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Governance and the leadership challenges in Emalahleni local municipality

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INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS FOR THE EMALAHLENI MUNICIPALITY EMPLOYEES

INT: INTERVIEWER

RES: RESPONDENT

PQ: PROBING QUESTIONS

(): ZULU WORDS TRANSLATED TO ENGLISH WORDS

QUESTION: 1

INT: How long have you been working for the Emalahleni Local Municipality?

RES 1: Uhm it's been 2 years.

RES 2: Its now 26 years.

RES 3: Okay I've been here since 2011 and I was an intern for a year and then I've been in internal auditing since 2012 up to now.

RES 4: Uhm since 2008 October.

RES 5: Uhm since 1999.

QUESTION: 2

INT: Are you happy working for the Emalahleni Local Municipality? Please motivate your response.

RES 1: Yes I am happy because uhm I have been promoted as I have been a student here then I am uhm now a HR secretary.

RES 2: Very happy. What makes me very happy is that we deal with the community on a daily base and the most interesting thing is that we make sure that the members of the community leave your office with a smile getting help even if I cannot help them immediately but I can try and ask someone else to assist them so what makes me happy is the direct impact that we them have on the people.

RES 3: I am happy I am I think ehhh ehhh like okay you've mentioned before ukuthi (that) it's not easy to get a job into local government but once you are inside opportunities for growth akhona wona (are there).

RES 4: Yes…giggles uhm happy means I know what I am doing I have a job description and uhm I'm not measured as per performance management but I do know what I'm supposed to do.

RES 5: Well 60/40 60 happy 40 not well for me the environment okay well the concept of municipality and the key performance indicators the deliverables that the municipality would like to do to the community is what keeps me going but the systems the municipalities are the ones which are disabling a person to be able to achieve fully what we would like to achieve what we would like to achieve yah but then I achieved that the 60 makes me happy yah but the 40 not.

QUESTION: 3

INT: What is your argument with all the assumptions being made regarding poor service delivery and poor leadership in your municipality?

RES 1: Hmmmm can you repeat the question?

INT: What is your argument with all the assumptions being made regarding poor service deliver and poor leadership in your municipality?

RES 1: Hmmmm it's a very bad thing because people want to see change happening in a very short period of time same time, but you know that these things take time.

PQ: Do you perhaps know how long the Emalahleni residents have been experiencing the water and electricity problem?

RES 1: Uhm I don't know, it's quite long but until then they have appointed the new Administrator things have changed. Because we are under Administrator we don't have a municipal manager.

RES 2: Eh I would say with poor service delivery you cannot satisfy uhm you cannot satisfy everyone and you cannot reach the major of their expectation but we are trying our best. I usually site an example that even though there can be assumptions I'm happy that Emalahleni has never gone uhm let's say uhm what do we call this uhm lights off for a month or people cannot access water for a month or three months. We see it in other areas, yes we do have our challenges but we try our best to sort them out within within a certain period of time because we have to keep our consumers happy at the same time so that they can also see the value of the money they are paying at the Municipality.

RES 3: Takes deep breath okay I'd say that uhm they are true and poor delivery it's

something that even umuntu nje (someone) like outside coming into Emalahleni can see ukuthi(that) there's like potholes on the roads. People are always striking for water and things like that and garbage collection you can see ukuthi(that) the city is not clean so e service delivery yona(it) it is poor and also.

PQ: But have you started working on that though? Any resolution on fixing the problems mentioned?

They are they are working on it but you know like e question yakho (yours) it was also e khuluma nge (it talks about) leadership, leadership it's a it's a huge challenge especially from the top we had like a whole lot of uhm within a year nje (like) there's been a whole lot of leadership changes we had two executive mayors so e stability se (of) management level it's not really it's not stable.

I'd say for mina (me) since ngi (I've) started working here the okay the challenges were still there you know like okay uhm I think it's something that over the years it continues to to get worse instead of getting better.

RES 4: Uhm I think the only problem with that is that most of us we don't take our jobs seriously uhm there is that entitlement mentality that I must get this because I am related so whoever so it's not like and uhm it's not like you look for a job with uhm passion and so most people they just get their jobs and these people they just get promotions so because of the lack of performance management it's one of the problems that we are facing now these are the consequences of not having performance management in the workplace.

RES 5: Well uhm poor service delivery I think for me depends on how a person understands it let me give you an example somebody may say the roads in Emalahleni are at a very bad state ne I joined the municipality in 1999 and I worked on roads and by that time with the predictions that I had that I made I told them that if the municipality goes on with the same budget or lesser with the same number of personal or lesser the road will deteriorate today they are at that stage so it is viewed as poor service delivery but on the other side the people who are supposed to do the work they don't have the tools of trade which is your budget and your human resource and that also stands from poor leadership because the leadership that is there cannot actually on paper is looking at the strategic level but with an operational mind you are looking at 5 years but you want to operate 5 years like one year because if by 5 years I want to see this desk cleaned and cleared I must have systems that says the first year I clear out that one even if somebody comes here and say what I must say hoooh I'm still busy with the papers only and then that would be the direction but if today somebody comes with this programme you take that programme and do what you'll never be able to achieve full service delivery.

QUESTION: 4

INT: What can you point out as the factors leading to slow service delivery at the Emalahleni Local Municipality?

RES 1: I think the employees are not delivering.

RES 2: Uhm in terms of the slow service delivery you know sometimes people lose passion in their work always. I believe that employees also they need to be motivated first people to motivate them is themselves and then their supervisors they are expected to do exactly the same thing make sure that everything is done correctly so that we can meet our target as per our SDIP the service delivery implemented plan yes.

RES 3: People are not really committed to service delivery. You find that the manager or whoever I don't want to mention names like you can see that people are complaining about a particular thing but you are not prioritizing and it also has to do nama (with) departments wethu (ours). Let's take revenue and technical services. There's no communication if there is one thing that is a contributing factor for these things is lack of communication between the departments because department A would expect department B to do certain things but the information e buya ku ye o (from) department A but is not flowing to the relevant department so things end up not happening as they are supposed to. Even people nje (like) they don't know who to complain to let's say I'm experiencing problems with my water meter for example, I go to technical services technical services refer me to revenue revenue would say it's this person who should be assisting me. So there is no communication and commitment from management which inflows to your normal person working on the ground floor post naye (him/her) if the manager is not committed in serving the community nawe (you) you don't have that motivation to assist. Because you would find someone who's willing to help but if o manager is not really assisting you to do your job then people end up being reluctant to do their jobs they just come to work because they have to work.

RES 4: Uhm it depends on which department. I think its lack of commitment that's 1 point you cannot commit to anything if you do not have an understanding of it
Lack of commitment coupled with lack of knowledge yes so I think that is the biggest problem
Lack of skill.

PQ: ohky in that case would you say most employees are employed based on nepotism than merits?

RES 4: Ohky you know what happens our recruitment ne when you start from the bottom like level 15 then you start as a cleaner but maneuvering inside than that is

the problem, that's where the problem starts our recruitment policy is totally wrong because you start as a cleaner on between level 14 and level 4 they do their recruitment inside so you are starting as a cleaner you're on level 15 then you apply for a post and then you go to level 8 then you move from level 8 you move to level 6 then you move from level 6 you go to level 4 do you understand? So there is that lack of knowledge of what is happening outside.

PQ: what is your take on graduates who studied PMG and are out there without jobs?

RES 4: The problem is that those people who are qualified they won't even be able to apply yes because from level 14 to level 4 you won't be accommodated then you will be accommodated on level 3 and level 3 is already managerial positions so you don't have experience you can't come here and be a manager . The policy itself, it doesn't accommodate you. So the only way you can be helped is if you know someone who is inside who can speak on your behalf and put you forward and then you come in as an intern not an intern but as a temp and then after 6 months they will absorb you.

RES 5: Well not No I don't think they are effective I don't think they are effective because the same, the same mistakes they happen each and every time to a point when sometimes you go to a strategic planning you are going to talk the same thing that you said last year you don't go there for reviewing and for putting forward a better systems or even a way of working so to me I don't think I don't think really it's it's progressive. Yah yah there must be a serious change in the leadership approach.

QUESTION: 5

INT: What can you point out as the factors leading to poor leadership at the Emalahleni Local Municipality?

RES 1: Some are leading well while others are not.

RES 2: Eh in terms of poor leadership laughs uhm I have not seen poor leadership in fact there are those people who are lacking and most of them its due to demotivation there are a lot of people who are demotivated let me say make an example by Lydia is coming in she is appointed to work with Thandi, Thandi has been working in that position, acted in the position for about 5 to 7 years and Lydia just comes in and the person feels demotivated. We are not strong all of us there are those people that cannot take disappointment. Yes it is disappointing but at the end of the day, one needs to sit down and just reflect back. What is the reason am I here? Why am I still here? Who is the person that I am holding at heart? Who am I giving service to? Is it the person who's coming in or the community of Emalahleni because the community doesn't know and they don't care what is happening within the municipality so that's where your loyalties lie, you have to remind yourself why am I here? And once a person, I usually say with leadership or with non performing

employees once a person loses passion about what they are doing you are deemed to fail.

PQ: But are there any training programmes to improve on leadership?

RES 2: A lot as I said we are in training we do a lot of training.

RES 3: Okay with poor leadership, okay one of the things that people use to point out, is to say the current leadership they not people from the city. They employ someone who comes from let's say Limpopo of which that person doesn't really understand how things are done this side. I think that people are influenced by politics. You know politically influenced is also something that I don't know how to put it you have politicians who are getting involved in administrative issues so you find let's say the manager technically maybe he's an ANC person and there's an ANC mandate that says this and this so he can't do his job because the mandate clashes with whatever policies that are followed within the municipality.

PQ: Do managers/leaders go to development training to advance their knowledge and skills?

RES 3: I think that's another thing qualifications of management you would find that a person in employed based on it also goes back to the political influence a person does not have the proper qualifications to fill a position but because of political influence other parties push that this person be appointed for the particular position. Most management positions are based on political influence.

RES 4: They don't have qualifications our managers are deployed I know I love the ANC did that record? Giggles I love the ANC no it's this deployment thing the deployment is killing the whole country not even just our municipality because they bring somebody who is supposed to be on internship programme to run the municipality. You don't even have a plan that's when they will have five people doing one person's job I mean if you are from other companies you will just see that here I am not doing anything really.

RES 5: Not having the right qualification is a contributing factor. And also working without passion. Like I mentioned before you find that a person is a specialist in engineering but is a manager for a different specialisation, this sometimes demoralises an individual at some point.

QUESTION: 6

INT: What are your thoughts about the leadership styles and attributes followed at the Emalahleni Local Municipality? Do you think that they are effective for the development and growth of the leadership practiced at the Emalahleni Local Municipality?

RES 1: They are beneficial.

RES 2: Laughs…I would say like our municipality because I have started working at this municipality while I was still very young I'd say our municipality it's a transformative one and judging about the leaders that we have they are strong willed people even though as I said that people are not the same there are those who are slagging behind and there are those who are fully committed yes so they want transformation and there are those who are driven so much by transformation. That even if there are changes people they can easily adapt to the changes so they also try to put into action or into effect the change management within the municipality because if people don't embrace change nothing is going to change.

RES 3: I think the leadership style lana (here) its changing especially since we are coming from the administration process. We were put under administration because we couldn't handle our financials. So this simply means that they take the powers from the municipal manager and then they appoint someone whom they call him the administrator who's now in charge of everything. The guy who was appointed as the administrator is now the municipal manage. Since he came in the municipal climate has changed for the better. His leadership is great it is what the municipality needed. He tried to stabilize everything like made sure that all the key positions must be filled such a person should be in this position for certain years. And also understanding the needs of the people working at the municipality trying to meet some of them so I think he has stabilized the municipality. Management is now concerned on what is happening within the departments and also on what services need to be delivered. There's transformation happening.

RES 4: There is no leadership style everybody is running the municipality the way they want to run it. Its okay we can just say that it's a laisses fair then it would be at much better because we have a leadership style but as you can pin point what they are doing no you won't.

RES 5: Everyone seems to be doing what they think is right not all policies are followed thus I can't really comment on the leadership style followed.

QUESTION: 7

INT: According, to your opinion based on the experience which you have been with the Municipality, what challenges have you come across as an employee of the Municipality? Would you say those challenges have been addressed or that they are in the process of being addressed with?

RES 1: Uhm so far no challenges that I've come across, my side no.

RES 2: Yah I will say earlier on especially like in the training and everything I will site an example with what I am doing currently. What we used to have a challenge with was e lack of funding to send every person that we have identified a need or identified a skills gap on for training so that we can enhance service delivery. But as time went by and as I said earlier all about the transformative municipality and the leaders that see that people need to be up skilled in order for them to perform much better. Uhm up until now it has changed traumatically ah ah ah uhm we can say we don't have a person who cannot read or write in this municipality so we attend to each and every person whether it's a manager down to a general worker so those who cannot read and write we also have a programme for them the adult education training so we also take them through we have people who have started with ABET eh eh AET it's called AET now not ABET anymore and some of them are foreman today some of them are even artisans so that that that's the transformation that is happening with them so we usually look at the bad side of things and yet there are so many good things that are happening and that are ah a profound truth or proof that there is transformation within the municipality.

RES 3: I think one of the challenges working as an auditor because what you do is before you go and audit a certain department you have to meet with the management explain that I'm here as an auditor and this is what I am here to do and this is what I am going to look at. One of the challenges was cooperation you don't get cooperation from management you try to set up a meeting with a certain manager they are forever not available or and when you auditing there are certain documents that you need to go through but you requested information and that information is not available because it is not made available to you or you don't get it on time or its not there at all. So it makes your job sort of challenging but as I've said now with this change there is change in the environment so management are now more understanding of the role the internal auditing and they are more cooperative they even because before they people didn't know that there is an internal auditing department and what do we do because when they see us in their departments they would say here are the police. But I think for now management are more understanding of what our roles are as the internal auditing team.

RES 4: The challenges that okay me as an individual uhm not everyone in this municipality has got a job description and you find that they adhere to and some people don't even know what they supposed to do that's when hence you find municipal employees at the streets going up and down it's not their fault it's our fault as leadership it's not their fault yah they take me and put me in a position and don't tell me what to do obviously I would have to figure myself out and if I don't even have school in my mind and I have that position who am I going to what am I supposed to figure out because they just took me and poured me inside a hole?

RES 5: Well some of the challenges have been but I think the other thing which I would also understand about municipalities which I think the they our our new government did not do correctly appointing people for a certain time period also limits people's ability to exercise their full leadership because this person knows that well I will be here anyway for 5 years from there I go then so it does not really bring out this thing motivation and also the matter of we want to outshine each other as a PME manager I want to outshine LED, LED wats to outshine technical, technical that's not to say me and technical are one to fail I fail if I win you win so to me if that can be how people could yes there is a will in talking but in doing it is contrary.

QUESTION: 8

INT: What is your comment about the professionalism, ethics, transparency and effectiveness of the public officials of the Emalahleni Local Municipality?

RES 1: Ah I can say from the officials of the municipality it should be……trained and learned seriously we should be professional. There are people who are professional and some are not

RES 2: Comments about the first one was professionalism I would say most of our professionals they really know how to deal with people in a professional way I'm saying that proudly so because I'm the one as well who is responsible for induction in this municipality it's our unit in fact the training unit that is responsible for that so we also touch on that we not just looking on the we also taking cognizant of what is enshrined at the constitution of South Africa when it comes to professionalism that it's not what us as a municipality has have policies on but we are responding to the needs that are in the constitution of south Africa. So we are we are obliged to do that to be professional as well as ethics people can do their things but we enforce ethics to to as a proof that we do and force ethics even the guys that are found to be you know maladministration is always there you will find some of the officials that are corrupt who are stealing for no apparent reason we we our disciplinary action is taken seriously and it is implemented yes yes.

PQ: Would you say you are transparent to the community?

RES 2: Definitely we are we are transparent to the community I will say like we have izimbizo where the community is we have councillors they are representatives of the community they are part of all the structures within the Emalahleni they are the ones who are supposed to tell but {laughs} funny enough the community knows so much about the municipality that even us as the employees are not even aware so that simply means that there is that transparency yes yes yes to me I usually say that there is soo much transparency in this government that even the person that you have never thought they would know this such of thing they will come in and tell you that ooh that's very interesting.

PQ: So you are clearly following the Batho Pele Principles?
RES 2: Definitely definitely that's one of our highlights in our inductions that and we don't just do it just we have exercises so that people can understand what batho pele is when they go to the work stations even the new ones will come back and tell you you know what those guys are all there but they don't know what they are doing because I am from an induction and I know and it's me who has brought I said but that's why what we training you for that's why we recruited you as a new person because we need innovation.

RES 3: Okay in terms of professionalism we do lack professionalism I mean when you see people interact with the public like when someone is coming to enquire about their statements or whatever you know you would find someone on the phone personal things you can here that the conversation is personal and not work related while the customer is here ever the way the employees speak to the customers it's really not professional they shout at them and things like that even the physical appearance we don't dress appropriately we don't we just rock up. There is a lack of professionalism.
PQ: Would you say the problem arises from the lower or top management of the hierarchy?
RES 3: I'd say from the top I'll make an example with our department, you come into the municipality you adapt this culture you know before I came here I was from the bank you know high heels uniform and then you come here you see people any day they wearing jeans your sloppies whatever. But you end up being like you adopt that culture so we adopted a new CA chief executive officer he was from the AG and the AG you know they very professional strict whatever so now in our department he makes sure that he says okay this is what you must wear from Monday to Friday this is our dress code this is how we appear to our clients and also the municipality they've recently adopted e dress code policy that Monday to Thursday this is the dress code and Friday you can wear your casual but it must also be smart casual but still people are not complying because you find that from the top the manage still dresses casual all the time but expects his team to wear formal. But with us we know that our CA is always wearing smart and formal so we should also follow his example. We have a very strict dress code in our department so professionalism is practiced first of all your physical appearance this is how you must look.
Yes we are very transparent in our department. I mean our department is a very sensitive department so I mean auditing is like me saying I'm going to check if you are doing the right thing so I must also not adopt the wrong culture whereby professionalism is not practiced. So I cannot go tell someone that no you can't wear this while I am also not complying so I must first do before I can actually tell someone do so we must be seen as doing the right thing before we can convince someone to do the right thing. So we are transparent in that manner. However, it not all the departments which are transparent for example corporate services like your HR department they have a very good manager who follows the right procedures and always ensures transparency. The manager always emphasise that they are the

face of the municipality and that policies must be followed. Professionalism is practiced here. But unfortunately the departments which deals with the public are the ones which do not practice professionalism and which are not transparent.

RES 4: Don't mention municipality and ethics in the same sentence {laughs} just don't. I don't even think people know what ethics are. They know the Batho Pele Principles for the interview but they don't practice them.

RES 5: Well there are managers who are professional in their way of working and there are those who are not professional but the thing is those ones who are professional are less than those who are unprofessional. And those who are effective as well are lesser than those who are ineffective actually a lot of people come here looking forward towards making a better municipality at the end of the day they end up going back backwards because they can't be able to fit because somebody would come for 1st month 2nd month, 3rd month yah you feel like you should just leave. The support structure the challenge is the challenges can be mounted.

QUESTION: 9

INT: What would you like to improve as an employee of the Emalahleni Local Municipality?

RES 1: Ya the professionalism.

RES 2: Mmmmm I'm trying to think holistically now {silence} maybe is because when I started working at this municipality I was very small {laughs} I've seen so much improvements I've seen so much improvements now the improvements that I can say is to make sure when we appoint people that we appoint people who have the interests of the people at heart people who are really ready to serve the community because if a person is not ready to serve the community I don't think that we going to change much the change that I can really bring about is to make sure that we appoint the correct people at the correct time for the correct positions that will take the municipality far.

PQ: So would you then say that most of your employees are employed based on merits and not on nepotism?

RES 2: No no no not most ne there are those few that they are the ones that are causing friction the instability the ones that comes in on merit or some are even deployed and when we know very well that the requirements of the positions are clearly stated and because of political pressure that's where that's were municipalities are suffering as well it's one of our challenges when politics is uhm infringing the administrative part of doing our day to day activities there are those that you know who are willing to work and can be promoted within the municipality rather than taking someone from outside a person who will still need guidance from

these people and training on so it causes a lot of instability but most of our people we try by all means even though there is political pressure so there are those external factors yes yes you will indicate it by the external factors on the political ones.

RES 3: For me I'm an internal auditor what we do is check if we have proper internal control and mitigate our risks so we have a risk of not collecting enough revenue my job is to check what is wrong with the system and how can we improve on that so my contribution is to actually go look at those controls and check if do we actually have those controls in placement management and if not you recommend that okay let's put this and see if we can't improve our situation so sometimes is a bit difficult for us auditors because when you talk about service delivery you talking to your water and electricity like your basic whatever and unfortunately we don't have those technical skills to go and actually audit like let me go and actually see water quality of the municipality do people actually drink our water because I can't personally go I will be lost because it is too technical but what I can do is go to because we have the department of water affairs because every month or quarterly I'm not sure they have this quality what do they call it like your blue drop whatever they check the quality of the water to see if does it comply to their requirements mine is to see if are we actually meeting the requirements of the department of water affairs can people actually drink the water and what can we do management what are the challenges to actually get this water to get to be at the required stage or level. Are we having challenges in buying the right equipment to purify our water or you know things like that yah.

PQ: So do you think that it is true that people have been experiencing water and electricity problem for the past 10 years?

RES 3:10 years I'm not sure but I'd say yes there have been electricity and water problems in the municipal jurisdictions I think one of the contributing factors would be our infrastructure we have very old infrastructure and one of the challenges that we identified like you remember like I was talking about controls about what controls is management putting to make sure so you'd find that there is no plan to make sure that this pipe is supposed to last us five years during this five years we don't do anything to ensure that by the end of the useful life of this pipe are we buying a new one or are we replacing it so you know there are those things to say okay so that is why we having these problems of electricity the main problem is infrastructure.

RES 4: I think you know we used to have this other lady who was a manager here she was the acting municipal manager she was so committed she knew that people are not committed but she was so committed to such an extent that we started feeling that we must start moving she made us stand up she didn't make us walk but at least we stood up unfortunately she left and we sat down again {giggles}. We've been sitting for so long so for you to make me stand up I must see that you have stood up and that you are running before I can even attempt to stand up. Yah we've been sitting for quite too long I always say that if I were to be appointed as a

municipal manager I would have been left with only ten percent of the municipal employees who are still working all these other ones would get their letters.

RES 5: Well one it's the systems that I think can be followed and can always be evaluated and improved from time to time it must just be a matter of compliance because once you look at complying every time you don't do a thing every time because you love it you love doing it but you do it because you are supposed to do it so that's why we are not we are not changing we are always doing things the same way yah we are working hard but not smart yah.

PQ: And how do you intend on improving service delivery within the Municipality?

RES 5: Well on electricity uhm okay actually on all the services the financial status of the municipality has not improved in years to a point that when you look at your capital expenditures and operational expenditures what we are getting from the payment of services is not sustaining the system we are living with old infrastructure uhm we are living we are not improving on the infrastructure we have, there's more yesterday I was talking to another guy saying that in the last twenty years the population has grown by two hundred percent we were about hundred thousands, now we are about three thousand something and there's not a new electrical power station there's not a new water source so you are still sourcing water from where you used to source twenty years ago you are sourcing water from a dam and your obstruction license is one hundred and ten mega litres but your demand is one hundred and forty mega litres so with that and you are to serve a community which is increasing on a day to day basis we supposed to be creating networks if there people who are out there maybe at Zone 14 they can all be situated around the dam then it will be easier for you to feed them you just take a small line from the dam to here now you have to take from the dam to somewhere where you store it from where you store it to the next one the pipe that takes it from here to there it burst it rust it does whatever its pressured its cordate inside it lessens the amount of water that needs to go through by the time it supposed to reach there its its its either the water is not clean because of the corroding inside or either pressure is small inside because it went feeding the others on the way and even the electricity as well we've been waiting for the Doorentpoort to be upgraded it is not upgraded so people are now buying their own generators buying for backup buying or putting boreholes or jojo tanks for secondary water.

PQ: So would you say the community contributes in this by not paying their rates or is the situation beyond that?

RES 5: Yah it is also the community because if you are having enough resources in the municipality you can improve you can also draw out there people who are more skilled not to say we are not skilled but I mean as a technical person my desk is not supposed to be filled with papers doing management and administration I should atleast be doing analysis and designs and looking at embettering the system every day I have to manage papers.

PQ: In terms of skills would you say that people are mostly employed based on nepotism than on merits?

RES 5: Well yes there would be nepotism to a certain extent and also thee the municipality has become so much unionized to a point that a person would just grow in the system when I came here I had my national diploma which I went on to study in a Technicon civil engineering I came here as an engineering technician the first mistake that the municipality does is that it changes the titles uhm if you say PMU manager what does that mean if you could say an engineering manager somebody who is not an engineer would fear to getting in that terrain because you would ask yourself if its engineer but if you say project management even anybody who thinks of project management as not putting people down as doing tea it's a it's a project but it's not engineering project management you see if you say a person is going to be doing uhm municipal administration is different from somebody who has a BA a Bachelor of Arts yabona (you see) if a person is having a degree in public management its different I mean I also did a certificate in public management when I was here in the municipality and I also did a course with Wits on municipal finance management the modules that you go through there are not modules that you grow in the system and then tomorrow you are promoted because you are in a union or somebody likes you or loves you there then you end up getting to a higher position yabona (you see).

Well for me I would not discourage anyone from acquiring education because for me education is not about being employed its more about changing perspective about life. If I give R20 to a person who is educated this person would be able to apply his mind in spending that money unlike somebody who is not yah and also its about knowledge it's about acquiring skills it's about there are other things that a person would do even without earning for them so it's only unfortunate that where we are living in okay like for myself when I came here I was working for who and not yet I was fully qualified and for the rest of the 5 years that I've been with them it because they were working for them it was good they never looked at them upgrading themselves and making sure that they go back and finalized and I used to tell them that mina I was even telling my wife yesterday at one time I was questioning God that why only one course can really not make me get a deans exam and write and go to work but I had to come back after doing my experiential training 6 month more and I had to come back the next 6 months then I left my job and I said I will come back I went in and for that 6 months I was only doing one course staying in Pretoria travelling to wits Technicon thrice a week the other two days I'm just sitting in Pretoria going out in buses finding out whether I can get a better job going to consultancy getting a voluntary work there and there well I said to myself I want to complete that and I completed it yabon (you see) I completed it and from there and I went back and I fortunately I was being sponsored by the department of public works so I could get my job back and work yabona (you see) yah so to me I would not I would not really say it's a waste yah it could never be a waste because tomorrow well be although even in academia we don't actually now our government is getting a lot of things clouded I was talking to a professor friend of mine he's a writer of the University of North West and he used to be at locker heads with the premier supra wanting tenders in the government and he would say to him no I'm an academia

that's what I have been appointed for he left academic at one time prof and he went to work in human research science council and he says it's good to go there and be a CEO and drive these big cars but if it's not within you my passion is in the classroom if it's not in the classroom its managing a thing that is related to a class and he ended up going back to Vaal and ultimately he went back to the University of North West.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS FOR THE EMALAHLENI RESIDENTS

QUESTION: 1

INT: How long have you been living in Emalahleni?

RES 6: Hmmm, I'm sure it's been 20 years.

RES 7: More than okay 65 years now.

RES 8: Uhm with the family since 1993.

RES 9: Uhm I think 17 years.

RES 10: Since 1977 about 38 years now.

QUESTION: 2

INT: Are you also challenged by the poor service delivery specifically the water and electricity issue?

RES 6: Yes.

RES 7: Yes

RES 8: Very much yes.

RES 9: Yes I am affected.

RES 10: Yes I am very much challenged by it.

QUESTION: 3

INT: What other challenges in terms of service delivery have you experienced so far?

RES 6: I think the sewage and uhm can't think of anything else right now because the water even smells bad you can't even drink the water from the taps because they smell bad.

RES 7: Cleanliness uhm removal of waste potholes in the street poor notification in connection with the water and the lights poor delivery for electricity bills.

RES 8: Okay mostly the biggest one is roads because I have a car and uhm they never take care of the roads especially potholes I know of potholes that have been there like I even crammed them for five years same potholes same area and its getting bigger and bigger by the day visitors are disadvantaged by these potholes because their cars get damaged as they not aware of them. We are also losing a lot of money with these potholes I mean last year I spend a lot of money I had to go buy a tyre it cost me R1700 you know so it's very sad.

RES 9: The rubbish collection like they are not collected on time.

RES 10:

- We are still experiencing regular outages of water and electricity.
- Frequent sewerage spills.
- Continued struggle with potholes.
- The level of quality of water is also a concern.
- Aging infrastructure creates many problems such as bursting pipes of water.
- Poor workmanship of RDP houses makes people unhappy especially during the heavy rainfalls e.g. roofs being blown away and cracks of the walls.

Question: 4

INT: How long have you been experiencing the water and electricity problem?

RES 6: Hooo it's been a while because the water usually we do have the water in the morning from 6 o clock and then it's off and then we and then its turned on again from 8 o clock yah and it's really unhygienic. The electricity is better than the water now.

RES 7: It's almost uhm for water I think its 2-3year okay electricity is now that bad.

RES 8: Shoo as far as I can remember the water problem it's been over 10 years to 15 years and the electricity problem also around that time since I've known this place electricity and water has been a problem and it's not just the water that we are drinking hey this area where I stay at Extension 5 when we arrived actually that land was never we were never supposed to build in that land so when we first around there was a lot of water coming from underground. And my home we suffered a lot

because it used to flood a lot they didn't even put uhm the the the drains so they all put them after maybe 10 years we living there and they started to put drains there were like springs I don't know what you call them coming from underground and then when it rains the way its structured there's no drains from the streets so when it rains it actually floods after flooding the springs come out it was horrible.

RES 9: I don't know as long as I can remember.

RES 10: It has been about 26 years now.

QUESTION: 5

INT: What measures have you taken to make the municipality aware of the challenges faced?

RES 6: I haven't taken any steps.

RES 7: We are reporting to the municipality we attend their meetings and report to them verbally in the meetings we do phone the council.

RES 8: Well I used to be a youth leader actually at the ANC youth league and I was just involved in the community I was a community person I'm that kind of person even now to help other you know that's my passion so every time I see a problem I will raise it and raise it but no one listened even the people you tried to vote for this one thinking that this one is going to do that and it was difficult for me because we are in the same party you vote for people hoping that they will do something you know and you tell people that this one you know this person is gonna do something our problems so our problems keep on mounting and mounting and mounting nothing is happening even the guy now at Extension 5 is a municipal councillor that guy is my friend from long time ago and I used to complain with him we were in the youth league together he's worse people have beaten him he's running away the place looks terrible now it's worse I'm so embarrassed that that's my home. Actually it's sad for me the way it is I feel like someone must be held accountable someone must be arrested because at national level like I'm an ANC member card carry member not ANC and I know at national level ANC has got good policies they really want to do something for the country so for national level to provincial level to municipality level actually at municipality level that's where we are struggling at the most people are not doing anything the problem is actually at the bottom where a lot of work needs to be done. At national level the policies are done and at provincial level you must uhm ensure that those policies are implemented and at the municipal level that's where the people are that's where you must make a change you know yah that's where the physical work is and people are not working so yah.

PQ: would you then say that most of the people at the municipality are employed based on nepotism and not on merits?

RES 8: Yes that is a definite yes I know it because for someone who is actually in the ANC I am privileged to know certain information well I'm not happy with, if you look at my life I've tried many things myself I've gone through what you've gone through I've suffered in such a way that now you have to go to places like Cape Town to get a job and for someone who is passionate about the community but now you have to think of yourself and go outside but if it was for me I would have loved to be here and actually give back I have soo much to give back actually to this community so I've been through it all we were building schools they give us they promised us jobs now you build schools and you get nothing and they say just open companies and you get a tender for the for the roads and then they give the families their tenders they don't train us well so those things they come from national level that you know take the people and do this so yah I've been there done that
yes you know it's really actually you know it breaks my heart as a black nation actually that we used to struggle uhm okay I'm young I never actually there in the struggle but like when I was born it's when I grew up and realized how things were Its like I realize why people they how much they struggled now for where I am now what I can do today the struggle now and people the power in their heads they have time money and actually they can make the change but the same people now they advance themselves and their families and you will find that the certain people are not qualified for certain jobs for instance like a municipal manager needs a very qualified person to fill that position because for me if it looks like this the first thing I do is I fire the CEO.

RES 9: My mom always complain in writing but nothing ever changes.

RES 10: I've raised the issues faced during community meeting but it seems like we are continuously being ignored by our municipality.

QUESTION: 6

INT: What has the municipality done regarding this problem?

RES 6: They just given us strategies on how to save water because there is water shortage and electricity ah nothing.

PQ: Do you think the municipality is aware of the problems faced?

RES 6: Yes they are aware because on the news they tell us that there is a water shortage and loads adding as well but nothing has been done.

RES 7: They are always promising to address the problems but the problem is never addressed.

RES 8: Nothing has been really done.

RES 9: Okay they post when they gonna come but they never come like about 2 weeks we have rubbish piling up and then we get people whom we need to pay to go throw the rubbish somewhere. And this is not right because now you ruining the environment because now it becomes dirty and unhealthy so we creating problems on top of problems.

RES 10: Nothing at all. Instead we receive empty promises. The municipality always fix a few things when the elections are near. As soon as the local elections are over we are yet experiencing the same problems with no solutions at hand.

QUESTION: 7

INT: Would you say your municipality is effective and efficient in delivering services to its citizens? Please motivate your response?

RES 6: In the previous years I'd say yes but this year ah no. I think that in the previous years we had water, even though we had water shortage in some days but it wasn't like this year and the electricity also but this year even in winter we didn't have electricity but they didn't tell us at least if they told us ukuthi (that) at this time the electricity will be off and water but they didn't for days we didn't have anything and we couldn't go anywhere to go get water because there was also not water there.

RES 7: Our municipality is inefficient service delivery is poor even if let me say even if they are correcting the potholes there are no supervisions or monitoring on the person who's doing the job so the person doing the job is not doing things correctly. So you find that after two or three weeks the very same problem rises. It's not fixed properly the material is not up to standard. People who are doing the job themselves we are doubting them because they not doing them correctly.

RES 8: I'm saying no definite no they are the worst municipality as far as I'm concerned I know I don't know other municipalities up close and personal for me in my life I'm embarrassed to say this is worst municipality in South Africa that I know of and the reason being whatever they don't follow any policies they don't follow any policies and procedures they don't do anything right so they don't pay their bills they

don't employ people for the job and actually people who are there they not doing their jobs you know there is sewage that is running on the streets and the water is bad there is constant load shading I don't even call it load shading blackouts.

RES 9: No I don't think they are I feel like they do things just to make us happy, to cover up for their mistakes.

RES 10: No because everything is not up to date.

QUESTION: 8

INT: What do you think of the leaders, and employees of the Emalahleni Municipality?

RES 6: Eish I'm not sure especially in this generation it's all about connections so eish I'm not really sure. They actually give us empty promises. We think of a plan for the unemployment for the youth and stuff but they never deliver those services. I'd like to think so but the employees are not really professional.

RES 7: There is no professionalism, even if you go and report, they will take you from one pillar to post rather than pillar you find yourself frustrated number one number two I don't say that some are trained for the job.

PQ: Would you then say most employees are employed on nepotism and not on merits?

RES 7: No people are not employed according to merits nepotism is there but people are employed according to their political status and nepotism too

PQ: Do you think the municipality if transparent in everything that is happening?

RES 7: Well they do call in meetings but the meetings are never fruitful the very same problems are being tackled in the meetings but there is no progress they will talk about electricity they will talk about water I think is almost more than forty something months talking about the very same problem but it's never addressed even two weeks ago we had a meeting talking about scarcity of water in our area we were promised that jojo tanks will be delivered in the area, until now we are seeing nothing yah we are still waiting for them but fortunately in the taps the water is there because at times you find that they don't even have taps.

PQ: Is the water clean and safe to drink?

RES 7: The water is not clean and safe to drink, the water is stinking You have to buy clean drinking water most of the time we use municipality water for washing and cleaning you have to buy clean water for drinking and cooking.

RES 8: Shoo my dear its bad and I'm not like saying I'm generalizing I'm looking at like the majority of the people they have bad attitudes the service is slow you actually most of the time don't get the results I'll make you an example I sold a house few

years ago and I did go to the municipality to go and change my account to the new owner and as I'm speak now in December I received a bill of R2700 still in my name.

RES 9: I think most of them are not doing their jobs because sometimes when you get to the municipality you are not given attention as the customer.
PQ: As a learner has this water and electricity problem affected you in anyway?
RES 9: Yes because I sometimes have to study in the dark and I'm not used to that lifestyle. Also the water issue affects me as a learner because I'm supposed to wake up and bath when I go to school so sometimes I end up not going to school because there is no water to bath.

RES 10: They lack professionalism and ethics still need more training to improve. Also employing the right people with the right qualifications will improve the system I think.

QUESTION: 9

INT: What changes would you like to see happening in the Emalahleni Municipality?

RES 6: I'd say maybe the unemployment. And uhm maybe if Zuma can create more jobs as he promised and uhm maybe the loads adding also if they can employ more people I think and qualified people. There are a lot of people who are doing electrical engineering these days but without jobs.

RES 7: You know I forgot to say something concerning service delivery if you can go to the graveyards you will be shocked. The graveyards are so dirty. At times when you are burying somebody you are looking down to check if there is no snake around you it's so bad the state is so bad would like to see people employing people on merits number one stop their internal bittering because as citizens you overhear that they are fighting internally so if you are in position and your subordinates are not in favour of you how are you going to deliver the services because they need to work as a team first of all they must be employed on merits and they must work as a team. Police must intervene crime is also too high. There is this man called copper head. Copper head comes into people's houses and rape people. He already raped about fifty six victims in the area.

RES 8: The first thing you must employ a good municipal manager it's very important because that manager is going to employ people who are capable then those capable people must be held accountable for. You must have measures in place that is gonna monitor their progress even if it includes like performance management kind of thing that they are monitored and motivated actually to service the people because what I've seen with South Africans the spirit of Ubuntu is dead and actually people don't want to service other people even with their jobs they don't want to do their jobs

RES 9: They should fix the potholes that's like the main thing. Like by the outline they fixed it but not like the entire road. Yah and its like dangers for drivers because you have to swerve to avoid that everyone is swerving you might cause accidents and there is kids running around so it's not good for cars for everyone I think they should just fix it.

RES 10: The municipality should send the employees to training to improve efficiency, effectiveness, professionalism, and ethics within the workplace. And I think the leadership style should improve because it seems like it is not democratic but autocratic because our opinions are not considered.