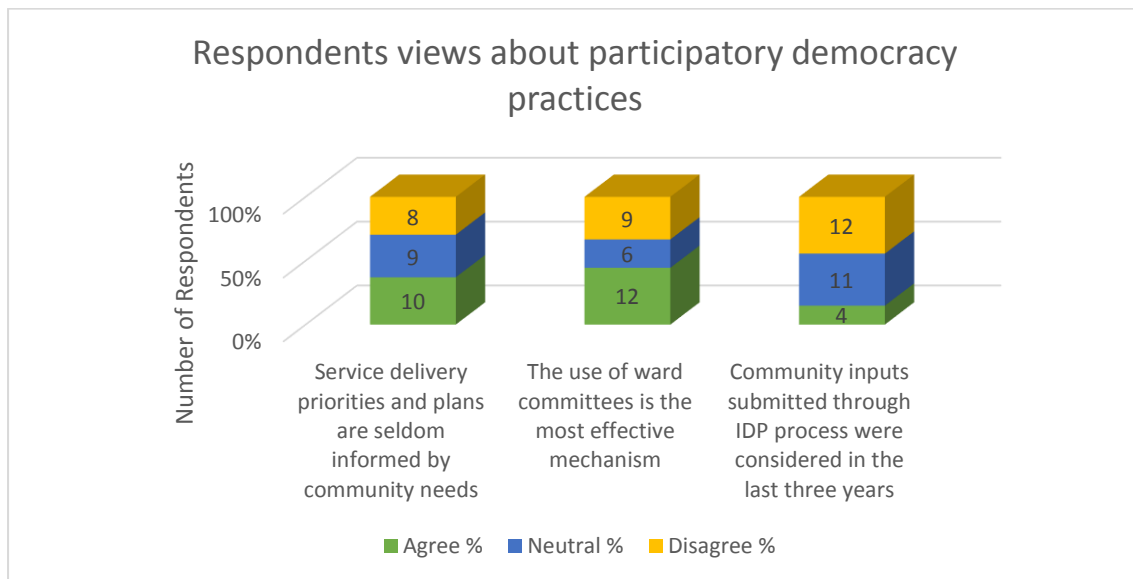
On a similar matter, a higher proportion (**40.7%**) of respondents agreed that their attendance to ward committee meetings is just a waste of time. However, an almost equal proportion (**37%**) indicated a descending views by disagreeing to this suggestion. On the other hand, **22.2%** of respondents chose to be neutral about this question.

Interestingly, only **7%** of the respondents disagreed to the statement that communities often find it difficult to consult the municipality, whilst higher proportion (**55.5%**) agreed that they often find it difficult to communicate with the municipality. Importantly, a fair proportion (**33.3%**) of respondents chose to be neutral about this statement.

The fourth and last bar of the graph presents results regarding the statement about respondent's preference to participate in IDP meetings than other available participatory democracy practices in Madibeng. Interestingly there is an equal proportion (**40.7%**) of respondents who agreed and those who chose to be neutral to this provision. Only **14.8%** of respondents seemed to prefer participating in other mechanisms.

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Figure 13: Respondents views about the effectiveness of participatory democracy practice in Madibeng Municipality



This diagram above, continues to presents results of section 2 of the research questionnaire. The first bar of the graph presents respondents views about the extent to which community needs informs service delivery priorities. A total of **37%** of respondents agrees that community needs seldom informs service delivery priorities and plans, whilst **29.6%** of respondents do not content to this statement and **33.3%** of respondents chose to be neutral to this statement.

Another revelation indicated in the above diagram is that **44.4%** of respondents seems to believe that ward committees are the most effective participatory democracy mechanisms in Madibeng municipality, whilst a total of **33.3%** of respondents disagreed to this statement. Additionally, **22.2%** of respondents chose to be neutral on this question.

On the statement regarding consideration of community inputs submitted through IDP in the last three years, only **14.8%** of respondents agreed that community inputs submitted during IDP were considered by council. A total of **44.4%** of respondents disagreed to this statement whilst **40.7%** of respondents chose to be neutral on this statement.

4.4. Conclusions

The results captured by this study indicated views from the ward councilors in the first section followed by views from community members. According to ward councilor's results, all participatory democracy mechanisms, reflected in table 1, exists within the Madibeng municipality. However, from the results of community's views, ward committees seems to be the most popularly known participatory democracy mechanism.

In general ward councilors believe they foster participatory democracy within their respective wards, and that municipal council adequately considers community inputs submitted through ward committee meetings. According to the findings indicated above, ward councilors are of the view that the relationship between them and their respective communities is of a good nature. Additionally, a fair proportion of respondents suggests they adequately represents the interests of the communities in council meetings.

Notably, this reflection contradicts with the results captured that the Madibeng Executive council do not always involve ward councilors in policy decision making. Another identification is that ward councilors seem to believe that communities are generally satisfied with the current practices of participatory democracy. This is also supported by the outcome that a higher proportion of ward councilors did not agree to the statement that community responses to the participatory democracy mechanisms is not satisfactory, and further reflected that communication channels between communities and ward councilors or municipality is clearly indicated.

The results also suggested that IDP process is preferred by communities than other existing participatory democracy mechanisms indicated in figure 1 above. Another revelation to be noted is that councilors are of the view that service delivery priorities and plans are sometimes not informed by community needs.

With regard to results as captured from community members, it became clear that ward committees are regarded as the popular participatory democracy mechanism. A descending view regarding the nature of relationship between ward councilors and the communities they serve was captured that there is no good relationship. However, the results also suggests that communities are confident that ward councilors fairly represents their interest in council meetings but the inputs provided do not always informs the service delivery priorities and plans for the municipality.

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In conclusion, the findings indicate that communities are not satisfied with the current practice of participatory democracy. It may be due to this finding that a high proportion of respondents agreed to the statement that attending ward committee meetings is just a waste of time for them. Moreover, community members indicated that they cannot consult the municipality without any difficulty.

According to these findings, there is an equal participation of communities to ward committees and the IDP processes. Of critical importance is the fact that a fair proportion of respondents were either unsure on the responses for most of the indicator statements, including the inclusion of inputs they submitted through IDP in the last three years.

CHAPTER 5

INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive interpretation and analysis of the findings presented in chapter 4 of this report. The preceding chapter outlined findings from the two groups of respondents; ward councilors and community members. This study wished to determine the nature of participatory democracy practices in Madibeng local municipality. Two questions were used to try and understand the nature of participatory democracy in Madibeng municipality namely;

- What is the nature of Participatory Democracy practices in Madibeng municipality?
- To what extent does the existing Participatory Democracy practices influence policy planning and decision?

A hypothesis was then formulated in relation to the second that the implementation of Participatory Democracy mechanism in Madibeng municipality is limited to compliance with existing laws and regulations.

In order for this study to try and respond to the two questions indicated in the above paragraph, two sets of self-completion questionnaire were distributed. Two strata's were then derived representing municipal governance structures (Ward councilors) and communities (individual community members). The first set was distributed to ward committees, which are the main sample for this study, and another set distributed to a group of community members. A probability random sample was used to collect data from ward councilors while a non-probability sampling method was employed for collecting data from community members. Although, the study planned to analysed these collected data using Microsoft statistical data analysis techniques and application of the SPSS techniques, the SPSS techniques was however not used in the final data analysis stage. Reasons for not using the SPSS owes to the principle that only data collected based on probability methods can be analyzed using SPSS software.

As a result data collected from community members could not be analyzed using the SPSS as such. Similarly, given the response rate of 52% from ward councilors, it became unnecessary to make analyses of the said data using SPSS software, since the response rate is considered low for making any statistical inferences or generalizability. Accordingly, all collected data was analyzed using Microsoft excel descriptive statistics tools.

Essentially, measure of central tendencies have been used to determine the measure of each variable from the data instrument. Notably, Burnham, Lutz; Grant & Layton-Henry, (2008), reflects that measures of central tendencies are necessary to give summarized values of variables. Of the three available, this report used the median as a measure of central tendency and Interquartile range as the measure of spread for both sets of variables in the two research questionnaires because the variables used here are considered ordinal.

5.2. Interpretation of research findings

5.2.1. What is the nature of participatory democracy in Madibeng municipality?

In order to respond to this research question, consideration was made to responses from both ward councilors sample and the community members sample. upon review of the responses from both sets of sample population, the study found that ward councilors are of the view that participatory democracy is being implemented using the five highlighted mechanisms in figure 4 of the preceding chapter, namely; IDP, Ward committees, Petition system, Policy public hearings and Mayoral imbizos.

However, according to the findings on the statement reflecting the knowledge and understanding of respondents about the practice of these five participatory mechanisms, majority of the respondents in the community members survey indicated that their unfamiliarity of the ward committee structures, whilst the minority indicated their knowledge about the practice of petitions system as a mechanism for participatory democracy, as reflected in figure 11 in the preceding chapter.

According to the findings reflected in the preceding chapter of this report, The Madibeng local municipality implements five mechanisms of participatory democracy, as outlined in the local government legislation. Importantly there are two descending views identified from the two groups of respondents. Ward councilors generally agree that inputs submitted through IDP process were considered by the Madibeng Executive Council prior to final policy decision making in the last three years, **Mdn= 2; IQR =3**.

Similarly, most of respondents believe that inputs submitted by communities through ward committee structures always get considered by the municipal executive council, **Mdn = 2; IQR = 2**. However, according to the recorded responses from community members, there is an equal proportion of respondents who disagreed that such inputs were indeed considered in the last three years and those who either are unsure whether such action do take place. **Mdn = 3; IQR = 1**

Additionally, a higher proportion of respondents, in both groups, indicates some positive reflections in relation to the high attendance of community members to IDP meetings as compared to attendance to other existing forms of participatory mechanism. In respect of ward councilors survey, **Mdn = 1; IQR = 1** whilst in community members **Mdn = 3; IQR = 1**. This positive indication could be related to the results from the statement about the ward councilors encouragement of community attendance to participatory democracy meetings, where all respondents were in agreement that they indeed do encourage community participation through available participatory democracy practice, **Mdn = 1 ;IQR = 1**.

In essence, this study established the existence of participatory democracy mechanisms in Madibeng local municipality. most importantly the study discovered that the five above discussed mechanisms are being implemented, though other mechanism such as ward committees structured and IDP process have been identified as the popular mechanisms amongst community members. However, there is a factor relating to the extent to which participatory democracy mechanisms influence executive council's policy decision which remained to be uncovered, and the next section tries to reflect more on that.

5.2.2. To what extent does the existing participatory democracy in Madibeng municipality influence policy planning and decision?

In trying to respond to this question, a hypothesis was formulated that implementation of participatory democracy mechanism has no effect on executive councils policy decision making. The study attempted to test this hypothesis using the available variables in the two sets of the questionnaires and the results are therefore reflected at the end of the discussions in this chapter. This report identified two sets of critical statements, from both sets of research questionnaires, to help respond to this research questions;

- Service delivery priorities and plans are seldom informed by community needs.
- Community inputs submitted through IDP process were considered in the last three years.

The most relevant statements from the two sets of research questionnaires was in relation to the consideration of inputs provided to the Madibeng executive council by ward councilors from community members. In the earlier chapter of this report, evidence collected suggested that most of respondents (**70.6%**), **Mdn = 2; IQR = 3**, believe participatory democracy practices have some influence over municipal executive council policy decision making in that inputs provided by ward councilors have been considered prior to any policy decision making, in the previous three years. Respondents also believe that executive council decision making are informed by community members needs and expectations denoted by **70.6%** of responses who do not agree to the statement.

Critically important, results captured in the survey for community members presented contradicting views regarding this statement. According to the results presented in the previous chapter most respondents (**88.5%**) are of the view that municipal service delivery plans and priorities are not informed by community's expectations and need. This proportion is based on the argument that **42.3%** of respondents who indicated their neutral status, could be due to lack of tangible evidence that such inputs have been taken to account, **Mdn = 3; IQR = 1**. Respondents from the community members, in this case, also believe that their inputs provided to council, through available participatory democracy mechanisms, have not been considered prior to policy making in the last three years, **Mdn =3;IQR =2**.

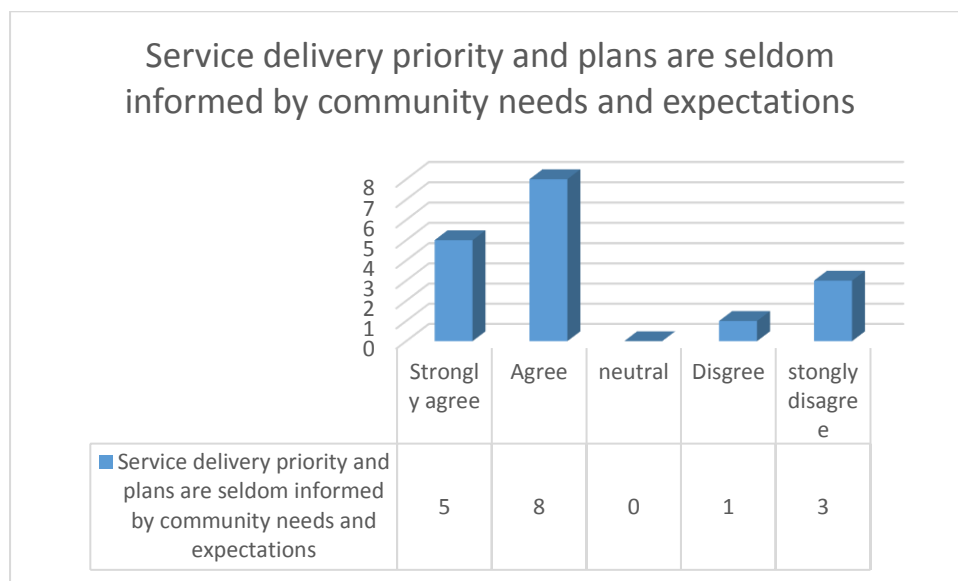
5.3. Analysis of research findings

Given that only one set of data was collected based on a simple random, this section presents some analysis for such data in an attempt to respond to the research question and hypothesis indicated in section 5.2. Of this chapter. Any inferences made in this report is largely based on the central limit theorem, which states that if the same random sampling occurs to the entire population of ward councilors, then the mean of the sample should produce a normal distribution.

As already indicated earlier, the response rate in this study appeared to be low, hence whatever inferences this study is making is in consideration of this factor. The normal distribution for the two sets of statements identified in the above section of this study is highlighted as the first point of departure;

5.3.1. Service delivery priorities and plans are seldom informed by community needs: Ward Councillors' responses.

Figure 14: respondent's views about whether municipal service delivery plans are informed by community needs & expectations



The above diagram present how responses, regarding the statement in discussion here, were distributed amongst the variables. Based on this the Researcher identified that most respondents believe that there are fewer times where community needs and expectations informs municipal annual service delivery plans. Using either, **Mdn =2; IQR =1**. Again, the distribution of responses as captured in figure 14 is not reflecting a belly shape normal distribution curve as expected.

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Having noted this indication in the above paragraph, it could be safely said that; the implementation of participatory democracy practices has little effects towards the development of service delivery policies and plans in a particular period. This claim is largely based on the calculated standard deviation of 0.98, as statistically it suggest that the Mean/Median was found to be a relevant measure of central tendency and that it is a representative response as captured by the survey. It should be noted however, that such claims are only true for the sample of this study and cannot be representative nor generalizable to the entire population of the sample as the sample response rate tended to be low-just above average.

Figure 15: Descriptive statistical figures

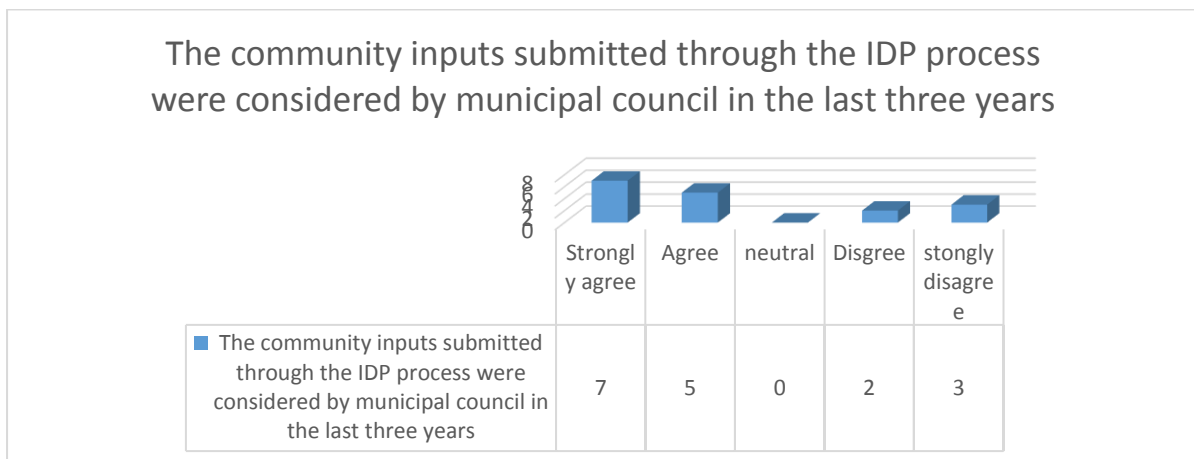
Mean	Median	Interquartile Range	Standard Deviation
2.3	2	1	0.98

The table above presents a summarized calculated measures of central tendencies with regard to the statement that “service delivery plans are seldom informed by community needs and expectations in Madibeng municipality.

5.3.2. Community inputs submitted through IDP process were considered in the last three years: Ward councillors responses

This report now moves to the analysis of responses captured in relation to the statement that “community inputs submitted through the IDP process were considered by Madibeng municipal council in the last three years. According to the diagram below, majority of respondents appeared to be in full agreement that such inputs were considered by the municipality in the last three years. It is again, revealed that the distribution of responses from the survey do not produce a normal distribution.

Figure 16: Communities inputs submitted through IDP processes



Using the median as a measure of central tendency, it could be concluded that the municipality considers the submission, from the community prior to policy decision making. The standard error of mean in this case was calculated to be equal to 1 as indicated in figure 16.

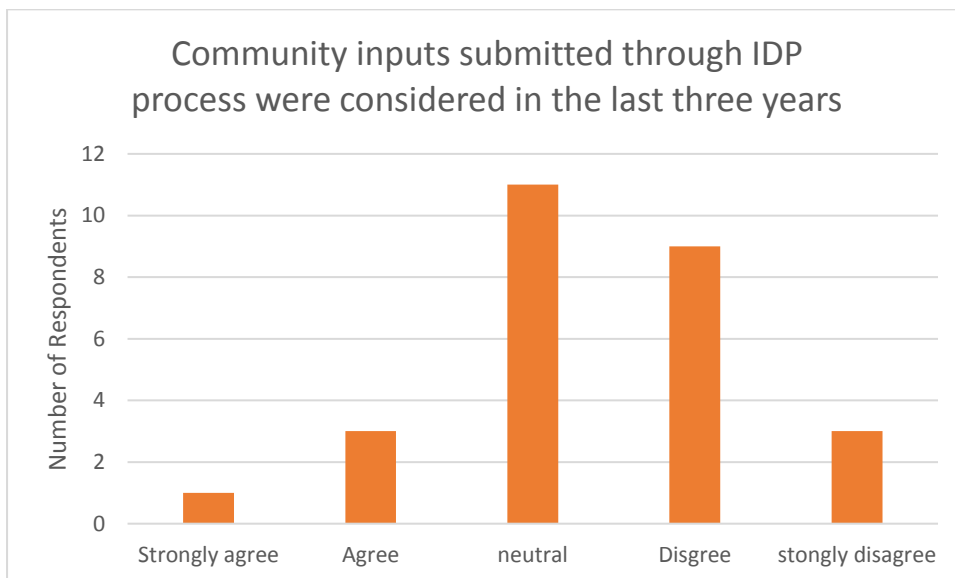
Figure 17: descriptive statistics measures

Mean	Median	Interquartile Range	Standard Deviation
2.12	2	2	1

Though, the data collected from community members was based on a non-probability method, they are also analyzed, using the descriptive statistics, in this report. The results will then be compared with the results captured in the section above from ward councilor's responses.

5.3.3. Inputs submitted through the IDP process were considered by council in the past three years: Community Members responses

Figure 18: Inputs submitted through IDP



With regard to the first statement about “Community inputs submitted through IDP process were considered in the past three years” the measures of central tendency and measure of spread were calculated and indicated in the figure below.

Figure 19: Descriptive statistical test- inputs submitted through IDP consideration

Mean	Median	Interquartile Range	Standard Deviation
2.814	3	1	0.872

According to the figure above, the median and the mean are almost equal, indicating that somehow, respondents are either not sure or do not want to give their opinion on the matter. Under these circumstances, the study could conclude that the extent to which participatory democracy mechanisms influence municipal policy decisions is not known to the community. Such findings are therefore regarded as true given that the sample standard deviation is less than 1.

5.3.4. Service delivery priorities informed by community needs and expectations: Community Members responses

Figure 20: Respondents view about the community needs influencing service delivery priorities

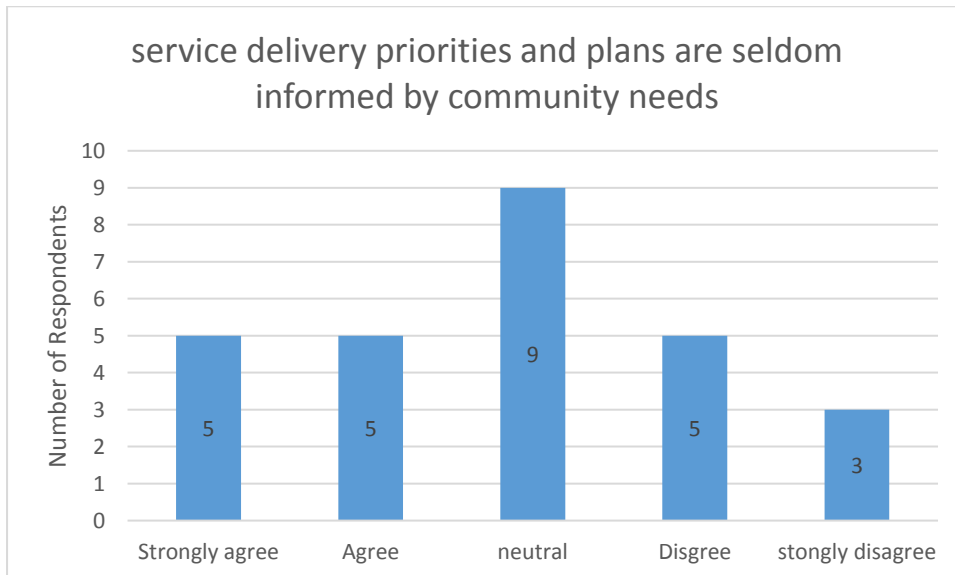


Figure 21: Descriptive statistical tests-community needs informing service delivery plans

Mean	Median	Interquartile Range	Standard Deviation
3.8	3	1	1.01

The above diagram (figure 21) reflects statistical measures used to determine the general finding in respect of the statement indicated above. Using the median, it could be concluded that majority of respondents are either unsure or do not want to give their opinions regarding the extent to which community needs and expectations informs municipal service delivery priorities. However, should the quartile be used, it could be said that there are fewer times when community priorities and expectations do inform municipal service delivery plans.

It should be noted however, that the spread of responses varies by greater than 1 and that there is high probability that such difference could have occurred under the null hypothesis.

5.4. Conclusions

In this section, the study findings presented in chapter 4 were interpreted and analyzed. Such interpretations and analysis were based on the two main questions of this study, which sought to determine the nature of participatory democracy practice and discover the extent to which participatory democracy mechanisms influence municipal policy decisions. In responding to the first question, considerations were made to both sets of responses as captured in chapter 4, although only data collected from one population sample (ward councilors) was based on probability methods and the other population sample (community members) was drawn using non-probability convenient sample method.

The study therefore concludes, in respect of the first question that participatory democracy practice in Madibeng local municipality is largely based on relevant policies and provisions governing the local sphere of government in South Africa. This study also identified five participatory democracy mechanisms [Ward committee structures, IDP, Mayoral imbizos, Policy public hearings and petitioning system] currently being implemented in Madibeng municipality. Interestingly, the study established that ward committee structures and IDP seem to be the popularly known participatory democracy mechanism amongst the community members sample population.

In contrast to what the ward committees perceived as the nature of participatory democracy practice, community members indicated some dissatisfactions and worries regarding the implementation of participatory democracy in Madibeng municipality. In addition to this findings, it was also observed that most respondents within the community members sample either lack knowledge or do not want to raise their views and opinions on matters relating to the practice of participatory democracy in Madibeng municipality.

The response to the second question about the extent to which participatory democracy practice influence municipal policy decision, was somewhat difficult to determine. Essentially, this study could not confidently test the stated hypothesis that 'implementation of Participatory Democracy mechanism in Madibeng municipality is limited to compliance with existing laws and regulations'. This difficulty was as a result of various issues including the low response rate and the nature of variables used in the questionnaire.

However, an attempt was made, nevertheless, to respond to this question and subsequently test the hypothesis using pure descriptive analytical methods. The general finding thereof, was that there is evidence for the null hypothesis, hence it is accepted in this study that the implementation of participatory democracy mechanisms in Madibeng municipality have a positive influence in council decision making

The conclusion in this regard, is that ward councilors responses indicates that participatory democracy has a positive influence to municipal policy decision, in that the executive council had considered inputs gathered through Both the IDP and ward committees prior to any policy decisions. More importantly it is being provided that in the last three years the Madibeng Executive Council did indeed consider, in many times, community inputs as captured through the IDP process. However, community members seem to not agree with the indications captured from the ward committee responses.

The inferences reached by this study were mainly based on the results calculated using descriptive statistical methods (measures of central tendency & measures of spread). The next chapter will then comprehensively conclude the findings of this study.

CHAPTER 6

RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

6.1. Introduction

This chapter presents general conclusions made in this study, as informed by the findings presented in both chapter 4 and 5 above. Although, this study managed to make some inferences on the nature of participatory democracy practices in Madibeng municipality, there were some limitations which were encountered throughout the conducting of the study. Such limitations had some bearings on the issues of reliability and validity of the study, hence conclusions made here in this chapter are subjective to the sample population.

Due to the nature and scope of this study and university of Witwatersrand requirement for submission of a 25% thesis for a Master's degree had a great influence on the manner in which data was collected as indicated in chapter 3 of this report. Notably, the study wished to respond to the two main research questions and test one hypothesis as discussed in chapter 4 & 5 of this report. Some comprehensive conclusions made in relation to these questions and the research hypothesis are then presented in the sections below.

6.2. What is the nature of participatory democracy practice in Madibeng municipality

The first main research question, this study wished to respond to, was to determine the nature of participatory democracy practices in Madibeng municipality. From the literature it was learnt that participatory democracy is a constitutional requirement in the Republic of South Africa (Nyalunga, 2006; Piper & Deacon, 2009; Raga & Taylor, 2006; Spink & Best, 2009). Consequently, all spheres of government, (National, Provincial & Local), are expected to adequately adopt the principle of participatory democracy and effectively implement such. An effective implementation of participatory democracy was identified from the literature, as one which adequately and fairly involves all affected communities, by providing a platform for them to make inputs on any policy decisions by the executive.

This study established that, like many municipalities across South Africa, Madibeng municipality implements five mechanisms of participatory democracy as outlined in the local government; Namely Ward committee structures, IDP meetings held with communities, Mayoral imbizos, Policy public hearings held with communities, and Petition system. Although, the study revealed that all listed mechanism are being implemented in Madibeng municipality, this study concludes that the participatory democracy in Madibeng municipality is skewed to IDP process and ward committee meetings. Importantly, Madibeng municipality did not have, on its own, a public participation policy until the 23rd of February 2016, when the Executive Council adopted one.

The revelation that participatory democracy practice is skewed to IDP and ward committee structures seems to be in line with the arguments identified through the literature, that participatory budgeting seems to bare fruitful results to the overall governance affairs of a particular administration, as indicated by Houston, (2000) and Marquetti, (2012:65). From this indication, the study could safely argue that participatory democracy in Madibeng is implemented based on the premise of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and the Municipal Structures Act, 2000, which therefore suggest it is more of a compliance act than anything else.

Consequently, organization of IDP gathering, particularly in Madibeng local municipality tends to be less formalized like participatory budgeting principle as currently being implemented in other countries such as Brazil. This lag was particularly identified by the continuous responses, from community members, that they are unsure of some information relating to the nature of participatory democracy practice in Madibeng municipality.

Having noted the responses from community members that most of them indicated to be participating in IDP meetings, this report therefore argues that the Madibeng local municipality also conforms to the principle of participatory budgeting. With the recent development relating to the adoption of public participation policy by the Madibeng local municipality, the likelihood to see enhanced implementation of participatory democracy mechanism in Madibeng local municipality.

Essentially, the adopted public participation policy (Madibeng, 23 February 2016) envisages to amongst others to;

1. *Establish well-structured proper communication channels between the municipality and its communities;*
2. *Provide sufficient platform for communities to participate in all municipal affairs;*
3. *Create better public understanding on the purpose and effects of municipal planning;*
4. *Increase the understanding and participation of the public in local government and other spheres of government in the role they should play with regard to the regeneration of the moral values of communities, and also promote positive community development*

Having noted the nature of participatory democracy in Madibeng municipality, the study then attempted to respond to the second question in relation to the extent to which implementation of participatory democracy influenced municipal policy decisions. Conclusions reached by this study are presented in section 6.3. Below.

6.3. To what extent does implementation of participatory democracy mechanisms influence municipal policy decisions

In an attempt to respond to this question consideration was made to two sets of responses, from the two sample populations selected for this study. Particular reference was then made to the two questions from both research questionnaires, about the general consideration of community inputs submitted to council in the past three years, as well as the frequency of community needs and expectations informing the municipal service delivery priorities. In this case, the study concludes that the extent to which the implementation of participatory democracy mechanisms in Madibeng municipality, influence policy decisions is perceived in different ways by different strata's. Such conclusion was reached based on the identified possible factors which appears to have a direct bearing towards a particular strata's perception on the matter, including political activeness and political affiliation of a particular individual.

This conclusions seems to be consistent with the arguments made earlier in this report (see Nyalunga, 2006; Piper & Deacon, 2009; Raga & Taylor, 2006 Spink & Best 2009), that it is often difficult to assess the extent to which participatory democracy mechanisms influence government policy decisions. On a similar note, the study therefore acknowledged and agrees with Houston (2001), argument that there is a critical necessity for an evaluation and assessment on the extent to which participatory democracy processes influences government policy decisions.

The findings, from the community members questionnaire, in respect to the statement about the extent to which community needs and expectations informs municipal service delivery plans seems to be attesting to the argument by Nyalunga, (2006 (a)) and others that ward committees contribution to the council's decisions could be limited to advisory, in that most respondents do not believe that service delivery plans are indeed informed by community needs and expectations.

However, findings from the ward councilor's questionnaire, revealed a descending view in that majority of them appeared to be positive that service delivery plans are seldom informed by community needs and expectations. As already argued that the extent to which the implementation of participatory democracy influences government policies may be perceived differently by different strata's, the researcher also argues that the responses from ward councilors could have being influenced by the nature of relationship between individual community members and municipal council.

On the other hand, community's perceptions on the extent to which participatory democracy influences government policy decisions, could be merely based on their observations of the services that are delivered by the municipality and rarely on the information regarding how such service were delivery plans concluded by council. This findings is found to be consistent with arguments made in the literature the effects of the information /community inputs gathered through the Ward committees is difficult to trace, given the manner in which decisions are taken in Executive councils meetings (DLGT, 2005; Nyalunga, 2005)). Importantly, the final decision on the prioritization of services always lies on the Municipal Executive Council, where ward committees are not yet afforded an opportunity to participate.

For example, if community member A, did attend the IDP meeting and observed that majority of community members, including him/herself wished to be provided with tared road in their respective community, then observes in the next year that community location X is being provided with electricity and his/her community not included in the current year plan, he/she could conclude that her community inputs were never considered by council, unless the municipality comes back to the same community and give feedback on what was requested in all communities and how council have decided to prioritize delivery of such service and also give reasons to that effect.

The above example provide the premise in which the general conclusion of this study was formed that the implementation of participatory democracy in Madibeng municipality has a positive influence on policy decisions. This conclusion was reached in consideration to the methods used to draw both sets of sample results, and only one set which was drawn on a probability sampling methods was largely considered. The argument here is that results from community members' survey could yield different results, had it be drawn on a probability methods.

However, it should be noted that such positive influence is dependent on various factors as discussed in the paragraph above. Having noted this indication and some limitations indicated in the introduction of this chapter, an attempt was, nevertheless, made to test the research hypothesis that the implementation of participatory democracy mechanisms in Madibeng municipality is limited to compliance to the existing legislation and policies.

6.4. Lessons learned

Given the findings identified through this study, some best practices models have been drawn, from various countries, with regard to the practice of participatory democracy as well as the implementation thereof.

6.4.1. Participatory budgeting theory

Participatory budgeting model is here regarded as one of the effective mechanisms to be considered by the South African government in all spheres of government. Although others could argue that that such mechanism already exist and currently implemented, especially by parliamentary committees, the researcher here argues that there is a difference in how such gatherings are structured, hence the need to revisit the concept and correct such structural changes.

Noting the example indicated earlier in this report of a similar mechanism which was identified as similar to participatory budgeting is the budget hearings. In this hearing meetings communities are afforded an opportunity to make inputs on the proposed budget in a given financial year, and state whether they are in agreement or not with the provisions.

Participation for such gatherings is open for every interested party within the society, including civic organization, community representative forum and individual members of the community. However, given the structural nature of such meetings, very few communities find themselves belonging and understanding the concept and the rationale for such meetings. Consequently, more often than not, communities find themselves wanting to rather address other matters relating to their lack of service delivery as they deem such issues very pertinent in their livelihood.

In contrast, the participatory budgeting model, as used in Brazil, rather focuses more on civil society organization for participation on behalf of the community at large (Mcnulty, 2013). Such meetings then becomes more strategic and always attended by community representatives whom are well conversant with matters of budget formulation and can therefore make meaningful contribution. Such representatives will therefore report to their constituencies on the outcome of all meetings attended. In South African local government system, representatives could be accompanied by some members of the communities to observe the proceedings of the meetings and attest that their concerns have been adequately submitted, in the interest of accountability and transparency. This element of transparency and accountability seems to be lacking in Brazil's model and hence Brazilians could learn such from the South African budget hearing model.

6.4.2. Participatory planning theory

Of the various practices of participatory planning theory in chapter 2, the IDP appears to be the most user friendly and effective mechanism to yield positive results. However, it should be noted that such positive results can only be realized if the principle is adequately implemented and adhered to. In actual fact, the IDP is supposed to be a bottom-up planning approach, where communities indicates their needs and priorities, which will then inform the IDP for that given year. Due to reasons such as lack of expertise in the community coupled with lack of interest to attend, technocrats found themselves encroaching in this space, by developing what is known as draft IDP for public comments and inputs. In many instances the drafts see themselves all the way to the final IDP document.

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Even though ward committee meetings are often regarded as the platform to prioritize ward needs, very few successful meetings of this nature exists in various communities across south African municipalities' ,including Madibeng. If the identified lags can be responded to, the IDP process can be one effective participatory democracy mechanisms and the best practice model for other developing nations. Having made these comments and conclusions, the report has drawn some recommendation as reflected in the section below.

6.5. Recommendations

1. The Madibeng municipality must conduct a series of community outreach programmes on public participation in order to enhance community understanding and increases their participation in municipal governance affairs.
2. The Madibeng municipality should put more emphasis on educating its communities about all possible mechanism to be used to influence Municipal Executive Council decisions.
3. The Madibeng municipality must always organize feedback session to inform the communities on decisions made by council after consideration to the inputs submitted by various committees.
4. A full comprehensive study on the extent to which the implementation of participatory democracy mechanism influences municipal policy decisions should be undertaken.

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Annexure A: self-completion questionnaire- Ward Councilors

Self-completion questionnaire

The Nature of Participatory Democracy Practices within the Polokwane Municipality.

Dear Ward Councillor.

My name is Moyagabo Mamabolo and I am a final year Master's student at the University of Witwatersrand. I am conducting a research survey on the Nature of Participatory Democracy Practices in Madibeng local municipality, as a university requirement for completion of my Master's Degree. I am kindly requesting you to take part in this survey by completing the questions below. Please note that your participation in this regard is purely voluntary, anonymous and does not have any immediate benefit to you whatsoever. Be assured that the results of this survey will be kept to the maximum confidentiality possible.

General Instruction

Please tick the box appropriate for your answer.

Scales

1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neutral 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree

Contact details for enquiries

Myself-Moyagabo Mamabolo : Researcher Cell :079 896 9909

Dr M Matshabaphala : Research Supervisor Phone :011 717 3508

PLEASE EMAIL THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE TO msephai@gmail.com

SECTION 1: Demographic Information

What applies to you? Please indicate by ticking the appropriate box.

1. Gender

Female	Male
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2. Political Party Affiliation

ANC	EFF	DA	Independent
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3. Ward No.....

Moyagabo Sephai: 692986
THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY PRACTICES IN THE MADIBENG MUNICIPALITY

SECTION 2: Participatory Democracy Practices

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? **PLEASE TICK THE BOX OF YOUR CHOICE**

- 4. The following Participatory democracy mechanism are used in madibeng municipality.**

IDP	Public hearings	Ward committee meetings	Mayoral Imbizos	Petitions
-----	-----------------	-------------------------	-----------------	-----------

- 5. As a councillor I encourage community members in my ward to participate through the above mechanism.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- 6. Inputs and submissions provided through the above mechanisms are always considered by council prior to final decision making.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- 7. I have a good relationship with the community members in my ward.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- 8. I always ensure that the interest of my committee is considered by municipal council.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- 9. The Madibeng council do not always involve me in policy decisions affecting my ward.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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SECTION 2: The extent to which Public Participation Mechanisms are used.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? **PLEASE TICK THE BOX OF YOUR CHOICE**

- 10. The community inputs submitted through the IDP process were considered by municipal council in the last three years.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY PRACTICES IN THE MADIBENG MUNICIPALITY

- 11. The community I serve is satisfied with the available participatory democracy mechanisms.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- 12. The community response to gatherings organised through the above mechanisms is not satisfactory.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- 13. Communication channels between the community and the municipality are not clearly indicated.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- 1. IDP are the most honoured gathering by the community.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- 2. The municipal council always considered my inputs gathered through ward committee meetings from my ward.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- 3. Service delivery priority and plans are seldom informed Community needs and expectations.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- 4. The use of ward committee structure is the only way to contribute on service delivery decisions concerning my village.**

5.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

Should you require feedback for these surveys, please inform Moyagabo Mamabolo on the contact number provided above

Annexure B: Self completion questionnaire-Community members

Self-completion questionnaire

The Nature of Participatory Democracy Practices within the Madibeng Municipality.

Dear Community Member.

My name is Moyagabo Mamabolo and I am a final year Master's student at the University of Witwatersrand. I am conducting a research survey on the Nature of Participatory Democracy Practices in Madibeng local municipality, as a university requirement for completion of my Master's Degree. I am kindly requesting you to take part in this survey by completing the questions below. Please note that your participation in this regard is purely voluntary, anonymous and does not have any immediate benefit to you whatsoever. Be assured that the results of this survey will be kept to the maximum confidentiality possible.

General Instruction

Please tick the box appropriate for your answer.

Scales

2. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neutral 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree

Contact details for enquiries

Myself-Moyagabo Mamabolo : Researcher Cell :079 896 9909

Dr M Matshabaphala : Research Supervisor Phone :011 717 3508

SECTION 1: Demographic Information

What applies to you? Please indicate by ticking the appropriate box.

14. Gender

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

15. Political active

Yes	No
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16. Ward No.....

THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY PRACTICES IN THE MADIBENG MUNICIPALITY**SECTION 2: Participatory Democracy Practices**

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? **PLEASE TICK THE BOX OF YOUR CHOICE**

17. The following Participatory democracy mechanism are used in Madibeng municipality.

IDP	Public hearings	Ward committee meetings	Mayoral Imbizos	Petitions
-----	-----------------	-------------------------	-----------------	-----------

18. I always participate / Attend ward meetings called by ward councillor.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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19. I believe community Inputs submitted through ward meetings are always considered by council prior to final policy decision making.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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20. I have a good relationship with the community members in my ward.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

21. I always ensure that the interest of my committee is considered by municipal council.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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22. The Madibeng council do not always involve me in policy decisions affecting my ward.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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SECTION 2: The extent to which Public Participation Mechanisms are used.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? **PLEASE TICK THE BOX OF YOUR CHOICE**

23. The community inputs submitted through the IDP process were considered by municipal council in the last three years.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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24. The community I serve is satisfied with the available participatory democracy mechanisms.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY PRACTICES IN THE MADIBENG MUNICIPALITY

25. The community response to gatherings organised through the above mechanisms is not satisfactory.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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26. Communication channels between the community and the municipality are not clearly indicated.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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6. IDP are the most honoured gathering by the community.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

7. The municipal council always considered my inputs gathered through ward committee meetings from my ward.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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8. Service delivery priority and plans are seldom informed Community needs and expectations.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

9. The use of ward committee structure is the only way to contribute on service delivery decisions concerning my village.

10.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

Should you require feedback for these surveys, please inform Moyagabo Mamabolo on the contact number provided above.