EXAMINING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AS A CONTRIBUTOR TO GOOD GOVERNANCE: A LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE

By

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DECLARATION:

In accordance with Rule G5.6.3, I hereby declare that the above-mentioned treatise/dissertation/thesis is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment to another University or for another qualification.

SIGNATURE: [Signature]

DATE: 05-01-16
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late grandfather, Mzingeli Kutse who was not educated but had wished that his grandchildren would grab the opportunity to get education and exploit opportunities and my aim was always to make this wish come true. I further want to dedicate this thesis to my late mother Sindiswa Patricia Nkuntse who sacrificed everything for me to get the best education. Her belief in me, in my abilities and her trust inspired me to strive for this achievement. I will always love you, Nomsilana, I thank God for you. To the rest of my family, Ontshilibe, OmDumane, ONdize, Obhango, yiboneni nantsi imizamo yam.
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ABSTRACT

This study undertook to examine public participation as a contributor to good governance in the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (NMBM), as part of the process of improving this Municipality’s governance. The main objectives of the study were to analyse the existing processes and arrangements for public participation in the NMBM; to examine the extent to which community participation influences decision-making; to investigate the factors that improve or lead to good governance in a municipal environment; to examine a framework for robust participation, in which communities are able to influence decisions that affect them; and to propose recommendations to potentially improve the Municipality’s governance. The triangulation research methodology was employed with emphasis on both the quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

The sample comprised of two Ward Councillors, two selected Mayoral Committee members and 14 Ward Committee members. Questionnaires, with open and closed questions, were employed for the Ward Committee members and semi-structured interviews were conducted with both the Ward Councillors and the two Mayoral Committee members. Statistical procedures supplied by the NMMU Unit of Statistics were utilised to interpret and analyse the quantitative data to determine the results for data analysis. The qualitative data analysis involved thematic content analysis.

The findings suggest that the current public participation processes are inadequate. The correlation of results further revealed that a significant negative relationship exists between the Ward Councillors, the Municipality and Ward Committee members. Despite various legislative prescriptions pertaining to public participation requirements in local government, the results suggest that the NMBM may be undertaking the public participation exercise for the sake of compliance and therefore it might not be a genuine exercise.

The thesis proposes specific recommendations on how the NMBM can address the current shortcomings in terms of its public participation processes and strategies. Recommendations include significant civic education for the public to understand that being in a democratic country involves active participation in local affairs; more participatory initiatives need to be done to make the public aware of the role of Ward
Committees and to invite people to apply to be on these Committees; recommendations also suggested that it would be crucial that Ward Committees are not used as a political platform to push political agendas, as this deters public participation. The NMBM needs to establish a monitoring and evaluation process to track their progress with public participation and develop and implement a public participation strategy and policy for enhanced public participation is also proposed in the thesis.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION ...........................................................................................................i
DEDICATION ............................................................................................................ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .........................................................................................iii
ABSTRACT ...............................................................................................................iv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....................................................................................xiv
LIST OF FIGURES ..................................................................................................xv
LIST OF TABLES .....................................................................................................xviii

CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................19
1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY ........................................................................20
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT .....................................................................................22
1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS ...................................................................................22
1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES ................................................................................22
1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY ....................................................................23
1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW .....................................................................................23
1.8 LEGISLATION AND POLICY ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN SOUTH AFRICA ...........................................................................................................26
1.8.2 The White Paper on Local Government, 1998 .......................................27
1.8.3 The Municipal Systems Act, 2000 ............................................................28
1.8.4 Batho Pele Principles, 1997 ....................................................................29
1.8.5 Guidelines for the establishment and Operation of Wards, 2005 (Policy) ...........................................................................................................30
1.8.6 National Framework for Public Participation, 2005 (Policy) ...............31
1.9 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY ........................................31
1.9.1 Research Design .................................................................32
1.9.2 Geographical Area of the Study .............................................33
1.9.3 Population ...............................................................................33
1.9.4 Sampling Methods .................................................................33
1.9.5 Data Collection Methods .........................................................34
1.9.6 Data Analysis ..........................................................................34
1.9.7 Delimitation of the study ...........................................................34
1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS ....................................................35
1.11 CHAPTER OVERVIEW ..............................................................36
1.12 CONCLUSION ............................................................................36

CHAPTER TWO
THE CONCEPTUAL AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
2.1 INTRODUCTION ............................................................................38
2.2 DEFINING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE ......38
2.2.1 Public Participation defined .......................................................39
2.2.2 Good governance defined ........................................................43
2.3 INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ........................................................................45
2.3.1 International Perspective ............................................................46
2.3.1.1 Brazil ................................................................................46
2.3.1.2 India ...............................................................................47
2.3.2 Regional Perspective .................................................................48
2.3.2.1 Uganda ...........................................................................49
2.3.2.2 Ghana ............................................................................49
2.4 SOUTH AFRICA ...........................................................................50
2.5 LEGISLATION ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN SOUTH AFRICA ..........53
   2.5.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 ................. 53
   2.5.2 The White Paper on Local Government, 1998.............................. 54
   2.5.3 The Municipal Systems Act, 2000........................................ 55
   2.5.4 Batho Pele Principles, 1997............................................... 56
   2.5.5 Guidelines for the Operation of Wards, 2005 (Policy).................. 57
   2.5.6 National Framework for Public Participation, 2007 (Policy) .......... 57
2.6 CONCLUSION..................................................................................58

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION..............................................................................59
3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN.......................................................................59
3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY..........................................................60
   3.3.1 Qualitative Research .............................................................61
   3.3.2 Quantitative Research ...........................................................62
   3.3.3 Rationale for the use of methodological triangulation ................. 62
3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS/TECHNIQUES..................................63
   3.4.1 Population and Sampling .........................................................64
   3.4.2 Questionnaire ........................................................................65
   3.4.3 Interviews...............................................................................66
      3.4.3.1 Semi-structured interviews with Ward Councillors and
              Mayoral Committee members ........................................... 68
      3.4.3.1.1 Design of interview questions .................................. 68
      3.4.3.1.2 Structure of the semi-structured interviews
              conducted with Two Mayoral Committee Members
              and Two Ward Councillors.............................................. 69
3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS .........................................................70
3.6 LIMITATIONS ..............................................................................70
CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION .................................................................................73

4.2 QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS .................................................................73

4.2.1 Section A .........................................................................................74

4.2.1.1 Demographics: Ward Committee Members ............................74

4.2.1.2 Age .........................................................................................75

4.2.2 Section B .........................................................................................77

4.2.2.1 Opinions on transparency ...............................................................77

4.2.2.1.1 The municipality gives progress reports to the community on municipal projects and programmes .................................77

4.2.2.1.2 The Ward Councillor does give feedback on municipal council meetings .................................................................78

4.2.2.1.3 The councillor is accountable to the community on an on-going manner .................................................................79

4.2.2.2 Attendance in meetings .................................................................80

4.2.2.2.1 There are regular ward meetings ............................................80

4.2.2.2.2 The notice of the meetings is communicated well in advance .................................................................81

4.2.2.2.3 The purpose of the meeting is communicated to the residents in advance .................................................................82

4.2.2.2.4 The venue of the meetings is always accessible .................82

4.2.2.2.5 The community is always informed about the meetings ........83

4.2.2.3 Opinions on public participation .................................................84

4.2.2.3.1 The residents are always given an opportunity to participate in meetings .................................................................85
4.2.2.3.2 The members of the community’s views are always taken into account when decisions are taken.................................................86
4.2.2.3.3 Members of the community are always rushed to take decisions as residents. .................................86
4.2.2.3.4 The public is always aware of the importance of their participation in these meetings. ...............87
4.2.2.3.5 Participation in municipal affairs is encouraged. .................................................................88

4.2.2.4 Empowerment ......................................................................................................................89

4.2.2.4.1 The Ward Councillor encourages members of the community to participate.............................89
4.2.2.4.2 The decisions of these meetings yield good results that are fruitful in the community. ..........90
4.2.2.4.3 Residents are encouraged to participate in empowerment projects...........................................90
4.2.2.4.4 Planned empowerment programmes are communicated in a clear manner...............................91

4.2.2.5 Promoting good governance...............................................................................................92

4.2.2.5.1 Views of the community influence the decision-making and planning in the municipality.................................92
4.2.2.5.2 The municipality is always accountable to residents................................................................93
4.2.2.5.3 There is regular feedback from Ward Councillors on the plans, state and future of the municipality.................................................................94
4.2.2.5.4 The short-term and long-term plans of the municipality are communicated to us.....................95
4.2.2.5.5 Members of the community have direct contact/access to democratically elected representatives.................................................................96
4.2.2.5.6 The community/committee feels that the governance is owned by the community.............96

4.2.2.6 What other forums for community participation are you aware of in your community? ......................97

4.2.2.7 In your view, how important is public participation in local government? .........................................................97
4.2.3 Statistical analysis .................................................................................................................98

4.3 INTERVIEW RESULTS .............................................................................................................99

4.3.1 Interviews with Mayoral Committee members .................................................................99

4.3.2 Interviews with Ward Councillors .......................................................................................104

4.3.2.1 Ward Councillor from Ward 3 .......................................................................................104

4.3.2.1.1 Are you aware of the processes for public participation in your Ward? Yes or No. Motivate your answer. .................................................................104

4.3.2.1.2 What are your views as a Councillor for this Ward about the processes of participation? ......104

4.3.2.1.3 Are you aware of any form of empowerment offered to the citizens to participate in local affairs? Yes or No. If yes, how are community members empowered to participate? ................105

4.3.2.1.4 Is the community educated about the importance of their role of being part of the decision-making in their affairs? If yes, how? If not, why? .................................................................105

4.3.2.1.5 What suggestions can you make to improve public participation in matters of local government? ........................................................................................................105

4.3.2.1.6 What (logistical) arrangements are made to improve attendance in meetings? ..............106

4.3.2.1.7 To what extent does community participation influence decision-making? ..................106

4.3.2.1.8 Does public participation inform good governance? Explain........................................106

4.3.2.1.9 What suggestions can you make for improving the level of participation in your ward? ..........106

4.3.2.2 Ward Councillor from Ward 4 .......................................................................................107

4.3.2.2.1 Are you aware of the processes for public participation in your ward? Yes or No. Motivate your answer. .................................................................107

4.3.2.2.2 What are your views as a Councillor for this Ward about the processes of participation? ......107

4.3.2.2.3 Are you aware of any form of empowerment offered to the citizens to participate in local
affairs? Yes or No. If yes, how are community members empowered to participate? ..........107

4.3.2.2.4 Is the community educated about the importance of their role of being part of the decision-making in their affairs? If yes, how? If not, why? ................................................................. 108

4.3.2.2.5 What suggestions can you make to improve public participation in matters of local government? .......................................................... 108

4.3.2.2.6 What (logistical) arrangements are made to improve attendance in meetings? ..........109

4.3.2.2.7 To what extent does community participation influence decision-making? ................. 109

4.3.2.2.8 Does public participation inform good governance? Explain. .................................... 109

4.3.2.2.9 What suggestions can you make for improving the level of participation in your ward? ..........110

4.4 KEY FINDINGS .................................................................................................................. 110

4.4.1 Key findings from the questionnaires administered to the Ward Committee Members. ...................................................... 110

4.4.2 Key findings from the interviews with the Mayoral Committee members 111

4.4.3 Key findings from the interviews with Ward Councillors ................. 111

4.5 CONCLUSION....................................................................................................................... 112

CHAPTER 5

FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................. 113

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY .......................................................................................... 113

5.3 FINAL CONCLUSIONS ................................................................................................... 114

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS .................................................................................................... 116

5.4.1 Recommendations addressing the research problem .................................. 116

5.4.2 Recommendations for future research ................................................................. 117

LIST OF REFERENCES ........................................................................................................... 119
APPENDICES

ANNEXURE A: LETTER OF REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN NMBM.. 134
ANNEXURE B: APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FROM NMBM............ 135
ANNEXURE C: ETHICS APPROVAL TO CONDUCT THE RESEARCH............. 136
ANNEXURE D: INFORMED CONSENT .............................................................. 137
ANNEXURE E: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE – Mayoral Committee Member........ 139
ANNEXURE F: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR WARD COUNCILLORS............. 140
ANNEXURE G: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ward committee MEMBERS141
ANNEXURE H: CERTIFICATE OF EDITING...................................................... 146
### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NMBM</td>
<td>Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDP</td>
<td>Integrated Development Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DA</td>
<td>Democratic Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANC</td>
<td>African National Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDW</td>
<td>Community Development Workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPF</td>
<td>Community Policing Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAPC</td>
<td>International Association for Public Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAPAM</td>
<td>African Association for Public Administration and Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>Public Sector Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community Based Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NMMU</td>
<td>Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USC</td>
<td>Unit for Statistical Consultation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.3: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 1 in Section B of the questionnaire, “The municipality gives progress reports to the community on municipal projects and programmes” .............................. 78

Figure 4.4: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 2 of Section B of the questionnaire, “The Ward Councillor does give feedback on municipal council meetings” ................................................................. 79

Figure 4.6: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 1 of attendance in meetings, “There are regular ward meetings.” .......... 81

Figure 4.7: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 2 of attendance in meetings, “The notice of the meetings is communicated well in advance.” ................................................................. 81

Figure 4.8: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 3 of attendance in meetings, “The purpose of the meeting is communicated to the residents in advance” ................................................................. 82

Figure 4.9: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 4 of attendance in meetings, “The venue of the meetings is always accessible” ............................................................................................................. 83

Figure 4.10: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 5 of attendance in meetings, “The community is always informed about the meetings” ................................................................. 84

Figure 4.11: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 1 on opinions on public participation, “The residents are always given an opportunity to participate in meetings” ................................................................. 85

Figure 4.12: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 2 on opinions on public participation, “The members of the community’s views are always taken into account when decisions are taken” ...... 86
Figure 4.13: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 2 on opinions on public participation, “Members of the community are always rushed to take decisions as residents” ......................................................... 87

Figure 4.14: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 3 on opinions on public participation, “The public is always aware of the importance of their participation in these meetings.” ................................................. 88

Figure 4.15: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 4 on opinions on public participation, “Participation in municipal affairs is encouraged” ............................................................................................................. 88

Figure 4.16: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 1 on empowerment, “The Ward Councillor encourages members of the community to participate” ............................................................................................................. 89

Figure 4.17: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 2 on empowerment, “The decisions of these meetings yield good results that are fruitful in the community” ................................................................. 90

Figure 4.18: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 3 on empowerment, “Residents are encouraged to participate in empowerment projects” ............................................................................................................. 91

Figure 4.19: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 4 on empowerment, “Planned empowerment programmes are communicated in a clear manner” ............................................................................................................. 92

Figure 4.20: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 1 on Promoting Good Governance, “Views of the community influence the decision-making and planning in the municipality” ................................................................. 93

Figure 4.21: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 2 on Promoting Good Governance, “The municipality is always accountable to residents” ............................................................................................................. 94
Figure 4.22: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 3 on Promoting Good Governance, “There are regular feedback from ward councillors on the plans, state and future of the municipality” ......................... 95

Figure 4.23: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 4 on Promoting Good Governance, “The short term and long term plans of the municipality are communicated to us” ................................................. 95

Figure 4.24: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 4 on Promoting Good Governance, “Members of the community have direct contact/access to democratically elected representatives” .......................... 96

Figure 4.25: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 5 on Promoting Good Governance, “The community/committee feels that the governance is owned by the community” ....................................................... 97
LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: A table showing the gender of the respondents from each of the selected Wards, both in numbers and percentages .......................................................... 74

Table 4.2: A table showing the age of the respondents from each of the selected Wards, both in numbers and percentages .......................................................... 76
CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study examines public participation as a contributor to good governance in the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (NMBM), as part of the process of improving this Municipality’s governance. According to Plein (1994:1), the place of public participation in governance is an enduring question in the study of politics, society and administration. Furthermore, many have noted the disconnection between citizens and governance, and have therefore questioned the relationship between citizens and the state (Simonsen, Johnston, and Bamett, 1996). This study examined how public participation can result in or contribute to good governance.

In the space of Public Administration, there are generally accepted clichés that are also applicable to South Africa, for example ‘the dawn of democracy’, which advocates the notion of participation and requires the active involvement of citizens in decision-making. In a democracy, the constitution is the supreme law that governs both the government and the people. One vital aspect of democracy is participation. Schuler and Namioka (1993:72) argue that the key element of participation is democracy and, conversely, that the key element of democracy is participation. Citizen participation is thus a crucial element for building local democracy (Stiefel and Wolfe 1994, Fung and Wright 2001). The post-apartheid dispensation in South Africa has seen the development of a new pro-people constitution that has entrenched public participation in government processes.

This chapter provides an outline of the direction the researcher wished to take during the research. The research question was provided, as well as the research aims and objectives that allowed this research question to be addressed. A brief background and motivation for this study, and a problem statement that guided the research was also presented.

A legislative framework that includes public participation as a contributory factor was analysed, together with policies underpinning public participation. The research
design and methodology that depicted how this research would be conducted was also outlined. A brief chapter overview of the thesis was also be presented.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Public participation as a Constitutional mandate ought to play an integral part in the assurance of a government that it will not only be people-centred, but also be accountable for its actions, transparent in its dealings and reliable in service provision. Public participation is also embedded in all current local government legislation in South Africa. It should therefore become a reality in all local government processes and practices.

According to Maphazi (2012:19), the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 heralded a new system of local government, mandated to also play a developmental role. Furthermore, in terms of this new status, local government became a sphere of government equal to the other two spheres, namely the national and provincial spheres. The enhanced status of local government augurs well for the future of democracy in South Africa, since local government is the sphere of government closest to the public in terms of service delivery. The developmental role of local government can be fully realised only if the people, who are the true beneficiaries of development, take part in shaping their own destiny. In this regard, the White Paper on Local Government (1998) defines developmental local government as government committed to 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.

According to the Municipal Structures Act (1998), municipalities have been demarcated into three categories, namely: (i) Category A, which includes Municipalities or Metropolitan Municipalities; (ii) Category B, which includes Municipalities or Local Municipalities; and (iii) Category C, which covers Municipalities or District Municipalities.

The NMBM, which is located in the Eastern Cape Province, is a Category A Municipality currently comprising 60 Wards. Due to the size of the municipality, this study concentrated on two Wards, namely Wards 3 and 4.
The NMBM obtained a number of awards that identified it as an example to other municipalities in promoting community participation in its affairs. In recent history, though, much has been reported on NMBM’s poor performance in terms of having poorly functioning Ward Committees and its public participation meetings not being as well attended and participatory as they used to be. There have been both illegal and legal protests staged against poor service delivery. Some of these problems have resulted in tensions between Councillors and constituencies. These challenges have motivated an examination of public participation processes at the NMBM, to investigate the manner in which the municipality conducts its business with its residents.

Furthermore, although there are mechanisms to improve public participation and participation processes, particularly related to the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and budgeting, these have not been effective in terms of communication and logistical arrangements. This has resulted in poor attendance by the public at these meetings, and less public participation undermines good governance.

Various offices have been created to manage public participation, but problems such as lack of attendance by citizens in these meetings remain. There are also reports of limited staff within this unit, namely Corporate Governance, within which public participation falls.

Another major area of concern pertaining to public participation is that officials do not respond to or attend to community matters and complaints, but know where to find citizens when a public participation exercise has to be conducted. Some Directors are also reluctant to become involved with or consult the public.

These problems have contributed to citizens refraining from participating in local government processes and have built a perception that these platforms of public participation are nothing but ceremonial and protocol-observation gatherings. This has led to the view that public participation is only done for the purpose of complying with legislation, as opposed to a genuine attempt to meaningfully engage the public as a key stakeholder grouping in local government functioning. It is within this context that the current research proposed to examine public participation in order to assess how this municipality can improve its participation processes so that both
citizens and the municipality can work together to ensure good governance in the Municipality.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The concepts for public participation include consultation, involvement and engagement. Consultation generally refers to informing the community about decisions that affect them, whilst involvement is often related to specific episodes. These processes do not seem to afford the community real participation in the governance of NMBM, in particular with regard to influencing decision-making. This research is therefore intended to analyse the existing processes for public participation at NMBM and the extent to which these can contribute to good governance in the municipality.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research proposed to answer the following questions:

i. What are the processes for public participation?
ii. How are community members empowered to participate therein?
iii. What logistical arrangements are made to improve attendance in meetings?
iv. Does participation inform good governance?
v. To what extent does public participation improve good governance?

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research were as follows:

i. To analyse the existing processes and arrangements for public participation in the NMBM;
ii. To examine the extent to which communities’ participation influences decision-making;
iii. To examine a framework for robust participation, in which communities are able to influence decisions; and
iv. To develop recommendations to potentially improve the Municipality’s governance.
1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The outcomes and recommendations of the study can assist NMBM improve its mechanisms of public participation, which could potentially enhance good governance in the municipality. In particular, the effectiveness and efficiency of local governance could be enhanced. Secondly, this research will assist the municipality in identifying current gaps and deficiencies with regard to citizen participation. Lastly, this research will enrich the debate around public participation and developmental local government.

1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Fink (2009:3), a literature review is “a systematic, explicit, and reproducible method for identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing the existing body of completed and recorded work produced by researchers, scholars, and practitioners”. For Dawidowicz (2010:2), a literature review is “a systematic examination of knowledge available on a topic and it involves the use of appropriate peer-reviewed articles”. While Jesson, Matheson and Lacey (2011:10) argue that literature review is not only for understanding of the already existing work, but it is also for the researcher to give interpretation of the work and outline contradictions and gaps in the work. Moreover, Blaxter (1998:110) define a literature review to be a “critical summary and assessment of the range of existing materials dealing with knowledge and understanding in a given field”.

In this short literature review, the conceptual terms of public participation and good governance will be explained. Existing legislation and policies on public participation, especially in local government, will then be examined. The role of citizens in local government and administration will also be discussed. This forms the basis of a framework for analysing public participation as a contributor to good governance.

Different authors have different perspectives of the concept of public participation. According to Theron (2005c:113), public participation is “an elusive concept which acts as an umbrella term for a new style of development planning intervention”. Furthermore, Theron (2005c:113) holds the view that it is impossible to suggest a development strategy of intervention that is not “participatory”.

23
He argues that the Economic Commission of Latin America (1973) considers contributions by the public to programmes to the complete exclusion of any in the decision-making process as “participation” (Theron, 2005c:113). Kumar (2002:23), meanwhile, holds the view that public participation means different things to different people. Public participation includes people’s engagement throughout the decision-making process, in implementing programmes, in the sharing of the benefits of development programmes and in efforts to evaluate such programmes (Kumar, 2002:24).

Theron (2005c:113-114) highlights that the ILO, through the Participatory Organisations of the Rural Poor Programmes, argues that its evaluations of international strategies have shown that a grassroots approach to public participation has generated the definition of public participation. Rahman (1993:150) outlines such an approach as follows:

“What gives real meaning to (popular) participation is the collective effort by the people concerned in organized framework to pool their efforts and whatever other resources they decide to pool together, to attain objectives they set for themselves. In this regard participation is viewed as an active process in which the participants take initiatives and take actions that are stimulated by their own thinking and deliberation and over which they can exert effective control.” [Emphasis in the original]

The United Nations (UN) Department of Economics and Social Affairs (1963), cited in Theron (2005c:114), states that participation of the people themselves in efforts to improve their level of living is expressed in programmes, which are planned to achieve a wide variety of specific improvements.

The key issues identified in the definitions of public participation by the ILO and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs include the following (Theron, 2005c:114):

i. Participation is an organized activity of the people concerned. The primary unit of participation is a collective of persons who participate in a relationship with the state;
ii. The taking of initiatives by the collective in gaining access to programmes and projects is a central feature; and

iii. The origin of initiatives for programmes and projects is based on the people’s own thinking and deliberations which direct their activities.

The above factors, as will be seen in subsequent chapters, are not well developed at local government level, in that the people concerned are not properly organised and there seems to be little initiative taken to improve this and empower the public to participate meaningfully in local affairs. This is evident particularly in the processes of IDP and budgeting, as there have been reports on the inadequate communication and logistical arrangements for the public to attend these gatherings. The origins of initiatives for programmes and projects are not based on the people’s own thinking; instead, local authorities come up with these and merely report these initiatives to the community. If the converse were true, the processes of public participation would be significantly improved.

According to the UN Human Settlements (www.oas.org) public participation refers to the interaction between government and civil society through different mechanisms to design, evaluate and implement development policies, projects and programmes. Participation could be either direct or indirect, through legitimate intermediate institutions or representatives; it needs to be informed and organised. This means freedom of association and expression on the one hand, and an organised civil society on the other hand. Public participation is a key component of good governance.

Good governance requires that this process is participatory, consensus-oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective, efficient, equitable, inclusive and that it follows the rule of law in order to ensure that corruption is eradicated, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making.

McCarney, Halfani and Rodfiguez (1995) state, “governance offers new way of thinking about development”. These authors further state that governance, in theory, goes beyond government and includes some of the less formal power structures that affect the lives of ordinary people. This highlights the roles of different power...
structures, how these exercise influence and how these power structures are influenced by the subjects of development. This led to the role of civil society in good governance. McCarney et al. (1995) state that while governance can be influenced in the interface between civil society and the state, the ‘buzzwords’ surrounding the definition of good governance, such as accountability, transparency and legitimacy, are most readily attached to the state.

According to Bryld (2001:151), “the promotion of an accountable and transparent civil society is not so easy and may even be impossible. What is important however, is to optimize the functioning of the state so that it encourages a closer interaction with civil society. The state can promote strong governance by letting citizens into the decision-making process”.

1.8 LEGISLATION AND POLICY ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The South African government has enacted a list of statutes and policies to encourage citizen participation and ensure good governance in the country, particularly at the local government level. These include the following, each of which will be subsequently discussed:

iii. The Municipal Systems Act, 2000
iv. Batho Pele, 1997 (Policy)
v. Guidelines for the Operation of Wards, 2005 (Policy)


The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, hereinafter referred to as the Constitution, places an obligation on local government to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government. During the years following the promulgation of the Constitution, municipalities wrestled with a multitude of other transformation-related issues, with the result that
few actively encouraged communities to involve themselves in the affairs of the municipality.

The notion of public participation in all spheres of government is embedded in the South African Constitution. In terms of the local spheres of government, the Constitution states the following:

i. According to section 151(1)(e), municipalities are obliged to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in local government;

ii. Section 152 states that the objects of local government are to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government; and

iii. Section 195(e) stipulates that in terms of the basic values and principles governing public administration, people’s needs must be responded to and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making.


According to the White Paper on Local Government (1998), municipalities require active participation by citizens at four levels:

i. As voters, to ensure maximum democratic accountability of the elected political leadership for the policies that the latter is empowered to promote;

ii. As citizens who express, through different stakeholder associations, their views before, during and after the policy development process in order to ensure that policies reflect community preferences as far as possible;

iii. As consumers and end-users who expect value-for-money, affordable services and courteous and responsive service; and

iv. As organised partners involved in the mobilisation of resources for development through for profit businesses, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based institutions (CBOs).

The White Paper also suggests that “municipalities should develop mechanisms to ensure citizen participation in policy initiation and formulation, and the monitoring
and evaluation (M&E) of decision-making and implementation” The following approaches can assist in the achievement of this:

i. Forums to allow organised formations to initiate policies and/or influence policy formulation, as well as participate in M&E;

ii. Structured stakeholder involvement in certain council committees, in particular if these are issue-oriented committees with a limited lifespan rather than permanent structures;

iii. Participatory budgeting initiatives aimed at linking community priorities to capital investment programmes; and

iv. Focus group participatory action research conducted in partnership with NGOs and CBOs can generate detailed information about a wide range of specific needs and values.

1.8.3 The Municipal Systems Act, 2000

The Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 defines “the legal nature of a municipality as including the local community within the municipal area, working in partnerships with the municipality’s political and administrative structures to provide for community participation”. According to section 4 of this Act, council has the following duties:

i. To encourage the involvement of the local community; and

ii. To consult the community about the level of quality, range and impact of municipal services provided by the municipality, either directly or through another service provider.

In section 5, members of the community have the following rights:

i. To contribute to the decision-making processes of the municipality and submit written or oral recommendations, representations and complaints to the municipal council;

ii. To be informed of decisions of the municipal council; and

iii. To regular disclosure of the affairs of the municipality, including its finances.

Perhaps the clearest and most specific requirements for public participation in local governance are outlined in Chapter 4. Section 16 of Chapter 4 states the following:
i. Municipalities must develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance and;

ii. must encourage and create conditions for the community to participate in the affairs of the municipality, including in the IDP, performance management system, monitoring and review of performance;

iii. must prepare the budget and strategic decisions regarding municipal services; and

iv. Municipalities contribute to building the capacity of the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality, and of councillors and staff to foster community participation.

Section 42 takes point (ii) above further and stipulates that through appropriate mechanisms, processes and procedures, the municipality should involve the local community in the development, implementation and review of the municipality’s performance management system and, in particular, allow the community to participate in the setting of appropriate key performance indicators and performance targets for the municipality.

1.8.4 Batho Pele Principles, 1997

Batho Pele, a Sotho translation for ‘People First’, is an initiative to get public servants to be service orientated, to strive for excellence in service delivery and to commit to continuous service delivery improvement. It is a simple and transparent mechanism, which allows citizens to hold public servants accountable for the quality of services delivered. Batho Pele is not an ‘add-on’ activity but rather a philosophy of service delivery in which citizens are placed at the centre of public service planning and operations.

Eight Batho Pele principles were developed to serve as an acceptable policy and legislative framework regarding service delivery in the public service. These principles are aligned with the Constitutional ideals of promoting and maintaining high standards of professional ethics; providing service impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias; utilising resources efficiently and effectively; responding to people's
needs; encouraging citizens to participate in policy-making; and rendering an accountable, transparent and development-oriented public administration.

The Batho Pele principles comprise the following:

i. Consultation;
ii. Setting service standards;
iii. Increasing access;
iv. Ensuring courtesy;
v. Providing information;
vi. Openness and transparency;
vii. Redress; and
viii. Value for money.

Batho Pele is a major departure from a dispensation that excluded the majority of South Africans from government machinery to one that seeks to include all citizens for the achievement of a better life for all through the services, products and programmes of a democratic dispensation.

1.8.5 Guidelines for the establishment and Operation of Wards, 2005 (Policy)

The preamble of the guidelines for the establishment and operation of municipal ward committees, June 2005, reads as follows:

i. Mindful of the legislative responsibility of ward committees in enhancing public participation in local government decision making,
ii. Recognizing the need for ward committees to have guidelines on how to enhance public participation,
iii. Desiring that ward committees engender and maintain the spirit of public participation in the community,
iv. Guidelines to support ward committees in their all important task is hereby issued.
1.8.6 National Framework for Public Participation, 2005 (Policy)

This document is a valuable source of information for municipalities and assisting the latter in the implementation of a public participation framework. In particular, this framework will guide municipalities in the practical implementation of a well-planned, resourced and structured participation programme, so that communities can actively contribute to the decision-making process within the council. Furthermore, it will create agents of change and development as espoused in a speech delivered by the Honourable Minister of Provincial and Local Government, Sydney Mufamadi at the Community/Ward-Based Planning Workshop hosted by the Mangaung Local Municipality, Bloemfontein, on 29 October 2002, when he stated:

*Government does not only view community participation as an end in itself. Rather the purpose of participation is the very essence of a people-centred approach to development. In this context communities should not be viewed as passive participants but as active agents of change and development. Participation processes should develop people to become more resourceful themselves in as much as it should be aimed at ensuring that service and infrastructure delivery is enhanced through community participation.*

1.9 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research methodology refers to methods, techniques, and procedures that are employed in the process of implementing the research design or research plan (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:104). McMillan and Schumacher (2001:31) explain research design as the plan and structure of the investigation used to obtain evidence to answer the research questions. The design describes the procedures for conducting the study, including when and from whom and under what conditions the data will be obtained. This implies that the design must show how the research is set up, what happens to the subjects and what methods of data collection will be used.

Burger (2005:11) argues that “a research design is a plan according to which we obtain research participants (subjects) and collect information from them”. Mouton (1996:49) states that a research design addresses the key question of what type of
study will be undertaken in order to provide acceptable answers to the research problem and hypothesis.

1.9.1 Research Design

There are two types of research approaches, namely quantitative and qualitative. This study employed a methodological triangulation approach which comprises both research methods. Denzin and Lincoln (2005:3) define qualitative research as “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible”. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

The quantitative research design used in this study was meant to generate important information from the target sample. Quantitative research is perceived to be objective in nature and involves examining, and concentrating on, measuring the phenomena being studied. It involves the collection and analysis of numerical data and the application of statistical tests (Tonono, 2008:40). Quantitative research is more focused and aims to test assumptions, whilst qualitative research is more exploratory in nature. Quantitative research concerns aspects that can be counted. One of its most common disciplines is the use of statistics to process and explain data and to summarise research findings. In general, quantitative research is concerned with systematic measurement, statistical analysis and methods of experimentation (Fox & Bayat, 2007:7). This research method was also chosen because it provides richer data by possibly exposing information that may have remained undiscovered if a single approach had been used, as described by Duffy (1987:133). More details on the methods used and reasons is provided in chapter three (see 3.3.1 – 3.3.3).
1.9.2 Geographical Area of the Study

This study was conducted in the NMBM, formally known as Port Elizabeth. NMBM is South Africa’s sixth largest city, situated on the Eastern Cape coast. This city has a population of 1.1 million and the estimated population by 2020 is 1.24 million (IDP 2011-2016: 3). This study focused on two Wards, namely Wards 3 and 4.

These areas were chosen due to the fact that, in terms of the Municipal Public Accounts Committee: Oversight Report on 2012/13 Annual Report, it was revealed that the citizens of these Wards have raised serious concerns about public participation, its processes as well as its relevance. These concerns were raised because although community members have participated in public activities, there seems to be no changes in living conditions and there were inadequate responses to concerns that have been raised or requests that have been made. There was thus a need for a study of this nature to be undertaken to examine public participation as a means to improve local governance.

1.9.3 Population

De Vos (2002:190) defines a research population as a set of entities for which all the measurements of interest to the researcher are present. For the purposes of this study, the research population comprised of the following individuals:

i. Members of the Mayoral Committee (2);
ii. Ward Councillors (2); and
iii. Ward Committee Members (14).

1.9.4 Sampling Methods

The study was conducted in Wards 3 and 4. Purposive sampling was employed. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2001:219), the purposive sampling of people or other units is undertaken for a particular purpose. In terms of this research, this type of sampling was chosen due to the nature of the study as well the belief that the sample would have the necessary information and thus offer insight into the research problem. Babbie (1998:195) supports this notion and states that, “sometimes it’s
appropriate for you to select your sample on the basis of your own knowledge of the population, its elements, and the nature of your research aims”.

The sample of the study comprised a total of 18 participants. Fourteen questionnaires were administered. Four individual, face-to-face semi-structured interviews were also conducted, as these have the highest response rate, as described by Neuman (2011:339).

1.9.5 Data Collection Methods

For this study, the proposed instrument for data collection was a mailed self-administered questionnaire. De Vos (2001:152) defines a questionnaire as “a set of questions on a form which is completed by the respondent in respect of a research project”. This instrument was chosen because it is more cost effective, quicker and easier to administer. More importantly, it can offer anonymity. However, it requires literacy and a further disadvantage is the typically low response rate to questionnaires. The researcher also needed to ensure that the questions posed were simple and easily understood; this was checked in a pilot test that was conducted before the commencement of the research. In addition to the questionnaire, the researcher also intended to conduct face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Interviews also yield further detailed, qualitative information that may not be elicited from a questionnaire.

1.9.6 Data Analysis

Brink, van der Walt and van Rensburg (2012:201) state that the researcher should give an account of the methods and processes that were used for analysing the data. Standard statistical procedures were used to interpret and analyse the quantitative data from the questionnaires, with the assistance of a statistician from NMMU’s Unit for Statistical Consultation (USC). The qualitative data from the interviews were analysed using thematic content analysis.

1.9.7 Delimitation of the study

The delimitation of a study is used to describe the study’s scope by delineating the geographical and theoretical boundaries of the study, whereas the scope of a study
refers to the extent of matters to be dealt with within a specific geographical area. Punch (2006:69) and Creswell, (2003:148) state that, “delimitation is used to explain the study’s limits and boundaries by stating explicitly what falls inside the boundaries of the study and thus avoid possible criticism”.

This study was conducted in NMBM, in Port Elizabeth and there are 60 Wards in this municipality. The study was limited to two Wards, namely Wards 3 and 4. This municipality is one of 283 municipalities in South Africa. It is a Category A municipality, meaning that it has exclusive municipal executive and legislative authority in its area (www.ddp.org.za). This study’s theoretical scope was focused on the examination of public participation as a contributor to good governance, local government being the focus.

1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study was conducted in line with the regulations and guidelines stipulated by NMMU. The researcher also requested permission from the Municipal Manager of the NMBM to conduct this research at the municipality (see Annexure A).

Babbie and Mouton (2003:520) contend that ethical issues arise out of interaction with other people, other beings (such as animals), and the environment, especially when there is a (potential) conflict of interest. These authors further note that ethical conduct entails conforming to the standards of conduct of a given profession or group. It can be seen that, fundamentally, ethics is concerned with morality, that is, with what is right or wrong.

In this study, the researcher observed the principles, ethics and procedures of dealing with humans in the process of searching for the truth. Below are the fundamental principles the researcher adhered to, as described by Babbie and Mouton (2003:523):

i. Respect for persons or voluntary participation;
ii. Non-malfeasance (do no harm to others);
iii. Beneficence (do good to others); and
iv. Confidentiality.
Participation was on a voluntary basis. The researcher reassured respondents of the confidentiality and anonymity of their participation.

1.11 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Chapter One of the thesis provides the general overview as well as the background to the study. The research question, problem statement, research aims and objectives, and the significance of the study are also outlined.

Chapter Two provides a literature review on public participation and good governance. In this chapter, various authors were consulted so as to understand the problem being examined and to see how much research has been done related to the problem. Gaps were also identified as far as the body of knowledge is concerned.

Chapter Three presents the research design and methodology that was employed in the study. The quantitative and qualitative research methods that were used were discussed in detail. The choice of sampling methods and methods of data analysis, as well as guiding ethical considerations, were also discussed.

The research findings are presented and analysed in Chapter 4, while Chapter 5 concludes the study, provide a summary of the findings and offers recommendations for future research.

1.12 CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided an outline of the direction the researcher wishes to take. Furthermore, the revelations of the aims and objectives that require fulfilment have been provided for. The introductory section provided a brief background on public participation as an essential element in local governance. Moreover, this section has given reasons in motivation of this study, and thus provides a problem statement intended to guide the study.

A legislative framework in which public participation as a contributory factor to good governance has been analysed and the policies underpinning public participation have been dealt with. A brief overview of the research design and methodology that
depicts how the study was conducted was also provided for in this chapter. This chapter has provided a clear picture of what the intention of undertaking of this study is. Furthermore, this chapter provided an illustration of how answers were generated to address the research questions. Lastly, the flow of how the chapters are structured was also provided for in this chapter. The next chapter provides the literature review.
CHAPTER TWO

THE CONCEPTUAL AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter One presented the research question, aims and objectives of the current study. The introductory section (see 1.2) provided a brief background on public participation as an essential element in local governance. It also provided a motivation for this research, and the problem statement that is intended to guide the study.

Following on from this, it is now important to discuss what is understood by the concept of public participation, particularly within the South African context. This chapter begins with definitions of the concepts of public participation and good governance. International and regional perspectives on public participation is then presented, in order to illustrate the importance of public participation as well as to draw comparisons from these. Following this, the South African perspective is analysed in order to establish the status quo of public participation in South Africa. After that, the current state of public participation in South African municipalities is considered. Finally, the key legislation underpinning public participation is discussed.

The intention of this chapter is to facilitate the development of a framework within which the research question will be analysed. As outlined in Chapter 1 (see 1.3), the research problem in this study involves analysing the existing processes for public participation at the NMBM and the extent to which these can contribute to good governance in this municipality. The current chapter examines the literature pertaining to public participation and the fundamentals of effective governance.

2.2 DEFINING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

In this section, the definitions of public participation and good governance are provided for. Firstly, in defining public participation, the ‘public’ in public participation is defined. Proceeding from this is the definition of public participation followed by that will be a definition of good governance.
2.2.1 Public Participation defined

In defining public participation, it is essential to firstly define the ‘public’ and what this entails. Thomas (1995:1) defines the ‘public’ in public participation as “includ[ing] individual citizens, community groups and interest groups”. Masango (2002:53) similarly defines members of the public as “individuals, members of groups, or group representatives”. While these two authors seem to be in agreement, they however are not specific in terms of what constitutes a citizen. The citizens are people with permanent residence in that specific country and such the ‘public’ in public participation refers to people with legal citizenship. For the purpose of this study, ‘public’ is made of those people who can vote.

Public participation has been defined by many scholars and has been seen to play a critical role in deepening democracy and promoting good governance. According to Nyalunga (2006:1), “the new [post-apartheid South African] government regards public participation as a cornerstone of democracy”. Davids (2005:19-29) agrees with the above authors in that public participation forms the basis of democracy, but further states that “public participation is an inclusive process aimed at deepening democracy through formal participatory mechanisms”. He advocates that authentic public participation should entail the following (Davids, 2005:19-29):

i. Participation in decision-making;
ii. Implementation, monitoring and evaluation; and
iii. Sharing the benefits of governance and development outputs and outcomes.

According to Brynard (1996a:135) decision-making cannot be left completely to elected councils. Members of the public, for example, often complain that the authorities forced decisions upon them and that they were not afforded representation in the planning and decision-making process. Davids (2005:19-29) therefore suggests that this process of public participation must remain inclusive of all stakeholders, which largely includes the public.

Sisk (2001) reiterates that public participation is “intrinsic to the core meaning of democracy”. There is, however, a tendency by government to take decisions on their own, specifically local authorities and policy-makers, and those that ought to foresee
and facilitate the process of public participation alluded to by Brynard (1996a:135) in the paragraphs above. This tendency involves deciding on what will happen and how it will happen; after this, the decision is announced, with government giving reasons as to why the decision has been taken. This is referred to as the ‘decide, announce and defend syndrome’.

This tendency deviates from the core principles for the practice of public participation, as developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAPC2, 2007), which suggest that:

i. Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process;

ii. Public participation includes the promise that the public’s contribution will influence the decision;

iii. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognising and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers;

iv. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision;

v. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate;

vi. Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way; and

vii. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

Burkey (1993:56-60) cautions against this behaviour of deciding without consultation and suggests that public participation should include giving the public the following:

i. Greater control over their own life situations;

ii. Access to resources for the beneficiaries’ development;

iii. The power to exercise influence in the decisions affecting these resources; and

iv. The opportunity to positively influence the course of events.
Brynard (1996:44) further argues that throughout the process of public participation, the masses are not afforded real involvement due to representation by interest and pressure groups. Public participation is often simply conducted as “therapy” for stakeholders, while important decisions have already been taken (Bradshaw & Burger, 2005:48). This is a persistent problem in local government, similar to the ‘decide, announce and defend syndrome’, and undermines not only the ‘public’ role in decision-making, but also public participation.

Bradshaw and Burger (2005:52) call for more inclusive, coordinated and structured public participation. The concept of public participation has deep roots in political philosophy and features prominently in the debate about democracy and the impetus towards participatory forms of government that involve wider sections of the population more directly in decisions affecting them (Bradshaw & Burger, 2005:52).

Pieterse (2002:12) defines public participation as “a process of social learning because it serves to empower uninformed, marginalized citizens about how they can advance their interests in conjunction with their (multiple) communities”. This implies that public participation is not a blanket solution for all development issues, nor should it be an activity performed simply for the sake of complying with legislation. The intention should not only be to fulfil the constitutional obligation to facilitate public participation in government’s decision-making processes, but rather more deep-seated structural changes need to occur for transformation to proceed. This suggests that public participation should rather be a political practice that fosters access to relevant information, influence over the allocation of scarce resources, and awareness of the benefits of collective action in terms of strengthening livelihood strategies to contribute meaningfully to this process.

The aim of public participation is therefore not restricted to citizens influencing decisions; through this process, the public learns more about how government functions as well as how they fit into the process of governance (Burkey, 1993:56). This author further states that public participation should not be limited, and he highlights that “participation is an essential part of human growth, that is the development of self-confidence, pride, initiative, creativity, responsibility and cooperation” (Burkey, 1993:56). This suggests that when people participate in decision-making processes, they are able to contribute to or assist in their own
community development and relevant projects with the aim of creating sustainable livelihoods for their communities. People within communities are also empowered to work together with government institutions towards the sustainable development of their area.

Kotze (1997:37) proposes that the concept of people’s or public participation is the main emphasis of the people-centered development approach and may refer to involvement, communication, a new attitude from government and reciprocal influence. Gildenuys, Fox and Wissink (1991:124) state that public participation in decision-making is an imperative for a democratic government. According to these authors, “the encouragement of interaction is important, as interaction of this kind provides a basis not only for the long term democratic stability of South Africa, but also for its future economic stability and prosperity” (Gildenuys, Fox & Wissink, 1991:124). It would arguably hold that in any democratic country, public participation in government’s policy-making and implementation processes is necessary.

Public participation is not only necessary for the advancement and strengthening of democracy, but it is also a key contributory factor to good governance. Bryld (2001:151) supports the above, noting that, “the way they [the public] participate in governance of their own life and society has become the new cardinal point of development”. It can be argued from Bryld’s perspective that the State can promote strong governance by involving citizens in the decision-making process. Midgley (1986a:23) contends that ideal public participation should entail the process of direct involvement of ordinary people in decision-making in local government affairs. The challenge of public participation in governance is that communities must be knowledgeable of political and public processes (Draai & Taylor, 2009:119).

The question, however, arises as to how maximum public participation can be achieved. Democracy is regarded as a “political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing governing officials and a social mechanism which permits the largest possible part of the population to influence major decisions by choosing among contenders for political office” (Roskin, Cord, Medeiros & Jones, 1994:64). According to these authors, a direct democracy is not feasible in modern nations, but it is important to develop a model or system of democracy that will provide the highest possible degree of direct popular participation. As a result, in a
democracy, one of the effective ways to secure a larger share of public participation in decision-making would be to delegate a larger share of public power to government institutions, such as small municipalities and neighbourhoods in large cities (Ranney, 2001:108).

This study assumes the view that public participation is the process of engaging local communities, the ‘public’ in this case, being engaged in the democratic process of consultation in municipal matters. This process requires communities to demonstrate their engagement for decision-making by giving their input in affairs and decisions affecting them. Communities should then be able to influence the determination of the type and level of service delivery they receive from municipalities through decisions taken with them. The following section discusses what is meant by good governance.

### 2.2.2 Good governance defined

Good governance also has various definitions. Gildenhuys and Knipe (2000:13) define good governance as the attainment by government of its ultimate goal in creating conditions for a good and satisfactory quality of life for each citizen. For Siphuma (2009:75), good governance involves government working hand-in-hand with the public when carrying out its activities. If members of the public are not taken on board in the activities of local government, the public does not embrace the various programmes undertaken by government as theirs. Conversely, taking the broader public on board in every local government activity ensures public participation and leads to good governance. It therefore suggests that good governance will only become a reality when public participation is optimally utilised in the intended manner.

Good governance can be further defined by the following characteristics (Richardson, 2008:4):

i. Participation based on freedom of speech and capacity for constructive engagement;
ii. Rule of law that is fair and impartially enforced;
iii. Transparency that is built on the free flow of accurate information;
iv. Responsiveness, in which institutions and processes aim at serving all stakeholders;
v. Consensus orientation, in which differing interests are mediated;
vi. Equity, in which all stakeholders have the opportunity to improve and maintain their well-being;
vii. Efficiency and effectiveness, so that real needs are met by making the best use of available resources;
viii. Accountability, which involves government officials, public officials, and civil society organisations being accountable to the public; and
ix. Strategic vision, in which all stakeholders have a long-term perspective of public affairs.

Based on the above characteristics of good governance, it can be deduced that good governance is pivotal for government’s decision-making processes and service delivery. It can also be argued that effective public participation lies at the heart of good governance.

The African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) (2000:12) suggests that good governance is:

i. Participatory;
ii. Consensus-orientated;
iii. Accountable;
iv. Transparent;
v. Responsive;
vi. Effective and efficient;
vii. Equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law.

These features overlap with the principles expressed in Chapter Ten of the Constitution of 1996, which ensure that corruption is eradicated, the views of communities are taken into account and the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making processes. The South Africa legislation will be discussed further (see 2.5). According to Van Niekerk, Van der Waldt and Jonker (2002:65), effective local governance typically includes leadership, transparency and accountability, public participation, impartiality in service delivery, the efficient and
effective use of state resources, sound human resource management, performance management and customer-orientated service delivery. This is the ideal picture which these authors paint, indeed local governance ought to include what is listed above, however this is not the case in many of the municipalities. Many service delivery protests have occurred and there has been a great outcry about the lack of leadership not only in municipalities but in government in its entirety. Public participation and good governance, one is the result of the other, they work of each other.

The next section will focus on the views and experiences of public participation outside South Africa; this is essential to put in context how things are done in South Africa compared to other countries. A comparative analysis will also reveal the factors that influence the various models of public participation, decision-making and development in different political contexts. For example, international perspectives influence the South African Constitutional Court’s interpretation of what it means for the public to participate when laws are made. This will also assist in demonstrating the importance of public participation in the local government landscape.

2.3 INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation is a useful tool to promote the involvement of the public in governance. According to The World Bank Report 1991/2000, the World Development Report states that governments at all levels have begun to understand the importance of inclusive, participatory and consensual models of public participation (Public Sector Commission (PSC), 2008). As a result, various strategies have been applied to consult and engage with members of the public in “progressive nations” across the globe (PSC, 2008). This study considers public participatory processes in international developing countries that have similar developmental challenges and living conditions to South Africa. In particular, Brazil and India will represent the international perspective while Uganda and Ghana will represent the regional perspective, as discussed below.
2.3.1 International Perspective

From an international standpoint, the emergence of participatory institutions in Latin America is today an established phenomenon and has generated a vast corpus of literature (Abers, 2000; Dagnino, 2002; Avritzer, 2002, 2009; Fung and Wright, 2003; Wampler and Avritzer, 2004; Baiocchi, 2005; Wampler, 2007; Seele and Peruzzotti, 2009). The stabilisation of democratic regimes in the region opened a door for exploring new avenues for civic participation to broaden and reinforce the role and voice of citizens in the policymaking process. Participatory mechanisms seek to complement electoral mechanisms with new points of communication between public authorities and civil society. These participatory mechanisms seek to deepen democracy by moving beyond the minimal understanding of democratic participation that characterised realist or elitist visions of the political process (Przeworski, 2010; Sprague, 2000:1). In this sense, South America has become a rich field of institutional experimentation in which different sorts of participatory designs are being developed and implemented, from participatory budgeting in Brazil and Argentina to citizen councils in Bolivia. Among all the participatory mechanisms that have recently been undertaken, participatory budgeting has received the greatest attention.

2.3.1.1 Brazil

In Brazil, the most prominent example of effective public participation is the municipal participatory budgeting initiative (Sprague, 2000:1). This is one of several creative programmes developed by the city of Porto Alegre. The aim of this participatory budgeting process is to address severe disparities in the living standards of the city’s residents by including these residents in the budgeting process.

Since its introduction in Porto Alegre in 1990, participatory budgeting has become famous worldwide and has been exported to other parts of Brazil, Latin America (Seele and Peruzzotti, 2009) and Europe (Sintomer et al, 2008). Participatory budgeting, however, is not the only available form of institutionalised participation in Latin America. Policy Councils in the areas of health and social assistance (Cornwall and Coelho, 2006) have thrived in Brazil and today involve tens of thousands of
participants. Participatory planning in cities (Saule, 2005) was greatly enhanced after the creation of the Ministry of the Cities and today occurs in more than 1000 cities in Brazil. Civic monitoring of election results, for example by Alianza Cívica in Mexico (Aguayo, 1996), is common in many countries, as is participation in environmental issues (Abers and Keck, 2006).

The 1990s was a key decade in the creation of participatory institutions in Brazil. Most of the participatory institutions that would play a significant role in Brazil either emerged in this period or were legislatively proposed during this time, due to the 1988 Constitutional requirement for normal legislation for all social policies chapters (Avritzer 2009:116). Each of these institutions had a different form, emerged from a different civil society practice, and required different types of action from political parties, in particular, the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT) (Workers Party).

2.3.1.2 India

In India, a notable example of effective public participation is the involvement of the community in sustainable forest management. According to Kotwal (2008:3), the sustainability of forest management depends on community participation at all levels, from planning to intervention and monitoring. Civil society organisations, for example Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), have played a critical mediating role between government and poorer communities in Development Planning initiatives (Prakash, Zipfel & Best, 2010). As mediators or intermediaries, organisations such as PRIA have helped to give local meaning to national policies, notably India’s Five Year Plans. These Plans have led to the devolution of Development Planning into National, State, District and Local levels and the establishment of district Panchayats aimed at encouraging local participation. The Panchayats were not assigned any meaningful role or resources even though there have been national policy adaptations to allow Panchayats to have the power to manage all development programmes. For a number of reasons including poverty and limited education, many local communities have not been able to play a meaningful role in the Panchayats without the assistance of NGOs.

Although development planning has long been recognised as an area that required the input of communities in India, it was only in 1992-93 that the 73rd and 74th
Amendments gave constitutional status to local self-government and provided a new and universalised platform for decentralised planning (Prakash et al, 2010). The comprehensive District Plan integrates multiple programmes that are in operation in the District concerned and therefore addresses backwardness by ensuring that multiple resources flow to the District. PRIA has ensured that communities are actively involved by organising ‘stakeholder workshops’. Prakash et al, (2010) cite the example of the state of Bihar, in which the main form of income is agriculture and 42.6% of the population lives below the poverty line, compared to India’s national average of 26.1%.

The literacy level in Bihar State is 42.0%, a factor that also hampers effective participation. Ensuring participation is critical in this State, but mediation has been vital. PRIA has acted as the intermediary, through the organisation of stakeholder workshops that include communities as well as government and other key role players, such as the media. PRIA also assists in the drawing up of development plans attuned to the needs of very poor communities. To ensure effective planning, PRIA has been instrumental in conducting local service delivery audits to assess what the real needs and priorities are in specific areas, such as Bihar State. The Indian case also refers to the importance of action after participatory decision-making, especially in relation to the allocation of resources. Failure of government to deliver on promises makes it more difficult to encourage public participation in the future.

2.3.2 Regional Perspective

From a regional perspective, many African countries have also identified public participation as a key principle to promote and uphold good governance. For example, in adopting the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance in 2007, the 53 member states of the African Union committed themselves to, amongst others, promoting the conditions necessary to foster citizen participation and transparency (African Union’s, 2007). A brief discussion of public participation in Uganda and Ghana is presented below.
2.3.2.1 **Uganda**

In Uganda, efforts to promote public participation have taken the form of both policy frameworks and the development of implementation modalities (PSC, 2008:13). The government took appropriate steps to put in place supporting legislative frameworks to promote public participation. The enactment of the 1993 Local Councils Statute, for example, broadened the space for citizen participation (Kakumba and Nsingo, 2008:3). According to these authors, this Statute was designed in such a way so as to facilitate the effective involvement of communities in articulating their needs and influencing programme planning and implementation. The United Nations Department Report (United Nations, 2006) states, furthermore, that the main aim of the statute was to foster citizen participation in the process of rural development. In addition, according to the United Nations Development Report (United Nations, 2008), the Ugandan government has been able, through public participation, to significantly reduce the level of HIV/AIDS in the country.

2.3.2.2 **Ghana**

In Ghana, public participation played a significant role in reducing corruption (PSC, 2008:13). According to Carrillo (2002), the government of Ghana conducted several diagnostic surveys in which citizens were invited to suggest possible strategies that the government could utilise to address corruption. Public institutions and civil society advocacy groups have been established purposely to combat corruption. The Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice, for example, was established to investigate all instances of alleged or suspected corruption and the misappropriation of public money by officials (Agyeman-Duah, 2002).

It can be seen that from an international and regional perspective encouraging progress has been made to increase and promote public participation. However, there are still challenges that need to be effectively addressed by various role-players. The lessons learnt from these countries can assist in addressing and enhancing public participation for the South African context. The next section provides the South African’s journey of public participation.
2.4 SOUTH AFRICA

In the South African context, public participation is highly regarded in various developmental policies, legislation and the country’s Constitution. However, in some developmental sectors, the implementation of these policies and legislation is still questionable. It is suggested here that public participation is limited in certain areas in local government.

The concept of public participation in the democratic South Africa has its origins in the period when the government’s strategic position on the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) and the Masakhane Initiative was introduced. According to Bekker (1996:32), it is through these two programmes that the government had encouraged people to participate. This came about as a response to the tradition of many South African citizens not showing distinct interest in governmental affairs (Department of Provincial and Local Government, 2002:16). This indicates that public participation is a relatively new phenomenon in South Africa, as alluded to by Nyalunga (2006:1).

The previous Apartheid-era governments created race-based municipalities to facilitate and regulate the suppression of participation by African, Indian and Coloured communities (Nyalunga, 2006:1). This author expands on this point, stating that “under apartheid the bulk of power resided at the centre with local government being the lowest tier within a strict hierarchical structure. Consequently, there was only minimal space for meaningful public participation in decision making processes” (Nyalunga, 2006: 1).

Democracy has brought about major challenges, such as the need to have increased participation from citizens in a sphere closer to them. Naude (2001) argues that the local government system was structured to advance the agenda of segregation and exclusion. According to Williams (2003), “[I]n terms of community participation, South African history reflects very little opportunity for this primarily because local government in South Africa had until the early 1990’s no constitutional safeguard, as it was perceived as a structural extension of the State and a function of provincial government”. Since the demise of the apartheid government, leaders of the new South Africa were compelled to create space for public participation, since the new
political dispensation regards public participation as a cornerstone of democracy (Williams 2000).

Public participation plays a critical role in deepening democracy and promoting good governance. Citizens’ involvement in governance processes ensures that their experiential and grassroots perspectives inform government on their needs and how these needs can best be addressed. Davids, Theron and Maphunye (2005) argue that there are three levels of public participation in South Africa, namely informing, consulting and empowering participants. These levels of public participation can be reflected by the practice of public participation, as identified by the International Association for Public Participation (IAPP) in 2002. The IAPP, cited in Theron (2000:114), outlines the following requirements:

i. The public should have a say in decisions about actions that affect their lives;
ii. Public participation includes the premise that the public’s contribution will influence the decisions to be taken;
iii. The process of public participation communicates the interests and meets the process needs of all participants;
iv. This process seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those partially affected;
v. It involves participants in defining how they participate;
vi. The public participation process communicates to participants how their inputs affected the decision that was taken; and
vii. The public participation process provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.

Hanyane (2005:267) argues that public participation at a local government level helps with the “provision of valuable information about the needs and aspirations of local people to public authorities in order to initiate and implement informed decisions. Participation also offers a platform through which to express civic interest with the aim of influencing public managers as well as councillors to adopt a particular direction of thinking”. Moreover, Hanyane (2005:267) explains that participation “offers a platform through which to express civic interest with the aim of
influencing public managers as well as councillors to adopt a particular direction of thinking”.

Numerous individuals, including politicians and officials at national, provincial and local spheres of government, advocate public participation, but it can be argued that few put it into practice. Many municipalities have a public participation programme in place, which is linked to the budget of that particular municipality; these programmes may include public outreach, public hearings, public education and the use of constituency offices. It is argued here that many municipalities do not have a comprehensive policy framework on public participation. However, there are various legislative and policy mechanisms governing the interface between the provincial government, the public and other constituencies as well as all the spheres of government. Certain provincial departments are required by certain sector-specific laws to consult interest groups or engage the public on specific matters. It should also be noted that the process of public participation in the different municipalities and wards differs substantially due to the nature of the political setting and demands of that jurisdiction.

The Western Cape Provincial Government, for example, holds regular forums, which constitute a generic form of public participation. These include the Premier’s Coordinating Forum and the Premier’s Metro Coordinating Forum (with the City of Cape Town), both of which were established in terms of the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act No. 13 of 2005. The Premier’s Heart FM radio show had been the only functional platform to engage with communities. In the recent past, the provincial government engaged the public through izimbizos. However, these have been discontinued, except when the provincial government is invited to cooperate on a national government event in the province.

Upon consideration of the state of public participation in South African municipalities, it is possible that the current state of limited public participation in the affairs of local government could undermine democracy in the new South Africa. The next section provides the legal framework that underpins public participation in South Africa.
2.5 LEGISLATION ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

In South Africa, there are various pieces of legislation and declarations that have been enacted to serve as a guide to facilitate the process of public participation in the country. The key to understanding public participation in South Africa is to understand the legal framework that underpins the practice. The South African government has enacted statutes and policies to encourage citizen participation and ensure good governance in the country, particularly at the local government level. These include, but are not limited to, the following, each of which will be subsequently discussed:

i. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996;
iii. The Municipal Systems Act, 2000;
iv. Batho Pele, 1997 (Policy);
v. The Guidelines for the Operation of Wards, 2005 (Policy); and

2.5.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, hereinafter referred to as ‘the Constitution’, places an obligation on local government to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government. During the years following the promulgation of the Constitution, municipalities wrestled with a multitude of transformation-related issues, with the result that few actively encouraged communities to involve themselves in the affairs of the municipality.

The notion of public participation in all spheres of government is embedded in the South African Constitution. The Constitution outlines the following in terms of the local sphere of government, regarding public participation:

i. According to section 151(1)(e), municipalities are obliged to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in local government;
ii. Section 152 states that the objects of local government are to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government; and

iii. Section 195(e) stipulates that in terms of the basic values and principles governing public administration, people’s needs must be responded to and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making.

2.5.2 The White Paper on Local Government, 1998

According to the White Paper on Local Government of 1998, municipalities require active participation by citizens at the following four levels:

i. As voters, to ensure maximum democratic accountability of the elected political leadership for the policies that the latter is empowered to promote;

ii. As citizens who express, through different stakeholder associations, their views before, during and after the policy development process in order to ensure that policies reflect community preferences as far as possible;

iii. As consumers and end-users who expect value-for-money, affordable, courteous and responsive services; and

iv. As organised partners involved in the mobilisation of resources for development through for-profit businesses, NGOs and community-based institutions (CBOs).

The White Paper also suggests that “municipalities should develop mechanisms to ensure citizen participation in policy initiation and formulation, and the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of decision-making and implementation”. The following approaches can assist in the achievement of this:

i. Forums that allow organised formations to initiate policies and/or influence policy formulation, as well as to participate in M&E;

ii. Structured stakeholder involvement in certain Council Committees, in particular if these are issue-oriented Committees with a limited lifespan rather than permanent structures;

iii. Participatory budgeting initiatives aimed at linking community priorities to capital investment programmes; and
iv. Focus group participatory action research conducted in partnership with NGOs and CBOs that can generate detailed information about a wide range of specific needs and values.

2.5.3 The Municipal Systems Act, 2000

The Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 defines “the legal nature of a municipality as including the local community within the municipal area, working in partnerships with the municipality’s political and administrative structures to provide for community participation”. According to Section 4 of this Act, the Council has the following duties:

i. To encourage the involvement of the local community; and
ii. To consult the community about the level of quality, and range and impact of municipal services provided by the municipality, either directly or through another service provider.

In Section 5, members of the community have the following rights:

i. To contribute to the decision-making processes of the municipality and submit written or oral recommendations, representations and complaints to the Municipal Council;
ii. To be informed of the decisions of the Municipal Council; and
iii. To regular disclosure of the affairs of the municipality, including its finances.

Perhaps the clearest and most specific requirements for public participation in local governance are outlined in Chapter 4 of this Act. Section 16 of the Act states the following:

i. Municipalities must develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance;
ii. Must encourage and create conditions for the community to participate in the affairs of the municipality, including in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), performance management system, and monitoring and review of performance;
iii. Must prepare the budget and strategic decisions regarding municipal services; and

iv. Municipalities contribute to building the capacity of the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality, and of councillors and staff to foster community participation.

Section 42 takes point (ii) above further and stipulates that through appropriate mechanisms, processes and procedures, the municipality should involve the local community in the development, implementation and review of the municipality’s performance management system and, in particular, allow the community to participate in the setting of appropriate key performance indicators and performance targets for the municipality.

2.5.4 Batho Pele Principles, 1997

Batho Pele, a Sotho translation for 'People First', is an initiative to get public servants to be service-orientated, to strive for excellence in service delivery and to commit to continuous service delivery improvement. It is a simple and transparent mechanism that allows citizens to hold public servants accountable for the quality of services delivered. Batho Pele is not an ‘add-on’ activity, but rather a philosophy of outstanding service delivery in which citizens are placed at the centre of public service planning and operations.

Eight Batho Pele principles were developed to serve as an acceptable policy and legislative framework regarding service delivery in the public service. These principles are aligned with the Constitutional ideals of promoting and maintaining high standards of professional ethics; providing services impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias; utilising resources efficiently and effectively; responding to people's needs; encouraging citizens to participate in policy-making; and rendering an accountable, transparent and development-oriented public administration.

The Batho Pele principles comprise the following:

i. Consultation;

ii. Setting service standards;
iii. Increasing access;
iv. Ensuring courtesy;
v. Providing information;
vi. Openness and transparency;
vii. Redress; and
viii. Value for money.

The Batho Pele principles are a major departure from a dispensation that excluded the majority of South Africans from government machinery to one that seeks to include all citizens for the achievement of a better life for all through the services, products and programmes of a democratic political dispensation.

2.5.5 Guidelines for the Operation of Wards, 2005 (Policy)

The preamble of the Guidelines for the Establishment and Operation of Municipal Ward Committees, June 2005 (Guidelines for the operation of Wards, 2005) reads as follows:

i. Mindful of the legislative responsibility of ward committees in enhancing public participation in local government decision making,
ii. Recognizing the need for ward committees to have guidelines on how to enhance public participation,
iii. Desiring that ward committees engender and maintain the spirit of public participation in the community,

2.5.6 National Framework for Public Participation, 2007 (Policy)

This document is a valuable source of information for municipalities and assists the latter in the implementation of a public participation framework. In particular, this framework will guide municipalities in the practical implementation of a well-planned, sufficiently resourced and structured participation programme, so that communities can actively contribute to the decision-making process within the Council. Furthermore, it is envisaged that the framework will create agents of change and development, according to the former Minister of Provincial and Local Government, Sydney Mufamadi, at the Community/Ward-Based Planning Workshop hosted by the
Mangaung Local Municipality, Bloemfontein, on 29 October 1999, when he stated (Mufamadi, 1999):

“Government does not only view community participation as an end in itself. Rather the purpose of participation is the very essence of a people-centred approach to development. In this context communities should not be viewed as passive participants but as active agents of change and development. Participation processes should develop people to become more resourceful themselves in as much as it should be aimed at ensuring that service and infrastructure delivery is enhanced through community participation.”

The abovementioned pieces of legislation and policies provide a good indication of the importance of public participation in South Africa. Public participation is a process that seeks to bring government closer to the people and thus reinforces the fundamental mechanisms underlying the sustainability of local government. It is the duty of municipalities, as indicated in the abovementioned pieces of legislation, to ensure the effective participation of citizens and communities in the matters of local government.

2.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the concepts of public participation and good governance were first defined. International and regional perspectives were then provided to illustrate the effects of historical, geographic and cultural differences on public participation. These perspectives also provided context and allowed for a comparison between other countries and South Africa. Following this, the South African perspective was considered in an attempt to establish the status quo of public participation in the country. This was followed by an assessment of the current state of public participation in South African municipalities. Finally, the key legislation underpinning public participation in South Africa was examined. In the next chapter, the research design and methodology used in the current study will be discussed.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter, the literature review, firstly defined the concepts of public participation and good governance. Secondly, it provided international and regional perspectives on public participation in an attempt to draw comparisons between Brazil, India, Uganda, Ghana and South Africa. Lastly, the key legislation underpinning public participation in South Africa was examined.

The current chapter discusses the research design and methodology adopted for this study. There are several frameworks and important methodological considerations that shape how a research study was conducted. This chapter therefore seeks to explore these considerations and choices in detail.

The chapter begins by describing the research design and methodology employed for collecting data in this study. Attention is then directed to discussing the data collection methods or techniques that were used. Following this, the use of sampling and the ethical principles and considerations guiding this study will be considered. The limitations that the researcher experienced while conducting the research will subsequently be discussed. The chapter ends with an overview of how the collected data was analysed.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Welman and Kruger (1999:46) describe ‘research design’ as a plan according to which the researcher obtains research participants, or subjects, and collects information from these. According to Laboritz and Hagedorm (1981:41), a research design is a set of logical procedures that, if followed, enables the researcher to obtain the evidence to determine the degree to which she/he is correct and incorrect about the research. Research design is often referred to as the ‘glue’ that holds the research project together (Patton, 2002:15). Welman and Kruger (1999:46-47) agree with Patton’s comparison and thus view research design as a means used to structure the research, to show how all the major parts of the research project – the
samples or group – work together to try to address the central research question. The function of research design, according to Patton (1990:182), is to ensure that evidence, which will be instrumental in answering the research questions unambiguously and clearly, is obtained.

### 3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Many scholars have attempted to define the concept ‘methodology’. For example, Leedy (1989:91) describes it as an operational framework within which facts are placed so that the meaning of these may be seen more clearly. Others, meanwhile, view ‘methodology’ as the philosophy of the research, which is guided by a series of rules and procedures. Babbie and Mouton (2001:103) define research methodology as “whom or what will be studied in order to collect information and identification of subjects”. Simply stated, research methodology can be seen as a system that a researcher uses to collect, analyse and interpret data in order to realise the objectives of the particular study being undertaken.

Mouton and Marais (1992:155) and Neuman (2007:7), among others, are of the opinion that there are two approaches to research, namely quantitative and qualitative. These two approaches describe groups of research methods, rather than being methods in their own right. Therefore, any given method of conducting research could belong to one or the other category (Neuman, 2007:10).

Quantitative research involves looking at amounts and quantities of one or more variables of interest using commonly accepted measures, such as numerical measuring scales and questionnaires (Leedy and Ormrod, 2010:94). In contrast, qualitative research involves investigating characteristics or qualities that cannot be reduced easily to numerical values. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches involve similar processes, including the review of literature, and the collection and analysis of data. These processes are often combined and carried out in different ways, leading to the use of different research methods (Leedy and Ormrod, 2010:94).

In the current study, a “methodological triangulation” approach was adopted which is described by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (1991:146) as including the use of
both a quantitative and a qualitative research method. The quantitative research method used involved the completion of survey questionnaires by Ward Committee members residing in the two (2) chosen Wards under study, to ascertain whether or not public participation occurs in their Wards and to investigate their views on public participation. The questionnaires allowed the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitative data, as there were also open-ended questions for respondents to answer.

The qualitative research method that was used comprised holding semi-structured, one-on-one interviews with two Ward Councillors (one from each of the respective wards) and two Mayoral Committee members involved in public participation, in order to determine their perceptions of public participation in the NMBM. Both of these methods are discussed in more detail in 3.3.1 and 3.3.2, respectively.

3.3.1 Qualitative Research

Denscombe (2003:268) suggests that qualitative research can be part of an information-gathering exercise and useful in its own right. It can be used as the basis for generating theories. Welman and Kruger (1999:186) agree, noting that qualitative research is orientated towards exploration; discovery and inductive logic; and that data collection occurs through observations, interviews and other methods. Furthermore, the product of qualitative research is often a new model, theory or hypothesis (Welman and Kruger, 2001:5). A qualitative research method produces verbal data, which is difficult to convert into numbers (O’Sullivan and Rassel, 1995:36). Merriam (1998) is of the opinion that qualitative researchers are concerned primarily with processes, rather than with outcomes. The researcher physically visits participants, settings, sites or institutions to observe or record behaviour in its natural environment.

Welman and Kruger (2001:5) have highlighted the following key features of qualitative research:

i. The data is in the form of words from documents, observations or transcripts;

ii. Theory can be causal or non-causal and is often inductive;
iii. Hypotheses are frequently undeclared or merely in the form of a research goal;
iv. Concepts are in the form of themes, generalisations and taxonomies; and
v. Research procedures are particular and replication is rare.

According to Abiche, (2004: 9), qualitative research methods are particularly appropriate when gathering socially dynamic information related to human behaviour and the interactions of people, namely, how people make sense of their lives, experiences and their structure of the world. He further states that qualitative research helps the researcher to better understand complex relationships; to investigate the reasons for people preferring particular strategies over others in solving their problems; and to be ready for the unexpected, which may trigger a new set of questions to be posed (Abiche, 2004: 9).

3.3.2 Quantitative Research

Quantitative research is perceived to be objective in nature and involves examining, and concentrating on and measuring the phenomena being studied. It involves the collection and analysis of numerical data and the application of statistical tests (Tonono, 2008:40). Quantitative research is more focused and aims to test assumptions, whilst qualitative research is more exploratory in nature. Quantitative research concerns aspects that can be counted. One of its most common disciplines is the use of statistics to process and explain data and to summarise research findings. In general, quantitative research is concerned with systematic measurement, statistical analysis and methods of experimentation (Fox and Bayat, 2007:7).

3.3.3 Rationale for the use of methodological triangulation

For this study a methodological triangulation approach was adopted. This is a synergistic approach that allows the advantages of both quantitative and qualitative research methods to be utilized in a complementary manner, thus allowing a more comprehensive, in-depth appreciation of the research problem (Gani (2004) and Easterby- Smith, et al. (2002).
Laxton (2004) highlighted that, since questionnaires can be completed in a relatively shorter period of time compared to qualitative data-gathering tools such as interviews, a large sample of respondents can be surveyed. This larger sample size enhances the representivity of the sample, thus potentially increasing the accuracy and credibility of research findings (see chapter 4). Both qualitative and quantitative methods would make it possible to gather the most needed data to address the research problem and to ensure that the objectives of the study were successfully met.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS/TECHNIQUES

According to Axelson, Bihler and Djert (2009:112), data collection methods refer to the ways in which a researcher gathers data and information pertinent to the study from various sources. Data collection methods can also be referred to as the way a researcher is going to collect data. According to Creswell (2012:90), the researcher may use both primary and secondary data. Primary data are original sources from which the researcher directly collects data that has not been collected previously (Mouton 1996:107). An example of primary data is data collected by the researcher through questionnaires and interviews. Meanwhile, secondary data is data that has been collected and compiled previously by other researchers and consists of readily available information that may be used by the researcher for his/her current study (Creswell, 2012:90). In this study, primary data was collected through the use of a survey questionnaire.

The techniques that the researcher used for primary data collection included interviews and questionnaires, whilst secondary data concerning the subject of ‘public participation’ was also used. The latter was obtained through public participation-related document analysis, semi-structured interviews (see Annexure E and F) and questionnaires (see Annexure G).

As mentioned above, the first step in the data collection process was for the researcher to scrutinise a number of documents that dealt directly with issues of public participation and good governance. These included relevant books, publications, journals and legislation. The latter included the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 and the White Paper on Local Government, 1998. The NMBM’s Annual
Report, 2012, as well as the Integrated Development Plan 2012, was consulted for additional information. The output of this document analysis was used as a verification process for the research, in line with the principle of the triangulation of research findings.

### 3.4.1 Population and Sampling

Neuman (2011:240) defines a sample as a small set of cases selected by a researcher from a larger pool. Neuman (2011:241) points out that the population is the abstract idea of a large group of many cases from which a researcher draws a sample, and results from this sample are generalized. A sample is therefore a selected small collection of cases or units that closely reproduce features of interest in a larger collection of cases termed the target population (Neuman, 2011:241).

According to Leedy and Ormord (2010:205), there are two major categories of sampling, namely probability and non-probability sampling. In probability sampling, the researcher can specify in advance that each segment of the population will be represented in the sample, while in non-probability sampling, the researcher cannot guarantee that all segments of the population will be represented (Leedy and Ormord, 2010:205). In the current study, purposive sampling was used; this is an example of non-probability sampling, as described below.

According to Babbie and Mouton (2011:166), purposive sampling involves selecting a sample on the basis of the researcher’s own knowledge of the population, the population’s elements, the nature of the research, the aims and the purpose of the study. For Leedy and Ormord (2010:212), purposive sampling refers to people or other units chosen for a particular purpose. Neuman (2011:268) observes that purposive sampling is appropriate to selecting unique cases that are especially informative, difficult to reach and regarded as part of a specialized population.

The current study was conducted in the NMBM, in Port Elizabeth, and there are 60 Wards in this municipality. This is a relatively large municipality, so the study was therefore limited to two Wards, namely Wards 3 and 4. As mentioned in Chapter One (see 1.9.3), the respondents comprised two selected members of the Mayoral Committee; two Ward Councillors, namely one from each selected Ward; and 14
Ward Committee members, comprising seven from each Ward. These respondents were targeted based on their knowledge and first-hand experience of the problem under investigation. The next section discusses the questionnaire as one of the data collection methods used, and why this method was chosen for the study.

3.4.2 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is not some sort of official form, nor is it a set of questions that have been casually jotted down without much thought (Oppenheim, 1999:65). Key (1997:1) describes a questionnaire as a data-collecting instrument that can be structured or unstructured. A questionnaire is a set of questions on a form, which is completed by the respondent in respect of a research project (Mouton, 1996:107). Legotlo (1998:21) attests to this by adding that a questionnaire is a device that enables respondents to answer questions posed to them.

Denscombe (2003:159) suggests the following as some of the advantages of questionnaires:

i. Questionnaires are economical; they can supply a considerable amount of research data at relatively low cost in terms of material, money and time;

ii. Questionnaires are easier to arrange than, for example, personal interviews. The former can also be delivered unexpectedly to the respondent; and

iii. Questionnaires supply standardized answers; respondents are faced with exactly the same questions, with no scope for the variations that could occur during face-to-face interviews with the researcher. Data collected from questionnaires is also unlikely to be contaminated through variations in the wording of the questions or the manner in which questions are asked.

Furthermore, if a questionnaire is well designed, it can enhance the validity as well as the reliability of the data that is collected to satisfactory levels of research practice (Legotlo, 1998:21).

However, there are disadvantages to the use of questionnaires, as highlighted below by Labovitz and Hagedorn (1981:68):
i. The population being studied is restricted because the respondents must be able to read and write in a particular language, such as English;

ii. There is a high degree of self-selection, leading to a comparatively low response or return rate. A 30% return rate, for example, is not uncommon;

iii. The questionnaire must be restricted in length and scope, as otherwise respondents may lose interest or become fatigued; and

iv. There is a lack of in-depth interviewing or probing for the meaning of the responses.

In designing the questionnaire used in the current study, the researcher used a number of questions that were simple and straightforward. These questions were subdivided into subtopics with sub-questions. Respondents were asked directly about the issues concerning public participation in their Wards. Most of the questions asked were closed-ended questions, with only two open-ended questions.

For the purposes of this study, a questionnaire was utilised as a data-collecting method as it is mostly used in surveys. The following section considers the individual interviews that were also conducted in this study.

3.4.3 Interviews

Merriam (1998:185) defines an interview as a conversation, but notes that it is a conversation with a purpose, in that the aim of the interview is to obtain targeted information. Clark and Sartorius (2004:15) are of the view that interviews are qualitative, in-depth and semi-structured. Interviews may rely on interview guides that list topics or questions on the particular phenomenon under study. Labovitz and Hagedorn (1981:68) state that the interview guide comprises questions, both structured and unstructured, that are asked and filled in by an interviewer in a face-to-face encounter with the respondent(s). Schnetler, Stoker, Dixion, Herbst and Geldenhuys (1989:16) state that this type of data collection method (semi-structured interviews) allows the interviewer to communicate by asking questions using his/her voice, body language and facial expressions, and also allows the interviewee to formulate his/her responses by making use of the same verbal and non-verbal behaviours. People are interviewed to find out from them those things that the researcher cannot observe directly (Descombe 1998:114).
Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:11) identify the following three advantages of individual interviews as a form of data collection:

i. Data can be collected from respondents who may be functionally illiterate in a particular language. The respondent does not have to be able to read and write;

ii. The interviewer has the opportunity to further explain a question or words in a question if he/she senses that the respondent does not fully understand the question; and

iii. The interviewer can ensure that all questions are answered and that challenging or difficult questions are not left out. This is made possible by the fact that the interviewer is personally administering the questionnaire.

Other studies list the following as further advantages of individual interviews:

i. Questions that may be misunderstood and inappropriate responses can be clarified;

ii. There are fewer incomplete responses;

iii. There is a higher response rate compared to questionnaires;

iv. There is greater control over the environment in which the survey is administered, unlike questionnaires, which anyone can complete and claim to be the relevant person in the field; and

v. Additional information can be collected from respondents.

Jackson (1995:122) identifies two major challenges associated with individual interviews:

vi. This is one of the most expensive survey methods; and

vii. It is a highly time-consuming method of data collection, as the researcher can only interview a limited number of respondents per day.

In this study, four interviews were conducted, as described in 3.3. These included interviews with two Mayoral Committee members and two Ward Councillors. The researcher used semi-structured interviews, which allowed the interviewees some form of flexibility to elaborate and speak their minds. The one-on-one semi-
structured interviews were conducted in a relaxed atmosphere. Individual interviews were preferred by the researcher because there was no group pressure or influence on the interviewee in responding to the questions. The researcher did not want to rely on notes and memory alone, but also used a tape-recording facility, with the permission of the interviewees. The tape recordings were later transcribed by the researcher. The next section will provide a brief summary of how the interviews were designed and conducted.

3.4.3.1 Semi-structured interviews with Ward Councillors and Mayoral Committee members

The section below deals with the how the interview questions were designed and structured.

3.4.3.1.1 Design of interview questions

As mentioned in 3.4, a semi-structured interview format was selected, as described by Charlesworth (2003b), as this provided consistency and standardisation between interviews, and also allowed flexibility in probing individual interviewees’ responses further or in explaining questions to interviewees. Laxton (2004) also notes that having standardised questions promotes quicker interviews and makes it easier to compare responses obtained in different interviews.

The aim of these interviews was to determine how the interviewees perceived public participation in the NMBM and particularly in their Wards, in the case of Ward Councillors, and in their specific portfolios in the case of Mayoral Committee members. Another aim of the interviews was to ask the interviewees whether they included the public in their respective portfolios when it related to decision-making. Interviewees’ responses could then be compared to Ward Committee members’ responses to the questionnaire, in the case of Ward Councillors.

Asking both Ward Councillors and Ward Committee members for their perceptions of public participation thus provided a useful cross-check, and allowed possible inconsistencies to be detected. Ward Councillors, for example, could state they have regular meetings with the community and provide feedback on decisions that have been made, but Ward Committee members’ questionnaires may reveal that this was
not the case. This cross-checking technique is an advantage of adopting a methodological triangulation approach. It has the potential to highlight areas of inconsistency and possible bias in responses and thereby improve the validity of the overall research process.

In order to elicit the kind of information described above, the following topics were covered in the interviews, as suggested by Laxton (2004):

i. Knowledge of the topic at hand;
ii. Perceptions, values and opinions;
iii. Some background information and,
iv. Behaviours of the interviewee.

### 3.4.3.1.2 Structure of the semi-structured interviews conducted with Two Mayoral Committee Members and Two Ward Councillors.

The interviews started with the researcher thanking the interviewee for agreeing to be interviewed, briefly explaining the purpose of the research, and assuring the interviewee that his/ her responses would be confidential and anonymous. The interviewees were informed that their participation in the interview, and that the study was conducted in accordance with NMMU’s Policy on Research Ethics, which could be made available to them if they wanted a copy. Furthermore, the interviewees were then asked if they had any questions, before the interview commenced. Further ethical considerations are discussed in detail in 3.5.

Laxton’s (2004) advises that in sequencing the interview questions, one needs to start with fact based questions before asking interviewees for their perceptions, in order to allow interviewees to feel more at ease; this was followed. The initial questions asked were thus the background questions. The interviews ended with interviewees being asked if they wished to mention anything else, as suggested by Laxton (2004), so that issues that the author had not considered or been aware of that may be relevant to the research problem could have surfaced.

In wording the interview questions, a combination of closed and open-ended questions was used. Many questions were first posed as close-ended questions, requiring a “Yes” or “No” response; this was then followed up by asking the
interviewee to motivate his/her response. This was done to keep the interview questions as simple and clear as possible, and to facilitate later analysis of the interviewee responses. Questions were asked one after the other, as suggested by Laxton (2004); for certain questions with multiple parts, one part at a time was asked, in order to minimise interviewee confusion and possible ambiguity. Questions were kept neutral, and leading or emotive questions were avoided.

There were minor differences between the interview questions for the Ward Councillors, and the Mayoral Committee members, to reflect their different roles and responsibilities. The researcher designed the interview questions himself.

3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher has attempted to promote ethical conduct in the research process (see Annexures A, B and C). The privacy of the respondents, where applicable, has been protected. Ethical guidelines serve as standards and as a basis against which the researcher ought to evaluate his/her own conduct (Newman, 2006:247).

According to Cooper and Schindler (2003:121), a research project should be designed in a way that promotes participants’ confidentiality and anonymity, and respondents should be kept free from intimidation and harm. Informed consent forms were thus completed by the respondents as an indication that they understood the terms of participation in the current study (see Annexure D). There was confidentiality and voluntary participation by the respondents and there was no threat of harm to respondents. The informed consent was preceded by the participants having full knowledge of those who were involved in the study, and what would happen to the records of the interview once the interviews were completed.

3.6 LIMITATIONS

During the interview stage of the process, the researcher experienced difficulty in securing meetings with Ward Councillors, as the latter were often in meetings. There was also a delay from municipal officials in organising meetings. Another contributory factor was that this research has been limited to only Ward Committee members, Ward Councillors and Mayoral Committee members, as it was believed
that these key role-players were directly or indirectly involved in public participation processes. Further limitations were that the study area was vast and that the researcher chose to conduct the study in the selected Wards only, because it was relatively easier to access these Wards. Involving the entire community would have been time consuming and would have involved extensive travelling.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

When a researcher undertakes a study, the purpose of that particular study is to solicit information from the data that has been collected and thus for the researcher to be able to make informed deductions. Once data has been collected from respondents, it has to be analysed and then presented. A researcher can only make sense of the data that is collected by organisng and arranging this data into a manageable form (Vithal and Jansen, 1997:27).

Data analysis is undoubtedly one of the characteristics of qualitative research that distinguishes it from quantitative research. The first step in analysing qualitative data is for the researcher to explore the data. The initial analysis in qualitative research consists of investigating the data, writing down the ideas, and thinking about the organisation of the data in text segments or themes (Cresswell, 2008:250). According to Lindlof and Taylor (2002:195), qualitative data analysis is, first and foremost, an inductive process of organising the data into categories and identifying patterns or relationships between these categories. Furthermore, the process of qualitative data analysis is an on-going, cyclical process integrated into all phases of qualitative research. It is an inductive process in which categories and patterns emerge from the data rather than being imposed on data prior to data collection, as argued by Stenbacka (2001:123).

Neuman (2011:507) further asserts that when a researcher is analysing data, he/she needs to connect particular data to concepts, advance generalizations, and identify broad trends or themes. It can thus be said that the final analysis allows researchers to improve understanding, expand theory and add to the existing body of knowledge.
3.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the research design and methodology that was used in the current study was outlined and discussed. A methodological triangulation approach was used, which involved the administration of questionnaires to 14 respondents and individual interviews with a further four respondents. The ethical considerations and limitations relevant to this study were also highlighted. The quantitative data was analysed using the expertise of a Statistician from NMMU’s USC while the qualitative data was analysed using thematic content analysis. The next chapter will present the results of this data analysis, as well as interpretations and findings.
CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined the research design and methodology used in this study. This chapter seeks to present, interpret and analyse the research findings based primarily on the literature review and the results that emanated from the empirical study. Data was collected as described in the previous chapter. The techniques that have been used to collect data were self-administered questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

Data was collected to describe details about people, actions and events in social life, as stated by Neuman (2011:507). Data analysis and interpretation is a process in which data is collected and analysed. After the data has been collected, it needs to be presented, interpreted and analysed. The results of the empirical study were analysed in this section in order to achieve the research objectives outlined in Chapter One (see 1.5). The section below (see 4.2) will provide the responses to each statement in the questionnaire.

This chapter is outlined as follows:

Firstly, the analysis of questionnaire responses is provided, with section A of the questionnaire providing personal demographic details of Ward Committee members. Section B of the questionnaire is presented afterwards. This is followed by an analysis of the semi-structured interviews held with the Mayoral Committee members. After this, the analysis of the semi-structured interviews with the Ward Councillors is provided. The chapter ends with a summary of the key findings being presented.

4.2 QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The questionnaire was divided into two sections, namely sections A and B, with Section A providing personal demographic details of Ward Committee members and
Section B giving statements to which participants needed to respond. The responses to these two sections are illustrated below:

4.2.1 Section A

The demographic profile of respondents, namely gender, age and the Ward to which respondents belong, will be presented below.

4.2.1.1 Demographics: Ward Committee Members

The sample used by the researcher consisted of 14 respondents from Wards 3 and 4, comprising both males and females. Six respondents were from Ward 3 (four males and two females) and eight (8) respondents came from Ward 4 (three males and five females). Of these 14 respondents, 50% were female and 50% were male. The table below illustrates these figures. It may be important to also note that Ward 3 is run by the DA and Ward 4 by the ANC.

Table 4.1: A table showing the gender of the respondents from each of the selected Wards, both in numbers and percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ward 3</td>
<td>Ward 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Ward</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Ward</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Ward</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.1 below presents the number of males and females in each Ward in bar graphs. The bar graph clarifies trends better than tables and is often easy to understand.
Figure 4.1: A composite bar graph illustrating the gender profile of Ward Committee members per Ward, in response to Section A of the questionnaire

4.2.1.2 Age

The different age groups of the fourteen (14) respondents were also analysed. The age groups were broken down as follows: 21-40 years, 41-60 years and those over the age of 60 years. As shown in Table 4.2 and Figure 4.2 on the next page, there were no respondents under 20 years. Most respondents, namely seven out of the 14 respondents, were in the 21-40 year category, of which four were from Ward 3 and three from Ward 4. Six participants were between the ages of 41-60 years, of which five were from ward 4 and one from Ward 3. There was only one participant over the age of 60 years, from Ward 3 (see Table 4.2 and Figure 4.2).
Table 4.2: A table showing the age of the respondents from each of the selected Wards, both in numbers and percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ward 3</td>
<td>Ward 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-40 years</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Ward</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-60 years</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Ward</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61+ years</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Ward</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Ward</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The bar graph below shows the age categories of respondents in each Ward. As stated earlier in 4.1 bar graphs are easily understood and allows one to be able to estimate key values at a glance.

Figure 4.2: A bar graph illustrating the age groups of respondents in each Ward, in response to Section A of the questionnaire.
4.2.2 Section B

Section B of the questionnaire was categorised into various sub-themes. In each category, there were statements relating to each sub-theme (see Annexure G). A Likert scale was provided, with response options ranging from ‘strongly disagree’, ‘disagree’, ‘neutral’ and ‘agree’ to ‘strongly agree’. In the sections below, each sub-theme will be presented, followed by the statements under it as well as the responses to each statement. Bar graphs for each statement are provided in Figures 4.4-4.26.

4.2.2.1 Opinions on transparency

In this sub-section, the responses to the questionnaire statements pertaining to opinions on transparency are provided.

4.2.2.1.1 The municipality gives progress reports to the community on municipal projects and programmes

As shown in Figure 4.3 below, almost two-thirds (64.3%) of participants disagree that the municipality gives progress reports to the community on municipal projects and programmes. More than one-fifth (21.4%) of respondents were undecided or had no opinion on this and 14.3% agree with this statement.

The large percentage of the respondents would suggest that not enough progress reports are given to the community on municipal projects and programmes. It can therefore be inferred that much more needs to be done by way of providing progress reports to the community on municipal reports and programmes. This has the potential to enhance participation.
Figure 4.3: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 1 in Section B of the questionnaire, “The municipality gives progress reports to the community on municipal projects and programmes”

4.2.2.1.2 **The Ward Councillor does give feedback on municipal council meetings**

Majority of the respondents which when expressed in percentages was 71.4 disagreed that the Ward Councillors provided feedback on municipal council meetings. A 28.6% of the respondents agreed with this statement, as shown in Figure 4.4.
Figure 4.4: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 2 of Section B of the questionnaire, “The Ward Councillor does give feedback on municipal council meetings”

4.2.2.1.3 **The councillor is accountable to the community on an on-going manner.**

As shown in Figure 4.5 below, almost two-thirds (64.3%) of the participants disagree with the statement, 14.3% were neutral and more than one-fifth 21.4% agree. It could be concluded that the lack of accountability on the part of the Ward Councillor reduces the interest of the community to meaningfully participate in municipal matters affecting their affairs.
4.2.2.2 Attendance in meetings

In this sub-section, the statements posed relate to the ward meetings and attendance thereof.

4.2.2.2.1 There are regular ward meetings

The view of 57.1% of the respondents indicated that there are limited ward meetings. The percentage expressing opposing views was 35.7 while 7.1% of the participants were neutral. It could be inferred that there needs to be consistency in the setting up of ward meetings by Ward Councillors in order to increase participation.
4.2.2.2 The notice of the meetings is communicated well in advance.

A total 64% of the respondents reported that they disagree with this statement. It was interesting to note that only one person from each of the two Wards agreed with this statement, which constituted 14.3% of the respondents.
4.2.2.2.3  The purpose of the meeting is communicated to the residents in advance

The view of 85.7% of the respondents indicated the purpose of the meetings is not communicated in advance. The percentage expressing opposing views was 14.3%.

It is beneficial for the community to know why meetings are called, therefore it is imperative that the purpose of meetings is communicated well in advance. The large percentage of the respondents would suggest that the purpose of the meetings is not communicated in advance to the community. It can therefore be concluded that much more needs to be done by way of informing the community about the meeting and their purpose to enhance interest in attending and their active participation.

Figure 4.8: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 3 of attendance in meetings, “The purpose of the meeting is communicated to the residents in advance”

4.2.2.2.4  The venue of the meetings is always accessible.

Of the respondents, 42.8% reported that they disagree with the statement, while a percentage 28.6% of the respondents were undecided. Interestingly, 28.6% of the respondents seemed to agree with this.
4.2.2.2.5 The community is always informed about the meetings

A percentage of 57.1 of the respondents indicated that they are not always informed about meetings. The view of 7.1% revealed that respondents agreed that they were always informed. The remaining 35.7% were undecided.

Given that information is important for people to attend meetings, the large percentage of the respondents would suggest that not enough information is available to the community regarding meetings. It can therefore be inferred that much more needs to be done by way of informing the community about the meetings and their purpose to enhance participation.
Figure 4.10: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 5 of attendance in meetings, “The community is always informed about the meetings”

Not a single person from Ward 3 agreed with three of the five statements posed (i.e. 4.6 - 4.10). The responses from the Ward Committee members differ with that of their Ward Councillor; this suggests that one out of the two is not being honest about their role when it comes to the facilitation of public participation.

4.2.2.3 Opinions on public participation

In this sub-section, the statements below relate to the views of the Ward Committee members on public participation.
4.2.2.3.1 **The residents are always given an opportunity to participate in meetings.**

Figure 4.11: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 1 on opinions on public participation, “The residents are always given an opportunity to participate in meetings”

A total of 35.7% of the respondents disagree that the residents are always given an opportunity to participate in meetings; 42.9% were undecided while 21.4% agreed with this statement. It is interesting to note that two-thirds (66.7%) of the participants who were undecided are from Ward 3, and that none of the participants from this Ward agreed with the statement. The responses from the questionnaire filled out by Ward Committee members revealed that quite a substantive number of respondents were undecided or did not have an opinion on this. Perhaps some respondents did not understand the question the way the researcher had framed it to them.
4.2.2.3.2 The members of the community’s views are always taken into account when decisions are taken.

![Bar graph showing responses to statement 2 on public participation](image)

**Figure 4.12:** A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 2 on opinions on public participation, “The members of the community's views are always taken into account when decisions are taken”

The majority (78.6%) of the respondents responded that members of the community’s views are not always taken into account when decisions are taken. A percentage of 7.1 of the respondents indicated to be in agreement with this statement. The remaining 14.3% were undecided or did not have an opinion on this.

When decisions made by the municipality do not reflect the views of the community a decline in participation is most likely to occur, the large percentage of the respondents would suggest that the community’s views do not count when decisions are taken. It can therefore be inferred that much more needs to be done by way of ensuring that the views of the community are reflected in the decision-making processes of the municipality.

4.2.2.3.3 Members of the community are always rushed to take decisions as residents.

The view of 14.2% of the respondents indicated that members of the community are not always rushed to take decisions as residents. The percentage expressing opposing views was 64.3%. Whilst 21.4% of the respondents indicated they were
undecided or did not have a view on this. No one from ward 3 disagrees with this statement.

Rushing people into making decisions without them properly considering and weighing the different options with the different consequences could potentially lead to unrest when outcomes of the decisions taken start to impact on them. It could be inferred that proper coordination of the process of decision making needs to be facilitated with reasonable time frames to allow the community to digest information shared with them so that they can make informed decisions and contribute meaningfully in the public participation process.

Figure 4.13: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 2 on opinions on public participation, “Members of the community are always rushed to take decisions as residents”

4.2.2.3.4 The public is always aware of the importance of their participation in these meetings.

A total of 64.3% of the respondents disagree with the statement. A total of 21.4% of the respondents were undecided or did not have an opinion on this. The remaining 14.3% of the respondents agreed to this statement. It is interesting to note that no one in ward 3 agrees.
Figure 4.14: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 3 on opinions on public participation, “The public is always aware of the importance of their participation in these meetings.”

4.2.2.3.5 Participation in municipal affairs is encouraged.

Of the respondents, 71.4% reported that they disagree with the statement that participation in municipal affairs is encouraged. A percentage of 21.4 of the respondents were undecided on this. Only 7.1% of the respondents agree with this. No one from Ward 3 agrees. It is significant that none of the participants from Ward 3 agreed with four out of the five statements to opinions on public participation.

Figure 4.15: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 4 on opinions on public participation, “Participation in municipal affairs is encouraged”
4.2.4 Empowerment

In this sub-section, the statements relating to empowerment are provided. This is followed by the responses to the statements which are represented in the form of bar graphs.

4.2.4.1 The Ward Councillor encourages members of the community to participate.

A large percentage of 71.4 of the respondents disagree that the Ward Councillor encourages members of the community to participate. The percentage of those who are with the above statement is 14.3%. The remaining respondents with a 14.3% response rate agree with this statement. None from Ward 3 agreed.

It is important for the democratically elected leaders to encourage and inspire their constituencies to be interested and participate in the issues affecting them. The large percentage of respondents would seem to suggest that Ward Councillors have failed in this regard in motivating the members of the community to actively participate in local affairs. It can therefore be inferred that Ward Councillors need to take more lead and initiative in ensuring that the members of the community are encouraged to participate.

![Bar Graph]

Figure 4.16: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 1 on empowerment, “The Ward Councillor encourages members of the community to participate”
4.2.2.4.2 *The decisions of these meetings yield good results that are fruitful in the community.*

A 57.1% of the respondents disagree, 35.7% were neutral and 7.1% agreed. No one agreed from ward 3.

![Bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 2 on empowerment](image)

**Figure 4.17:** A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 2 on empowerment, “The decisions of these meetings yield good results that are fruitful in the community”

4.2.2.4.3 *Residents are encouraged to participate in empowerment projects.*

Of the respondents, 85.7% reported that they disagree that residents are encouraged to participate in empowerment projects. However 14.3% of the respondents did not share the same opinion. No one agrees from Ward 4.

Given that empowerment projects often provide people with information and evoke interest to participate in community-based projects, the large percentage of the respondents would suggest that not enough empowerment is available to the community. It can therefore be inferred that much more needs to be done by way of informing and inviting the community to empowerment programmes with the purpose to enhance participation.
Figure 4.18: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 3 on empowerment, “Residents are encouraged to participate in empowerment projects.

4.2.2.4.4 Planned empowerment programmes are communicated in a clear manner.

A total of 78.6% of the respondents reported they disagree that planned empowerment programmes are communicated in a clear manner. Interestingly, 21.4% of the respondents reported that they were undecided or had no opinion on this.

Given that communication is important for people to attend empowerment programmes, the large percentage of the respondents would suggest that not enough information is available to the community on empowerment programmes. It can therefore be inferred that much more needs to be done by way of informing the community about the empowerment programmes and the purpose of these programmes.
Figure 4.19: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 4 on empowerment, “Planned empowerment programmes are communicated in a clear manner”

4.2.2.5 Promoting good governance

Under this sub-section, statements posed relate to the promotion of good governance. Coupling these statements are responses from the respondents which are expressed in a form of a bar graph with some narration.

4.2.2.5.1 Views of the community influence the decision-making and planning in the municipality.

A total of 71.4% of the respondents felt that the views of the community do not influence the decision-making and planning in the municipality. The percentage of the respondents that were undecided or had no opinion on this was 28.6%. Interestingly, the same number of participants (4) from both Wards remained undecided.
Figure 4.20: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 1 on Promoting Good Governance, “Views of the community influence the decision-making and planning in the municipality”

4.2.2.5.2 The municipality is always accountable to residents.

Of the respondents 64.3% reported that they disagree with the statement that the municipality is always accountable to residents. However, 14.3% did not share the same opinion, for them the municipality remained accountable to residents. Only 21.4% of the respondents did not have an opinion this. The large percentage of the respondents would suggest that the municipality lacks accountability. It can therefore be inferred that much more needs to be done by way of increasing the accountability levels on the part of the municipality.
Figure 4.21: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 2 on Promoting Good Governance, “The municipality is always accountable to residents”

4.2.2.5.3 There is regular feedback from Ward Councillors on the plans, state and future of the municipality.

A total of 85.7% of the respondents reported that there is no regular feedback from the Ward Councillor on the plans, state and future of the municipality. A percentage of 14.3 were undecided or had no opinion on this and no one agreed with this statement.
4.2.2.5.4 The short-term and long-term plans of the municipality are communicated to us.

A total of 78.6% of the respondents reported that the plans of the municipality, both short and long term, are not communicated to the community. A total of 14.3% of the respondents were undecided on this or did not have an opinion on this while the remaining 7.1% of the respondents agreed to this.
4.2.2.5.5 Members of the community have direct contact/access to democratically elected representatives.

The view of 57.1% of the respondents indicated that members of the community do not have direct contact/access to the democratically elected representatives. Interestingly, 42.9% of the respondents were undecided or did not have a view on this. Significantly, no one agreed to this.

![Response Graph](image)

#### Figure 4.24: A bar graph showing Ward Committee members’ responses to statement 4 on Promoting Good Governance, “Members of the community have direct contact/access to democratically elected representatives”

4.2.2.5.6 The community/committee feels that the governance is owned by the community.

An outright majority of 85.7% of the respondents indicated their disagreement to this statement. A percentage of 14.3 of the respondents remained undecided or did not have an opinion on this. In four (4) out of the six (6) statements no one agreed from both Wards.

According to Dahl (1990), democracy is government of the people by the people for the people which therefore means that the community needs to feel part of the governance by allowing their views to influence decisions taken on their behalf. It can therefore be inferred that communities need to be encouraged to actively get involved in the governance process.
4.2.2.6 What other forums for community participation are you aware of in your community?

The following forums were mentioned by participants: The Youth Forum, Community Development Workers (CDW), Community Policing Forum (CPF), Business Forum, Disabled Persons’ Forum, Crèche Forum and Church Forum.

4.2.2.7 In your view, how important is public participation in local government?

Participants gave the following responses to the above question:

i. Public participation is very important because it can minimize the service delivery protests in our areas and also people must be aware of what is going on in the community.

ii. It gives voice of the people to influence and come up with solutions to their own challenges.

iii. It is crucial because community members are the ‘government’ and they provide a mandate to elected representatives to communicate the needs of residents.
iv. Public participation is important because it makes the community feel part of the government.

v. It is a tool that can bridge the gap between communities and the municipality.

vi. It can help improve the standard of living.

4.2.3 Statistical analysis

This section provides a summary of the two tests conducted. The correlation test will be firstly dealt with, this test was conducted to establish if there is any relationship between the responses. This was done to see if any trends would be picked up from the responses, for example, to see if responses from opinions on transparency is the same as attendance in meetings. It was critical to perform this test as it was necessary to establish if responses from the respondents could have said there is no transparency but it so happens that they do not attend meetings.

The correlation test was done at a 5% significance level which means that for all values greater than 0.5. It can be said with 95% confidence that there is a very strong correlation between the responses. All values smaller than 0.3 indicate that there is a very weak correlation between the responses.

The conclusions stated below, in this sub-section, were made by the predicting correlations of those factors at a p<0.5 significance level. In other words, we are 95% sure that these results are correct and there is a 5% probability of the results being incorrect.

Based on the statistical analysis that was performed, it cannot be concluded that opinions on transparency affect the attendance of the community at ward meetings. Attendance in meetings, meanwhile, does have an effect on opinions about public participation. It can also be concluded that opinions of transparency do not have an effect on the Ward Committee members’ opinions of public participation.

There is not enough evidence to conclude that there is any link between responses on transparency and empowerment, but it was found that there exists a link between responses to attendance in meetings and empowerment. For example, the people
who attended meetings felt that there was transparency compared to those that did not attend. It can also be said that the results of opinions on public participation are linked to those of empowerment.

The statistical analysis has also revealed that opinions of transparency affect the promotion of good governance as well as attendance in meetings. Opinions of public participation also affect the promotion of good governance, as does empowerment.

The second test performed was the Cohen’s $d$ test which is a test done to see if there is any statistical significance in the responses based on gender, ward and age. As can be noted; for example, a small statistical significance of a response revealed that a grouping of respondents by ward was not important. For all values of the Cohen’s $d$ test greater than 0.8 show that there is a large significance and all those smaller than 0.5 show that there is a small significance. Grouping participants per ward was found to be of little statistical significance, except for opinions on transparency; in this case, it mattered which ward the participant came from. There was no practical significance in grouping participants based on gender or age.

4.3 INTERVIEW RESULTS

In this sub-section, the results of semi-structured interviews with the two Mayoral Committee members as indicated in 1.9.3 are presented, commencing with the description of the demographics.

4.3.1 Interviews with Mayoral Committee members

Two Mayoral Committee members from the NMBM were selected, as described in 1.9.3 and both were interviewed. One member of the Mayoral Committee had been serving for less than five years, whilst the other had served for over eleven years. Both of these Mayoral Committee members were female.

Section B of the semi-structured interviews dealt with the mayoral committee members’ knowledge of public participation, as well as their application of public participation processes in their respective portfolios and their general perceptions of public participation. For ease of reference, the mayoral committee members will be
referred to as ‘mayoral committee member 1’ and ‘mayoral committee member 2’. The members’ responses to the interview questions are summarised below.

1. **Are there any processes for public participation in the Metro? If yes, which processes are these? If no, why not?**

Both mayoral committee members agree that there are processes for public participation in the Metro. Mayoral committee member 1 stated that, firstly, ward councillors are platforms at the ward level for engagement with the respective communities. Secondly, there is the Mayoral Outreach Programme that goes to communities; this involves each member of the mayoral committee informing the public about departmental programmes. The Mayoral Outreach Programme aims to inform communities of the services available to them and how the public can access these. Mayoral committee member 1 also highlighted that another process is the IDP and budgeting, stating that in the municipality, there is an office with a Director for the IDP, Budget and Public Participation. This office is accountable to all stakeholders and, according to mayoral committee member 1, notifies the public of different times for sessions to increase the outreach of communication to the broader public.

Mayoral committee member 2, in her justification, listed the following as the processes of public participation in the Metro: the IDP and budget sessions, the People’s Assembly Annual Report, Ward public meetings, Mayoral outreach, stakeholders’ engagement and mayoral regeneration programmes.

2. **In your view, are these processes effective in the Metro or not? Please briefly explain your answer.**

Mayoral committee member 1 stated that in the past, these processes were not effective because the processes were completed for compliance reasons, but that the Metro has changed its strategy in dealing with this. She explained that, previously, processes were undertaken in clusters and it was realised that not everyone was reached because when wards were grouped up to six wards, for example, it was found that only three wards with a few people would attend. Currently, there are ward-by-ward, sector-by-sector sessions to accommodate those
community members who are working. Mayoral committee member 2’s view was that some of these processes are effective, whilst some are not, due to poor planning, inadequate publication or announcements, or people only being interested in certain issues rather than the overall municipal programmes.

3. Are you aware of any form of empowerment offered to citizens to participate in local affairs? If yes, how are community members empowered to participate?

Both mayoral committee members agree that there are forms of empowerment offered to citizens to participate in local affairs. Mayoral committee member 1 elaborates that community members are assisted through their councillors, posters in different sports centres, notices to libraries and ward councillors’ offices. She added that empowerment occurs through ward committees as well, because “first empowerment is offered to the ward committee members who then inform the community”. Lastly, she indicated that empowerment also results from the use of community radios and load hailers. Mayoral committee member 2 believed that the empowerment of community members is achieved through ward committee information sessions, as well as public meetings held by ward councillors.

4. Are there processes for educating the community about the importance of their role of being part of the decision-making in their affairs? Briefly explain your answer.

Both members of the mayoral committee agreed that there are processes for educating the community about the importance of their role in such decision-making.

Mayoral committee member 1 mentioned that the mayoral outreach programme is one such system of educating the community. Mayoral committee member 2 explained that in the months of January and February each year, there are education awareness campaigns run by the mayoral committee, who visit churches.
5. What suggestions can you make for improving the communities’ understanding of their role in decision-making?

Mayoral committee member 1 suggested that the municipality needs to encourage people to attend its council meetings, at which all decisions are taken, so that the public can also find out how much money the municipality has and get to know the standing committees that are open for them. Mayoral committee member 2 recommended more information to be made available and greater mobilisation at ward level, as well as relevant training for ward ambassadors.

6. What logistical arrangements are made to improve attendance at meetings?

Mayoral committee member 1 suggested the increased use of ward committee members in getting the message to the rest of the community. She also mentioned that the Speaker's office should devise more ways to improve the logistics of meetings, such as communicating notifications about such meetings timeously as well as trying to organise venues nearby or at least reliable transport for easier access. Mayoral committee member 2 proposed the use of loud hailing to inform citizens of meetings, as well as the organising of proper venues to hold meetings.

7. To what extent does community participation influence decision-making in the Metro?

Mayoral committee member 1 stated that community participation occurs through consultation with different stakeholders. The only thing that is sometimes a challenge, according to her, is municipal resources, because the community’s needs are substantial and resources are limited. Mayoral committee member 1 added that they are, however, working on addressing this. Mayoral committee member 2 shared that community participation does influence decision-making in that during the IDP sessions, priorities in wards are discussed by ordinary citizens residing in those respective wards.

Both members from the mayoral committee seemed to agree that public participation informs good governance. Mayoral committee member 1 justified this by stating that there is nothing the municipality can do for its citizens without them; consultation and engagement with the latter assists in the municipality being transparent, accountable, more responsive and compliant with the Batho Pele Principles. Mayoral committee member 2 responded that public participation is one of the key cornerstones of democratic local government.

9. In your view, can public participation be improved in the Metro? Briefly explain.

According to Mayoral committee member 1, public participation needs to be done timeously. For example, community meetings should be called quarterly and the municipality should not wait for the IDP and budget processes, which is the current situation. Ward councillors should take the lead in keeping communities informed. Mayoral committee member 2 stated that the only way for public participation to improve in the Metro is if the Metro adopted a public participation strategy and policy.

10. In your view, is public participation a challenge in the Metro? Briefly explain.

Mayoral committee member 1 acknowledged that this is still a challenge because sometimes one finds out that meetings are called and few people attend. This could be due to the municipality not having given the public notice in advance. Or sometimes people attend in good numbers and there are no councillors and officials to address them. Mayoral committee member 2 highlighted that there is minimal participation by people and sometimes meetings are stopped by those who are unhappy about other issues that are not on the agenda.
11. What suggestions can you make for improving the level of participation in the Metro?

Mayoral committee member 1 says that the municipality should take a step backwards and consult with residents regularly to close the fast-growing gap between the municipality and its citizens. Mayoral committee member 2, meanwhile, recommended more information sessions, community mobilisation and closer relations by ward councillors.

4.3.2 Interviews with Ward Councillors

Below are the results of the Ward Councillors interviewed as described in 3.4.3. Firstly, the results of the semi-structured interview with Ward Councillor from Ward 3 are presented. This is followed by the results of the semi-structured interview with the Ward Councillor from Ward 4.

4.3.2.1 Ward Councillor from Ward 3

This section provides the responses of the Ward Councillor of Ward 3 during his semi-structured interview.

4.3.2.1.1 Are you aware of the processes for public participation in your Ward? Yes or No. Motivate your answer.

The Councillor was aware of the processes for public participation. The Councillor goes on to state, “There is on-going public participation in terms of the IDP and the ward-based budgets”.

4.3.2.1.2 What are your views as a Councillor for this Ward about the processes of participation?

The Councillor responded by saying, “Public participation must take place”. He added, “However, the municipality fails to give the public effective notice of such meetings and they are therefore badly attended”. He also states that at the last public meeting, none of the NMBM officials or ANC presenters were present. The meeting, according to him, was abandoned half an hour after it was supposed to start.
4.3.2.1.3 Are you aware of any form of empowerment offered to the citizens to participate in local affairs? Yes or No. If yes, how are community members empowered to participate?

The Councillor did not answer this question, but rather said, “My office is always open for people to come speak to me. I have an open door policy and I am prepared to speak about the IDP budget and the ward-based budget at any time as required by people”.

4.3.2.1.4 Is the community educated about the importance of their role of being part of the decision-making in their affairs? If yes, how? If not, why?

According to the Councillor, the majority of the residents of this particular ward are fully aware of their importance and the importance of public meetings.

He went on to emphasise that inadequate and ineffective communication by the municipality defeats the purpose of having the community involved. He stated, “People are aware but the problem is that they do not attend because of the ineffectiveness of the awareness and communication from the NMBM”. In particular, he mentioned that the notice periods are too short. He further stated, “I know for a fact that The Herald is only read by a few people in Port Elizabeth; the printing itself caters for those few that read it. If you look at your popular publications read by Black people, such as the Daily Sun, which sells out on a daily basis, it would be more effective to advertise there than to do so on (sic) The Herald. Awareness is one thing, participation is another”.

4.3.2.1.5 What suggestions can you make to improve public participation in matters of local government?

His recommendation is for the DA to take over in 2016. He elaborates and says, “The DA has plans that will be set in motion to improve public participation and to ensure that the public is both aware and actively participates”.
4.3.2.1.6 What (logistical) arrangements are made to improve attendance in meetings?

His response to this question was, “I have my own system of communicating with a large number of residents in this ward, which is often more effective than the NMBM way of doing things. I have collected my own database with 95% of the people in the ward. I don’t include those in elderly homes as they do not have cell phones; I target them personally. Out of the 85% of data I have collected, I have about 99% of their cell phone numbers which are working. If there is any notice that needs to be sent out, I send over 5000 SMSes in one go”.

4.3.2.1.7 To what extent does community participation influence decision-making?

The Councillor’s view on this was that the NMBM makes its own decisions as to what will be in the IDP and what will be in the ward-based budgets. He went on to state that this is normally based on cash availability.

4.3.2.1.8 Does public participation inform good governance? Explain.

The Councillor fully agreed that public participation can enhance good governance, but noted that this is currently not happening. He provided the following example, “You have housing that is built for individuals that neither exactly poor (sic) nor are they middle class, but the placement of these houses make no sense. The houses are isolated from workplaces and are far. Some people leave from their work places and end up spending double on travelling costs than what they usually would. Their income decreases as the cost to travel is too high. I met a waitress at a coffee shop down the road that closed down and she told me she earned R3000 net including tips every month and used R1200 for transport, which is ridiculous! You find people living in places further away working at other ends of town because the houses are placed in isolated areas where there is no place of work nearby”.

4.3.2.1.9 What suggestions can you make for improving the level of participation in your ward?

The suggestion he provides is for the DA to take over in 2016.
4.3.2.2 Ward Councillor from Ward 4

In this sub-section, the results from the semi-structured interview conducted with the Councillor from Ward 4 is presented below.

4.3.2.2.1 Are you aware of the processes for public participation in your ward? Yes or No. Motivate your answer.

The Councillor is aware of the processes for public participation in her ward and mentioned the IDP process as an example.

4.3.2.2.2 What are your views as a Councillor for this Ward about the processes of participation?

She responded by answering, “Firstly, we are doing the loud hailing. Then we are distributing pamphlets and then people attend. Even tomorrow, we are going to have a meeting and two cars have just left to do the loud hailing”.

4.3.2.2.3 Are you aware of any form of empowerment offered to the citizens to participate in local affairs? Yes or No. If yes, how are community members empowered to participate?

The Councillor asks for the researcher to elaborate. She then says in IsiXhosa that she does not want to give an incorrect answer that may possibly implicate her. After much deliberation, the following response was given:

“What we do is that we encourage them. Sometimes when it comes to public participation and when we are in meetings certain things are not addressed. Furthermore, things that people want to hear are not addressed. People tend to come wanting to hear something and you have prepared yourself otherwise to discuss something else. There are workshops in different areas since there are many areas in one ward. In each area there is a committee set up. We call for someone from the municipality to conduct these workshops. These workshops also help us in finding out what is needed in each particular ward and what is needed of each person to participate”.

107
4.3.2.4 Is the community educated about the importance of their role of being part of the decision-making in their affairs? If yes, how? If not, why?

The Councillor’s response to this question was, “When the officials and the people in the ward agree on their priorities and both parties are satisfied, that’s when it happens. The officials let the people of the ward decide which priority should go first and from that point what else is to come next. The people of the ward are given the opportunity to select what they want to be done in the ward. We also tell them about the budget and what can be done with the money allocated for the ward. This also helps them make a decision as to what will be suitable for them taking into account the budget”.

She emphasised that the education of citizens about the importance of their role in decision-making is currently not happening. She elaborates that if one looks at the priorities of projects that can be done within the ward, one would find that the officials can identify what can and cannot be done. They go to the people within the ward relaying what will be done. The priorities of the IDP are not the same as those of the people within the ward. The conflict between the two delays and/or hinders the process.

4.3.2.5 What suggestions can you make to improve public participation in matters of local government?

The Councillor provided the following answer:

“I’m unsure what to say. Let me make an example. Let’s say tomorrow is a public meeting and the reality is not each and every person will attend this meeting. There are 18 areas; not everyone will attend. What I’m thinking is that since I have a ward committee, what we can do is go to the people directly in their respective areas. What you’ll find is that what troubles the one area won’t be the same as the next. Each area has its own problem. What I’m thinking and what is being done is going to an individual area and find out what is troubling people of that particular area. We then find a solution where the people within the particular area elect people who will be able to work hand-in-hand with me as the ward councillor, even if it is people within the
ward committee council. People assume that things are done easily which is not the case. The people that are elected and I will go together to the municipality and they will see for themselves how things are done. From there, we go back to the people in that area to report back to the people. You’d find that in the follow-up meeting that people are enthusiastic and are willing to participate”.

4.3.2.6 What (logistical) arrangements are made to improve attendance in meetings?

To improve attendance, the Councillor recommended the use of a loud hailer system to inform the community about meetings. She provided the following example, “Tomorrow there is a meeting and the cars have gone out to tell people that there will be a meeting to be held tomorrow. Tomorrow there will be a reminder for people to notify them that there will be a meeting held later on that day. We can’t make announcements during the day because people are working. These are done in the evening when we know a vast majority of people are at home and are able to hear the meeting announcement. Our system is that we tell them the day before and we remind them on the day”.

4.3.2.7 To what extent does community participation influence decision-making?

She did not have a view on this question.

4.3.2.8 Does public participation inform good governance? Explain.

The Councillor agreed that public participation informs good governance. She elaborated, “There is a possibility of improving. The only thing that people want is service delivery and they find that to be of importance. Nothing will improve if all they know is public participation, yet nothing is seen on the ground. There needs to be something happening in order for people to participate. Services must be delivered. People will be encouraged to participate if there is service delivery. If there is nothing for people to see in terms of service delivery, there won’t be any public participation”.

109
4.3.2.2.9 What suggestions can you make for improving the level of participation in your ward?

She does not have suggestions on how the level of participation in her ward can be improved. She stated, “That’s why I said what I had said in the beginning that touching base with each area is effective. Yes, in the beginning when you called for public participation, the people lacked encouragement. But now that we go to each area informing people on the meetings and we touch on what we can. I’m satisfied by the manner in which the public participate and that they play an active role in order for us to assist each other in reaching the same objective”.

4.4 KEY FINDINGS

The following are the key findings of the study from both the questionnaire and interview data that has been presented in this chapter.

4.4.1 Key findings from the questionnaires administered to the Ward Committee Members.

Key findings from the questionnaire responses of the Ward Committee members include the following:

i. There are allegations of a lack of transparency and accountability from Ward Councillors. The latter do not inform residents of what is happening nor do they provide feedback on issues;

ii. Ward meetings do not occur on a regular basis and when they do, due notice is not given;

iii. In terms of public participation, the views of the community are not reflected in the decisions that are taken. Most of the time, the residents or members of the community are rushed to make decisions, not allowing them enough time to think about issues. In most instances, residents are not even aware of the importance of their participation in these meetings. Furthermore, residents are not encouraged to participate in municipal affairs;

iv. Residents have found that decisions that are taken do not yield good results and have therefore become discouraged from participating;
There are limited educational and empowerment programmes in place, and those that are available are communicated to a selected few only;

In most cases, the Ward Councillor either does not have a relationship with residents or ward committee members, or both. If there are relations, these are influenced by political affiliation. This has created a disconnect between the people, their elected representatives and local government;

The Municipality is not accountable to residents; and

No feedback is provided on the plans, or the state and future of the municipality.

In some cases, the community struggles to access or does not have direct access to their democratically-elected representatives.

**4.4.2 Key findings from the interviews with the Mayoral Committee members**

The two Mayoral Committee members highlighted the following when interviewed:

There are processes for public participation in place in NMBM, which are not fully exhausted because of the serious perception that all is well when it comes to public participation;

Whilst some of these processes seem effective, many are still ineffective and this is due to poor planning, or inadequate publication or announcement of meetings. It is also due to people being interested in certain issues rather than the overall municipal programmes;

Empowerment initiatives seem to be given to the Ward Councillors to administer. There seem to be different interpretations of what is meant by 'empowerment', and this has contributed to the poor administration of such initiatives; and

There is no clear educational process or programme and plan for residents.

**4.4.3 Key findings from the interviews with Ward Councillors**

Significant findings from the interviews with the two Ward Councillors include the following:
i. The municipality fails to give due notice of meetings;
ii. The subject of empowerment and education in wards relies heavily on the type of Ward Councillor, as the latter are the drivers of these processes;
iii. There is inadequate communication from the municipality;
iv. In the rare cases when notices are given by the municipality, these are placed in the Herald newspaper. This is a problem because many people do not access this newspaper;
v. In some cases, Ward Councillors have too many areas that they are responsible for in a ward, making it impossible for them to reach all areas; and
vi. It is interesting to note that the Councillor for Ward 4 painted a different picture from that of her ward committee members.

4.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the demographic profile, questionnaire responses, interview responses as well as the key findings. In this chapter the interpretation and analyses of the findings from this study is presented. The gathered data was analysed with the help of a statistician from USC at NMMU. Since many of the questions elicited opinion, the statistical analysis was mainly on the demographic and multiple choice types of responses. The responses were then captured in bar graphs in the form percentages. The researcher was then able to insert interpretive comments on the various figures to provide meaning. Where appropriate, some opinions expressed in motivation were added to give clarity to the responses.

It is evident from the responses of the respondents that there are serious issues around public participation in the NMBM and that public participation is not maximised to its fullest so that good governance can be realised. The majority of the respondents agree that there is a challenge with regard to public participation generally in the NMBM. The last chapter will focus on the final conclusions and recommendations of the study.
CHAPTER 5

FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher presents the summary of the study, final conclusions and recommendations to address the research problem and provide a platform for further research. The main research question of the study was to ascertain whether public participation could lead to good governance in the NMBM.

In this research, a literature study was conducted, which included a broad analysis of a variety of sources comprising official documentation, unpublished theses as well as relevant legislation. The findings revealed that there is a serious challenge of public participation in NMBM, which has resulted in a disconnect between the public and local government. This study has established that the current level of knowledge about the importance of public participation and inadequate communication, which includes feedback, transparency and accountability, in the NMBM, was a concern and that residents needed to be educated, encouraged and empowered to participate more meaningfully in their affairs.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Chapter One of this study provided the general overview as well as the background to the study. The research question, problem statement, research aims and objectives, and the significance of the study were also outlined.

Chapter Two provided a literature review on public participation and good governance. This literature review revealed that there is indeed a gap between communities and government. If further revealed that there is a brewing tendency by government officials of making decisions on behalf of the community and when challenged on these decisions a defence approach is adopted. In this chapter public participation was seen as a matter of compliance and is far from being genuine exercise. The lessons learnt from international and regional perspectives revealed that encouraging progress has been made to increase and promote public participation but also highlighted lots of room for improvement. The lessons learnt
from these countries can assist in addressing and enhancing public participation for the South African context. In terms of legislation and policy on public participation, it became apparent that the duty of municipalities, as indicated in the pieces of legislation, to ensure the effective participation of citizens and communities in the matters of local government rests solely with that particular municipality.

Chapter Three presented the research design and methodology that was employed in the study. The qualitative and quantitative research methods that were employed were discussed in detail. The choice of sampling methods and methods of data analysis, as well as guiding ethical considerations, were also discussed.

The research findings were presented and analysed in Chapter Four. The responses have revealed that there is a disconnect between the communities and the NMBM municipality. The findings also suggest that the public participation exercise may be undertaken for the sake of compliance and therefore might not be a genuine exercise. Some respondents in the communities feel deprived of their basic human right to be involved in the governance of their Wards and municipality, as prescribed by the Constitution. Chapter Five presented a summary of the findings, final conclusions and recommendations both to address the research problem and for future research to be undertaken.

5.3 FINAL CONCLUSIONS

The research question of this study was to examine public participation as a contributor to good governance in the NMBM, as part of the process of improving the Municipality’s governance and to make recommendations that could potentially improve such participation. The first chapter of this thesis provided an outline of the direction the researcher wished to take with this particular study. Furthermore, the revelations of the aims and objectives that required fulfilment were provided for. In this chapter; the introductory section provided a brief background on public participation as an essential element in local governance. Moreover, this section provided reasons in motivation of this study, and thus provided a problem statement which was intended to guide the study.
A legislative framework in which public participation as a contributory factor to good governance was analysed together with the policies underpinning public participation. An overview of the research design and methodology used in this study is also provided for in this chapter, with more detail provided in chapter three. This chapter provided a clear picture of what the intention of undertaking this study was. Furthermore, this chapter provided an illustration of how answers will be generated to address the research questions. Lastly, the flow of how the chapters are structured was also presented in this chapter.

In chapter two, the concepts of public participation and good governance were first defined. International and regional perspectives were then provided to illustrate the effects of historical, geographic and cultural differences on public participation. These perspectives also provided context and allowed for a comparison between other countries and South Africa. Following this, the South African perspective was considered in an attempt to establish the status quo of public participation in the country. After that, the current state of public participation in South African municipalities was assessed. Finally, the key legislation underpinning public participation in South Africa was examined.

In chapter three, the research design and methodology that was used in the current study was outlined and discussed. A methodological triangulation approach was used, which involved the administration of questionnaires to 14 respondents and individual interviews with a further four respondents. The ethical considerations and limitations relevant to this study were also highlighted. The quantitative data was analysed with the help of a statistician from the Unit of Statistical Unit at the NMMU whilst the qualitative data was analysed by the researcher.

The next chapter, chapter four, presented the results of the data analysis, as well as interpretations and findings. This chapter presented the demographic profile, questionnaire responses, interview responses as well as the key findings. In this chapter the interpretation and analyses of the findings from this study were presented. The gathered data was analysed with the help of a statistician from the Department of Statistics at NMMU. Since many of the questions elicited opinion, the statistical analysis was mainly on the demographic and multiple choice types of responses. The responses were then captured in bar graphs in the form of
percentages. The researcher was then able to insert interpretive comments on the various figures to provide meaning. Where appropriate, some opinions expressed in motivation were added to give clarity to the responses.

It is evident from the responses of the respondents that there are serious issues around public participation in the NMBM and that public participation is not maximised to its fullest so that good governance can be realised. The majority of the respondents agree that there is a challenge with regard to public participation generally in the NMBM. The last chapter focussed on the final conclusions and recommendations of the study. The recommendations provided were categorised under two sub-headings namely; recommendations to address the problem statement and recommendations to address possible future research. It is hoped that the proposed recommendations can assist the NMBM deal with the challenges of public participation.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Under this sub-section, two types of recommendations will be presented, namely, recommendations to address the research problem followed by recommendations for possible future studies.

5.4.1 Recommendations addressing the research problem

The following recommendations are made from this study:

i. The whole concept of active citizenship is becoming more important and is central to good governance, but significant civic education is needed for the public to understand that being in a democratic country involves active participation in local affairs.

ii. More needs to be done to make the public aware of the role of Ward Committees and to invite people to apply to be on these Committees. It is also important that Ward Committees are not used as a political platform to push political agendas, as this deters public participation. This may be a challenge because the Ward Councillor chairs the meeting and is a political figure.
iii. Councillors must develop their own systems of communicating with their constituencies. For example, it would be a good idea for Councillors to have collected their own databases of the people in their wards, so that if there is a meeting, they could send SMSes in bulk, where feasible.

iv. There should be an extension of Ward Committee members, in other words get more people involved as volunteers within that particular area or Ward who will be able to work closely with the Councillor on voluntary basis.

v. The NMBM needs to establish a monitoring and evaluation process to track their progress with public participation.

vi. The NMBM needs to adopt a public participation strategy and policy.

vii. Democratically-elected representatives need to be accessible to the community that they represent.

viii. Regular and continuous feedback is crucial and must be provided.

ix. More meaningful and relevant educational as well empowerment programmes for the communities need to be developed, rolled out and carefully monitored.

x. The municipality should consider using community radios, community television, and local and easily accessible newspapers or tabloids, such as The Daily Sun and Die Son, as part of its communication channels.

5.4.2 Recommendations for future research

A descriptive overview of possible future studies that could be undertaken from the current research platform, is provided below.

i. This research could be extended to other Wards within the NMBM as well as other municipalities, the current study was limited to NMBM and within NMBM, only in two Wards. There 283 municipalities in South Africa with three different municipal categories.

ii. The research methodology in this study could also potentially be applied to smaller municipalities; to investigate the impact public participation has in ensuring good governance.

iii. Furthermore, a wider range of demographic variables can be explored, rather than solely focusing on age and gender. Examples of such
additional demographic variables could include the educational level, socioeconomic status as well as perhaps general citizens (general citizens being citizens not in any committee structure within the municipality or within government).

iv. The current sample size of 18 respondents could also be increased and the research conducted at multiple municipalities across all provinces in South Africa instead of being restricted to the NMBM.


Agyeman-Duah, B. (2002), Civil-Military Relations in Ghana’s Fourth Republic, Critical


Athens City County Health Department, (2004).


Davids, I. 2005c. Voices from below. Reflecting on ten years of Public Participation: The case of Local Government in the Western Cape Province: FCR.


Doomo, A.M., 2004. Pluralidade religiosa à brasileira, associativismo e movimentos sociais em São


Martin, V. & Taylor, P. eds. Toolkit 1: Investigating performance and change:


Merriam, S.B. 1998. Qualitative research and case study applications in education. San Francisco:


APPENDICES

ANNEXURE A: LETTER OF REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN NMBM

A6 Xanadu Residence
Summerstrand
Port Elizabeth
6031
12 August 2014

The Municipal Manager
Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality
City Hall
Vuyisile Mini Square
Port Elizabeth
6001
Dear Mr Mbambisa

I am currently registered for an MA degree in Public Administration (student no. 210079703) with the Faculty of Arts, in the department of Public Management and Leadership, at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. I would like to request permission to conduct a research study in fulfilment of the said degree.

The title of the study is: EXAMINING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AS A CONTRIBUTOR TO GOOD GOVERNANCE: A LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE

Below are the details of my study leader:

Dr Sindsile Maclean
Room 509: Main Building
NMMU
Tel no: 041 504 3770
Fax no: 0415041506
E-mail: sindisile.maclean@nmmu.ac.za

Your favourable consideration would be appreciated.

Yours faithfully

……………………..
T. Nkuntse
RESEARCHE
073 016 3139 (C)
ANNEXURE B: APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FROM NMBM

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir / Madam

Please be advised that permission has been granted to Mr. Nkuntse to conduct research in the following offices:

- Office of the Speaker;
- Constituency Office; and
- COO’s Office (IDP)

Yours truly,

[Signature]

MS K MAKALIMA
FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: CORPORATE SERVICES

17 OCTOBER 2014

WORKING TOGETHER WE CAN BUILD BETTER COMMUNITIES
ANNEXURE C: ETHICS APPROVAL TO CONDUCT THE RESEARCH

Ref: H/14/ART/PGS-0026
17 December 2014
Mr T Nkuntse
3627 Tonjeni Street
Kwazakhele
PORT ELIZABETH
6025

Dear Mr Nkuntse

EXAMINING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AS A CONTRIBUTOR TO GOOD GOVERNANCE: A LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE

Your above-entitled application for ethics approval served at the FPGSC Higher Degrees sub-committee of the Faculty of Arts Faculty Postgraduate Studies Committee.

We take pleasure in informing you that the application was approved by the Committee.

The Ethics clearance reference number is H/14/ART/PGS-0026, and is valid for three years, from 05 NOVEMBER 2014 – 05 NOVEMBER 2017. Please inform the FPGSC, via your supervisor, if any changes (particularly in the methodology) occur during this time. An annual affirmation to the effect that the protocols in use are still those for which approval was granted, will be required from you. You will be reminded timeously of this responsibility.

We wish you well with the project.

Yours sincerely

Mrs N Mngonyama
FACULTY ADMINISTRATOR

cc: Promoter/Supervisor HoD School Representative: Faculty FPGSC
## ANNEXURE D: INFORMED CONSENT

**NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY**

**INFORMATION AND INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESEARCHER’S DETAILS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title of the research project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interviewer</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### A. DECLARATION BY OR ON BEHALF OF PARTICIPANT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I, the participant and the undersigned</th>
<th>(Full names)</th>
</tr>
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</table>

I confirm that I am over 18 years of age.

### A.1 HEREBY CONFIRM AS FOLLOWS:

| I, the participant, was invited to participate in the above-mentioned research project |
| that is being undertaken by |
| from |
| of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. |

### THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS HAVE BEEN EXPLAINED TO ME, THE PARTICIPANT:

<p>| 2.1 Aim: |
| 2.2 Possible benefits: |</p>
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<th>2.3</th>
<th>Confidentiality:</th>
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<th>2.4</th>
<th>Voluntary participation / refusal / discontinuation:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My participation is voluntary</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My decision whether or not to participate will in no way affect my present or future care / employment / lifestyle</td>
<td>TRUE</td>
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A.2 I HEREBY VOLUNTARILY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ABOVE-MENTIONED PROJECT:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signed/confirmed at</th>
<th>on</th>
<th>20</th>
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<tr>
<td>Signature of witness:</td>
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<td>Full name of witness:</td>
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<td>Signature or right thumb print of participant</td>
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ANNEXURE E: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE – Mayoral Committee Member

SECTION A

Please complete the questionnaire by indicating your answer with an “X”

1. Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
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2. Length of service with Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality as a Ward Councillor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0-5yrs</th>
<th>6 – 10yrs</th>
<th>11 – 15yrs</th>
<th>16 – 20yrs</th>
<th>21 and above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

SECTION B

1. Are there any processes for public participation in the Metro? If yes, which processes are these? If no, why not?

2. In your view, are these processes effective in the Metro or not? Please briefly explain your answer.

3. Are you aware of any form of empowerment offered to citizens to participate in local affairs? If yes, how are community members empowered to participate?

4. Are there processes for educating the community about the importance of their role of being part of the decision-making in their affairs? Briefly explain your answer.

5. What suggestions can you make for improving the communities’ understanding of their role in decision-making?

6. What logistical arrangements are made to improve attendance at meetings?

7. To what extent does community participation influence decision-making in the Metro?


9. In your view, can public participation be improved in the Metro? Briefly explain.

10. In your view, is public participation a challenge in the Metro? Briefly explain.

11. What suggestions can you make for improving the level of participation in the Metro?
ANNEXURE F: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR WARD COUNCILLORS

SECTION A

Please complete the questionnaire by indicating your answer with an “X”

1. Gender

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<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
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2. Length of service with Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality as a Ward Councillor

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<tr>
<td>0-5yrs</td>
<td>6 – 10yrs</td>
<td>11 – 15yrs</td>
<td>16 – 20yrs</td>
<td>21 and above</td>
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</table>

SECTION B

1. Are you aware of the processes for public participation in your Ward? Yes or No. Motivate your answer.
2. What are your views as a Councillor for this Ward about the processes of participation?
3. Are you aware of any form of empowerment offered to the citizens to participate in local affairs? Yes or No. If yes, how are community members empowered to participate?
4. Is the community educated about the importance of their role of being part of the decision-making in their affairs? If yes, how? If not, why?
5. What suggestions can you make to improve public participation in matters of local government?
6. What (logistical) arrangements are made to improve attendance in meetings?
7. To what extent does community participation influence decision-making?
9. What suggestions can you make for improving the level of participation in your ward?
ANNEXURE G: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ward committee MEMBERS

Dear Participant,

You are kindly requested to take part in this research study on “EXAMINING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AS A CONTRIBUTOR TO GOOD GOVERNANCE: A LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE” for a Master’s degree at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

Your involvement in this research is voluntary. If you decide to take part you are free to withdraw from participation at any time. I must also inform you that any information provided will be treated with confidentiality and used for academic purpose of the study. You will not be identified in any document, including this questionnaire and research report.

The questions will not take more than 20 minutes of your time.

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<th>Municipality:</th>
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<td>Date:</td>
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<td>Time:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ward:</td>
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</table>

SECTION A:

Please use a tick ☑ alongside the chosen option

1. Gender

   i. Male
   ii. Female

2. Age

   i. 20 or less
   ii. 21-40
   iii. 41-60
   iv. 61+

SECTION B:

OPINIONS ON TRANSPARENCY

1. The municipality does give progress reports to the community on municipal projects and programmes.

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<th>AGREE</th>
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2. The Ward Councillor does give feedback on municipal council meetings.

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3. The councillor is accountable to the community in an ongoing manner.

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**ATTENDANCE IN MEETINGS**

1. There are regular ward meetings.

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2. The notice of the meetings is communicated well in advance.

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3. The purpose of the meeting is communicated to the residents in advance.

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4. The venue of the meetings is always accessible.

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5. The community is always informed about the meetings.

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OPINIONS ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. The residents are always given an opportunity to participate in meetings.

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2. The members of the community’s views are always taken into account when decisions are taken.

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3. Members of the community are always rushed to take decisions as residents.

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4. The public is always aware of the importance of their participation in these meetings.

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5. Participation in municipal affairs is encouraged.

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EMPOWERMENT

1. The Ward Councillor encourages members of the community to participate.

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2. The decisions of these meetings yield good results that are fruitful in the community.
3. Residents are encouraged to participate in empowerment projects.

PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE

1. Views of the community influence the decision-making and planning in the municipality.

2. The municipality is always accountable to residents.

3. There are regular feedback from ward councillors on the plans, state and future of the municipality.

4. The short term and long term plans of the municipality are communicated to us.

5. Members of the community have direct contact/access to democratically elected representatives.
6. The community/committee feels that the governance is owned by the community.

7. What other forums for community participation are you aware of in your community.

8. In your view, how important is public participation in local government.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!!!
Certificate of Editing

Layla Cassim ERS Consultants CC

certifies that

TULANI NKUNTSE

has had his Master’s thesis, entitled “Examining Public Participation as a Contributor to Good Governance: A Local Government Perspective”, edited.

30 December 2015

Dr Layla Cassim