

Instilling public accountability through the use of monitoring and evaluation among ward councillors in South Africa

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ABSTRACT

While the literature shows that local government is the closest tier of government to the citizens of South Africa, the communities are denied some benefits of its existence, resulting in service delivery protests that are largely attributed to the lack of public accountability. It is therefore the aim of the study to understand how South African ward councillors understand, perceive and use Monitoring & Evaluation mechanisms to instil public accountability.

A structured interview guide in the form of an online self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from 201 ward councillors. From the study questions, the following alternative hypotheses were tested using regression analysis and T-test:

- i. There is a positive relationship between the knowledge of public accountability of M&E mechanisms.
- ii. There is a positive relationship between perceptions of public accountability and usage of M&E mechanisms.
- iii. There is a difference in the use of M&E mechanisms between gender (males and females) to foster public accountability within local government.

Contrary to expectations, the study findings revealed that there was no relationship ($0.431 < 0.05$) between the knowledge of public accountability and usage of M&E mechanisms. Similarly, only 02.60% of the variation of the usage of M&E mechanisms (dependent variable) could be explained by perceptions of M&E mechanisms (independent variable). Lastly, the findings revealed that the observed difference between the samples means (4.0-4.34) was close and not convincing enough to suggest that the

usage of M&E mechanisms between female and male ward councillors differed significantly. In all the findings alternative hypotheses were rejected and null hypotheses accepted.

In conclusion, it is evident that ward councillors understand the concepts relating to public accountability; however, the knowledge has not been comprehended fully and utilised to instil public accountability within local government. An in-depth analysis on public accountability practices within local government in South Africa will strengthen scientific knowledge on public accountability.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis/dissertation titled “Instilling public accountability in local government through the use of monitoring and evaluation among ward councillors in South Africa” is my own unaided work. I have acknowledged and referenced all sources that I have used and quoted. I hereby submit it in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Management (Public Sector Monitoring and Evaluation) in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I have not submitted this report before for any other degree or examination to any other institution.

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Johannesburg, September 2017

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

This chapter introduces the research context generally and more broadly, outlines the problem statement and introduces the research questions and hypotheses. The chapter is divided into five sections. Section 1.1 provides a brief overview of South African local government history. Section 1.2 introduces the programme under study as well as key terms and concepts. The research problem statement (Section 1.2.1) and the purpose of this research (Section 1.2.2) as well as the research questions (Section 1.3), are presented in Section 1.3 and Section 1.4, and the terms used in conceptualising the research are introduced.

1.1 A BRIEF HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

South African local government is a component of an emerging democracy. Prior to the 1994 democratic elections, local government structures had been established based on racial grouping. The local government elections of 2000 and 2006 “marked the beginning of a new local government system” as noted by Reddy and Govender (2013:78) as these provided for democratic local governance. Legislative reform had to be institutionalised to transform the racially based municipal structures to a democratic local government system that aims to provide basic services to all citizens and communities. The transformation of the local government system contributed to the achievement of a number of significant social and economic development advances. The increased access to basic services and economic opportunities (COGTA: 2009) was among the advances that the disadvantaged communities began to benefit from.

However, in less than a year after 2006, the local government system started to experience challenges and showed signs of distress. Kanyane (2004) argues that while there was transformation, democracy created opportunities for corruption and other social ills that deprived the communities of basic services. The challenges were attributed to party politics, maladministration, corruption, lack of public participation and public accountability. A culture of corruption, unaccountability and poor service delivery was noted within the South African local government system.

Despite all the challenges, South African local government continues to be the important third tier of the South African government, closest to the people with responsibilities so as to ensure that basic services reach the communities. The South African local government as established under a democratic legislative system and frameworks that are built on principles of good governance have the responsibility to account to the communities that voted for them (South African Constitution, 1996). However, the local government system has not produced the level of public accountability required for good local governance.

Following the 3 August 2016 municipal elections, women comprised 41% of elected local government councillors and 40% of Members of Parliament in South Africa. The local government election results indicate a 3% increase from the 2011 elections results. While impressive by international standards, this remains below the Gender Protocol requirements of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) target of 50% women's representation in leadership and decision-making in all spheres of leadership and governance.

1.2 INTRODUCTION TO MONITORING AND EVALUATION MECHANISMS FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

In the last few years there has been a growing interest in attempts to strengthen accountability at local government level and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms have become critical. The South African government deemed it necessary to strengthen monitoring and evaluation processes and systems for local governance and introduced the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and Mid-year Budget and Performance Assessment monitoring tools to document progress in service delivery and expenditure (Krishnan, 2008:7). These frameworks allowed for ward councillors to interact and engage with communities to collate inputs for the development of plans and programmes.

There is some degree of consensus in the literature that Monitoring & Evaluation provides valuable information on the performance of government policies, programmes and projects. The literature has propounded that M&E helps to identify what works and what does not. Monitoring and evaluation can also help local government and municipalities to develop and analyse policies. Through the development of performance indicators, comparisons of progress over time can help identify and suggest practical solutions. Valuable information gathered through M&E tools and mechanisms can thus be used to develop improved interventions that directly address the developmental needs of communities. The process of collecting and analysing data contributes to a better understanding of the trends and underlying issues that emerge.

The growing attention given to M&E provides the evidence necessary to inform strong accountability relationships that aim to strengthen good governance at local government level. There are M&E mechanisms directly and indirectly entrusted to the local government leadership to perform in order to instil and promote principles of good governance. M&E

thus provides valuable evidence on the progress, challenges successes and failures of projects. M&E draws valuable information from international best practice to inform and support policy decision-making and planning processes.

1.2 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.2.1 The research problem statement

In the recent past in the South African democracy, considerable attention has been given to improving governance at local government level. From the legislative perspective, the South African Constitution continues to provide guiding principles for good governance in which transparency and accountability are entrenched. Section 152(1)(a) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) mandates local government to provide a democratic and accountable government for local communities. In fulfilling this mandate, councillors should, in terms of Schedule 5 of the Local Government Municipal Structures Act (Act 117 of 1998), be accountable to local communities and report back on council matters, including the performance of the municipality.

Even though South African legislative frameworks that are geared towards good governance have improved in recent years, democratic local governance is challenged by ongoing service delivery protests largely attributed to the lack of knowledge, skills and use of M&E mechanisms for public accountability at local government level.

Therefore, the study makes an assumption that the lack of public accountability is a central key problem that has resulted in an increase in service delivery protests within South African local government attributed to the lack of knowledge, skills and use of M&E mechanisms among ward councillors.

1.2.2 The research purpose statement

The purpose of the study is to understand the extent to which Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms are perceived and used to instil public accountability at local government level.

1.2.3 The research questions

The broad questions for the study are the following:

1. Does the knowledge of public accountability among ward councillors improve the use of M&E mechanisms?
2. Do ward councillors who perceive M&E mechanisms as effective for public accountability use the M&E mechanisms?
3. To what extent do ward councillors use M&E mechanisms for public accountability?

The study makes the following hypotheses:

Question 1: Does the knowledge of public accountability among ward councillors improve the use of M&E mechanisms?

H₀: There is no relationship between the knowledge of public accountability and the use of M&E mechanisms.

H_a: There is a positive relationship between the knowledge of public accountability and the use of M&E mechanisms.

Question 2: Do ward councillors who perceive M&E mechanisms as effective for public accountability use the M&E mechanisms?

H₀: There is no relationship between perceptions of public accountability and usage of M&E mechanisms.

H_a: There is a relationship between perceptions of public accountability and usage of M&E mechanisms.

Question 3: To what extent do ward councillors use M&E mechanisms for public accountability?

H₀: There is no difference in the use of M&E mechanisms based on the gender (males and females) of ward councillors to foster public accountability within local government.

H_a: There is a difference in the use of M&E mechanisms based on the gender (males and females) of ward councillors to foster public accountability within local government.

1.3 DELIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The provision of basic services within the local government is the responsibility of the elected local council members with administrative support from municipal officials. Therefore, local councillors play a critical role in communicating the progress and challenges in the provision of basic services to communities. This study thus attempts to understand how M&E mechanisms are perceived and used by local councillors to improve and foster accountability.

The study did not attempt to understand the extent of the lack of accountability root causes and its impact. However, the study made an attempt to understand the level of knowledge on public accountability, perceptions and use of M&E mechanisms to instil and foster public accountability.

The study did not attempt to analyse the causes of the service delivery protests within local government; however, the role and nature of M&E mechanisms performed by local councillors to improve accountability will be the focus to be examined.

1.4 RELEVANCE AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH

The study was undertaken during the local government transition, when the country had the fifth Local Government elections (Local Government Election for 2016). It was the time where local government policy makers had to understand what worked, how programmes/projects worked, challenges experienced and how to improve service delivery. Second, within the M&E field, it was also important to understand how the local government understood, perceived and used M&E mechanisms that aim to enhance public accountability.

The institutionalisation of the M&E system and culture within local government is still at the early stages; hence, the study provides a better understanding on the areas to intensify in order to direct and drive M&E practices that aim to improve and instil public accountability. Through the study, the discussion on the role of the M&E function within local government will have a platform to be debated with the aim of identifying improved solutions.

1.5 PREFACE TO THE RESEARCH REPORT

The report has six chapters. Following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 provides a literature review covering the problem, the past studies, the explanatory framework and the conceptual framework. Chapter 3 discusses the research strategy, design, procedures, reliability and validity measures as well as limitations. Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 present and discuss the findings, respectively, that were reached in interrogating the research questions while Chapter 6 summarises and concludes the research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter has four broad objectives, namely (i) to detail the research; (ii) to identify the research gap; (iii) to develop a theoretical framework for interpreting the findings; and to (iv) conceptualise the research approach.

In Section 2.1 the study describes the research context in preparation for Section 2.2 in which the research problem is explained. In Section 2.3, studies that have attempted to assess how monitoring and evaluation mechanisms enhance public accountability are reviewed. With this knowledge, the research is located within governance studies and hence governance key components and attributes are presented in Sections 2.4 and 2.5. Having identified the New Public Management Theory and Principal Agent model framework as the most relevant explanatory frameworks for this research, the theories are discussed in Section 2.6. Section 2.7 provides a conceptual framework as a road map of how this research intends to assess the knowledge, perceptions and practice of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in instilling accountability within local government.

2.1 A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

South African local government is among the three spheres of government in South Africa, namely national, provincial and local government, as established under the South African Constitution. The local government comprises municipalities categorised into metropolitan municipalities (category A), local municipalities (Category B) and district municipalities (Category C).

Prior to the establishment of the current democratic local government system, the local government system was established based on racial provisions. Different racial groups were managed under different municipalities in which municipal services were not equitably provided. In adhering to the international standards of democratic good governance, the South African government had to transform the apartheid local government structure to a democratic accountable local government system. De Visser (2009:9) observes that the process of local government transformation was necessary as the country had to “redress the apartheid-led government system” that was characterised by racial imbalances and other social economic inequalities created by apartheid. The South African Local Government Association (SALGA) (2000) notes that redressing the then apartheid local government imbalances in the delivery of services and ensuring that there was a uniform local government system was a necessity.

During the period 1994-1999, the country embarked on a process to ensure that all legal instruments that govern the entire government system were aligned to the Constitution and all administrative enablers were institutionalised. This included the transformation of the local government system. The Constitution (1996) then established a chapter on local government and pronounced definitively on local government. The local government was positioned as the third level of government closest to the communities. It was for that reason that the Constitution and other legislative frameworks proposed other accountability mechanisms to reside with local government. However, the Constitution failed to specify the mechanisms and how councillors should be accountable to their citizens (Craythorne, 1997:198).

In line with the then new transformation within the local government, the concept of “developmental local governance” emerged as explained in the White Paper on local government. According to De Visser (2009:9) the

concept of developmental local government translated the new mandate and approach that the local government had to play. De Visser (2009:9) notes that for local government to be able to play its developmental role it had to be “committed towards working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives.” While the concept was well received, the actualisation of the concept was characterised by challenges.

During the period 1999-2004, all apartheid processes had to be overhauled. This process gave rise to the Municipal Systems Act and other important legislative frameworks that have oversight of local government. Two models of local government, namely single-tiered metropolitan municipalities in large urban areas and a two-tiered system of district and local municipalities, were established under the legal framework of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act of 1998. Hence, today the South African local government is among the three spheres of government in South Africa, namely national government, provincial government and local government established under the South African Constitution. The local government constitutes of municipalities categorised into three categories: metropolitan municipalities, district municipalities and local municipalities.

The transformation of the local government system contributed to the achievement of a number of significant social and economic development advances. The majority of Black communities have greater access to basic services and economic opportunities (COGTA, 2009). According to Reddy and Govender (2013:78), the local government elections of 2000 and 2006 “marked the beginning of a new local government system” that resulted in the reduction of municipalities from 843 to 283 and an increase in access to basic services for communities who previously did not have such provision. However, in less than a year after 2006, the local

government system started to experience challenges and thus show signs of distress. With such legislative progress, it became increasingly challenging for the local government to accelerate the development agenda owing to the challenges being encountered. The challenges were attributed to mismanagement, maladministration, corruption, and lack of public participation. It is thus that the culture of unaccountability, ineffectiveness and inefficiency in the South African local governance structures became prominent and raised concerns.

2.1.1 Gender representation at local government level

Gender equality within local government continues to be a key debate in recent years internationally and South Africa has been compelled to seek ways of addressing the imbalance in gender representation within local government. Statistics reveal that males remain dominant in all spheres of life, be it domestic, social, economic, corporate or government. The South African Constitution requires national, provincial and local governments to adopt legislation and other measures to advance and promote gender equality. However, it has been noted that women are underrepresented at local government level.

Both the Municipal Structures Act and the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill have been enacted to give effect to the Constitution. The Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill has as a key element that non-compliance warrants punitive measures being taken against the defaulting entity. This includes local councils and council executives. Clause 11 requires 50% representation. Yet, after the 2011 local government elections Limpopo Province had the highest representation of women as executive members. KwaZulu-Natal had 25.85% female executive representation and Western Cape had 34.5% executive female representation. KwaZulu-Natal had the highest female representation in mayoral positions, with 21 mayors and 15 deputy mayors. There were 42 women executive mayors across all provinces. This demonstrates that

there is a great variation and no consistency in the representation of women executive mayors and deputy executive mayors.

There is little difference at the ward level where there were fewer female ward councillors and the ward council positions were largely occupied by men, even though the 2016 local government elections noted an increase in female ward councillors. While women are increasingly assuming leadership roles in local government, the target of 50% female local councillors has still not been met, despite good progress over the last two decades. The important role of women councillors cannot be underestimated and Williamston et al (2006) notes that women councillors should better represent the interests of women and have a good understanding of the issues that affect women, because they can relate to the problems of poverty and development experienced by women. It is thus important to understand how gender impacts on the use of M&E mechanisms for public accountability.

2.2 ACCOUNTABILITY ROLE AND THE POTENTIAL ROLE OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The accountability role within South African local government is outlined in different legislative frameworks that oversee the operations at local government level. Below is the literature reference to the legislative frameworks for accountability within South African local government.

2.2.1 Legislatives frameworks for accountability within South African local government

The South African Constitution (2000) provides a basis for all three spheres of government to be accountable. The Constitution further establishes and institutionalises independent institutions such as the Public Protector, the Human Rights Commission, the Auditor-General and the Public Service Commission to promote good governance principles.

Section 152(1)(a) of the Constitution emphasises the importance of accountability in local government. It stipulates that local government should provide democratic and accountable local governance. Mfene (2014) suggests that one of the primary tasks of local councillors is to ensure that the municipality as a whole is accountable to the people it serves. In line with the Constitution, statutory provisions such as the Municipal Structures Act, No. 117 of 1998, the White Paper of Local Government, the Municipal Systems Act, No. 32 of 2000 and the Municipal Finance Management Act, No. 56 of 2003 are among the key legislative frameworks that promote accountable local government. The Municipal Systems Act (2000) has introduced the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) as a tool to be developed by each municipality and made provision for the local elected councillors to account to the citizens. It was thus that accountability became a critical part of good governance within South African local government.

Hence, the government deemed it necessary to strengthen monitoring and evaluation processes and systems for local governance. The Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and Mid-year Budget and Performance Assessment were introduced as a monitoring tool to capture “progress in service delivery and expenditure and thus make necessary adjustments to ensure achievement of objectives or reprioritization of operational activities” (Krishnan, 2008:7). The establishment of the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation in 2009 was among the principal initiatives that aimed to strengthen the role of M&E within the three spheres of government.

2.2.2 Defining and contextualising accountability within local government

In defining and contextualising accountability, this study draws on Krishnan (2008:4) who defines accountability in the context of local government in South Africa as the “obligation to explain and justify

conduct and decisions to a stakeholder”. This is in line with the definition by Bovens (2006:3) who observes that “accountability is the relationship between an actor and a forum, in which the actor has an obligation to explain and to justify his or her conduct, the forum can pose questions and pass judgment, and the actor may face consequences”. Concurring with other definitions, accountability is considered as the liability of elected councillors and government employees to communicate, explain and justify actions taken when delivering services to the public.

In relation to the study objectives, public accountability is the responsibility of the local councillors of the constituencies to keep the communities informed on delivery of services as defined in the Municipal Integrated Development Plans (IDPs). Therefore, one can conclude that the communities expect the elected leaders to deliver according to the agreed standards and targets and to report on the progress, successes and challenges experienced. It is from this description that the concept of public accountability is being referred to in the study.

The expectations of the communities are translated through the local government voting system that allows the communities to vote for the candidate that will represent them in the municipal council. Therefore, accountability at local government level can be established through various instruments, either directly or indirectly. Election of public representatives is the main direct instrument that facilitates accountability for local government.

2.2.3 Types of accountability within South African local government

The debate around the forms and types of accountability continues to be at the centre of governance issues. Within the context of local government in South Africa, researchers like Krishnan (2008) claims that there are three types of accountability, namely vertical accountability, horizontal accountability and bureaucratic accountability. Boven (2006) argues that

vertical accountability refers to accountability of the municipal council to local citizens while horizontal accountability refers to accountability of municipal executives to the municipal council. The last type of accountability pertains to the accountability of the local bureaucracy to the municipality. While the three forms of accountability are critical for good governance within the local government, the study focuses mainly on vertical accountability (referred to as public accountability).

2.2.4 Role of ward councillors within South African local government

The Municipal Systems Act (2006) allows for the elected municipal councillors to account to the communities who trusted them with their votes to deliver basic services to them. Piper and Deacon (2009:417) shares the view that community leadership within participatory local governance is of importance for democratic local government. Therefore, for the elected ward councillors to be able to account to the elected communities, certain knowledge and skills are necessary. Piper and Deacon (2009:417) argues that municipalities need to empower community leaders with the necessary skills to enable them to achieve participatory local governance objectives.

The duties and responsibilities of councillors towards the respective communities are legislated and documented in the Municipal Code of Conduct for Councillors. Councillors are expected to serve as facilitators of community/constituency input (SALGA, 2010). Through consultative engagement, ward councillors are supposed to collate inputs from the community irrespective of political affiliation (Joseph, 2002). Mfene (2014) suggests that ward councillors serve as a communication link between the Municipal Council and community. The IDP makes provision for ward councillors in partnership with ward committee members to monitor the performance of the municipality (DPLG, 2009) and give feedback to the community. As a first point of contact, ward councillors receive complaints and grievances from the community.

The roles and responsibilities of ward councillors are embedded within the M&E framework; hence knowledge of public accountability and M&E tools and mechanisms is important. Equally important is how ward councillors perceive the M&E role for public accountability and how they have used M&E mechanisms to instil public accountability.

2.2.5.1 Public accountability instruments and mechanisms within South African local government

The literature on public accountability suggests that different mechanisms are used to establish accountability at local government level. The Community Law Centre (2008:9) explains that mechanisms through which locally elected representatives can be accountable to the public include, among other things, elections, public meetings, formal grievance procedures, and recall. The Community Law Project (2008:9) further notes that instruments like opinion surveys and polls, serve as yardsticks to measure citizen satisfaction with, and facilitate, accountability.

2.2.5.2 Elections as a public accountability mechanism

While the literature suggests that the election is the primary mechanism for accountability at local government level, it could be argued that the effectiveness of an election lies in the structure of the electoral system. The South Africa local government electoral systems allows for electoral recall, providing regularity of election and to some extent genuine voter choice. However, the implementation of voter choice through electoral recall remains a challenge.

On that basis it may be argued that the fact that councillors are directly linked to a constituency does not mean that institution of accountability produces genuine accountability. Friedman (2004:5) notes that community

dissatisfaction also resides within some municipalities, who “did not choose those who were nominated to represent them.” In support of that, Benit-Gbaffou (2007:30) has highlighted that in a number of municipalities, party political issues counteract the accountability roles and practices leading to communities not electing the councillor but the political party forcing their political candidate to be the ward councillor. While communities vote for ward councillors, ward councillors are more accountable to the political principals and in many instances feel they are not obligated to report to the communities.

Another issue of concern and debate has been around the question of whether the current electoral systems provide the most feasible link between the citizens and the elected local councillors. With the proportionate representative list that was used for the local councils, it was noted that the practice diminishes and weakens the extent of accountability (Friedman, 2004). The lack of accountability is more glaring at district municipality level. The lack of accountability questions representation with the Municipal council as this means no district councillors are directly linked to a constituency. The smaller political parties in this case automatically fail to have a voice within the local governing structures, leaving the majority party dominating other parties.

2.2.5.3 Participation and feedback mechanism

The use of public meetings has been noted as a worrying trend in local government where the political parties only consider holding public meetings to mobilise for votes (Devas and Grant, 2003). The frequency of public meetings and gatherings organised by municipalities was said to increase towards elections dates (Devas and Grant, 2003). Hence, the credibility of these meetings as part of accountability practice raised a number of questions.

Studies have found that the rise in service delivery protests was as a result of the lack of meaningful spaces for citizens to engage with the municipality on their grievances (COGTA, 2009: 2014). Similarly, Devas and Grant (2003: 310) argues that although a suggestion box is among the mechanisms to gather inputs from the public, the placing of suggestion boxes does not necessarily mean that the communities know about the suggestion boxes and will use them or that governments take any notice of concerns raised through the suggestion box. Creating a platform to receive grievances is as important as giving feedback on how the grievances have been dealt with.

With regard to the review on the mechanisms to instil public accountability, one can argue that while recalling an elected official was noted as a mechanism to enhance accountability, its applicability and appropriateness is questionable as none of the legislative frameworks had provided the procedure to be followed should the citizens decide to recall the local elected councillor. Other mechanism exist, but the extent to which they are utilised is still an area of concern. Therefore debates and criticism around public accountability at local government level calls for a better understanding of the mechanisms used within local government to instil and promote accountability.

2.2.6 The potential role of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanisms for public accountability in local government

There is extensive support for the view that monitoring and evaluation resides within the management function that aims to provide feedback and early indication of progress made and challenges experienced. Woodhill (2005) observes that monitoring and evaluation as a planning tool is used to “review progress made, the challenges experienced” for “learning” purposes to make corrective actions”. From an international perspective, a number of government structures work towards improving their performance by creating monitoring and evaluation systems to measure

and help understand their performance. It is therefore that M&E is used to measure the quantity, quality and targeting of the goods and services (World Bank, 2007). M&E systems also serve as a vehicle to facilitate understanding of the causes of good and poor performance.

Woodhill (2005:2) suggests that monitoring of the project stops at a certain point, allowing for evaluation to begin. The view is supported by Maphunye (2013:13) who notes that the aspects of monitoring thus involve reporting progress on the set indicators. Supporting this view, Zuma (2013:10) notes that monitoring involves reporting on actual performances against planned targets while evaluation seeks to identify potential gaps. According to the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (2009), evaluation aims to determine “relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability’ to improve the provision of services within the public sector.

The World Bank (2007:9) maintains that M&E can provide unique information about the performance of government policies, programmes and projects. Mtshali (2010:10) explains that “monitoring and evaluation mechanisms provides feedback and early indication of progress of challenges. Bratton (2001:454) states that public goods need to be measured to demonstrate the value added. There seems to be no compelling reason to argue against the fact that M&E provides valuable information to understand the progress made and map the way forward. Therefore one can conclude that M&E helps to identify what works, what does not and promoting positive outcomes.

M&E can help local government and municipalities to develop and analyse policies. Furthermore, M&E can help local government to manage activities at the sector, programme and project levels (World Bank, 2007). Through development of performance indicators, comparisons over time can also be made that help identify good, bad and promising practices, and this can prompt a search for the reasons for such performance (World

Bank, 2007). This valuable information can thus be used to develop improved interventions that directly address the needs of the communities. While the M&E information could be of value, the debate arises as to the extent to which the information is being used to improve government performance.

Of importance to this study is the role M&E plays to enhance transparency and support accountability relationships. Many researchers argue that transparency can be achieved by providing information and data that reveals the extent to which government has attained its desired objectives. Therefore one can deduce that M&E provides the essential evidence necessary to underpin strong accountability relationships. Through the process of collecting and analysing data, a better understanding of the trends and underlying issues may result. Therefore, on the basis of the evidence currently available, it may be concluded that M&E is a tool that aims to enhance and instil accountability within local government. M&E mechanisms are thus directly and indirectly entrusted to the local government leadership to perform in order to instil and promote principles of good governance. M&E therefore provides valuable scientific evidence on the progress, challenges, successes and failures of projects. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) uses and draws from internationally best practices to inform and support policy decision-making and planning processes.

M&E may therefore be viewed as a management tool, where monitoring involves a process of collecting data to understand the trends and underlying issues as presented within by the progress achieved. Evaluation, on the other hand, aims to assess the relevance and efficiency. On that basis this research has aligned itself with the view of Mtshali (2010) regarding monitoring, while borrowing some elements from Woodhill (2005:108), suggesting that monitoring and evaluation is a planning tool used to review progress made and examine the challenges experienced for learning purposes to make corrective actions. The paper

confines itself to the DPME description of evaluation, putting forward the view that evaluation aims to determine relevancy, impact and efficiency.

2.3 METHODS, DATA, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION OF STUDIES ON MONITORING AND EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY AT LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

This section reviews past and present studies conducted in related areas of research and focuses on research methods, data, findings and conclusions drawn from research that are pertinent to the study.

2.3.1 Public accountability challenges within local government

Several publications have in recent years documented the challenges experienced at the South Africa local government level as a result of lack of public accountability. Salleh and Khalid (2011:1307) notes that a lack of accountability implies “a failure in the implementation and monitoring stages”. Shaidi (2013) and Botes et al (2007) concur, and indicate that the absence of public meetings at local government level is the main cause of accountability challenges within local government. Mtshali (2010) suggests that the failure of councillors to provide feedback and early indication of progress and challenges is a critical issue within local government.

Similarly, Kukumba and Fourie (2007:661) holds the view that the lack of M&E culture led to misconceptions on the role of accountability. Mathenjwa (2006) suggests that the misconceptions of the content and scope of monitoring local government contributes to the challenges faced by local government. This has been observed by Mettle (2009) who notes that the system of municipal monitoring at the provincial and local levels was not conceptualised and was thus fragmented. Mettle (2000:8) has further highlighted that a problem lies in the fact that monitoring mechanisms, especially the intervention part, did not comply with the principles of good governance as set out in Section 139 of the Constitution. Mfene (2014) in her interpretive research study that investigates the prevalence of leadership and accountability of ward

councillors, cautions that there is a strong relationship between communication and accountability. As noted by many researchers including Mfene (2010), ward councillors fail to communicate as a result of poor communication skills. Communication with local communities does not necessarily need advanced English or advanced communication skills. While the communication skills are of some importance, lack of public accountability is broader than the acquisition of skills, whereas of greater importance is understanding the purpose of the role of public accountability and the use M&E tools and mechanisms to instil public accountability.

Adding to what other researchers have noted as public accountability challenges within South African local government, Aucoin et al. (2000:53) points out that the assurance aspect of accountability undermines the continuous improvement objectives of public accountability. The literature further notes that in municipalities where M&E was practiced the aim was to comply with the reporting authorities not as a learning exercise but to improve performance and delivery of services. The World Bank (2011:21) observes that the “inadequate monitoring, evaluation, feedback and learning processes, treating monitoring and evaluation as ancillary rather than integral to service delivery” is among the main challenges that undermine accountability in South Africa. At local government level M&E continues to be perceived negatively and is generally not seen and used as a tool for improvement, resulting in M&E functions being performed for malicious compliance rather than for learning purposes.

2.3.2 General appreciation of the purpose of public accountability

While there is limited literature to identify how ward councillors appreciate the value in public accountability, Sikhakhane (2011) has highlighted that though the local government has measures and initiatives towards instilling public accountability, public accountability remains a “buzzword” and is not always taken seriously by municipal functionaries. Like other

researchers, Sikhakhane suggests that the increase in service delivery protests points to the lack of appreciation of the purpose of public accountability. The literature does not provide extensive information on whether ward councillors know the purpose and how they value public accountability for good governance. Linked to the level of appreciation is the general knowledge on public accountability and M&E mechanisms to instil public accountability. In general, one can assume that ward councillors have basic knowledge of public accountability and M&E mechanisms.

2.3.3 Capacity challenges among ward councillors

While the role and practice of M&E is not well documented, the inability of the leadership to account is among the key debates within local government discourse. Lack of accountability in local government has been addressed in the media as well as in academic discourse partly due to the increase in service delivery protests that are primarily attributed to the inadequate performance of accountability mechanisms by ward councillors. Coetzee (2010:22) argues that municipal leadership is inexperienced and incapable of delivery and oversight of the municipalities and is neither trained nor equipped to perform the developmental role that is required from them (Coetzee, 2010).

Many studies made proposals of what was expected from ward councillors. Joseph (2002:10) suggests that councillors must be “vigilant and effective”. Fourie (2009:1118) proposes that councillors as leaders should be in a position to provide “check and balances” which would give effect to improved governance. The expected level of vigilance and eagerness from ward councillors needs specific skills and capabilities for them to monitor and report progress on projects. With limited skills in monitoring and evaluation, the councillors are not in a position to fulfil their public accountability role. Mfene (2014:201) highlights that communication skills are of critical importance to build and maintain social relations. Ward

councillors should be fluent in English and in local languages to be able to present information to their communities using different techniques. This study also acknowledges that communication as a skill is critical and councillors need to communicate progress made, results and findings to their constituencies to fulfil their accountability role.

In agreement with other researchers Maile (2012:3) observes that local government performance challenges are “rooted in capacity issues”. Wallace and Tomlinson (2010:23) postulates that it was necessary for the government to have invested in building capacity of local managers within the first local government election period. Addressing capacity issues at local government would have provided the foundation for good governance in which the local government could have improved the delivery of the essential services. Wallace and Tomlinson (2010) suggests that capacity building would have brought about social, economic and political stability. Lack of capacity within ward councillors thus remains the critical challenge and an underlying cause for local government failing to perform its developmental duties as required by the Constitution.

2.3.4 Understanding the local government context

Boven (2006) and others have significantly contributed to the literature on public accountability. Boven (2006) claims that in the broad context of public accountability three important questions arise: “accountable to whom; for what; and how?” Of late within the South African context, the question of when to account is also of critical importance. Similarly, Joseph (2002:17) argues that ward councillors and the ward committees can only be successful if they understand the communities and the people they represent. For ward councillors to be effective they need to “go to the people” to learn from them, to understand their conditions, and to work for change (Joseph, 2002). Critical to public accountability is the relationship between the ward councillor (agent) and the community (principal), and

the relationship defines the outputs or services expected and the standard thereof.

Through public meetings and other communication platforms the ward councillors have to engage the communities. It is in this context that councillors need to account to the communities they serve through interaction, holding public meetings and communicating progress and challenges on the provision of service delivery. On these grounds, the report argues that the relationship built between ward councillors and communities should aim at understanding the community needs and different platforms should be established to enhance open communication.

There has been ongoing controversy over community participation within public accountability. The World Bank (2011) argues that where participation takes place, it is often “diluted to mere community consultations and treated as something to check off on the official’s checklist of “his” project”. On this debate, Maserumule (2008:441) proposes that a different strategic approach and technical capacities are needed for successful developmental local government structures. Mfene (2014:29) proposes that ward councillors must provide strategic direction and leadership that aim to engage and encourage “positive involvement of citizens and community groups”. The extent to which the communities fully engage with policy and project related issues remains unknown yet needs to be more fully understood.

The failure of South African developmental local government to be accountable was noted as the result of a “disconnect between the ward councillors and the community, resulting in service delivery protests and a vote of no-confidence on the part of the councillors”, according to Mfene (2014:29). In many cases the challenges are rooted in the failure to understand to whom, for what, how and when the local councillors need to account in order to effect transparency and democratic developmental

local government. Joseph (2002:10) similarly argues that elected councillors represent local communities at the municipal councils, “to ensure that municipalities have structured mechanisms of accountability to local communities, and to meet the priority needs of communities by providing services equitably, effectively and in a sustainable fashion within the means of the municipality”. Therefore, councillors have to be accountable to local communities through quarterly report-back meetings. Ward councillors need to report on council matters and performance progress of the municipality in terms of established indicators.

The issue of transparency within local government poses a challenge on how the municipal leadership, including councillors, manages and accounts for the use of financial resources allocated for service delivery (Joseph, 2002). Similarly, Holtzhausen and Naidoo (2011:744) notes that leadership in municipalities should use a bottom-up approach to be more transparent in their management. In the same discourse, Mfene (2014) asserts that disclosure of public spending and service delivery outcomes is a powerful overall control mechanism in the new system of budgeting proposed by government, particularly in ensuring the transparency and accountability of the operational aspects of the budget in the sphere of local government”. Advancing the discussion, Holtzhausen and Naidoo (2011:741) emphasises that accountability suggests that leadership within municipalities charged with the performance and management of the provision of service are responsible and thus have to be accountable by providing accurate, relevant and timely information to stakeholders and the communities served. Therefore local government ward councillors have the responsibility to be transparent and accountable to the community they serve. While this is the case, transparency and accountability in local government continues to be a challenging issue that needs dedicated efforts to make improvements and develop appropriate measures.

The lack of public accountability within local government is an international challenge. To understand the problem, Kluvers and Tippet (2010) conducted a study on accountability and information within local government. The study findings indicate that councillors and managers understand the fundamental importance of information for accountability purposes. However, Funnel (2003) postulates that the availability of information does not guarantee accountability. Collier (2005) observes that not only is information important but that compulsory reporting to stakeholders enhances accountability. It therefore suggests that there is a growing body of literature on good governance which indicates that ward councillors are at the centre of ensuring and instilling public accountability, yet ward councillors continue to encounter numerous challenges.

While an essential feature of accountability at local government is the role that citizens play in holding decision-makers to account, the inadequacy of M&E accountability functions being performed at local government level is a major factor that contributes to the functional, financial and administrative crisis in most municipalities in South Africa. The focus of the study is therefore to understand the extent to which the public accountability mechanisms are perceived and M&E mechanisms used to instil public accountability by ward councillors in fulfilling their accountability roles.

2.3.5 Public accountability and service delivery protests

During the second era of South African democracy, service delivery protests increased significantly as a result of community dissatisfaction and the failure of local government to deliver on the policy and legislative frameworks provisions (Botes et al., 2007) and promises made during the local government elections (Gaffney, 2004). Botes et al. (2007:64) notes that the protests have become the vehicle that communities use to send messages of dissatisfaction regarding the delivery and provision of basic services. The Institute of Security Studies (2004) notes that since 2004,

“South Africa has experienced a number of service delivery protests, amounting to a rebellion of the poor”. The extent of damage caused by service delivery protest differs between municipalities. However, it must be noted that an increasing number of protests became violent (Municipal IQ, 2007). This identified the need for ward councillors to work together with the community to acquire a deeper understanding of service delivery protests. It is in that context that Yilmaz, Beris and Serrano-Berthet (2008:1) postulates that improving government accountability within local government will improve service delivery. Cavill and Sohail (2005:157) also suggest that citizens’ participation in priority setting and planning for services, as well as in monitoring and evaluation of the project progress of services delivery, is necessary to improve service delivery and reduce service delivery related protests.

In the previous five years, research has provided ample support for the assertion that service delivery protests are a result of the lack of responsiveness by the elected councillors towards the communities. According to the Service Delivery Protest Barometer (2013) the increase in protests in non-metro municipalities doubled from 2011 to 2012. A TNS Research Survey (2011) among 2 000 residents in South Africa’s metropolitan areas revealed that “the proportion of residents felt dissatisfied with the services they received from their municipalities, with the dissatisfaction rate rising from 51% in November 2010 to 58% in February 2011”. According to Turok (2012) the study conducted within the South African Metropolitan Municipalities indicated that there was a lack of trust from the communities. This partly explained why the number and frequency of violent service delivery protests was on the increase across the country. Booyens (2009) in an analysis of fourteen community protests from 2007 notes that among the issues of concern was the “poor performance of public representation and the lack of functionality of local government administrative structures” as the main issues that anger the communities. Booyens (2009) further notes that the protests appear to be

as a result of the lack of local councillors to communicate and address the poor progress in service delivery and the challenges in bringing tangible developmental changes to the lives of the communities as being the main concern.

Botes et al (2007) concludes that the protests in Phomolong, for example, reflects the ongoing challenges in the local administration and the complexities of South African local government in ensuring that services are delivered to the people at large. Shaidi (2013:93) agrees with Botes et al (2007) that service delivery dissatisfaction and the lack of communication between the community and the relevant ward councillors are among the root causes of service delivery protests. The literature shows consensus on poor governance and lack of public accountability as being principal reasons for increased public service delivery protests. From the researcher's experience from January to March 2015, where a number of service delivery protests erupted within the West Rand municipality particular at Westonaria and Carletonville local municipalities, among the issues tabled in memoranda was the lack of communication channels between the communities and the ward councillors. While on the surface the issue seems to be a lack of communication, the underlying issue is the lack of involvement of the communities in the monitoring of the municipal projects. The literature reviewed indicates that many of the service delivery protests are as a result of the lack of public accountability and responsiveness by the elected councillors towards the communities.

While the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 states that communities are mandated to participate in decision-making within local government structures, in many municipalities this has not been the case. Contrary to that, communities have used service delivery protests to demonstrate their dissatisfaction and frustration as a result of the municipality's failure to include them in the decision-making processes as well as the lack of accountability related to service delivery.

Previous studies seem to validate the view that capacity issues and the lack of understanding of the importance of monitoring as a tool for accountability are the underlying factors for inadequate public accountability practices within South African local government. The literature suggests that councillors have not fully understood their accountability role (Joseph, 2002) hence the accountability roles and mechanisms are not fully practiced within local government. This in turn has resulted in an increase in the number of basic service delivery protests where communities communicate their dissatisfaction on the level of accountability from the local government structures (Botes et al, 2007). The South African legislative system and framework for local government provides for an accountable local government; however, the implementation of M&E mechanisms as a tool to instil and promote accountability for good local governance continues to be in question.

The study conducted by Shaidi (2013:93) concurs with Botes et al (2007) that service delivery dissatisfaction, lack of communication between the community and the relevant ward councillors are among the main causes of service delivery protests. In support, Yilmaz, Beris and Serrano-Berthet (2008:1) confirms that lack of government accountability compromises service delivery. None of the studies has linked the absence of accountability practices to service delivery protests in a direct manner.

To better understand accountability at local government level, various research methods have been used. Mfene (2014) and Naidoo (2013) use a mixed methodology to better understand the concepts of good governance and accountability. Municipal IQ (2010) conducted a survey to understand the causes of service delivery protests in metropolitan areas and the Community Law Project (2008) conducted a desktop review to assess municipal accountability tools. The current research intends to augment and complement the existing literature; a quantitative research

method was considered the most appropriate to measure the extent to which ward councillors understand and view the M&E mechanisms that aim to instil public accountability at local government level.

In the literature, several theories have been used to explain public accountability within M&E and good governance frameworks. Naidoo (2011) and Maphunye (2013) cite the New Public Management (NPM) theory as forming the basis for new thinking within public administration that aims at improving efficiency and effectiveness. The basis of their arguments is that the NPM provides a new way of thinking among public officials and elected community representatives. Nabris (2002) explains how M&E systems and theories could promote accountability in the public sector. Ijoema (2010:346) distinguishes between monitoring and evaluation as concepts while agreeing that data collected either through monitoring or evaluation processes aims at improving efficiency in service delivery and is thus a tool for good governance. Mfene (2014) draws on communication theory to emphasise that councillors must be able to practice M&E roles and communication skills are critical. Mfene (2014) contests that feedback sessions by ward councillors can be analysed using Habermas's communicative rationality. While the theories are independent, they form a basis for better understanding of public accountability within governance and M&E frameworks. The Principal Agent model has also appeared in the literature explaining the relationships that exist within accountability frameworks.

From the literature it may be deduced that ward councillors have dual accountability roles to perform: to the citizens that put them in power and to their political party. Some observers have argued that accountability to the political party takes precedence in most cases (McKay, 2001). The primary challenge that local government faces is to balance the accountability roles that ward councillors have. In an attempt to balance the roles, accountability to the citizens has been noted to have been

neglected, resulting into community dissatisfaction on the level of accountability expected from the local government councillors. The failure of ward councillors to communicate the progress and challenges within municipalities thus becomes the core issue that communities are not satisfied with. While not all service delivery protests can be attributed to lack of communication between the municipality and communities, some service delivery protests are politically driven.

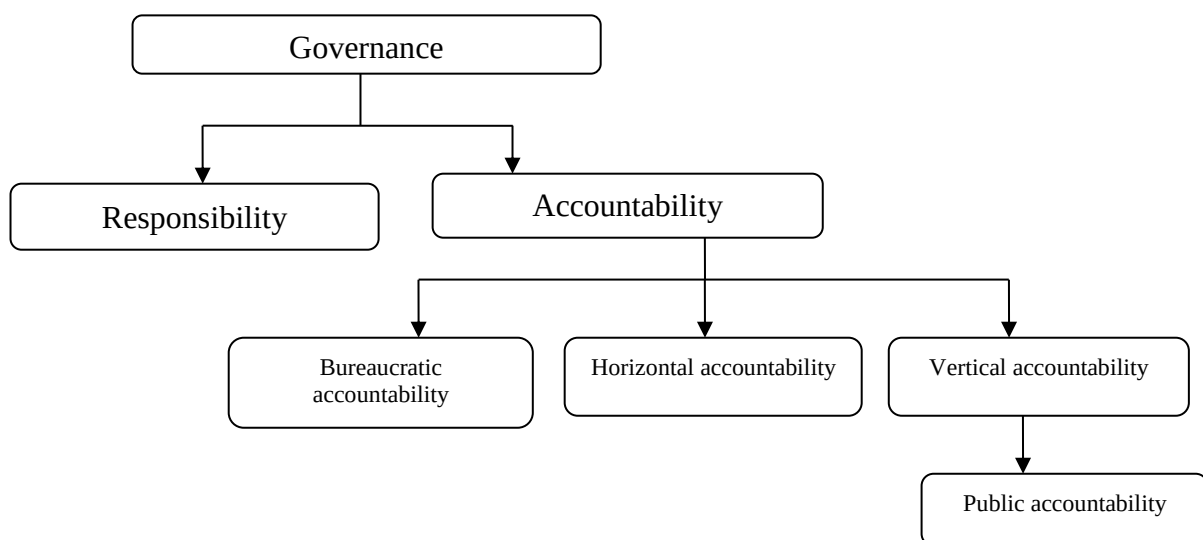
2.4 AN INTRODUCTION TO GOVERNANCE AND ITS COMPONENTS

This section aims to describe the broad field of study in which the research study is situated and governance as the field of study is described.

2.4.1 Describing governance

Figure 1 below provides an overview of where public accountability links to governance.

Figure 1: Governance and its components



Accountability finds its home within the governance broad field of study. There is a consensus in the literature that governance is the social function involving the establishment and administration of rights, rules and decision-making procedures to direct actors (Graham et al., 2003; Delmas & Young, 2009). In the context of South Africa, Mfene (2014) suggests that good governance comprehends the relationships that exist between the government structure (municipal) and the community they serve. Du Toit *et al.* (2002:64) agrees that for good governance there must a sound and strong relationship between government structures and the community being served and describes governance as “actions undertaken to improve the general welfare of a society by means of the services delivered”. Thus governance can only be regarded as good governance when there is a level of responsibility and accountability. Boven (2006) states that accountability and responsibility are key features of good governance. Clearly, without some level of responsibility it is nearly impossible to achieve accountability; hence, the literature suggests a relationship between responsibility and accountability.

2.4.2 Describing accountability

Despite the importance of accountability for good governance, there is no consensus on the definition and meaning of accountability. Various attempts have been made to define the concept of accountability. Mulgan (2003:2) has examined accountability based on its consequences and suggests that accountability results in a relationship of social interaction and exchange involving complementary rights on the part of the account-holder and obligations on the part of the account. Raga and Taylor (2006:16) argues that the public office holder and the forum are the two main actors within public accountability, in which the public office holder is expected to explain and justify his or her conduct. Though accountability may be difficult to define (Ebrahim, 2003; Goddard, 2005), there is consensus that accountability involves a rendering of an account and

therefore the provision of accurate, relevant and timely information to the appropriate stakeholders (Cameron, 2004).

Accountability is thus the obligation to demonstrate and take responsibility for performance in light of commitments and expected outcomes. Within the public sector, accountability can be described as enforcing or explaining responsibility. Thus, making and disclosing of information accessible to the public is the key accountability activity. Funnell (2003) agrees on the importance of provision of information but argues that information cannot be equated with accountability. According to Funnell (2003), information is an essential ingredient of accountability, but does not lead to better accountability. Broadbent and Laughlin (2003) similarly argue that the provision of more detailed information does not automatically lead to greater accountability. Likewise, Barton (2006) argues that accountability requires openness, transparency and the provision of information.

While the definition of accountability is contested, many researchers (Sinclair, 1995, Mulgan, 2000, Dubnick & Justice, 2004), fundamentally all agreed that accountability is key to developmental public service and good governance. From different angles and contexts accountability is defined, however, within the context of local government in South Africa, as three types of accountability, namely vertical accountability, horizontal accountability and bureaucratic accountability (Krishan, 2008; Boven, 2006).

The vertical accountability refers to the accountability of the municipal council to local citizens while horizontal accountability refers to accountability of municipal executives to the municipal council. The last type of accountability pertains to the accountability of the local bureaucracy to the municipality. While one can conclude that the importance of accountability forms a basis for good governance within a

democratic society, challenges are experienced in attempts to instil public accountability within South African local government. The study therefore focused on a better understanding of public accountability, referred to as vertical accountability (Krishan, 2008; Boven, 2006).

Another area of contestation within the concept of accountability is the types of accountability. Bovens (2006) notes that there are different types of accountability, namely democratic accountability, political accountability, legal and ethical accountability, managerial accountability and performance-based accountability. Bovens (2006) suggests a catalogue highlighting different types of accountability, based on the nature of the forum, actor, conduct and obligation. The concept of accountability can be classified according to the type of accountability exercised and/or the person, group or institution the public official answers to, mainly classified as vertical accountability and horizontal accountability. In the context of this study, vertical accountability is referred to as public accountability.

2.4.3 Describing public accountability

A considerable amount of literature has been published on public accountability. Krishnan (2008:4) defines public accountability in the context of local government in South Africa as the “obligation to explain and justify conduct and decisions to a stakeholder”. This is in line with the definition by Boven (2006) that “accountability is the relationship between an actor and a forum, in which the actor has an obligation to explain and to justify his or her conduct, the forum can pose questions and pass judgment, and the actor may face consequences”. Concurring with other definitions, public accountability is considered as the liability of government officials and elected community representatives to communicate, explain and justify actions taken on behalf of delivering services to the public.

From these definitions and in relation to the study, public accountability is regarded as the responsibility that local councillors have towards their constituencies. This definition ties in closely with the definition by Roberts and Scapens (1985:447) that accountability is “giving and demanding of reasons for conduct”. While the definition touches on elements of answerability, clearly answerability of its own does not constitute accountability. Therefore, the report concludes that public accountability goes beyond informing the constituencies of the progress on projects, and includes an interactive engagement of all parties in accounting on the progress, challenges and failures and collectively taking corrective actions to redress any shortcomings. Public accountability is regarded as the obligation of the elected representatives to explain publicly, fully and fairly how they carry out responsibilities the citizens entrusted to them and allows the constituencies together to develop interventions to redress challenges and failures. It is from these definitions that the concept of accountability was used in the study as it relates to public accountability. Furthermore, the perceived meaning of public accountability was explored in the study in relationship with the use of M&E mechanisms to instil public accountability.

Sikhakhane (2011) argues that while public accountability is a tool for participatory local democracy, public accountability remains a catchphrase and is certainly not taken seriously by the municipal functionaries. Sikhakhane (2011) suggests that the recent marches by the local citizenry in protest against poor service delivery countrywide bear ample testimony to the notion that public accountability has become a catchphrase with limited supporting actions.

2.4.4 The purpose of public accountability

There seems to be no compelling reason to disagree on the main purpose of public accountability. Holtzhausen and Naidoo (2011:741) asserts that public accountability is the citizen’s right to obtain justifications and

explanations from public officials who are given powers to oversee the affairs of the municipality through the use of public resources. Cucumber and Fourier (2007:351) agrees with Alcuin et al (2000:45) that public accountability's main purpose is to improve governance through addressing corruption, providing services and improving financial administration, thereby enhancing governance. Public accountability continues to be a key factor in enhancing democracy. The electoral system is used as a mechanism for democracy and allows the citizens to choose a representative. Within South African local government the ward councillors are elected by their constituencies. There is no doubt that elections are the main means of holding legislators and other officials accountable. However, Benit-Gbaffou (2008:16) contends that the accountability of ward councillors is limited by the current electoral system as it emphasises the importance of the political party in the choice of ward candidates.

Through public accountability processes, reliable, relevant information is provided. The process of making information available to the communities is therefore critical. It is through such a process that community confidence in the municipality is installed. Furthermore, through public accountability processes, communities are able to share their challenges and both parties seek solutions to address the issues. Public accountability creates a platform for open and informed public discourse (World Bank, 2007). Similarly, Melena (2004:5) asserts that by monitoring government performance, demanding and enhancing transparency and exposing government failures and misdeeds, accountability mechanisms are also powerful tools against corruption. Therefore one of the purposes of public accountability is to fight corruption.

While the purpose of accountability is clear as outlined in the literature, there is limited information available on how ward councillors understand the purpose of accountability, hence the study tried to establish ward

councillors' knowledge of public accountability and the use of M&E mechanisms.

In conclusion, the study agrees that public accountability is built on the general accountability principle whose primary important purpose is to "evaluate the ongoing effectiveness of public officials or public bodies to ensure that they are performing to their full potential, providing value for money in the provision of public services, instilling confidence in the government..." (Bovens, 2006) and thus being responsive to the community.

2.4.5 Ward councillors' role in public accountability

This discussion draws on research conducted by Hugue (2006) and Boven (2006) who argue that there are three components of public accountability, namely accountable for what, accountable to whom and accountable how. This section explores the three dimensional components of public accountability with reference to the role of South African local government ward councillors.

2.5.6 The standard of accountability

To date research on public accountability has tended to emphasis what the public official should account for, hence accountability for what is important. Bovens' (2006) definition of accountability suggests a relationship that exists between "an actor and a forum". In the relationship, the actor is answerable and obligated to provide explanations and justifications for his or her conduct to the forum. The forum can interrogate, question and pass judgment based on the explanation provided. In this context, the interrogation assumes that there is an agreed standard and indicators; thus, Bovens' (2006) description of accountability assumes that there is an agreed standard that the forum bases its questions on. In support, Grant and Keohane (2005:29)

suggests that accountability implies that the actors being held accountable have obligations to act in ways that are consistent with accepted and agreed standards. Similarly, Huque (2006:602) acknowledges that the standards of accountability also refer to the expected role or duty of public governance for which it is held accountable.

While the content and standard for accountability differs, in the developed countries, Huque (2006) asserts that the shift has been towards accountability for accelerating economic growth rate, boosting efficiency and productivity, encouraging competition, maximizing profit, and ascertaining cost effectiveness. In the developing countries the demand for public accountability is largely focusing on accountability for social welfare, which includes citizens' rights, poverty eradication, impartiality, fairness, representation and justice. These social welfare standards issues are outlined in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). While the IDP stipulates the standard and targets of services the municipalities have to render to the communities, it does not form a legal contract. It is believed that a social contract through a customer service charter could also be used as a binding contract between the municipality and the community on the standard and quality of services to be rendered.

The process of setting out standards and indicators within local government is crucial as it provides the basis for measurement for progress within municipalities. The process is entrenched with the M&E role and practice that the ward councillors should perform. The absence of an M&E role and practice is among the serious concerns that is said to perpetuate challenges and compromise the quality of services within local government. One can argue that where M&E mechanisms are performed the quality of basic services within local government will improve as M&E will provide a framework tool to assess the quality standard. The importance of M&E mechanisms within local government thus allows for

service providers to provide quality services as there would be a measuring and assessment framework in place.

It can be argued that ward councillors should have M&E knowledge, to be in a position to support and enable the attainment of setting up standards. It may not be possible for ward councillors to engage with the community in the process to set the standards if they do not have some knowledge of M&E.

2.5.7 Public accountability agents

Huque (2006:603) asserts that the major component of accountability is the communities to whom the elected representatives must be accountable. Meanwhile, Bovens (2006) suggests that accountability to whom is established by the relationship between the actor and the forum, hence there is political and/or professional accountability based on the relationship that exists. In relation to the study, key public accountability agents are the communities and the ward councillors. Mfene (2014:56) highlights that the constituency-based local government election provides an element of direct accountability, allowing the elected ward councillors to account to their constituencies. The relationship that exists between the elected local councillor and the community is a critical contractual agreement that obligates the councillors to account to their constituencies. It places the community or constituency as the key component of accountability at local government level.

While there are other agents that play a critical role within public accountability, for the purposes of this study the principal agents are the communities and the ward councillors. Through established structures, the ward councillor accounts to the community it serves. It can be further argued that the ward councillors provide a link between the defined constituency and the municipality, hence they are expected to give reports on project progress.

2.5.8 Methods to implement public accountability

An important question relates to how the elected public officials are supposed to account or rather what mechanism may be used to enforce public accountability. Huque (2006:604) claims that due to changes in governance, different mechanisms are being used. However the core traditional mechanisms include external-formal mechanisms like legislative instruments, external-informal mechanisms, such as public hearings and internal-formal means, including official rules, codes of conducts, official hierarchies, and performance reviews; and internal-informal mechanisms, such as organizational culture, and professional conduct. The Community Law Centre (2008:9) asserts that M&E mechanisms through which locally elected representatives used to account included, among other things, elections, public meetings, formal grievance procedures and recall. Along similar lines, Cavill and Sohail (2005:165) argues that instruments like opinion surveys and polls serve as a yardstick to measure citizen satisfaction with and also facilitate accountability. The extent to which the mechanisms are being used to instil accountability at local government level remain open to question. In contrast, Grant (2003: 310) argues that some mechanisms do not merely translate into acts of accountability. It goes beyond the availability of the mechanisms. Grant, (2003:310.) further argues that placing of suggestion boxes does not necessarily mean “that either citizens use them or that governments take any notice of what is put into them”.

In general, public accountability is the responsibility to act where the elected and appointed officials are obligated to perform, communicating and giving satisfactory explanations to the public (taxpayers) over the exercise of power, authority and resources entrusted to them, The role to communicate is legislated and there is an expectation from citizens that those elected will be accountable.

2.5.9 Major processes of public accountability

The Municipal Systems Act (2000) and other South African legislative frameworks, including the Constitution (2000), promote democratic principles in which the communities are encouraged to participate in the planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring and evaluation processes of the municipalities. Through the development of an Integrated Development Plan, the municipality sets its goals and development plans. The public funds are then allocated to municipal projects and programmes. It is at this point where inputs, comments and suggestions from the communities are necessary. Ackerman (2004:448) observes that “the opening up of the core activities of the state to societal participation is one of the most effective ways to improve accountability and governance”. Buccus (2011), however, challenges the public participation process in South Africa, noting that it does not add value to the local governance processes.

Municipalities are required to provide services to the communities that they serve. For this, municipalities need a wide range of resources, including financial resources. While finances impact heavily on a municipality’s ability to deliver services effectively and efficiently, another critical aspect is the extent to which they communicate the progress on the delivery of services as agreed within the IDPs.

Monitoring is an ongoing process in which municipalities are expected to report on how they utilised the allocated financial resources by preparing monthly, quarterly and mid-year reports. Giving feedback to the communities as outlined within the Municipal Systems Act is a critical part of public participation.

2.5.10 Established facts on public accountability

The idea of public accountability seems to express a belief that persons with public responsibilities should be answerable to the people for the performance of their duties (Dowdle, 2006:3). It demands that facts concerning government activities be published and communicated so that public debate can be conducted on them. Hence, Malena (2004) has attributed that accountability is closely related to rights-based approaches of development. Generally, it is the obligation of government officials and elected representatives to be accountable to citizens that derives from notions of citizens' and information rights, as enshrined in constitutions and the broader set of human rights. Public accountability is also based on the principle of the sovereignty of citizens over the financing of government activities (Tippett & Kluvers, 2010). Communities exercise accountability by participating in this dialogue (Dowdle, 2006:12). Therefore, central to public accountability is public participation (Dowdle, 2006). Thus, elected government representatives, political office-bearers and appointed public officials are obliged to conduct a public dialogue with members of the public (public participation) on government activities, thereby ensuring transparency. In this way, transparency in both collective accountability (external) and administrative accountability (internal) can be ensured (Tippett & Kluvers, 2010). The fact as explained by Tippett and Kluvers (2010:23) is that the underlying principle in public accountability is that human beings are imperfect and therefore the citizens must keep the activities of those entrusted with public office under scrutiny.

Political context and culture set parameters for public accountability (Malena, 2004) and the feasibility and likelihood of success of accountability initiatives are largely dependent upon the political arrangements. The extent to which the municipality exercises democratic principles in decision-making is critical for public accountability to succeed (Malena, 2004). An unfavourable political context produces poor public accountability; in a number of municipalities in South Africa there is a lack of public accountability that manifests in unfavourable political context and

culture. While the context and culture are important for public accountability to thrive, the role that the citizen plays is of equal importance.

The South African local government created different structures in which public participation can be enriched. The Ward committee is among the structures created (Municipal Systems Act, 2000). In support, Nyalunga (2006) suggests that ward committees (led by a ward councillor) are a vehicle for engaging communities in municipal decision-making. While ward committees are highly recommended (Mfene, 2014) different mechanisms including radio, newspapers and regular public meetings should be explored by municipalities to keep citizens informed. The success of public accountability initiatives depends upon the capacity and effectiveness of the municipality. One can argue that budgetary constraints within municipalities may impede public accountability initiatives.

Sikhakhane (2011) argues that ward committees are empowered to conduct an annual satisfaction survey, subject to availability of capacity and resources, in order to assist it in the execution of its functions and powers. Monitoring the progress of projects planned and implemented at the ward level is also a responsibility of ward committees. This ensures a sense of local ownership of projects and solidarity with the efforts of the municipality; providing feedback to council through minutes; setting key performance areas (KPAs) and key performance indicators (KPIs); and measuring the efficiency and effectiveness of municipal service delivery (Naidoo, 2004:14). The committee, as a representative and consultative structure, plays a critical role in participatory democracy and can be viewed as a crucial link between the community and the council in terms of improving service delivery.

It is therefore important that the ward committee members (led by the ward councillors) must have an understanding of the purpose of public accountability, and knowledge of the tools to execute the public accountability roles.

2.5.11 Central debates in the study of public accountability

The Department of Cooperative Governance (2013) argues that elected representatives are faced with a major challenge in promoting and enhancing participatory governance. Furthermore, the literature indicates that the councillors have not fully understood their accountability role, hence the accountability roles and mechanisms are not fully performed within local government. This in turn has resulted in an increase in the number of basic service delivery protests where communities communicate their dissatisfaction on the level of accountability from the local government structures.

The failure of South African developmental local government to account is as a result of “disconnect between the ward councillors and the community, resulting in service delivery protests and a vote of no-confidence on the part of the councilors” (Mfene, 2014:29). In many cases this is rooted in the failure to understand to whom, for what, how and when the local councils need to account to effect transparency and democratic developmental local government.

From the literature, Kroukamp (2007:60) notes that the transformation of local government since 1994 has focused on financial accountability leaving a gap in public accountability, hence public accountability within local government suffered, resulting in service delivery protests. The transformation is supposed to introduce a new system of governance characterised with a high level of transparency and accountability within local government. Kroukamp (2007) posits that the local government

system needs to have a new visionary leadership to be able to progress the objectives of good local governance principles as outlined in the Constitution. However, it is noted that the leadership within local government has not attained the required standard.

While a sound legal framework is but one variable to strengthen local government accountability, as noted by many researchers, including Krishnan (2008:10) that “efforts to put together a combination of variables in order to achieve public accountability” are needed to be able to strengthen public accountability. The Local Government Project (2008) concurred with Krishnan (2008) that good governance at local level resides in the question of local government responsiveness and accountability, hence the role that the municipal leadership and in particular the councillors play in promoting accountability.

2.6 KEY GOVERNANCE ATTRIBUTES FOR ASSESSING EFFECT OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

This section has two objectives: (i) to outline the key public accountability attributes (Section 2.5.1); and (ii) to discuss the effect of M&E influences on public accountability attributes (Section 2.5.2).

2.6.1 Public accountability attributes

Public accountability is the obligation of the elected representatives to explain publicly, fully and fairly how they carry out responsibilities the citizens entrusted to them. The accountability that the citizens entrust to the local government should be embraced through participation and consultation which is operationalised through public meetings, and participation in the municipal council decisions by citizens. Second, public accountability should encompass transparency, which is operationalised through the availability of, and access to, reliable information. Lastly, the provision of basic services which are operationalised by entering into a

service contract, have procedures to register complaints from citizens and mechanisms to respond to these complaints. The study interrogates three attributes essential to public accountability, namely public participation and consultation, transparency, and service delivery mechanisms.

2.6.1.1 Public participation and consultation

Central to developmental local governance is public participation. Ackerman (2004:448) argues that “the opening up of the core activities of the state to societal participation is one of the most effective ways to improve accountability and governance”. Hicks (2006) maintains that “public participation is a constitutional matter, going beyond granting the right to vote”. In line with the Constitution of South Africa (Act No. 108 of 1996) local government leadership should encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations to participate in matters of local government to strengthen a democratic and accountable local government.

Despite the progressive legislative frameworks that the country has to strengthen democracy and accountable local government, Friedman (2004) believes that it has only freed the country from racial minority rule, but has not offered citizens a platform and effective channels for participation in government decision-making processes. Nyalunga (2006) suggests that not all local government stakeholders participate and are involved in or represented in community structures as per the requirements of the Municipal Structures Act. Nyalumba (2006) further argues that while there are advanced and progressive systems of community participation in local government, the model of community participation is not working well. This was seen as the local government sector continues to experience community protests. It is an indication that the current public participation system has not brought good results hence there is the need to revisit it.

The study therefore examines the perceptions of the councillors on public participation and the extent to which M&E mechanisms are being used.

2.6.1.2 Transparency and disclosure

Transparency has been defined differently by experts like Vishwanath and Kaufman (1999:1) who asserts that transparency is “the increased flow of timely and reliable economic, social, and political information”. Martin and Feldman (1998:1) alludes to the fact that defined in this way the main attribute of transparency is access to information in which the citizens “obtain information in the possession of the state”. Cloete (2007) suggests that transparency is closely linked to the ability of all citizens to access the information relatively easily. What is common in the description of transparency is that transparency is linked to good governance principles. For purposes of this study, transparency refers to the provision of accessible and timely information to citizens. The availability of information allows citizens to monitor service provision through interrogation of financial statements and thus hold the councillors and the municipality accountable for its commitments, actions, and decisions (Lloyd et al., 2007).

Cloete (2007:193) observes that transparency is closely linked to accountability within democratic societies. Goetz and Gaventa (2001) cited in Devas and Grant (2003) argues that the lack of transparency in budgetary processes fails to provide the citizens with a platform to interrogate the finances and the spending records, thus counteracting the principles of democratic societies. Onzima (2013:34) acknowledges that lack of transparency is a common occurrence in most of the local governments. South Africa is no exception, and the question that is often asked is the extent to which local government communication is transparent and whether access to information is considered a privilege.

Hollye et al (2013) suggests that transparency varies with the degree to which this information is publicly available. Furthermore, Hollye et al (2013) asserts that public information must be available to all citizens. Therefore, transparency is the act of good governance in which those who are elected to rule are required to be answerable or accountable to both the legislature and the general public on how they govern and spend public finances.

Along similar lines, Pollitt (2005:207) argues that despite the fact that transparency and freedom of information are essential prerequisites for encouraging accountability, it cannot be used as a synonym for accountability. In instances where information is not readily available, transparency is said to be “mere mantras chanted but given no substance” (Craythorne, 1997:198). Transparency should involve ready access to reliable, comprehensive, timely, understandable and internationally comparable information on government activities and is necessary for sound government and good governance (Viswanath and Kaufman, 1991:1).

Similarly, Pollitt (2005:207) notes that in the whole picture of public accountability, transparency only offers the element of openness in disclosure of information. Monitoring and evaluation thus provides a platform in which accurate and reliable data could be collected, shared analysed and presented to the communities as part of accountability processes that enhance good governance. Along similar lines Blair (2000:32) argues that while different mechanisms of accountability exist, the public all tend to rely on availability and government openness, levels of disclosure and transparency. Therefore, one can argue that transparency goes beyond merely availability of information but information should be delivered and presented in the format that the communities understand and are able to comprehend.

The study therefore examines the extent to which councillors make reliable information on project progress and finances accessible to the public. It further interrogates the mechanisms used in local government to instill transparency as a key principle of public accountability.

2.6.1.3 Service delivery enhancement tools and complaints management mechanisms

The literature explains a number of service delivery enhancement tools or mechanisms that are useful for promoting public accountability. For the purposes of the study, the following mechanisms were interrogated.

Service charter is said to be a contractual agreement to enforce public accountability (Foster, 2000). Similarly, Kloot and Martin (2001) argues that there are social contracts that are important for accountability and which go beyond the legalistic approach. However, for the purposes of this study a written social contract referred to as a service charter was interrogated.

The service charter provides a contractual agreement on the standard timeframes for the delivery of services by the municipality. Delivery of basic services is the core function of local government. Craythorne (2006:159) describes service delivery within municipalities as the provision of basic services within a municipal jurisdiction in terms of its powers and mechanisms. Neale (2007:148) notes that basic municipal services are necessary to “ensure that an acceptable and reasonable quality of life which, if not provided, would endanger public health or safety of the environment”. The Municipal Systems Act (2000) stipulates the services as including but not limited to, water provision, sewerage sanitation and electricity that municipalities should provide to the communities. Therefore, constitutional provisions place an obligation on the local government sphere to provide basic services to the communities, and the

service agreement should be entered into between the community and the municipality. Respective wards have different service needs, hence the quality, quantity and timeframes should be stipulated in the service agreement and service charter.

The complaints management system is of importance in ensuring that communities' voices are heard. It is the platform which communities use to register their disapproval or approval of service delivery issues. Cloete (2008:100) argues that the delivery of services within municipalities is characterised by a number of challenges. The challenges are said to be related to effective and sustainable provision of basic services, administrative capacity and institutional performance to drive service delivery and effective implementation of government policies and programmes (Koma, 2010:10). The same sentiments are shared by Netswera and Phago (2009:132) in that "municipalities are confronted with challenges in implementing their strategic plans in the form of the integrated development planning, of the changes in basic service delivery to benefit the poor majority". Gaffoor and Cloete (2010:1) and Netswera and Phago (2009:132) note that the services delivery challenges have resulted in dissatisfaction within communities that are largely demonstrated through service delivery protests. It is therefore important that a platform for communication is provided to citizens to explain the extent to which service delivery challenges affect them.

Mechanisms to report and communicate service delivery issues appear to be lacking within local government. A platform for communities to lodge complaints and dissatisfaction is missing in many municipalities, hence the communities consider service delivery protest as a mechanism to communicate their level of dissatisfaction. The study moves from the premise that a number of service delivery protests are as the result of the dissatisfaction and frustration that the citizens have towards the level of accountability of local government. The study supports the notion that

complaints and response mechanisms are the last accountability resort to minimise service delivery protests (Lloyd, et al, 2007) and it is thus important to understand whether municipalities have complaints management mechanisms in place.

Houston et al (2001:206) suggests that local government legislation like the Municipal Structures Act (Act No. 117 of 1998) makes provision for local authorities to establish a system of participatory democracy at the local level in the form of ward committees. At the centre of the debate was the question of how effective the current public participation structures are. Nyalumba (2006) states that ward committees are largely perceived as being “ineffective in advancing citizen participation at the local government level”.

2.6.1.4 The effect of Monitoring and Evaluation on public accountability attributes

There is some consensus in the literature that M&E is important for societal transformation which comes about when there is greater transparency and accountability of its operations (Naidoo, 2011). Hence, M&E has been said to supports the deepening of democracy. (DPME:2014), though there are several challenges in the implementation of M&E, particularly within the local government sector.

In considering that M&E should assume a particular approach within developmental South African local government, the type of M&E performed becomes important. Naidoo (2011) notes that the type of M&E should promote transparent and improved citizen participation. In practice this means that citizens should be offered an opportunity to participate and processes should be transparent. It is in this regard that the DPME (2014) and Dawson, (2014) have introduced and promoted the concept of citizen-based monitoring. Public participation can be achieved using Citizen

Based Monitoring (CBM) as explained by Dawson (2014), because the CBM approach not only aims to monitor government performance, it mainly focuses on the experiences of ordinary citizens in order to strengthen public accountability and drive service delivery improvement. Dawson (2014) further suggests that citizen based monitoring places the citizen at the centre of the monitoring process, including deciding what is monitored, how the monitoring takes place, and what recourse is required. The DPME (2014) acknowledges that methods that have emerged from civil society-led initiatives draw on a rich tradition of participatory methodologies. CBM is considered appropriate as an approach to strengthen public accountability within local government. Monitoring and evaluation therefore plays a critical role in ensuring that citizens have a voice in the local government planning and implementation processes.

2.7 ESTABLISHED FRAMEWORKS FOR EMPIRICAL FINDINGS ON THE EFFECT OF M&E

The literature has highlighted different theories that could interpret the effects of monitoring and evaluation on public accountability. Among those theories is the Theory of Change which supports good governance, the New Public Management Theory which also focuses on efficiency within good governance, the Public Participation Theory, the Governance theory and the Principal-Agent Theory which elaborates on the relationship that should exist to enhance good governance principles and accountability. Having reviewed all the theories, the study has considered New Public Management Theory and Principal-Agent Theory as most appropriate, taking into consideration the study objectives. The section below explains New Public Management Theory and the Principal-Agent Model.

2.7.1 New Public Management (NPM) Theory

The theoretical origins of New Public Management (NPM) can be traced to a variety of theoretical perspectives. Gruening (2001) and Aucoin (1990)

believe that NPM originated in public-choice theory and management theories. Promberger et al (2003) believes that Niskanen's (1971) theory of bureaucracy was the most influential landmark in the development of New Public Management theory and principles. There are other theories that are also influential in the conceptualisation of the NPM. While the theoretical origin is not entirely clear, the NPM movement that began in the late 1970s and early 1980s in the United Kingdom gained momentum.

It was believed that NPM was a body of managerial ideological thought based on ideas generated in the private sector and imported into the public sector. Hope (2001:120) suggests that the NPM relates to the notion of re-engineering the public sector or the reinventing of government management philosophy that seeks to increase efficiency, effectiveness and competitive ability. Omoyefa (2008:18) states that the objectives of public sector reform were therefore "to achieve better delivery of the basic public services that affect living standards of the poor". Concisely, the NPM theory originates from the fusion of economic theories and private sector management techniques that aim to improve effectiveness and efficiency in public sector service delivery.

The New Public Management was criticised as it is not new ideology. Some scholars have argued that NPM provides a new solution for administrative problems and improves the market based and supervisory approach. It was noted that New Public Management is focused on running government in a business manner. Reider and Lehman (2002:31) suggests that NMP "leads to an increase in the direct information flow from agencies to parliament". Therefore, it is suggested that through the implementation of NMP the level of accountability between structures will improve.

NMP suitability for the public sector was questionable (Hughes, 1998). The NPM eliminates values such as fairness, equality, honesty and being

impartial which are deemed critical within the public sector as noted by Denhardt (2000). The disadvantage of NPM emanates from the approach of running the government like a business, requiring the government to focus too much on “the numbers” instead of the community benefits that entrench fairness, equity and impartiality (Denhardt, 2000).

2.7.1.1 Accountability principles within New Public Management

New Public Management is based on a series of principles, and accountability is among the principles. While the accountability principle can be traced back to classical thinkers (Gulick, 1937; Urwick, 1937; Mooney, 1937; Graicunas, 1937), it also resides within NPM. Gruening (2001:16) notes that accountability reappeared in neoclassical public administration, in policy analysis, and in rational public-management circles. Public choice scholars like Tullock (1965) have recommended accountability principles albeit with reservations.

Behmaesh (2012:47) observes that the new public management approach has two types of accountability principles that may be considered; accountability to politicians and accountability to customers. Käyhkö (2011) believes that the NPM which brought about the paradigm shift in public management has led, among other things, to empowerment of the citizen as a customer. Hence, the concept of public accountability gained popularity as it is aligned to the new thinking within public management, placing more emphasis on participatory citizenry. Smyth (2011) agrees that the introduction of New Public Management (NPM) techniques and models have a significant impact on accountability in the public sector. Therefore, to some extent the NPM theory impacts on fulfilling different aspects of accountability in the public sector (Behmanesh, et al., 2012). The paradigm shift had to be implemented in government allowing an approach where politicians and civil servants are liable and accountable to elected authorities as well as citizens. The approach focuses on efficiency

where accountability for outputs is specified clearly by targets, success indicators and criteria for performance measurement to be accountable to people.

Likewise, Bovens (2006) argues that accountability is not a process in a democratic system but a goal of democracy whereby the elections process becomes the tool to instil accountability in which those elected have to account to the citizens. Accountability practices are a prerequisite for democracy to prevail. The accountability relations proclaimed in the NPM theory are emphasised through the application of the Principal Agent Model.

2.7.2 The Principal-Agent Model

The Principal-Agent model originates from disciplines such as law, finance, accounting and economics. It relates to the relationship that exists between the bureaucracy and the elected officials (Mitnick, 1973; 1975; 1980; Moe, 1982; Waterman & Meier, 1998). Onzima (2013:30) observes that the principal agency model has two major assumptions: first, that there is a conflict of goals between the principal and the agent, which assumption is based on the premise that principals and agents each have competing interests; and second, that an agent is privileged to have more information than their principals, which results in unevenness of information between them (Onzima, 2013). The implication of the second assumption is that agents will always try to exploit the information to their advantage to satisfy their own self-seeking behaviours (Howlwett, Ramesh and Perl, 2009:167). The assumptions suggest that there may be accountability frameworks, agents will take advantage and hide information and use it for their personal benefit, leaving the principal less informed, which may result in frustration.

The Principal-Agent Model is without limitations. Howlwett et al (2009) and Bernstein (1995) emphasise that the model has a limitation as there is

a tendency for the agent to identify more with the needs of those who are regulated than with the interests of the principals. In principle, the agent tends to place more emphasis on accounting to the government structures than to the principal (citizens). This poses the question of the role that public accountability plays.

Through the principal agency model lens, this study interrogates the different mechanisms that the councillors (agents) use to instil accountability and fulfil accountability responsibility to the principal (citizens). The model is further used to analyse how the relationship between the principal (citizens) and agent is perceived within local government.

2.7.3 Applying New Public Management Theory and Principal-Agent Model in local government in Africa

The New Public Management Theory is grounded in the concepts of citizenship and the public interest. The NPM places citizens rather than government at the centre of its frame of reference. The NPM places more emphasis on the efficiency of the use of public resources by the elected ward councillor. Within the agency theory, ward councillors act as agents with the responsibility to oversee and monitor progress made and thus are required to account to the principal (citizens). The success of public accountability is thus dependent to a large extent on set objectives and service standards detailed in the IDP. M&E tools are therefore used to collect data that feeds into the planning process to determine the objectives; to collate community inputs (survey) and register complaints. Through public meetings, the progress made is communicated as part of public accountability by the ward councillor to the community.

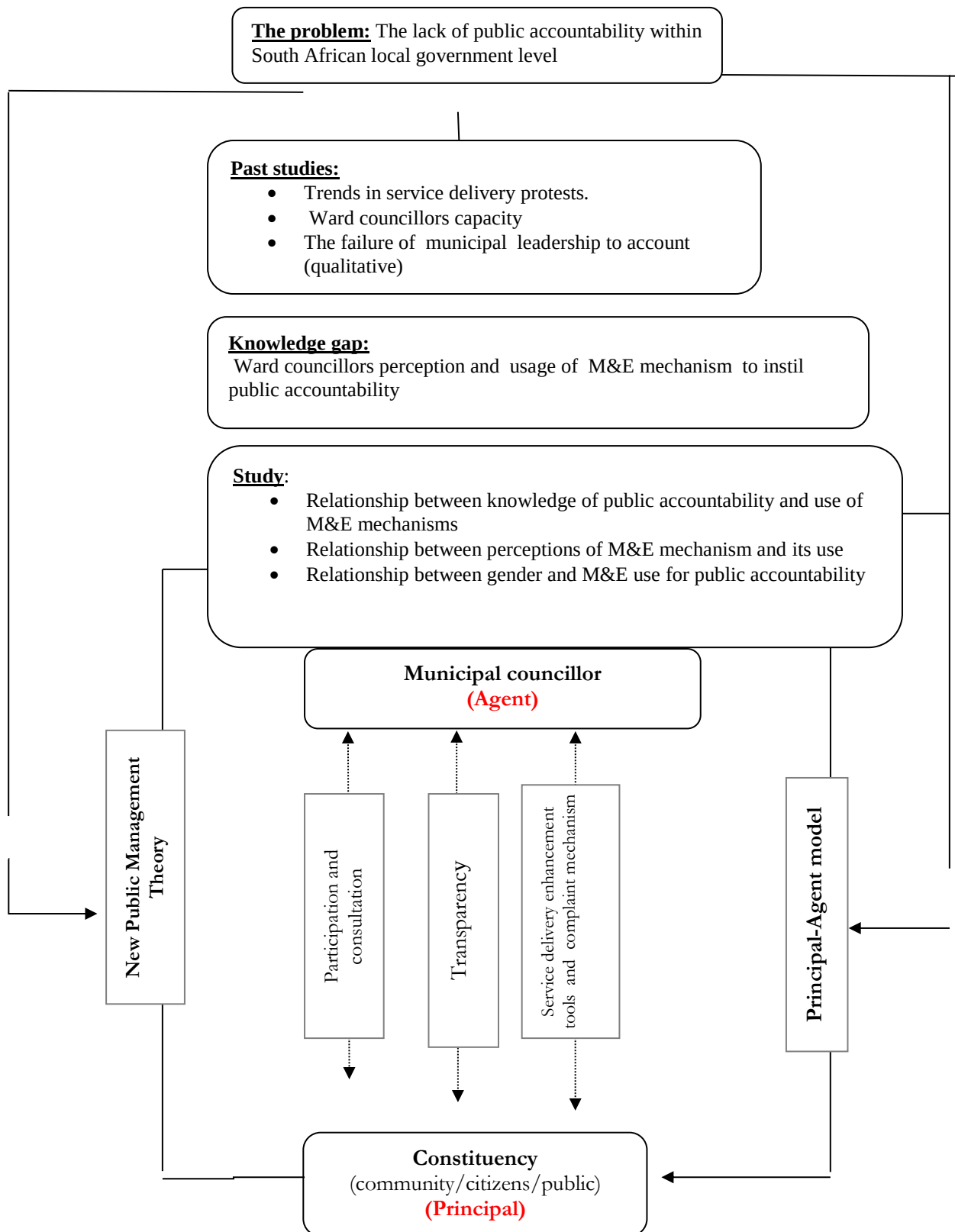
Applying the NPM principle of accountability, the citizens who are the principal are expected to hold their leaders (appointed and elected bureaucratic and political leaders) to account. Therefore, the NPM theory

and the Principal-Agent Model were used to analyse accountability relations within local governments and the extent to which public accountability mechanisms are practices to instil and promote public accountability within local government.

2.8 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 2 below provides a picture of a conceptual framework that the study used to better understand how M&E mechanisms are understood, perceived and used in instilling public accountability at local government level.

Figure 2: Conceptual framework



The local government elections of 2000 and 2006 marked the beginning of a new local government system that resulted in increased access to basic services to communities who previously did not have these. However, in less than a year from 2006, the local government system started to experience challenges and thus show signs of distress. To certain extent, the challenges are attributed to the lack of public accountability.

In the context of South African local government, lack of public accountability is thus central to service delivery protests. Public accountability entails the responsibility of local councillors to keep the communities informed on the progress on delivery of services as contained in the Municipal Integrated Development Plans (IDPs). Therefore, one can conclude that the communities expect the elected leaders to deliver according to the agreed standards and targets and to report on the progress, successes and challenges experienced. The culture of unaccountability, ineffectiveness and inefficiency in South African local governance raises concerns. Therefore, service delivery protests largely experienced within the South Africa local government are because of inadequate public accountability mechanisms and practices in local government.

The literature has highlighted the extent of the problem, citing relationship between variables. Yilmaz, Beris and Serrano-Berthet (2008:1) confirms that lack of government accountability compromises service delivery. In essence, many service protests in South Africa are as the result of lack of accountability from the municipalities. Kluvers and Tippet (2010) indicates that councillors and managers understand the fundamental importance of information for accountability purposes. However, Funnel (2003) challenges Kluvers and Tippet that the availability of information does not guarantee accountability.

The literature further notes that the absence of the M&E system within municipalities has resulted in municipality failure to report on progress on their developmental plans (Maphunye, 2013:15). Kukumba and Fourie (2007:661) and Mathenjwa (2006) allude to the fact that the lack of monitoring local government contributes to the challenges local government faces. In line with that, Mettle (2009) observes that the current system of municipal monitoring by a province is fragmented. Mettle (2000:8) further highlights that the problem was that monitoring mechanisms did not comply with the principles of good governance as set out in Section 139 of the Constitution.

The literature provides valuable insights but lacks a deeper understanding of the extent to which the ward councillors perceive and practice monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to instil public accountability. To understand the extent of the problem, one must first establish how the M&E roles are perceived and practiced.

To better understand the councillor's perceptions and experiences on the use of M&E mechanisms, the study focused on the following mechanisms as being central to the process of instilling public accountability within the South African local government context.

Table 1: Study focus areas and M&E mechanisms

Study focus areas	M&E mechanisms
Participation and consultation	Participation tools (Public Meetings/ Public Hearings/ Community Radio/ Public Noticeboards Public participation structures (Ward committee /IDP)
Transparency	General information accessibility (noticeboards/websites) Financial information accessibility (public hearings/noticeboards)
Service delivery enhancement tools and complaint management system	Community Surveys Service Charter Complaint/grievance feedback system

New Public Management theory has embraced the notion that the elected representatives should account to the citizens. NPM biasness towards efficiency and measurement provides an opportunity for M&E mechanisms to be introduced to enhance accountability within the public sector. However, the absence of the M&E system within municipalities has resulted in municipalities failing to report on progress on their developmental plans which compromises the good governance principle of accountability. The Principal-Agent Model was used to analyse the perceived and practiced relationships that exist between municipal councillors (agent) and their constituencies (principal). Through the Principal-Agent model lens this study interrogated different mechanisms used by councillors (agent) to instil accountability and fulfil accountability responsibility to the communities (principal). The model is further used to analyse how the relationship is perceived within local government.

A Principal-Agent model was therefore used to analyse and discuss accountability relations within local government and the extent to which public accountability mechanisms are practices to instil and promote public accountability within local government. The extent to which the local government adheres to principles of democracy, in particular the accountability principles as embedded in the New Public Management Theory, was discussed. Applying the New Public Management Theory, the study thus interrogated how key attributes of public accountability, namely public participation and consultation, transparency, and service delivery mechanisms were perceived and used to instill public accountability. The study presented the findings in relation to how participation and consultation through public meetings was carried out; how transparency was carried out through the availability of and access to reliable information; and the extent to which the municipality entered into a service contract, registered complaints from citizens and responded to the complaints.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH STRATEGY, DESIGN, PROCEDURE AND METHODS

This chapter discusses research strategy, design, procedure and methods and shares reliability and validity measures as well as limitations of the research process applied. Through Section 3.1 research strategy is defined and presented and communicates the identified and used research strategy in the study. In section 3.2 a research design is defined and presented. In section 3.3 research procedure and methods are presented. Data collection instrument and sampling framework is explained. Section 3.4 covers research reliability and validity measures while Section 3.5 explains research limitations.

3.1 RESEARCH STRATEGY

From the literature research strategy is described by many researchers. Bryman (2012) refers to the research strategy as the general orientation to conduct social research. Saunders et al. (2012) asserts that research strategy refers to the methodology of how research could be undertaken. Remenyi et al (2003) notes that research strategy provides direction and process by which the research is conducted. Therefore, one can argue that research strategy is the plan of how research would be conducted. In agreement with many researchers, Neumann (2011) argues that research strategy resides within qualitative and quantitative main research methods. It is important to note that there are three main research strategies: qualitative, quantitative and the mixed methods strategy noted by Bryman (2012:715) and Wagner et al (2012).

A quantitative research strategy was used as it relies on positivism principles and helps to analyse causal relationships between variables (Neuman, 2011). Wagner et al (2012) defines quantitative approach as a descriptive of social phenomenon by numbers and statistical processes. Maree and Pietersen (2007:145) describes quantitative research strategy as a process that is systematic and objective using numerical data from only a selected subgroup or subgroups of a universe to generalise the findings to the universe that is being studied. Therefore, one can argue that quantitative research strategy places more emphasis on quantification, allowing relationships between variables to be measured.

Many studies have used the quantitative research strategy. Tippet and Kluvers (2010) uses a quantitative research strategy in his study on accountability and information in local government and a survey questionnaire for data collection. Similarly, Ntlemeza (2007) has used a quantitative research strategy in his study investigating challenges faced by ward committees in the Eastern Cape. The quantitative research method was chosen against many other strategies because it was believed to be the most appropriate method of measuring the properties of phenomena (e.g. the attitudes of individuals towards certain topics) (Ntlemeza, 2007:16) and the use of a questionnaire as the main techniques employed to collect data. Mfene (2014) uses quantitative research strategy to make predictions about the leadership role of ward councillors with the intention of developing a model of a good leader. Questionnaires were administered to the ward councillors to obtain their views pertaining to their leadership roles. A questionnaire was used as it covers a large sample within a short space of time (Mfene, 2014).

In line with the study objectives, quantitative research strategy was the preferred strategy. The quantitative research strategy allowed for public accountability concepts to be reduced to three measurable variables (knowledge, perceptions and use of M&E). The quantitative research

strategy further helped to analyse causal relationships between study variables.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

While the research design has been described by many scholars in the literature, Bryman (2012:46) describes research design as “a structure that guides the execution of a research method and the analysis of the subsequent data”. Wagner et al (2012) suggests that a research design is a plan of action that the research study follows. Babbie (2012) points out that a research design involves steps to be followed to conduct research. This report acknowledges that research design is a framework for the collection and analysis of data. Collectively with other scholars, Bryman (2012) asserts that there are five research designs, namely experimental cross-sectional survey; longitudinal survey; case study; and comparative research design. Therefore, research design is a way that a researcher collects data.

A cross-sectional survey design was used in the execution of the study. McMillan and Schumacher (2001) points out that cross-sectional survey data describes and explains the status of phenomena, tracks changes and draws conclusions. In agreement with many researchers, Babbie (2001:201) describes cross-sectional survey as it involves phenomena that are made at one point in time. Likewise, Bryman (2012) mentions that a cross-sectional research design entails the collection of data at a single point in time in order to collect data in connection with two or more variables. Briefly, a cross-sectional survey is a snapshot of the population about which they gather data allowing conclusions about phenomena across a wide population to be drawn.

To the best knowledge of the researcher, there are no studies that used cross-sectional survey to understand how M&E was understood, perceived

and used to instil accountability at local government level. However, other studies have analysed different aspects of governance and accountability using cross-sectional surveys. Mfene (2014) uses a cross-sectional survey in her study on leadership and accountability. Using a quantitative strategy, Punyaratabandhu (2007) uses a cross-sectional survey among 3,600 respondents. Likewise, Afesis-corplan (2008) uses cross-sectional survey to interrogate key elements of governance, namely decision-making within local government, public participation and consultation, transparency, disclosure, corruption, service delivery and systems and structures.

It was necessary to understand how ward councillors perceived and have used M&E mechanisms to instil public accountability, hence a cross-sectional survey was the preferred research design. Using a cross-sectional design provided the snapshot of the ward councillors' perception and use of M&E mechanisms for public accountability.

3.3 RESEARCH PROCEDURE AND METHODS

This section focuses on research procedure and methods of the study. It covers data collection instrument, the population, selection of the samples, development and validation of the tools, their administration and statistical techniques used for data analysis.

3.3.1 Data collection instrument

There is a consensus in the literature on what is described as data collection instruments. Collectively with other scholars, Bryman (2012) defines a data collection instrument as the tool used in the process of gathering information on variables to answer stated research questions and/or test the hypotheses. Maree (2007) and Babbie (2012) have acknowledged that a data collection instrument largely depends on the research method used. Hence, this report acknowledges that there are

two main types of data collection instruments, namely observation schedule and interview schedule.

A structured interview scheduled in the form of a questionnaire was used. Many scholars, including Bryman (2012) and Wagner et al (2012) have agreed that a questionnaire is a structured research instrument with questions and/or statements that are used to collect data from respondents. Babbie (2012) and Maree (2007) further specify that a questionnaire is mainly associated with quantitative research allowing easy coding and usefulness to prove the statistical significance. In advancing the discussion, Bryman (2012) mentions that a questionnaire produces homogeneous responses from respondents and thus increases the probability that a unitary attitude is measured. Maree (2007) emphasises that a questionnaire enhances the data validity and data reliability. Therefore close-ended statements were developed allowing for homogeneous responses.

According to Saunders et al. (2012), there are many approaches to delivering and collecting the questionnaire, for example internet based questionnaire, postal questionnaire, telephone questionnaire, and delivery and collection questionnaire. For this study, data was collected using an internet based questionnaire survey form. Looking at the benefits of the questionnaire, Fox and Bayat (2007:88) suggests that a questionnaire is cost-effective, less intrusive and reduces bias. A questionnaire was chosen because it covers a large sample within a short space of time. The questionnaire was administered to the ward councillors to obtain their views pertaining to mechanisms to instil public accountability. Through the use of Google Drive, a linked questionnaire was distributed through emails to municipal councillors registered in the Department of Cooperative Governance database.

The questionnaire was designed around a range of formulated statements as a means to explore respondents' perceptions of M&E mechanisms and practices to instil accountability at local government level. A 5-point rating scale of the structured statements was used. Data was collected using a 5-point scale as follows:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
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Looking at who has used the scaled questionnaire, the literature confirms that many studies have used a questionnaire to collect data. Afesis-corplan (2008) has used a questionnaire to collect data on the key elements of governance, namely decision-making within local government, public participation and consultation, transparency, disclosure, corruption, service delivery, and systems and structures. The questionnaire had a combination of closed ended questions and the use of the five-scale statements. Mfene (2014) has used a 4-scale questionnaire survey for ward councillors that indicated that they are comfortable with their ability to account to the members of the public and to monitor implementation of municipal decisions and policies. Likewise, Punyaratabandhu (2007) surveyed 3,600 respondents and a questionnaire was used.

There is an agreement on how the statements in the questionnaire are formulated. Saunders et al. (2012) mentions that the design of each individual question or statement in the questionnaire is driven by the data to be collected for the purpose of fulfilment of the research objectives. Bourque and Clark (1994) notes that there are three approaches that could be followed when designing individual questions or statements: adopt questions/statements used in other questionnaires; adapt questions used in other questionnaires; or develop their own questions.

The questions/statements in the research study were adapted. The questions and statements in the questionnaire were originally developed by Afesis-corplan (2008) as part of the good governance survey. For the purpose of this research study, questions and statements were adapted and reworked to suit the research questions. A copy of the questionnaire is attached as Appendix B. The questionnaire used is subdivided into 4 sections as follows:

Section A: Biographic information;

Section B: Knowledge of public accountability;

Section C: Perception of M&E mechanisms;

Section D: Experiences on the use of M&E mechanisms.

In summary, the structured interview guide in the form of an online self-administered questionnaire was ideal and used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire was used as it produced homogeneous responses from respondents and thus increased the probability and enhanced the data validity and data reliability. Using the questionnaire was time- and cost-effective. A structured interview schedule provided the opportunity for the researcher to collect data within a short space of time.

3.3.2 Target population and sampling

The target population as a research concept has long been defined and described by scholars. Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006:98) describes target population as the set of objects or people the research focuses on and about which the researcher wants to determine some characteristics. Similarly, Bryman (2012) agrees that target population is the group of people whom the researcher wants to study. Polit and Beck (2004:290) states that the target population is the aggregate of cases about which the researcher would like to make generalisations. Therefore this report aligns itself with the description that the target population is a universe of units from which a sample was to be selected.

The study target population was the municipal ward councillors and municipal councillors. During the fourth local government period, there were 278 municipalities in South Africa, comprising eight metropolitan, 44 district and 226 local municipalities. As of the election of 2011, there were 4,277 wards in South Africa. Therefore, all ward councillors within the designated municipal wards formed part of the target population.

In tracing who has used ward councillors as target population in the study, it was found that Mfene (2014) in her study on leadership and accountability has targeted ward councillors of Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality. Ward councillors were among the targeted group in a study on accountability and information in local government conducted by Tippet and Kluvers (2010). Similarly, Afesis-corplan (2008) conducted a good governance survey among the target population of ward councillors.

From the population a representative sample was identified. Bryman (2012) notes that the sample is the subset of the subjects representing the population. Therefore, the sample should have all the characteristics of the population to be representative. According to Bryman (2012:186), the process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the entire population is known as sampling. There are two types of sampling methods, namely non-probability sampling and probability sampling. Non-probability sampling implies that none of the population subject has a chance of being selected and can be carried out in different forms: convenience, quota and purposive sampling. Probability sampling implies that each subject within the population has an equal chance of being chosen (Bryman, 2012: 201).

Using a non-probability convenience sampling method, 201 respondents were drawn from a database of ward councillors in the nine provinces. Based on their availability and willingness to participate in the research study, respondents were drawn.

While non-probability convenience sampling has disadvantages, respondents who genuinely had interest and willingness to share their perceptions and experiences for the benefit of the improvement of the local government sector voluntarily gave valuable inputs and participated. Ward councillors were identified as a target population as they are at the forefront of local government, and they provide the link between the communities and municipalities and as they are entrusted with public funds they have the responsibility to account to their constituencies. Therefore, ward councillors were better positioned and gave valuable insights into public accountability and how M&E mechanisms have been used to instill public accountability within the local government sector.

3.3.3 Ethical considerations

Social science researchers agree that ethics in research sets boundaries on what can or cannot be done. Flick (2011), Babbie (2012) and Bryman (2012) have shared an important premise that ethical considerations in research are the process and considerations that the researcher applied to ensure that the respondent's consent is obtained, the respondent is protected from any harm, and respondent privacy is maintained while conducting the study. Ethical considerations are based on principles among which voluntary participation, informed consent, free from risk of harm, confidentiality and anonymity should be adhered to by the researcher to safeguard the interests of the participants or respondents.

At the time of conducting this study, the researcher was employed by the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Appendix A); her position was not used to deceive the respondents. Through the introductory letter, respondents were informed that participation in the study is voluntary. Procedures to be followed were explained and informed consent from respondents was obtained.

Anonymity is of significant importance in any research study. Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:100) argues that while anonymity can be maintained, respondents must also be assured of confidentiality. Similarly, Bryman (2012) notes that privacy should be maintained as an ethical consideration for any research study. An introductory letter (part of the questionnaire in Appendix B) requested respondents to be part of the study, and guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality. Respondents were informed that their participation is voluntary and that anonymity as well as privacy would be protected. Respondents were not required to provide identification information as a measure to ensure privacy, confidentiality and anonymity.

The ethical declaration form of the University of the Witwatersrand was completed as an assurance that at no point during the research study would the respondents be exposed to any harm or stress during their participation,

3.3.4 Data collection process and storage

Data collecting process is among the key stages in research. Many scholars including Flick (2011), Babbie (2012) and Bryman (2012) agree that data collection process is a systematic process of gathering and analysing information on targeted variables. The method used for data collection largely depends on the research strategy applied (Bryman, 2012). There are four main modes of data collection: participant observation, interviews (face-to-face, telephone or internet-based), focus group discussion, and documents.

Internet-based interview was the most preferred mode of data collection for the study and was used. According to Saunders et al. (2012), there are different approaches of delivering and collecting the questionnaire that includes internet-based questionnaire, postal questionnaire, telephone questionnaire, and delivery and collection questionnaire. For this study

data was collected using an internet-based questionnaire survey form. Fox and Bayat (2007:88) notes that a questionnaire is cost effective, less intrusive and reduces bias. An internet data collection process was chosen because it covers a large sample within a short space of time. A questionnaire was administered to the ward councillors to obtain their views pertaining to mechanisms to instil public accountability. Through the use of Google Drive, a linked questionnaire was distributed through emails to municipal councillors registered in the Department of Cooperative Governance database.

Data storage forms the key part of data management. The importance of a data management plan is emphasised by many researchers including Bryman (2012) and Bless and Higson-Smith (2000). The emphasis is mainly on data security to ensure that ethical considerations are met at all times. An Excel spreadsheet consisting of dataset reference/data item and name was used to store the data in the hard drive and back-up on a flash drive. Data items were generated as data items are critical in data storage as this assists in identifying specific sub-components of a data record (Glossary of Statistical Terms, 2006).

3.3.5 Data processing and analysis

Many researchers including Burns and Burns (2008) and Saunders et al. (2012) have shared the view that the usefulness of the collated raw quantitative data appears only after data is processed, analysed and converted to information. Likewise, Saunders et al. (2012) notes that data processing rests on the assumption that data processing involves a series of actions performed on data to verify, organize, transform, integrate, and extract data in an appropriate output form for subsequent use. From the literature, one can deduce that data processing involves actions and methods performed on data that help describe facts, detect patterns, develop explanations and test hypotheses. This includes data quality assurance, statistical data analysis, and interpretation of analysis results.

Burns and Burns (2008) and Saunders et al. (2012) share the view that in quantitative research data coding is a process of converting raw data into codes that act as tags placed on data about people or other units of analysis. Saunders et al. (2012) notes that the aim of data coding is to assign the data relating to each variable to groups, each of which is considered to be a category of the variable in question. Numbers are then assigned to each category to allow the information to be processed by the computer (Salkind, 2010). The researcher deemed it necessary to prepare a codebook with data name, description of data item and coding. This helped in ensuring that data was coded according to respective code and relating to the data item. All responses were recorded in the generated data entry response worksheet. The responses were coded, as follows: (Appendix C)

- (a) Zero (0) and (1) for all binary responses categories.
 - (b) Numbers to represent the responses from Likert scale categories
- | | | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| Strongly | Disagree (2) | Neutral (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly |
| Disagree(1) | | | | agree (5) |

Measures to ensure that data was cleaned included automatic formatting of each statement within the questionnaire. The statements were locked allowing specific units to be entered and the further the questionnaire was locked to allow submission after fully completing all statements. In the event where there were statements missed or skipped, at the end of the questionnaire those statements were highlighted allowing the respondents an opportunity to complete them.

Many scholars including Bryman (2012) and Salkin (2010) share the view that data analysis constitutes a technique that converts data into numerical forms, so that it could be subjected to statistical analysis, on the basis that for quantitative research, the purpose of analysing the collected data is to test the hypotheses in order to answer the research questions. Therefore

one can deduce that data processing is the scientific process to convert raw data into knowledge.

Accordingly, SPSS and Excel statistical analysis toolpac tool was used to process and analyse data and to generate the tables and frequencies and allow data to be quantified in terms of comparing cohorts. The method of data analysis used in this study included the following:

(i) Descriptive statistics

Like many other scholars, Bryman (2012) agrees that descriptive statistics helps to describe the basic features of the data in a study. Descriptive statistics provides an analysis of the responses for quantitative data. To measure the spread of scores the Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) for each variable was populated.

Testing the hypotheses is important for quantitative research. Salkind (2010) claims that to test the hypotheses different methods can be applied. This can include t-test, Pearson corrections, F-test and other tests. The study used the following methods to test the hypotheses.

i. Regression analysis

The regression analysis describes the relationship between more than two variables. Regression analysis technique was also used to establish a correlation between knowledge public accountability and the usage of M&E mechanisms for public accountability.

The population regression model used : $y = \beta_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + u$

ii. Pearson correlation was conducted to test the hypotheses that knowledge of public accountability results to an increased usage of M&E mechanisms.

iii. T-test was computed to determine the significant between mean of males and females use of M&E mechanism.

3.3.6 Description of the respondents

As of the local government election of 2011, each designated local ward had to have a ward councillor, but not all wards have councillors. The study respondents were drawn from the population (ward councillors) that were active as the time of data collection. All ward councillors (100%) had access to e-mails and computers and other internet devices and were able to complete the questionnaires online.

3.3.6.1 Frequency by gender

Gender of the respondents was of importance as the literature acknowledges that female ward councillors are in a better position to interact with the communities as they understand social issues from the perspective of being home carers and better able to relate to poverty and development issues as mostly likely to affect women.

Table 2: Frequency by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Males	112	56	56
Females	89	44	100
Total	201	100	

Table 2 shows a frequency analysis by gender of the respondents, where males (0) and females (1). The table shows that the majority of respondents were males (56%) with females comprising 44%.

3.3.6.2 Frequency by age

Age of the respondents is one of the most important characteristics in understanding their perceptions about particular problems. Hence, age

indicates level of maturity of individuals and in that sense age becomes more important to examine the response.

Table 3: Frequency by age

Age	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
1	3	2	2
2	45	22	24
3	102	51	75
4	34	17	92
5	17	8	100
Total	201	100	

The average age of respondents was 32 years (SD=33.4).

Table 4 shows the frequency analysis by age, of the respondents, where less than 25 years (1), 26-35 years (2), 36-45 years (3), 46-55 years (4) and above 56 years (5). From Table 3 above, one can conclude that the majority of respondents were in the ages of 36-45 years (105) and none in the ages less than 25 years.

3.6.6.3 Education level

Education is one of the most important characteristics that affect the person's knowledge, perceptions, usage and understanding of any particular social phenomenon. Hence, respondents were asked to indicate their educational level.

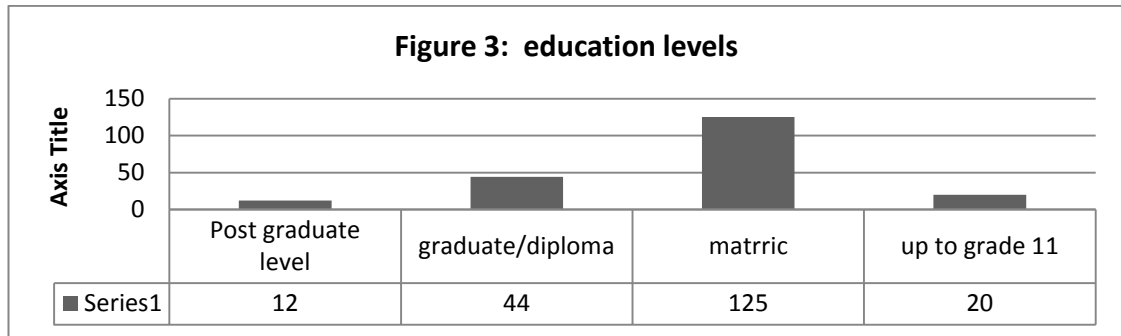


Figure 3 above shows that the majority of respondents (62%) were educated up to Matriculation level, while only 6% have a post-graduate education level.

3.6.6.4 Descriptive statistics for each variable

For each variable measured, descriptive statistics was populated. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement ranging from strongly disagree (5) to strongly agree (1) in each statement.

Table 5: Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) of variables

Variable	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Knowledge of public accountability	4.50	0.728
Perceptions of M&E mechanisms	4.31	0.7861
Experiences and usage of M&E mechanisms	4.05	1.061

n=201

3.4 RESEARCH RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY MEASURES

Saunders et al. (2012) like many other researchers shares the view that reliability refers to consistency and the ability of the data collecting instrument to produce consistent findings at different times and under

different conditions. Bryman (2012) states that for the instrument to be reliable it should be stable. Similarly, Mitchell (1996) and Saunders et al. (2012) agree that there are three common approaches for assessing reliability in the data collecting instrument: test re-test; alternative form; and internal consistency.

Salkind (2010) acknowledges that Cronbach's Alpha is popularly utilised to measure the reliability of data collecting instruments. Data was populated into the Reliability calculator developed by Prof Del Seige (2004). There is some agreement in the literature that where the range of Cronbach's Alpha is from 0 to 1, and less than .6 value is considered to be inadequate (Burns & Burns, 2008; Gill & Johnson, 2010; Klenke, 2008). Second, where the range of coefficients from 0.70 to 0.90 are acceptable for most instruments, a coefficient alpha of 0.90 represents a high reliability of the instrument (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). After accounting for reversely worded items, the scale had a reasonably strong coefficient of 0.78 based on the responses from the study data. The data collecting instrument was considered to be reliable.

Validity can be defined as the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure (Mason & Bramble, 1989). Bryman (2012) notes that four main types of validating research exists, namely measurement validity, internal validity, external validity, and ecological validity.

Among the three approaches (content validity, construct validity, and criterion-related validity) content validity is the extent of the measurement device (Saunders et al., 2012). According to Rossiter (2008), content validity is the extent to which the items in an instrument cover the entire range of the significant aspects of the area being investigated. From the detailed literature review and the conceptual framework, it was concluded that the best approach for measuring the variables of the study was to adapt the previously proven and used questionnaire. To measure the

instrument, the questionnaire was discussed with six content experts in the field to ensure that there are relevant statements. Statements were realigned with inputs provided.

The content experts included two M&E specialists, and two Back to Basics Provincial co-ordinators of the Department of Cooperative Governance. All the content experts have more than seven years' in their respective fields within the local government sphere.

Pilot testing of the questionnaires is important to be carried out as it aims to identify areas that need improvement in terms of language and understanding of the questions or items (Saunders et al., 2012). The questionnaire was piloted among 12 respondents drawn from the population of ward councillors. The aim of the pilot test was to confirm the clarity of the questions and related instructions and to obtain feedback from the respondents on validity, reliability, content clarity, content relevance, and content specificity.

3.5 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

Although the research achieved its objectives, there were some unavoidable limitations. First, ward councillors did not have enough time to complete the questionnaire as they were busy with pressing local government elections.

Second, from the 201 respondents who completed the survey questionnaire, one cannot generalise the findings. The number of respondents was not adequate to make a generalisation of the findings.

Third, since the study used a cross-sectional research design that relied on survey data, the survey limited the respondents to provided answer options, failing to explore other related issues. Thus, future research

designs may benefit from the inclusion of a qualitative approach to understanding the ward councillors' perceptions and use of M&E mechanisms to instil public accountability.

While there is literature on local government in general, the researcher found limited literature in relation to local government and M&E mechanisms for public accountability.

Last, the use of the online questionnaire posed limitations as not all ward councillors were comfortable enough to complete the online questionnaire.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

This chapter presents the study results in four broad categories, namely Section 4.1 on knowledge of public accountability, while Section 4.2 provides the ward councillors' perceptions of M&E mechanisms meant to foster public accountability. Section 4.3 presents the experiences of ward councillors using M&E mechanisms, and Section 4. 4 concludes the chapter.

4.1 KNOWLEDGE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY AMONG WARD COUNCILLORS

The first question of the study asked “Does the knowledge of public accountability among ward councillors improve the use of M&E mechanisms? The question made the following assumptions:

***H_o*:** There is no relationship between knowledge of public accountability and usage of M&E mechanisms.

***H_a*:** There is a positive relationship between knowledge of public accountability and the usage of M&E mechanisms.

A regression analysis technique was also used to establish a correlation between knowledge of public accountability and the usage of M&E mechanisms for public accountability and the population regression model used: $y = \beta_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + u$.

Knowledge of public accountability data and of data for experiences/usage of M&E mechanisms was populated and analysed, and the following findings emerged.

Table 6: Relationship between knowledge of public accountability and experiences in the use of M&E mechanisms

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.176759
R Square	0.031244
Adjusted R Square	0.021458
Standard Error	0.721002
Observations	201

ANOVA TABLE

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	2	3.319611	1.659806	3.192891	0.043175
Residual	198	102.9291	0.519844		
Total	200	106.2488			

From the ANOVA table (Table 6) above, the associated p-value was found to be 0.0431. Since $0.043 < 0.05$, we accept the null hypothesis. This indicates that the correlation among the independent variable (knowledge) and dependent (usage) of M&E mechanisms was null. Therefore, there is no statistical significance of the correlation between variables. The coefficient of determination is 0%. This means that none of the variation in the dependent variable was explained by the independent variables. Therefore the hypothesis was not supported by the data hence the alternative hypothesis was rejected and the null hypothesis was accepted.

The finding was not a surprise, as its in agreement with Kluvers and Tippet (2010) who indicates that councillors and managers understand the fundamental importance of information for accountability purposes, while Funnel (2003) postulates that the understating and availability of information have not guaranteed the actions of accountability. Nyalumba

(2006) argues that the models of community participation are not working. The finding clearly supports the findings of Shaidi (2013) and Botes et al (2007) that the absence of public meetings at local government level is a root cause of accountability challenges within local government and that ward councillors fail to communicate as a result of poor communication skills.

The subsection below presents the findings based on the responses to the statements in relation to the knowledge of public accountability.

4.1.1 Meaning of public accountability

Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statements in relation to the meaning of public accountability.

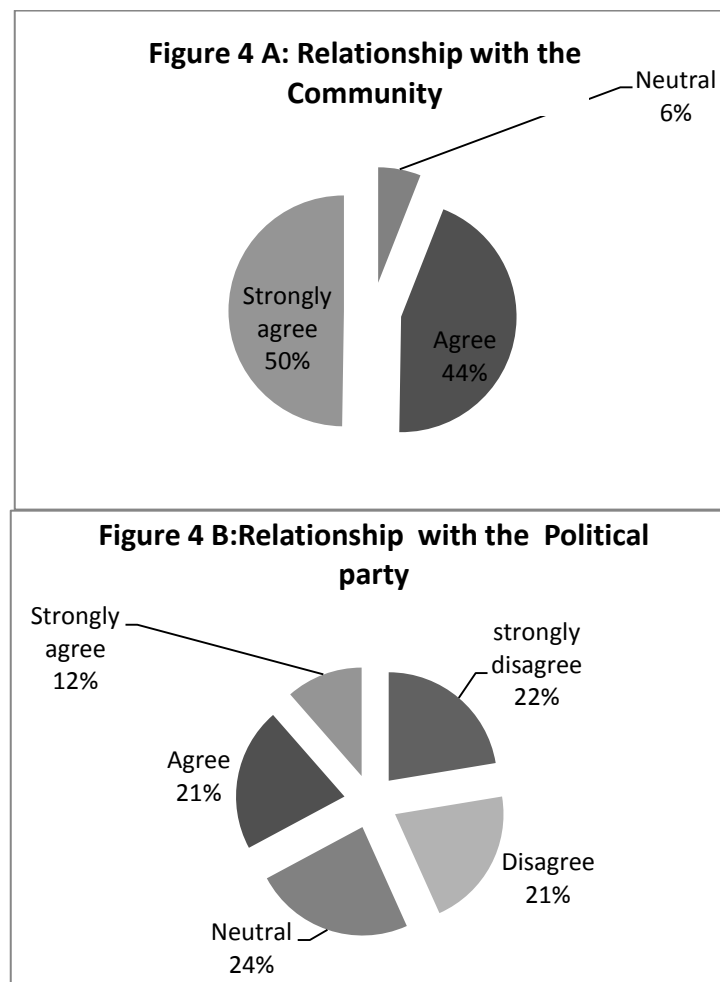
Table 7: Meaning of public accountability

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Answerable to the public			51 (25%)	45 (23%)	105 (52%)
Reporting to the public			17 (8%)	82 (41%)	102 (51%)

Table 7 above shows that a majority of participants 105 (52%) strongly agree that public accountability means being answerable to the public while 102 (51%) strongly agree that public accountability means reporting to the public on developmental issues.

4.1.2 Relations within public accountability

Public accountability emerges from a good relationship between the principal (community/citizens) and the agent (ward councillor), while a relationship with respective political parties is a lesser factor. The statement thus attempts to understand which relationship supersedes the other. Using a five-point Likert scale, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on who the ward councillor should be accountable to.



Figures 4A and 4B above show that 50% of the respondents strongly agreed that the ward councillors should be accountable to the community compared to 12% who strongly agreed that the ward councillors should be accountable to a political party.

4.2 PERCEPTIONS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION MECHANISMS FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

This section presents the results of the findings for the question “Do ward councillors who perceive M&E mechanisms as effective for public accountability use the M&E mechanisms?”

The question made the following assumptions:

H₀: There is no relationship between ward councillors’ perceptions on M&E mechanisms and the usage of mechanisms.

H_a: There is a positive relationship between ward councillors’ perceptions on M&E mechanisms and the usage of mechanisms.

A regression analysis technique was used to establish a correlation between perceptions and usage of M&E mechanisms and was computed using Data analysis Add-in and Regression, and the following findings came out:

Table 8: Relationship between perceptions and usage of M&E mechanisms

SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.161384
R Square	0.026045
Adjusted R Square	0.016207
Standard Error	0.623357
Observations	201

ANOVA
TABLE

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	2	2.057397	1.028698	2.647369	0.073344
Residual	198	76.93763	0.388574		
Total	200	78.99502			

The ANOVA table (Table 8) above indicates that the correlation coefficient was found to be 0.0734. This indicates that the correlation between the independent variable (perceptions) and dependent (usage) of M&E mechanisms is null. Therefore there is no statistical significance of the correlation between variables. The coefficient of determination is 0%. This means that none of the variation in the dependent variable was explained by the independent variables.

The regression statistics table shows $R^2=0.026045$ meaning that 02.60% of the variation of the usage of M&E mechanisms (dependent variable) could be explained by perceptions of M&E mechanisms (independent variable).

When data was plotted graphically, the following emerged:

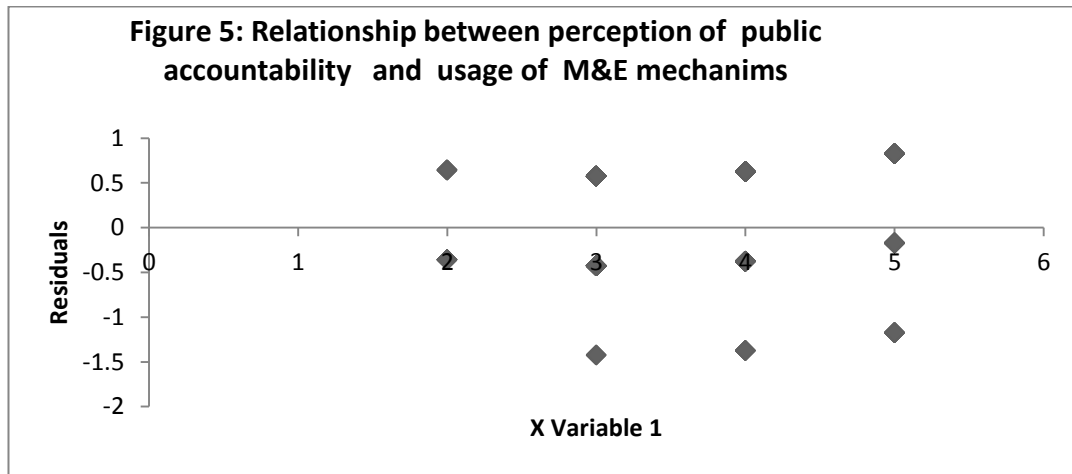


Figure 5 above shows that there is no relationship between independent variables and dependent variable.

The finding was expected and is in agreement with Kukumba and Fourie (2007) who notes that a lack of M&E culture leads to “misconception of accountability”. Mathenjwa (2006) suggests that the misconstruction of the content and scope of monitoring local government contributes to the challenges local government faces. This was also observed by Mettle (2009) who notes that the current system of municipal monitoring by a province is fragmented and is in agreement with Clouted (2008) who believes that the delivery of services within municipalities is faced with a number of challenges. The same sentiments are shared by Netswera and Phago (2009) in that “municipalities are confronted with challenges in implementing their strategic plans in the form of the integrated development planning, of the changes in basic service delivery to benefit the poor majority”. Gaffoor and Cloete (2010:1) and Netswera and Phago (2009:132) note that the service delivery challenges have resulted in dissatisfaction by the communities largely shown through service delivery protests.

The study tested the hypothesis that ward councillors who perceived M&E mechanisms for public accountability as being effective utilise the M&E mechanisms to instil public accountability. The study findings indicate that a negative relationship ($p > 0.20$) between perceptions of public accountability and the usage of M&E mechanism exists. Therefore the hypothesis is not supported by the data, hence the alternative hypothesis is rejected and a null hypothesis is accepted.

The subsection that follows presents the findings based on the respondents' responses on the questionnaire statements in relation to the perceptions of M&E mechanisms.

4.2.1 Participation and consultation mechanisms

In line with the research question "What are the ward councillor's perceptions on M&E mechanisms for public accountability?", the next subsection presents the findings on the perception statements linked to the role public meetings play in instilling public accountability.

A public meeting is among the participation and consultation tools used to instil public accountability at local government level. The extent to which the purpose of a public meeting is understood and perceived by ward councillors is critical for effective usage.

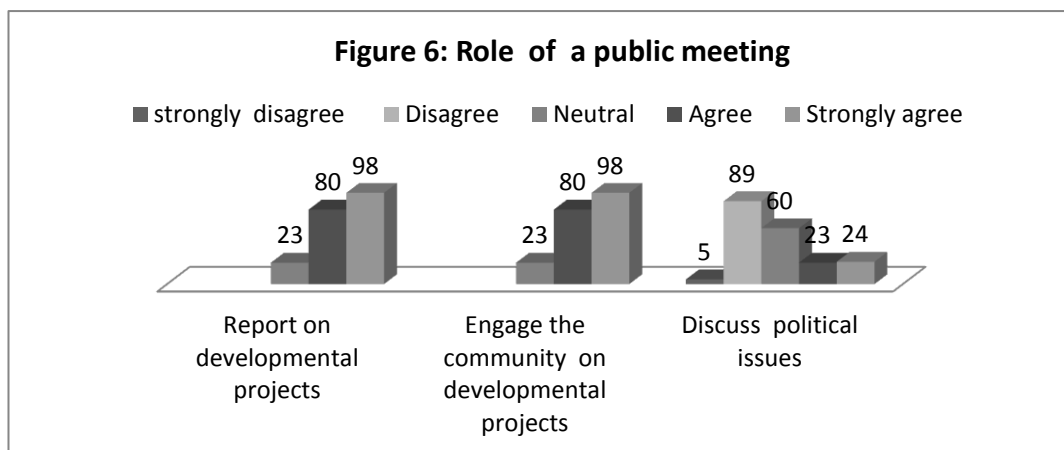
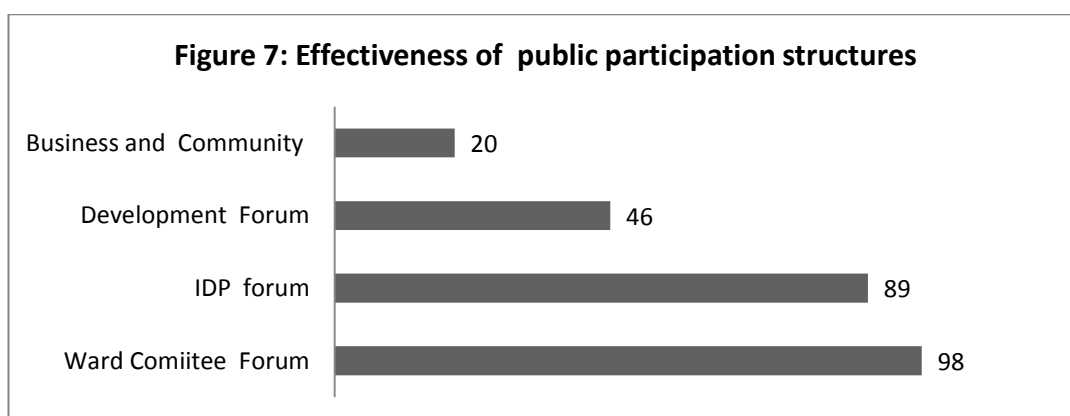


Figure 6 above shows that the majority of respondents - 98 (49%) - strongly agree that the role of a public meeting is both to report on developmental projects and to engage the community on developmental projects. Eighty-nine respondents (44%) strongly disagree that discussing political issues should be on the agenda of a public meeting.

The Municipal Systems Act (2000) prescribes that the public should participate in the ward related matters hence there are structures that are established to facilitate this. However the effectiveness is always questionable, hence the study through the statement “which structures do you think is effective for public participation” was posed to respondents.



The findings reveal that the majority of respondents or 89 (39%) followed by 89 (35%) respondents strongly agree that ward committee forums and IDP forums are effective in instilling public accountability. The least effective forum is said to be the business and community forums as indicated by only 20 (8%) respondents as shown in Figure 6 above.

4.2.3 Mechanisms to promote transparency

The availability of information measures the level of transparency; hence this section presents the findings on the councillors' perceptions on information that should be made available to the communities to improve transparency.

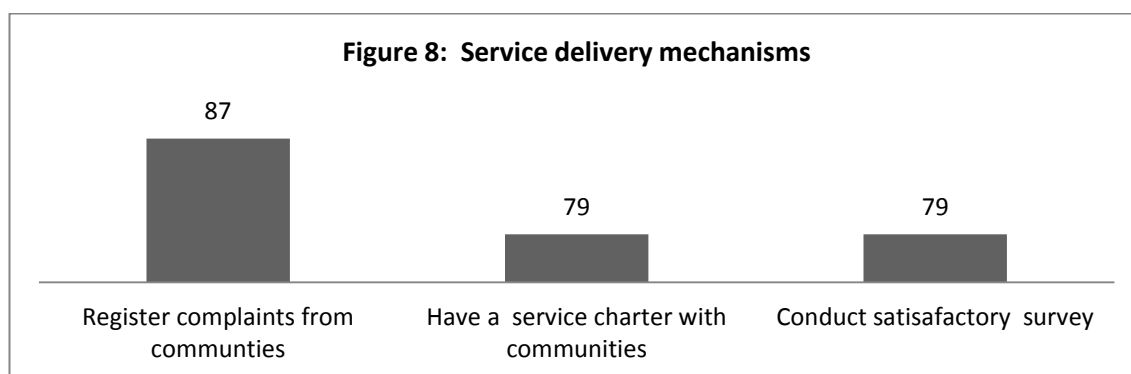
Table 9: Ward Councillors' perceptions on information that should be made available to the communities

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Budget and finance		14	34	65	88
Project progress			5	64	132
Tender allocations	4	9	78	34	76
disciplinary issues	6	21	67	31	76

The findings reveal that the majority of respondents (132) indicated information on project progress, while 88 respondents indicated that budget and finance information should be made transparent and available to communities by municipalities.

4.2.4 Service delivery enhancement tools and complaint management system

This section presents the findings on the councillors' perceptions on which mechanisms will improve public accountability.



Eighty-seven (36%) of respondents strongly agreed on the registering of complaints from communities and 79 (32%) agreed that ward councillors need a service charter, while 79 (32%) indicated that the ward councillors should conduct satisfactory surveys to get opinions from the communities and to instil public accountability.

4.3 EXPERIENCES OF WARD COUNCILLORS USING M&E MECHANISMS

This section presents results of the findings for the question: To what extent do ward councillors use M&E mechanisms for public accountability? The question made the following assumptions:

H₀: There is no difference in the use of M&E mechanisms among gender (males and females) ward councillors to foster public accountability within local government.

H_a: There is a difference in the use of M&E mechanisms among gender (males and females) to foster public accountability within local government.

T-test was computed to determine the significant between mean of males and females use of M&E mechanism.

Table 10: Relationship between gender and the use of M&E mechanisms

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
Mean	4.0199	4.343284
Variance	0.969602	0.596567
Observations	201	201
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	379	
t Stat	-3.6635	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000142	
t Critical one-tail	1.648884	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000284	
t Critical two-tail	1.966243	

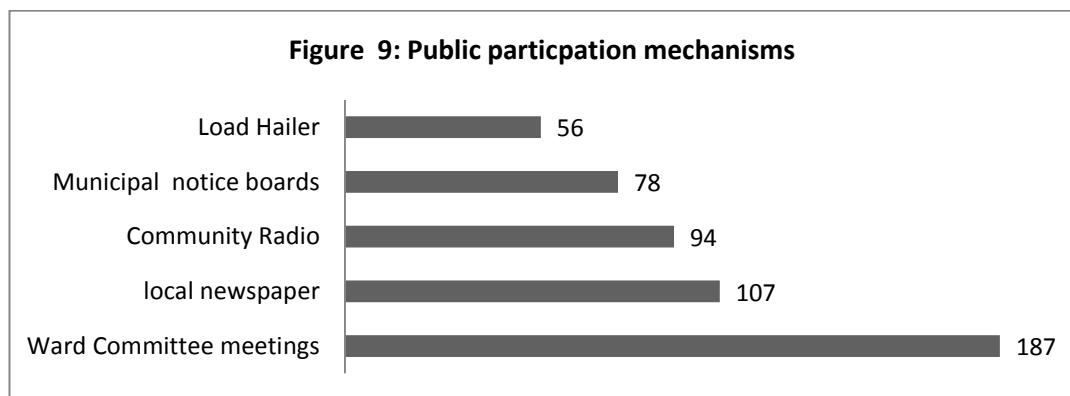
A two-tailed tail test (inequality) was computed. According to the t-test formula, if Stat < -t Critical two-tail or t Stat > t Critical two-tail, we reject the null hypothesis. The observed difference between the sample means (4.0-4.34) is so close and is not convincing enough to say that the usage of M&E mechanisms between female and male ward councillors differed significantly. Therefore the null hypothesis was accepted.

Although the literature has not provided enough data to distinguish between the use of M&E mechanisms among males and females the literature has linked the lack of public accountability to service delivery protests. Shaidi (2013) concurs with Botes et al (2007) who indicates that service delivery dissatisfaction, lack of communication between the community and the relevant ward councillors are among the main causes of service delivery protests. Yilmaz, Beris and Serrano-Berthet (2008) states that the lack of government accountability compromises service delivery. Therefore the study findings were to some extent anticipated.

The subsection below presents the findings based on the responses to the questionnaire statements in relation to experiences on the usage of M&E mechanisms to instil public accountability.

4.3.1 Public participation and consultation mechanisms

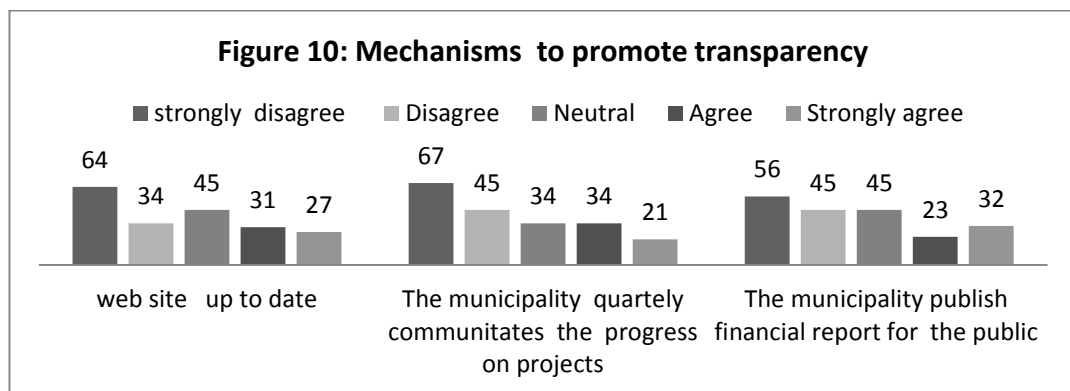
When respondents were asked to indicate which mechanism or tools are being used to instil public accountability the following emerged.



The findings in Figure 9 above reveal that the majority of respondents or 187 indicated that ward committee meetings are used, followed by 107 who indicated that local newspapers are used for public participation.

4.3.2 Mechanisms used to promote transparency

When respondents were asked what the extent of information being transparent within respective municipalities is, the following emerged:



The majority (64) of respondents indicated that websites are not updated. The majority strongly disagreed that quarterly meetings are held. Fifty-six (56) of the respondents disagreed that financial reports are made accessible to the public.

4.3.3 Service delivery enhancement mechanisms

When respondents were asked about statements in relation to the use of service delivery mechanism, they responded as follows:

Table 11: Use of service delivery enhancement mechanisms

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Register complaints from communities	98	69	34		
Have a service charter with communities	79	82	28	12	
Conduct satisfactory survey	79	48	66	8	

The majority (98) of respondents strongly disagreed that there are registers within their municipalities. The majority (79) strongly disagreed that service charters have been entered into with communities and the majority (79) strongly disagreed that satisfactory surveys have been conducted in the last two years.

4.4 CONCLUSION

Contrary to the expectations, the study findings revealed that there was no relationship ($0.431 < 0.05$) between the knowledge of public accountability and usage of M&E mechanisms. Similarly, only 02.60% of the variation of the usage of M&E mechanisms (dependent variable) could be explained by perceptions of M&E mechanisms (independent variable). Lastly, the findings revealed that the observed difference between the samples means (4.0-4.34) was so close and not convincing enough to suggest that the usage of M&E mechanisms between female and male ward councillors differs significant. In all the findings, alternative hypotheses were rejected and null hypotheses accepted.

The study has shown that ward councillors understand the concepts relating to public accountability; however, the knowledge has not been comprehended fully and utilised to instil public accountability within local government

The majority of respondents - 105 (52%) - strongly agreed that public accountability means being answerable to the public while 102 (51%) strongly agreed that public accountability means reporting on developmental issues. When data was populated against the usage of M&E mechanisms using a regression analysis, the findings show that there is no relationship between knowledge of public accountability and the use of M&E mechanisms.

The majority of respondents 89 (39%) followed by 89 (35%) respondents strongly agreed that public meetings and ward committee structures are effective tools for instilling public accountability. However, when data was correlated against experiences and usage of M&E mechanisms using a regression, the analysis findings showed that there is no relationship between perceptions of M&E mechanisms as being effective and the use of M&E mechanisms.

The findings are not unexpected as confirmed by the literature that highlighted that M&E mechanisms for public accountability within South African local government are not fully utilised as tools to foster public accountability, hence the lack of public accountability has resulted in ongoing service delivery protests.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter discusses the findings presented in Chapter 4 using the framework for interpreting empirical evidence discussed in Chapter 2. The chapter is presented in two broad categories. Section 5.1 reflects on the research objective, questions, hypotheses and also a reflection of the conceptual framework. Section 5.2 uses the theoretical frameworks to interpret and analyse the hypotheses and study findings.

5.1 REFLECTION ON THE PURPOSE, QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES AND THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

This section reflects on the research objective, the hypotheses and also a reflection of the conceptual framework. Section 5.1.1 examines the research objectives, questions and hypotheses. It provides arguments for the hypotheses findings by reflecting on the relationship between variables. Section 5.1.2 revisits the conceptual framework which provided the setting for analysis for the study, and then provides an overview of how the framework was operationalised.

5.1.1 Reflection on the research purpose, questions and the hypotheses.

This paper is the contribution to the ongoing discussion on the role of M&E mechanisms for public accountability. The study purpose is to understand the extent to which Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms are perceived and used to instil public accountability within South African local government. Using a scientific approach, three hypotheses were made and analysed.

First, to interrogate the research question “Does the knowledge of public accountability among ward councillors improve the use of M&E mechanisms?”, the research made a hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between the knowledge of public accountability and the use of M&E mechanisms. However, the findings revealed that there is no relationship between the knowledge, clear understanding of the meaning and conceptualisation of public accountability and usage of M&E mechanism.

Second, to interrogate the research question, “Do ward councillors who perceive M&E mechanisms as effective for public accountability use the M&E mechanisms?” where the research made the hypothesis that there is a relationship between perceptions of public accountability and usage of M&E mechanisms. Supported by the literature, the findings revealed that there is no relationship between ward councillors’ perceptions of M&E mechanisms and the usage thereof.

Last, to interrogate the research question, “To what extent do ward councillors use M&E mechanisms for public accountability?”, the study made the hypothesis that there is a difference in the use of M&E mechanism among gender (males and females) to foster public accountability within local government. Interestingly, the findings revealed a minor difference not significant enough, hence the study concluded that there was no difference between the use of M&E mechanisms among female and male ward councillors.

Having reflected on the study objectives, questions and hypotheses, the next section reflects on the theoretical and conceptual frameworks as detailed in Section 2.6 and Section 2.7 respectively.

5.1.2 Reflection on the theoretical and conceptual frameworks

The conceptual framework as outlined in Section 2.7 of the research is based on how public accountability could be instilled through the use of M&E mechanisms. Throughout the conceptual framework the interplay between variables relating to public accountability is illustrated. The New Public Management theory and Principal-Agent model were therefore used to analyse and interpret data.

The New Public Management (NPM) theory embraces the notion that the elected representatives (ward councillors) should account to the citizens. NPM biasness towards efficiency and measurement provided an opportunity for M&E mechanisms to be introduced to enhance accountability within the public sector. On the other hand, to develop the analytical framework and help find answers to the research questions, the Principal-Agent Model was used, which is often used in accountability relations. The key argument of the Principal-Agent Model was that the agent (ward councillor) should be answerable to the principal (community).

The next section interprets the study findings using the above reflected theoretical frameworks.

5.2 INSTILLING PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY USING MONITORING AND EVALUATION MECHANISMS

This section uses theoretical frameworks to interpret and analyse study findings. The section is divided into three broad thematic areas derived from the study questions. Section 5.2.1 focuses on whether knowledge of public accountability has an influence on the use of M&E mechanisms, while Section 5.2.2 uses the theoretical frameworks to focus on whether perceptions of public accountability influence the use of M&E mechanisms. Finally, Section 5.2.3 uses the theoretical framework to interpret the

findings on the extent to which ward councillors use M&E mechanisms to instil public accountability. At the beginning of each discussion, the respective research question, hypothesis and study finding is highlighted. The theoretical context is then drawn on to bring proper perspective to the interpretation and analysis. The main focus of study and thematic areas are then interpreted using theoretical frameworks.

5.2.1 Knowledge of public accountability

The question, “Does the knowledge of public accountability among ward councillors improve the use of M&E mechanisms” was intended to understand whether a relationship exists between knowledge of public accountability and the use of M&E mechanisms. The importance of knowledge is that it allows an individual to appreciate the ultimate objective and the purpose. In this case, knowledge of public accountability allows ward councillors to appreciate the purpose of public accountability and thus use different M&E mechanisms to instil public accountability.

The findings revealed that there is no relationship between the knowledge, clear understanding of the meaning and conceptualisation of public accountability and usage of M&E mechanism. Thus a negative relationship between the perceptions on public accountability and usage of M&E mechanisms exists. The findings are expected, given that M&E within local government is still at an early state of development, with many of the municipalities not having M&E structures.

According to New Public Management Theory, for democratic developmental governance to prevail, a paradigm shift in ensuring that citizens play a role in governance issues is of paramount importance. Hence, the concept of public accountability gained popularity as it is aligned to the new thinking within public management. Although the knowledge and understanding of public accountability is often understood as a rather straightforward democratic principle, it is however debatable

whether public accountability means the same to different people, in different contexts or issue-related and institutional settings.

5.2.1.1 Meaning of public accountability

The concept of public accountability is as old as democratic principles yet there is no conclusive definition of what it means. Perhaps the complexity in the definition is as a result of different dimensions that it has and the different contexts within which it exists. Krishnan (2008:4) defines public accountability in the context of local government in South Africa as the “obligation to explain and justify conduct and decisions to a stakeholder”. This is in line with the definition by Boven (2006:3) which states that “accountability is the relationship between an actor and a forum, in which the actor has an obligation to explain and to justify his or her conduct, the forum can pose questions and pass judgment, and the actor may face consequences”.

The study findings reveal that the majority (52%) of the respondents associate the concept of public accountability as being answerable to the public. This concurs with the conceptualisation by Roberts and Scapens (1985:447) and Dowdle (2006:3) stating that an official with public responsibility has to be answerable by giving account and reasons for conduct undertaken. Interestingly, it is noted from the study findings that public accountability is also associated with reporting. The elements of reporting can mean informing the public without engaging and seeking solutions from them. Reporting has been a practice within South African local government where the public is not engaged to seek solutions but is merely informed. This has indeed diluted the meaning of public accountability. It is in this regard that the question arises of the extent to which the public is meaningfully engaged. On the other hand, there is a trend in which the concept has been loosely used to be “politically correct” but does not necessarily translate into the act of being answerable.

While the two concepts are interlinked, from the public accountability perspective, answerability has more weight than reporting as it engages the public in municipal affairs. One can argue that South African local government is still young in democracy and the emphasis is more on compliance reporting. For this (and other) reasons the concept of answerability is not fully understood and implemented. It may be that the role of communities in public accountability is not strengthened to be in a position to interrogate and engage the agent (ward councillor) in the accountability process.

5.2.1.2 Importance of understanding the relations within public accountability

The conceptualisation of what is meant by public accountability questions the relations that exist between those elected and the public. Through the Principal-Agent Model lens this study interrogates which relationship is perceived as important or rather whose interests the ward councillor should promote. The principles within the theory suggest that the community is the principal and that the elected public official becomes the agent. Hence the agent has to report and engage the principal on developmental issues as agreed upon. Similarly, the Municipal Systems Act places an obligation on ward councillors to be accountable to the communities who vote them into power. However, there is a tendency that has emerged for ward councillors to be accountable and put the interests of the political party far above the communities. Perhaps the ward councillors find themselves in a conflicting situation where politically they have to put the interests of the political party first whilst they are expected to serve the interests of the communities. Hence, for this (and other) reasons many local governments around the country are failing to deliver proper services to communities and continue to experience service delivery related protests from dissatisfied communities. Practically, in

exercising the relationship, party-political interests supersede the community interests.

The study notes that despite the disparities in definitions, public accountability remains the core principle of democracy within local government. While reporting of its own accord does not constitute public accountability, reporting coupled with engagement and discussion of issues pertaining to communities remains important. As public accountability goes beyond informing the public on the progress on projects, public accountability should include an interactive engagement of all parties in accounting on the progress, challenges and failures and collectively taking corrective actions to redress deficits. While the relationship between the ward councillor and the community is important and should define public accountability patterns, the tendencies of ward councillors to account to their political parties continues to result in dissatisfied communities.

5.3 PERCEPTIONS OF M&E MECHANISMS TO FOSTER PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

The research question “Do ward councillors who perceive M&E mechanisms as effective for public accountability use the M&E mechanisms?” was intended to understand whether a relationship between perceptions of public accountability and the use of M&E mechanisms exists. Not surprisingly and supported by the literature, the findings revealed that there is no relationship between ward councillors’ perceptions of M&E mechanisms and the use thereof.

The hypothesis made by the study to interrogate the question was that ward councillors who perceive M&E mechanisms as effective use the M&E mechanisms to foster public accountability (there is a positive relationship between ward councillors’ perceptions on M&E mechanisms and the

usage of mechanisms). The findings revealed that there is no relationship between ward councillors' perceptions of M&E mechanisms and the use thereof. Clearly, the ward councillors' perceived public meetings and other M&E mechanisms as effective tools for public accountability; however, the actual use of the mechanisms to foster public accountability remains a challenge. What emerged is the lack of understanding of the principles of M&E and Theory of Change (ToC). Ideally, the planning process should be underpinned by a Theory of Change to assist and explain choices. However, within South African local government sphere this is not the case. The ToC is not used or understood to have a role in the planning process. Hence, the intended outcomes, what worked in the previous cycles and what improvements (changes) are not clarified or not embedded in the planning. The absence of the ToC within the planning process poses major challenges in the progress towards monitoring and evaluation and the actual practice of public accountability is thus negatively impacted.

As acknowledged by the New Public Management theory that in an ideal democratic local government, the elected office-bearers conduct a public dialogue with members of the public (public participation) on government activities, thereby ensuring transparency, in order to do this, different M&E mechanisms are used and thus public accountability is instilled.

The role of ward councillors is to link the public to the municipality. In order to perform the role effectively, Weiss (2000) suggests that there must be a close interface between citizens and government, which in turn requires effective public participation mechanisms. This section therefore discusses ward councillors' perceptions on participation and consultation mechanisms for public accountability.

5.3.1 Community feedback mechanism

Public meetings commonly referred to as *izimbizo* are among the key participation and consultation tools to instil public accountability at local government level. Ideally, the purpose of a public meeting is to gather public opinion. Confirmed by Kyohairwe (2006) who observes that the public meetings (*baraza* in Uganda) are characterised by four identifiable aspects that involve assessment of the planned services for the community; what is actually delivered; what is actually spent on different locations; and the issues and challenges with proposals for the way forward.

It is generally acknowledged that the ward councillors in South Africa do understand and articulate the main purpose of public meetings as being to discuss and engage the public on the developmental projects and progress. The reality is that public meetings are held not for purposes to allow the public to interrogate the progress made but to merely report, and for malicious compliance. There are a number of factors that make the purpose of a public meeting questionable; among those is the timing and the content of discussion during the meetings. In many instances the frequency of meetings is only noticeable a few months towards election dates with a number of tokens distributed at meetings. The distribution of tokens at meetings is said to increase the number of attendees; however attendee participation is questionable. There is a notion of equating the number of attendees to participation, which leaves room for critique as merely having people attending the meeting does not translate into participation.

While the purpose of the public meeting with communicated prepared agendas, previous meetings minutes circulated on time is important, the key to the effective participation and consultation is locked within the post-public meeting phase. The monitoring and follow-up on the issues discussed in the public meeting is critical as it shapes the developmental

progress. Therefore, rather than solely emphasising the number of public meetings held, the content of discussion and feedback strategy after meetings should be catered for. Hence, this paper suggests that a public meeting should not be limited to only demands and complaints but a well-informed constructive discussion on developmental issues as it pertains to the community that includes an integrated approach to the municipal plans.

5.3.2 Participatory governance

Community participation structures are critical tools of democracy. Ward committee structures are established to represent the ‘voices’ of the community hence are perceived as playing a critical role in enhancing public participation. However, the question has been on the effectiveness of the structure. Compared to other community forums like IDP and developmental forums, the ward councillors perceived them as effective. Whether the ward committee forums are useful conduits for community involvement in local governance and create space for public participation continue to be questionable. The tensions between ward councillors and ward committee members and other structures, lack of funding and other resources for organising meetings are among the issues that directly impact on the effectiveness of ward committee forums. One can conclude that, while the ward committee structure is perceived as an effective tool for public participation, there are challenges that impact on their maximum effectiveness. The lack of capacity or power to fully assert community needs and input into development planning processes, and engage meaningfully with communities and civil society in this regard, is among the critical issues of concern. Civil society organisations can play a critical role to advance the goals of the developmental local government state. There are studies which suggest that civil society organisations are well placed to promote participatory M&E by sharing and providing information which could compel key decision-makers within respective municipalities to act to enhance public accountability.

In conclusion, whilst it is acknowledged that the South African government has provided the enabling legislative environment for good governance and created the space for citizens to exercise their oversight role, this report takes the view that communities continue to play a secondary role in setting agendas, developing budgets, implementing programmes, or evaluating outcomes. The report further acknowledges that whilst ward committee structures are effective, they are faced with challenges, hence proper and formal inclusion of civic societies and in particular non-governmental organisations (NGOs) could strengthen public accountability.

5.3.3 Transparency strengthens public accountability

Despite the importance of transparency for good governance as outlined within the New Public Management theory, there is limited literature on the tools to measure transparency. In most cases the measurement is limited to access to information. Whether access to information is a sufficient element to measure transparency remains a debate. Around the debate also is what information is made available, how is it made available, and the timing of publication. It is a combination of issues that still need further interrogation to better understand transparency at local government level in general.

South African local government is not exceptional; there are no proper tools to measure transparency. The lack of tools to measure transparency can be traced from the different meanings attached to transparency. It is not clear what constitutes transparent at municipal level. While there is an acknowledgement that access to information is a starting point, as democracy matures there is a need to conceptualise clearly what constitutes transparency at local government level. The ongoing debate that access to information is central to poverty eradication should be built in to strengthen democracy.

From the study findings, it is evident that transparency is linked to access to information. The study further examined which information should be accessible; there is a common understanding that financial information should be made available for the public. The question also arises as to whether the presentation of financial information is “friendly” enough for public comprehension. If citizens are failing to comprehend the financial information provided, then the purpose of transparency by providing information is defeated. Along similar lines, the timing of providing the information is also critical, as it is important to give communities enough time to be able to critically interrogate the information so that they are able to make meaningful contributions in meetings.

The use of technology to enhance transparency is one of the discourses that local government should participate in. As technology advances, the question is to what extent is South African local government geared to use technology to enhance good governance? Mobile technology and web applications empower them to engage with government and find clarity on issues that touch their lives. Throughout the world, there is a shift towards the use of mobile phones and web based portals to provide information in a way that creates transparency and demonstrates accountability. This in turn provides citizens with a platform to interrogate issues and exchange ideas to promote better governance.

This research supports the argument by Fisher (2004:504) that transparency is not enough to constitute accountability. Along the similar lines, Boven (2006:11) alludes to the view that transparency does not constitute accountability although the words are often used interchangeably. Hence Boven (2006) and many other scholars observe that public reporting does not in itself qualify as public accountability yet remains among the key principles that the NMP subscribes to.

The research contributes to the discourse on the extent to which public accountability mechanisms are understood, perceived and used. Nyalumba (2006) argues that while there are advanced and progressive systems of community participation in local government, the model of community participation is not working. This is seen in the local government sector continuing to experience community protests. While the study findings indicate a high level of understanding on what public accountability is, the usage of M&E mechanisms to instill public accountability remains minimal.

5.4 EXPERIENCES OF WARD COUNCILLORS USING M&E MECHANISMS

The New Public Management Theory puts emphasis on efficiency in the delivery of basic services for citizens. Hence, service delivery is the cornerstone of local government and service delivery mechanisms are tools used to strengthen the democracy. These tools support participation, consultation and transparency within the local government. The argument here is built within the context of M&E to understand the extent to which municipalities have and use different service delivery mechanisms.

Regarding the research question, “Do ward councillors who perceive M&E mechanisms as effective for public accountability use the M&E mechanisms?”, a hypothesis to understand the use of M&E mechanisms along gender lines was made. Interestingly, the findings revealed a minor difference but not significant enough, hence the study concluded that there was no difference between the use of M&E mechanisms among female and male ward councillors. The democratic process has led to the ongoing discussion of how females can be instrumental in pursuing the developmental agenda. There are indeed unique and isolated experiences suggesting that women at grassroots level, irrespective of their educational, occupational and socio-economic background, are

considered suitable and empowered enough to occupy political positions and participate in decision-making and economic development through local governance. both women and men have failed to translate their knowledge of public accountability to meaningful usage of M&E mechanisms to foster and instil public accountability, hence within South African local government the lack of public accountability has led to ongoing service delivery protests.

5.4.1 The service charter

The service charter is internationally recognised as a tool to enhance good governance. Through the service charter the Principal-Agent relationship is maintained. It was argued that some relationships cannot be accurately defined by a contract and therefore to define accountability in contractual terms limits our understanding of the concept.

The relevance of the service charter cannot be over-emphasised. If fully and effectively implemented, it can assist in nurturing a culture of good governance. However, within South African local government, it is interesting to note that while there are a few municipalities who have entered into the service agreement with communities, it remains a compliance document that is produced and seldom followed. This is because there are no standard guidelines that a municipality has to follow to ensure that the community's views are incorporated and represented in the document formulation process. This allows municipalities to follow different methods and officials to develop a document without engaging the communities.

While an acknowledgement goes to those municipalities with service charters, for the service charter to be effective the municipalities must understand the custodianship of the state's resources and the responsibility of practicing good governance entrusted to them. To give practical effect to the charter, there must be community structures that

take active steps to not only promote what the charter stands for, but to ensure that its signatories uphold its objectives. This is another area that is lacking within local government. There may be reasons why community structures are not active in this regard. One can argue that there is not much involvement of the community structures in the development process and very little if any education on the role of community structures to keep the elected municipal office bearers accountable. The document is by virtue an agreement; however, the South African local government reality is that in most cases the service charter document is produced by the municipal officials without or with limited community inputs. This points to the flaws in the conceptualisation, the development process of the Service charter and its practicality within the South African local government.

5.4.2 Service delivery enhancement tools and complaint management system

While the New Public Management theory places more emphasis on the centrality of the citizens as customers, it also appreciates the key role that communities can play in shaping local government. It suggests a wide variety of alternative service delivery mechanisms in which citizen involvement could be promoted. Again, transparency and fairness principles are central to the New Public Management Theory.

The local government is the first point of contact for the public in accessing public services, and the extent to which municipalities deal with communities has serious concerns. Ideally, the municipalities should deal with the public in accordance with the principles of courtesy, fairness, openness and transparency. Hence, *Batho Pele* (People First) principles are built upon the notion of serving the public better. Therefore the community as customers should be given the opportunity to express concerns regarding services rendered or not rendered, service standards and in general give opinions on municipal issues. Complaint mechanisms

are channels developed for the community and stakeholders to file complaints on issues of non-compliance or against decisions and actions. The filing of a complaint is said to give the community a voice about the issues at hand. The system is thus a platform both to encourage participation and consultation.

While there are few municipalities with complaint and grievance systems, the question remains about the effectiveness of the systems. From the number of service delivery protests within municipalities, one can argue that complaint and grievance systems are not working. Ideally, the complaints system if it is working should be able to address complaints before they escalate to protests. The true value of the complaints system is to enhance the responsive culture, in which service delivery or municipal issues are quickly resolved to lead to an improved way of interacting and delivering services to the public and also assist municipalities in improving the services they offer.

One acknowledges that the existence of the complaints and grievance systems within municipalities is a step forward; however, the usage of such is questionable. Around the usage of the systems, many issues need careful interrogation, and the municipalities have a responsibility to ensure that the system is user friendly and needs to be advertised and communicated to the public. The value of the system is not merely in its existence but how best it is being used to consolidate inputs from the public. Hence, if the public is not familiar with the system its value is lost. Within local government we are faced with complaints systems that are not fully functional as there is no proper monitoring of how issues are dealt with. In cases where the public raises issues through the complaints system, the issue is not followed up and no feedback is given. The debate around the implementation of complaint and grievance management systems questions the extent to which municipalities understand and practice this.

5.4.3 Community survey

The New Public Management Theory is grounded in the concepts of citizenship and the public interest. NPM places citizens rather than government at the centre of its frame of reference. Hence, collating of inputs from citizens regarding the services rendered or planned is important within the New Public Management approach.

A community survey serves as an important tool to understand how citizens form satisfaction judgments regarding government services. The OECD (2005:10) has pointed out the need for government-led avenues to be opened to allow transparency and accountability and for citizens to express their level of satisfaction. The literature indicates that modalities for such expression may be government initiated, among which the community surveys can be one.

Ideally, the community survey is used to measure the gap between expected performance and delivered performance. The low number of municipalities that have conducted satisfactory surveys indicates not only a serious issue with regard to how the local government interacts with the communities but also the M&E practices. It questions whether the municipalities deliver what the local communities need and the extent to which the communities are given the opportunity to measure the municipal performance. In South Africa the majority of the population do not have the knowledge or resources and there is a reliance on civics to act on their behalf and protect their rights.

The conceptualisation and development community survey at local government level is said to be a challenge as it fails to measure what it is supposed to measure and in many instances the satisfaction survey is developed without fully taking into consideration all key features of the municipality. One can argue that service delivery related protests within

South African local government are largely associated with low satisfaction levels of communities either for the implementation of the programme/service or the quality of the service delivered. This points to the failure of the municipalities to conceptualise and timeously conduct community satisfactory surveys.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This Chapter has as its broad objectives: to give a summary of the study purpose and methodology and to present the concluding remarks on the study findings, and to propose recommendations.

Section 6.1 of this chapter is divided into 6.1.1 which is a summary of the purpose, methodology, and delimitations. In Section 6.1.2 a summary of study findings is provided. Section 6.2 presents a conclusion based on researcher insights gained regarding study findings and limitations. In addition, two sets of recommendations are presented in section 6.3.

6.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted for the purpose of understanding the extent to which Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms are perceived and used to instil public accountability within local government. Hence the study made hypotheses that knowledge, clear understanding and conceptualisation of public accountability results in effective usage of M&E mechanisms for enhancing and instilling public accountability. To test the hypotheses, the questions for the study were:

1. Does the knowledge of public accountability among ward councillors improve the use of M &E mechanisms?
2. Do ward councillors who perceive M&E mechanisms as effective for public accountability use the M&E mechanisms?
3. To what extent do ward councillors use M&E mechanisms for public accountability?

The study did not attempt to understand the extent of the lack of accountability root causes and its impact. However, the study made an attempt to understand the level of knowledge on public accountability, perceptions and usage of M&E mechanism to instil and foster public accountability.

Insight on the study variables was drawn from literature that highlighted that the lack of government accountability compromises service delivery. In essence, many service protests in South Africa are as the result of lack of accountability from the municipalities, more particular from ward councillors. The literature suggested that the absence of the M&E system within municipalities has resulted in the municipality's failure to report on progress on their developmental plans. The lack of monitoring local government contributes to the challenges local government faces. One specific problem is that monitoring mechanisms, especially the intervention part, do not comply with the principles of good governance as set out in Section 139 of the Constitution.

While the literature shows that local government is the closest tier of government to the people in South Africa, supported by impressive legislative frameworks that support good governance principles, the communities are denied some benefits of its existence, resulting in service delivery protests that are largely attributed to the lack of public accountability. The aim of the study was to understand how South African ward councillors understand, perceive and use M&E mechanisms to instil public accountability.

Using a quantitative research strategy, a structured interview guide as an online self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from 201 respondents. Data was coded, analysed using Excel and SPSS statistical tools. Throughout the conceptual framework the interplay between variables relating to public accountability was illustrated. The New Public

Management theory and Principal-Agent model were therefore used to analyse and interpreted data.

6.2 SUMMARY OF STUDY FINDINGS

From the study questions, the following alternative hypotheses were tested using regression analysis and T-test:

- i. There is a positive relationship between the knowledge of public accountability of M&E mechanisms.
- ii. There is a positive relationship between perceptions of public accountability and usage of M&E mechanisms.
- iii. There is a difference in the use of use M&E mechanism among gender (males and females) to foster public accountability within local government.

Contrary to expectations, the study findings revealed that there is no relationship ($0.431 < 0.05$) between the knowledge of public accountability and usage of M&E mechanism. Similarly, only 02.60% of the variation of the usage of M&E mechanisms (dependent variable) could be explained by perceptions of M&E mechanisms (independent variable). Last, the findings revealed that the observed difference between the samples means (4.0-4.34) is so close and not convincing enough to say that the usage of M&E mechanisms between female and male ward councillors differ significant. In all the findings alternative hypotheses were rejected and null hypotheses accepted.

The study has shown that ward councillors understand the concepts relating to public accountability but the knowledge has not been comprehended fully and utilised to instil public accountability within local government.

The study identified a wide gap between perception and usage of M&E mechanisms for public accountability within local government level. The gap emanates from the failure of the government structures to provide a lead in conceptualisation and implementation of M&E within local government. The usage of M&E mechanisms within the South African local government is at a minimum and done purely for compliance reasons, which undermines learning and improvements aims.

Participation and consultation mechanisms for public accountability are well understood as tools for good governance but there are challenges in the implementation and usage of the mechanisms. Ward committee meetings were perceived to be the most effective tool to instil public accountability within local government but are not fully utilised and are faced with numerous challenges

This paper acknowledges that active participation cannot succeed when information is not accessible. This places participation as equally important as transparency, perhaps for participation to take place information must be made available to the community. From the study findings, it is evidence that transparency is linked to access to information. There is also a common understanding that while other information is should be accessible, financial information should be made available for the public.

Mechanisms to report and communicate service delivery issues, platforms for communities to lodge complaints and dissatisfaction are minimally used in municipalities; hence the communities consider service delivery protest as a mechanism to communicate their level of dissatisfaction.

Although the research managed to arrive at the findings detailed in Chapter 4. However, the findings were subject to limitations. These included that the number of respondents (201) was not adequate to make a generalisation of the findings. Second, since the study used a cross-

sectional research design that relied on survey data the survey limited the respondents to provided answer options, failing to explore other related issues.

6.3 CONCLUSION

This paper has critically demonstrated that whilst the ward councillors within South African local government have the knowledge and understanding of good governance principles, the failure to translate the knowledge to action and absence of the M&E system within municipalities has resulted in their failure to report on progress on their developmental plans; this compromises the good governance principle of accountability. Although in general it has been acknowledged that the New Public Management is still a valuable vehicle that South African local government can use to promote good governance and democracy principles, the practice has not yet yielded the results to meet international standards where public accountability is at the centre of good governance within the local government sphere.

In concluding, while the South African local government is entrusted with the provision of basic services to the communities, the failure to address service delivery challenges has resulted in service delivery protests. According to the researcher, the usage of M&E mechanisms to report and communicate service delivery issues, platforms for communities to lodge complaints and dissatisfaction is not at optimal level in many municipalities; hence the communities consider service delivery protests as a mechanism to communicate their level of dissatisfaction.

The study findings conclude that ward councillors understand the concepts relating to public accountability but have not fully understood their public accountability role, hence the M&E mechanisms are not fully utilised within local government for learning and improvement purposes. This in turn has

resulted in an increase in the number of basic service delivery related protests where communities communicate their dissatisfaction on the level of accountability from the local government structures. The researcher was able to arrive at the above conclusions based on the findings of the study:

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

To address some issues that the South African local government faces, there is a need to refocus and strengthen public accountability. By placing public accountability at the core of good governance, the citizen's will reclaim their right to obtain justification and explanations from public officials who are given powers to oversee the affairs of the municipality through the use of public resources. The impact of refocusing and strengthen the use of M&E mechanisms is likely address citizens dissatisfaction and decrease service delivery related protests. This can only be done by bridging the gap that exists between knowledge, perceptions of M&E mechanism and usage of M&E mechanism.

6.4.1 Recommendation for future research

The study will be extremely relevant in the provision of comprehensive models and will encourage further research within academia. From the data, it is evident that the following research will add value to the scientific knowledge.

1. An in-depth analysis on public accountability practices within local government in South Africa.
2. More evidence is needed on citizen's engagement in monitoring and evaluation for improved public accountability at local government level.

6.4.2 General recommendation for interventions

It is evident that for good democratic governance to succeed within South African local government, public accountability should be strengthened. Beyond the intellectual worth of this study, it is expected that the findings of this study will significantly contribute to better understanding of local government accountability dynamics. Therefore the following should be noted as recommendations:

1. It should be acknowledged that public participation is the key to democracy and plays a critical role in public accountability and hence it should extend to all structures within communities to draw and share resources to strengthen capacity needed to enhance public accountability.
2. The world is moving from manually based efforts towards technological efforts. The use of technology in enhancing public accountability should be explored by municipalities.

With these recommendations it is hoped that governance issues in relation to public accountability that South African local government experiences will be minimised.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: PROFILE OF THE RESEARCHER AND DECLARATION OF RESEARCH INTEREST

Ms Xoliswa Saila is currently a Masters student at Wits and employed by the Department of Cooperative Governance as M&E Manager, mainly responsible for performance monitoring of municipalities.

I declare that this dissertation titled ‘Instilling public accountability in local government through the use of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms’ is my own, unaided work. I have acknowledged and referenced all sources that I have used and quoted. I hereby submit it in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Management (Public Sector Monitoring and Evaluation) in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I have not submitted this report before for any other degree or examination to any other institution.

XN Saila

.....

Date: March 2017

APPENDIX B: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

INSTILLING PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH THE USE OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION AMONG WARD COUNCILLORS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Dear Sir/Madam

This research is undertaken as part of academic requirements by Ms Xoliswa Saila. The research title is "Instilling public accountability through the use of Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms among ward councillors in South Africa"

You are kindly requested to participate in this voluntary and anonymous research. Responses to all questions will be kept confidential and will ONLY be used for purpose of this research. Your participation is highly appreciated. A report will be shared with you after the academic institution has approved it for publication.

Completing this questionnaire will not take more than fifteen (15) minutes of your time. Should you have any questions, feel free to contact Xoliswa Saila on the below contact details:

Cell phone number: 0724890108

Office Number: 012 3340883

E-mail: 773352@students.wits.ac.za/xoliswa.saila@gmail.com

Thank you and Regards

Xoliswa Saila

*** Required**

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

What is your gender? *

	Male
	Female

In which age category are you? *

	less than 25 years
	26 -35 years

	36-45 years
	46-55 years
	56 years and above

What is your education level? *

	post graduate level
	graduate/diploma level
	Matric /Senior Certificate
	Up to grade 11
	Grade 1-10

SECTION B: KNOWLEDGE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY:

This section measures understating on the general knowledge on public accountability. You are therefore asked to please indicate your level of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

Public accountability means *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Answerable to community on the developmental progress made					
Reporting to the community on developmental issues					

Public accountability aims to... *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Improve service delivery					
strengthen community participation					

Ward councillors represent interest of *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Community					
Political party					

SECTION C: PERCEPTIONS OF M&E MECHANISM

This section measures the understanding on the general knowledge on public accountability. You are therefore asked to please indicate your level of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

Public meetings as a tool for public accountability, In my opinion, its purpose is to... *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Report on developmental issues					
Engage the community on progress made					
Discuss political issues					

In my opinion, the following forums are effective tools for public participation *

Please indicate your level of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Ward committee forums					
IDP forums					
NGO/developmental forums					
Business forums					

In my opinion, the availability of following will improve transparency

Please indicate your level of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Budget and finance					
Project progress					
Tender allocation					
Disciplinary issues					

In my opinion, .. the following M&E service delivery enhancement mechanisms will improve public accountability..... *

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Register of complaints and grievances from communities					
Have a service charter with communities					
Conduct satisfaction surveys every two years					

Please indicate your level of agreement whether

The following M&E mechanisms have been used for public accountability *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
ward committee meeting					
local newspaper					
municipal notice board					
community radio					
General public meetings (organised by Municipality)					

Municipality(service improvement mechanisms) *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Financial report is published quarterly					
Quarterly communicates the progress					
Website provides updated information					

Service improvement mechanisms used in my municipality *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Have a Service Charter with the community					
have conducted a perception survey the last 2 years					

Have a system to receive grievances is operational					
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Thank you for completing the questionnaire

SUBMIT

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE OF CODED DATA

bio-data			Questions/statements																															
A1	A2	A3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	#	21	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	31	
0	2	3	5	5	5	5	3	2	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	1	1	4	1	3	2	1	3	1	
1	2	3	5	5	5	5	4	2	5	3	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	4	4	3	3	4	4	3	4	4	5	1	3	2	1	3	1	
0	3	3	5	5	5	5	4	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	4	5	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	1	5	1	4	1	1	2	4	
0	2	3	5	5	5	5	3	2	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	1	1	4	1	3	1	1	3	1	
0	3	4	5	5	5	5	3	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	4	1	1	4	1	3	1	1	3	1	
1	4	3	5	5	5	5	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	5	3	4	4	3	4	1	1	5	1	3	1	1	4	1	
0	5	3	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	3	4	3	3	4	3	2	1	1	4	1	3	1	1	3	1	
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0	1	3	5	5	5	5	3	3	5	5	4	5	5	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	5	3	1	1	1	3	

Sample (first 20) of coded responses of 31 statements (including 3 bio-data statements)

APPENDIX D: DETAILED DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

<i>Knowledge</i>		<i>Perceptions</i>		<i>Use of M&E mechanism</i>	
Mean	4.502488	Mean	4.318408	Mean	4.059701
Standard Error	0.05141	Standard Error	0.055454	Standard Error	0.07486
Median	5	Median	5	Median	4
Mode	5	Mode	5	Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.728865	Standard Deviation	0.786199	Standard Deviation	1.061328
Sample Variance	0.531244	Sample Variance	0.618109	Sample Variance	1.126418
Kurtosis	-0.245	Kurtosis	-1.10516	Kurtosis	-0.10527
Skewness	-1.10431	Skewness	-0.62952	Skewness	-0.82964
Range	2	Range	2	Range	4
Minimum	3	Minimum	3	Minimum	1
Maximum	5	Maximum	5	Maximum	5
Sum	905	Sum	868	Sum	816
Count	201	Count	201	Count	201
Largest(1)	5	Largest(1)	5	Largest(1)	5
Smallest(1)	3	Smallest(1)	3	Smallest(1)	1
Confidence Level (95.0%)	0.101375	Confidence Level (95.0%)	0.10935	Confidence Level (95.0%)	0.147617

APPENDIX E

Question 1:

Relationship between knowledge of public accountability and experiences in the use of M&E mechanisms

SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.176759
R Square	0.031244
Adjusted R Square	0.021458
Standard Error	0.721002
Observations	201

ANOVA

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	2	3.319611	1.659806	3.192891	0.043175
Residual	198	102.9291	0.519844		
Total	200	106.2488			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95.0%</i>	<i>Upper 95.0%</i>
Intercept	4.466368	0.588593	7.588209	1.24E-12	3.305652	5.627084	3.305652	5.627084
Variable 1	0.096433	0.244836	0.393869	0.694102	-0.38639	0.579253	-0.38639	0.579253
Cubed Variable 1	-0.0052	0.005532	-0.93956	0.348587	-0.01611	0.005711	-0.01611	0.005711

Question 2:

Relationship between perceptions and usage of M&E mechanisms

SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.161384
R Square	0.026045
Adjusted R Square	0.016207
Standard Error	0.623357
Observations	201

ANOVA

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	2	2.057397	1.028698	2.647369	0.073344
Residual	198	76.93763	0.388574		
Total	200	78.99502			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95.0%</i>	<i>Upper 95.0%</i>
Intercept	4.032232	0.50888	7.923737	1.63E-13	3.028711	5.035752	3.028711	5.035752

Variable 1	0.188601	0.211678	0.890985	0.374019	-0.22883	0.606033	-0.22883	0.606033
Variable 2								
(cubed)	-0.00641	0.004783	-1.34083	0.181511	-0.01584	0.003019	-0.01584	0.003019
