

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRADE UNION
PARTICIPATION IN MUNICIPAL DECISION-MAKING: A CASE STUDY OF THE
BUFFALO CITY MUNICIPALITY**

BY

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In accordance with Rule G4.6.3, 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.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work first to my family especially my mother, Mrs. VIDA AFIA AKAMANI ASANTE, my lovely wife, Mrs. VIDA MENSAH APRAKU for their love for me which has taken me to this far. Mom and honey, I love you. The next dedication goes to all supporters of New Patriotic Party (NPP) both in Ghana and abroad.

ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study were to first identify the decision-making bodies structures in the Buffalo City Municipality. Secondly, to assess compositions, powers and functions of such identified bodies or structures. The field study was limited to the administrative jurisdictions of the Buffalo City Municipality; however, the findings and recommendations were applicable to all municipalities in South Africa with the same or similar decision-making like the Buffalo City Municipality.

In order to achieve the research objectives, a review of the relevant literature was done. It began by first looking at the constitutional and other legislative provisions establishing the Municipal government system or concept. The literature review looked at the powers and functions given to municipal governments by such constitutional provisions and how effective are such powers exercised.

The literature further highlighted the role of trade unions participation and civil society groups in the smooth and effective administration of the municipality and in making the Integrated Development Planning a successful one.

The data collection was done by means of questionnaire, focus group discussions complimented by face-to-face interviews. Forty respondents were sampled from six different trade unions and top municipal management. The data collected were analysed thematically with the use of frequency tables, pie charts and histograms.

The findings of the study showed among other things that, the highest decision-making body in the municipality is the municipal council supported by various

committees, boards and directorates. All the legislative and executive powers are vested in the municipal council.

Again, it became known that, the municipal workers unions participate effectively in labour related issues whereas the non-municipal workers unions participate poorly in all consultative processes.

In conclusion, there is the urgent need to bring all stakeholders including trade unions in the municipality during decision-making processes in order promote sustainable development in the municipality.

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Chapter two: Chapter two deals with the relevant literature related to the research topic including constitutional and legislative provisions.

Chapter three: This chapter covers the research design, methodology, sampling methods, sample size, data collection tools, data analysis tools, and the research ethics deployed in this study.

Chapter four: This chapter is about the data presentation and analysis.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

1.1 Introduction

After the establishment of the state of South Africa in 1910 by the South African Act (1909), the four former colonies became provinces of a single unitary state. Each of the provinces possessed more or less the same powers as were prescribed in the South African Act of 1909. With the establishment of the Republic of South Africa in 1961, the system of provincial governments remained virtually unchanged.

However, with the commencement of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa in 1993, the system of both provincial and municipal governments underwent drastic changes. Provincial governments were given more powers and competencies than was in the case under the previous constitutional dispensation. Most of such powers given to the provincial governments were further decentralized to the local and municipal governments.

In January 1994, The Local Government Transition Bill was passed into an Act, which then became The Local Government Transition Act of 1994. According to this Act, a municipal or local government is an autonomous body and is further entitled to regulating matters relating to local affairs. The compositions, powers, functions and structures of local and municipal governments are regulated by the Act.

In terms of section 175(3) of the 1993 constitution of the Republic of South Africa, a municipal government shall make provision for services like potable water, sanitation, transport facilities, electricity, primary health services, education, housing, safety and security, etc to all people residing within areas of its jurisdiction.

In order to ensure the smooth execution of such a constitutional duty, it is further stipulated in section 175(4) of the constitution that, local and municipal governments shall have the powers to pass by-laws. Such by-laws may not conflict with the 1993 constitution of the Republic of South Africa. In terms of section 175(6) of the 1993 constitution, a local or municipal governments may, in its discretion and resolution of its council provide for the assignment of the specified functions to local bodies or sub-municipal entities within its areas of jurisdiction. This is the clause that needs to be used judiciously to allow all stakeholders in the municipality to actively take part in the decision-making process, especially trade unions, whose members can disrupt the smooth running of the municipality at any point in time.

Apart from the participation by communities and other stakeholders in local government are also provisions stipulated in chapter four of the Municipal Systems Act 117 of 1998 for the establishment of ward committees through which organized communities and trade unions can participate in local government which includes decision-making. The Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 further requires municipalities to develop a culture of municipal government that complements formal representative government by developing mechanisms, processes and procedures for community participation.

The above-cited legislation offers new opportunities for communities and labour unions to constructively engage in local government by giving inputs to decisions that are made at the local councils and at the municipalities. It is recognized that the participative capacities of communities needs to be developed (DPLG 2005).

However, according to Carothers (2005), with the growth in poverty and inequality, and as citizens become increasingly skeptical and distrustful in political institutions, there is declining political participation. This widening gap between state institutions and the citizens results in a 'diminished democracy' (Skocpol, 2003). All over the world, governance actors, analysts, and activists are grappling with the issue of participation and exploring how best to engage citizens and other parties in government decision-making processes. Citizen participation is, however, often reduced to participation by elite, businesses, and other interest groups with access to resources.

Crenson and Ginsberg (2002) refer to this monopoly of participating process by a few elite groups as 'downsized' democracy.

Participatory mechanisms that are established to channel citizen and other interested parties inputs are not accessible to the majority of the population in societies that are characterized by inequalities. Marginalized communities and groups do not 'automatically' benefit from participatory mechanisms. Poor people and groups have long faced 'social exclusion' (Manor, 2004, p5).

How can we develop mechanisms that will allow the poor and marginalized to influence policy making, thus building 'democratization with inclusion' (Manor, 2004, p6)? At the

municipal level particularly, what is the role of ward committees and trade unions in bridging the gap between government and the communities?

There are clearly legislated provisions for community and civil society participation in municipality decision-making process, and societal mechanisms to facilitate that. But the questions emerge: How effective are these societal participatory mechanisms? What are community members' experiences of participating in policy making at this level? What role can trade unions play in strengthening this? And finally, what transformation and support would be required to enable all these?

By parliamentary Acts and on paper, the design of municipal government system looks beautiful and comprehensive that will ensure an efficient service delivery to the people. However, the situation in the Buffalo City Municipality (BCM) is far from the ideal. Complaints about service delivery, financial mismanagement and more importantly decision-making process from the people are assuming an alarming proportion. This has therefore necessitated an assessment of the effectiveness of trade unions, which is one of the major stake-holders in the municipal government, in the decision making process.

The active involvement of the various trade unions within and outside the municipal administration will help tremendously to avert the serial complains and strike actions within the municipality. Sections of the society will be well informed about certain micro policies of the municipal government and will therefore not complain when such policies are later implemented.

In order for the researcher to make a thorough assessment of the role or roles of trade unions in the municipality at the decision-making levels, the following salient questions were posed: what is the decision-making process at municipality, and are trade unions involved in the process at all? If they are involved, to what extent? Answers to these and many other questions will help change or improve the current situation to actively involve trade unions and make their role an integral part of the decision-making process at the Buffalo City Municipality.

The research topic is therefore, ***“An assessment of the effectiveness of trade union participation in municipal decision-making: a case study of the Buffalo City Municipality (BCM)”***

1.2 Research objectives.

The objectives of the study are; (1) to identify the legislative and the executive structures in the municipality, (2) to examine the composition of the various structures identified, (3) to analyse the powers of the various bodies in the municipality, (4) to assess the functions of such bodies, and finally (5) to evaluate trade union participation in the decision-making processes at the Buffalo City Municipality

1.3 Sub- foci of the research problem

In order to assess the effectiveness of trade unions’ participation in the municipal decision-making process and further achieve the objectives thoroughly, I have broken my research problem into smaller units or specific questions.

These questions therefore constitute my research sub-foci. They are; (1) what is the current decision-making process at the municipality? (2) Are trade unions involved in the process? (3) If trade unions are involved in the decision making process at all, at the Buffalo City Municipality, on what issues are they called upon to participate? (3)At what levels do they participate in the decision-making process? (4)To what extent are their views considered and incorporated into the micro- policies of the municipality?

1.4 Motivation

As mentioned earlier on, the active participation of the various trade unions in the municipality will help reduce the rampant strike actions as well as the over politicization of sensitive development issues. This will therefore promote sustainable development within the municipality.

Like any other action research in the field of social sciences, this research work and its findings will help to ensure quality service delivery to the people in the Buffalo City Municipality. Additionally, it will add more knowledge to the discipline of social sciences and public administration. Besides, it will enhance the smooth and effective running of the municipality. Finally, it will promote political tolerance since the components of the decision- making council may have different political affiliations but will learn to tolerate each other and so do their followers or supporters.

1.5 Delimitation of the study

The study was limited to the political territories of the Buffalo City Municipality in terms of the data collection. All the respondents were selected from the administrative jurisdictions of the Buffalo City Municipality, but the findings would be applicable to all the municipalities in the country that has the same decision-making process like the Buffalo City Municipality.

1.6 Definitions of concepts and terms

Actively: To vigorously and frequently take part in an activity, process or action.

BCM: Buffalo City Municipality.

Change: Move from one system or method to another.

Involve: To include as a necessary part or result of an activity.

Public participation: It is the establishment of appropriate mechanisms, processes and procedures to enable local community and the general public to participate in the affairs of the municipality through consultative sessions with community recognised organisations.

Trade unions: They are organisations of workers who are banded together to achieve common goals in key areas such as; working conditions, regulating relations between employees and employers, raise new demands for their members, help settle grievances, and so on.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the democratic dispensation in 1994, the broader civil society and trade union movement in particular has participated in all democratic process aimed at redressing the past skewed political process. Trade union leaders have been deployed into government both at the national levels where major policy decisions are made and at the local levels where the actual implementation takes place.

Unfortunately, this participatory role of trade unions especially at the municipal levels is always at the periphery where their views and contributions only make little or no impact at all on the final policies of the municipal governments.

This notwithstanding, the trade union fraternity and the broader civil society has played and continue to play a vital role in the political and socio-economic development of South Africa by giving inputs to government on development policies. Borrowing from the words of Chang (2010), “developmentalism can emerge under different political conditions and can be achieved through a combination of different tools and the involvement of different parties” (Chang, 2010,p85). Deriving from the above statement, politics in conjunction with the various political units in a given society greatly affects the development process of the said society.

Putting Chang’s assertion into the South African context and Buffalo City Municipality for that matter, one of the major role players in the development process is the trade

unions. The effective participation of trade unions in the development drive of modern day societies should be encouraged and supported as against 'trade union exclusion.'

Most capitalists and politicians throughout the world see trade union movements and civil society groups as an instrument of derailing productivity and profitability. They consider the existence of workers and their agents in the production process as incidental and something the process should not worry about.

According to Palane of the National Union of Mine Workers (NUM,2001), without trade union movement and other civil organizations, there would not be much achievement as far as productivity and profitability are concern both in the private and public sectors. This perfectly extends to the political and socio- economic development of local, national and regional economies. No one could put it better than Atkinson (2002) who said, "Municipalities need policy guidance by other governmental and non-governmental agencies to redesign their policies and programmes, and only then will the governance aspect of the municipalities become realistic" (Atkinson, 2002, p23).

It is a known fact that, the political struggle in South Africa did shape the role of trade unions in the democratic processes and governance; however, due to some unions' alliance with some specific political parties, fighting for the interest of the entire democratic governance is always marginalized. According to (Matlala 2001),Such union's contribution to planning and decision-making is predominantly destructive since they exist to pursue the parochial interest of their members.

“Trade union movements always manage to have a greater influence on government policies and programme reforms” (Munk, 1988, p167).

Contrary to the views of capitalists and their cohorts, trade unions have always been agents of change and development throughout the struggle against colonialism in Africa and in postcolonial democracies. The dilution of the role of trade unions in decision-making process will leave a gap in good governance and development. The developmental role of trade unions should therefore be brought into the picture as one of the mechanisms of ensuring social equity in governance.

According to the view of Vishnu (2006), trade unions and civil society organisations are regarded as the primary mechanism for community involvement in governance. However, they may not necessarily function as constructive platforms for democratic participation in governance. The developmental focus of trade unions and other civil society organizations in South Africa is susceptible to being overtaken by overtly political agenda. This notwithstanding, trade unions if well guided and directed, can help promote sustainable development by “identifying areas for intervention, formulating practical goals and strategies, and implementing targeted programmes” (Vishnu, 2006,p35). That is, the inclusion of trade unions in the development planning process at local and municipal levels will ensure that development guidelines are translated down to the people effectively.

Ultimately, promoting trade unions interest in the development process of the country's municipalities will strengthen the government's commitment to 'bottom-up' development approach.

Vishnu (2006) argues that, it is important to structure participation in such way that, it will give chance to every small local organization that is vital in providing a range of services to the community.

The design of the structures through which policies are made has an impact on the kind of discussions that take place and on the decisions that are made. One of the remarkable characteristics of the local governance scene since 1994 is the vast range of institutional innovations and transformations that have taken place across the entire spectrum of activities starting from municipal finance to service delivery.

However, most local government officials cite the repeated process of institutional changes as a cause for the weak performance of the whole local government concept. Odifield,(2008) believes that change is not synonymous with improvement.

Reflecting on Odifield (2008), there is the need to rethink the assumptions about the nature of the state institutions, and in particular the relationship between participatory structures like ward committees, trade unions, etc and the complexities of the policy-making process. The decision making processes have been structured via stringent legalized formalities focused on the technocratic dimensions of physical delivery at the expenses of more subtle social processes of building a democratic culture of negotiation, expression and social cohesion.

Drawing on Van Donk and Pieterse (2006), three phases of transition at the local governance system can be defined. The first phase covers the period of the late 1980s to the 1995-96 local elections. It began when the mass mobilization of township residents and the impetus of the national transition process forced the national party government into negotiations about the system of local government.

The authors explained that, there were two strands in the second phase of the transition. The first strand begins with the 1995-96 local government elections. The 1995-96 elections were based on interim structures, which resulted that there was considerable uncertainty about the future. The second important strand of phase two begins with the constitutional Act (Act 108 of 1996), which established local government as an independent sphere of government. A policy process to design the new Local Government White Paper (DPLG 1998) followed this and following from it, the legislations that established the current local government (The Municipal Demarcation Act 27 of 1998 and Municipal Structures Act 117 of 2000) were enacted.

The third phase started from the 2000 elections. The 2000 elections took place based on the structures defined in the Municipal Structures Act. In metropolitan areas, a unicity model was implemented, with single metro-wide councils. All municipal powers were invested in the metropolitan councils, and sub-councils have only those delegated to them by the metropolitan councils.

The Municipal structures Act clarifies how the broad objectives in the constitution should be implemented by specifying the functions of the various bodies under the Municipal government structure.

According to the constitution of South Africa, the Municipal Council is the highest law making body in the municipality with the national and provincial governments playing an oversight role within the constitutional system of co-operative government envisaged in section 41 of the constitution. The national and provincial governments have to exercise their executive and legislative oversight authority in such a manner that it does not impede a municipality's ability or right to exercise its executive and legislative authority. Among other things, the municipal council has got the following constitutional functions aimed at involving the community and pressure groups in the decision-making process.

The municipal council must annually review; (1) the needs of the people in the community, (2) its priorities to meet those needs, (3) its process for involving the community, (4) its organizational and delivery mechanisms for meeting the needs of the community, and (5) its overall performance in achieving those objectives. This notwithstanding, the contribution of non-governmental and non-political groups can play a pivotal role in attaining sustainable development in the municipality.

Trade unions are specifically mentioned in the Municipal Structures Act as a social partner.

Municipal council must develop mechanisms to consult the community, pressure groups, trade unions, and other community organizations in performing its functions and exercising its powers (Municipal Structures Act, section 19.1)

Dauids (2005) on his part states that, given the history of exclusion during apartheid, community organizations, trade unions, and pressure groups participation through integrated planning process has been superficial. The perpetuation of this practice is one of the numerous factors militating against growth of the country's young democracy.

According to Odifield (2008), community and trade unions' participation in the decision-making process is a fundamental feature of integrated development planning process.

According to section (4), subsection (1) clause (a) of the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, the municipal council has the right to govern on its own initiative the local government affairs of the municipality. The judicious use of this constitutional provision to include all interested parties in the planning and implementation process of the municipality will strengthen the public confidence in the municipality. Section (5) subsection (1) clause (a) of the same Act further states that, members of the community have the right through mechanisms and in accordance with processes and procedures provided for in terms of the Act and other applicable legislations to contribute to the decision-making process of the municipality. In this sense, the public, through its representative bodies has got the right to participate in the municipal government and to be informed of decisions of the municipal council, or other political structure, or any political office bearer of the municipality affecting their rights.

Participation by local community and other organized bodies in the affairs of the municipality must take place through the already existing political structures and other appropriate mechanisms and processes as established by the municipality. In situations where such structures do not exist, it is administratively expedient for the municipality to establish such appropriate mechanisms, processes and procedures to enable the local community and trade unions to participate in the affairs of the municipality. This will help the municipal administration to receive, process, and consider pertinent petitions and complaints lodged by members of the local community. This will further encourage public meetings and hearings between the various interested parties in the community and the municipal council and other political office bearers or political structures of the municipality. These administrative structures can be further strengthened by establishing advisory committees consisting of persons or leaders of organisations who are not councilors to advise the council on sensitive development policies.

This will be the best avenue for recognised trade unions to take part in the decision-making and planning by getting representation on such advisory committees.

Section (20) subsection (2) clause (c) of the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 specifies that, a municipal council, or a committee of the council may not exclude the public including the media and labour groups when considering or voting on the municipality's draft Integrated Development Plan (IDP), or on any amendment of the plan tabled in the council. Integrated Development Planning is a development planning process that allows all recognised parties within the municipality to have a say in the formulation and implementation of development policies in the municipality.

IDP spells out the municipal council's vision for the long-term development of the municipality with special emphasis on the municipality's most critical development and internal transformation needs. It is the principal strategic planning instrument which guides and informs all planning and management decisions.

Integrated Development Planning therefore ensures that, the planning undertaken by a municipality is aligned with, and complements the development plans and strategies of other municipalities and other organs of the state so as to give effect to the principles of co-operative government.

The contribution of trade unions like COSATU, NUMSA, FEDUSA, etc in the formulation of national development policies since 1994 to date is enormous. In order to ensure that development strategies at the municipal level are representative of the people and are in line with the national and provincial ones, there is the urgent need to bring trade unions on board. This will complement the efforts and contributions of their mother unions at the national and provincial levels.

The effective inclusion of the public as sanctioned by law will therefore ensure a smooth and successful formulation and implementation of sustainable development oriented policies.

According to the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, marginalizing the role and participation of trade unions in drawing up and implementing an Integrated Development Plan in a municipality is tantamount to deviating from the core purpose of the whole development agenda in the affected area or sector.

A municipality must therefore give effect to its Integrated Development Plan and conduct its affairs in a manner which is consistent with its development agenda.

“A liberal and passive conception of citizenship does not provide avenues for participation to address the serious challenges that face many poor residents of our towns and cities” (Smith and Vawda, 2003 p36). According to Putu (2006), active participation of trade unions and the citizenry will therefore ensure an improved community in the governance processes. It will further help disseminate information to the various sectoral groups in the community from the municipality and to identify problems. These problems will then be brought to the attention of the municipality.

Hicks (2006) contributed to the discussion by stating that, the ward committees, which are avenues for communities to participate in the municipal governance, exist by 2006, and operate in approximately 80% of most provinces.

However, Hicks' work revealed that, trade unions and pressure groups level of participation in the municipal government has three main limitations. These are; (1) the politics of representation at the municipal decision-making board, (2) the structural limits to the ward committees powers where any form of community participation takes place, and (3) finally the ways in which ward committees become enmeshed in the vagaries of councilor and party politics (Hicks, 2006). With party politics in play, structural linkages to decision making and shaping of policies are therefore constrained, Hicks further lamented.

In analyzing the situation, Nyalunga (2006) states that ward committees cannot be understood to be the only avenue for participation of the various trade unions and other community organizations at the municipality. According to Nyalunga, ward committees only build on the existing participatory practices inside and outside state-driven process, and thus “cannot despise” or sit in opposition to “ other alternative forms of participation” (Nyalunga, 2006 ,p1).

Ward committees can only be effective when they are complimented by pragmatic and more inclusive mechanisms for participation. This is where trade unions become one of the best routes to attain community participation in the decision- making process aimed at the realization of the Integrated Development Plan of the municipality.

In relying on participatory mechanisms as the interface between communities and community organizations and the municipal government, we face the challenges of substantiating democracy at a local level, according to (Harris, et al, 2004).

A non- partisan and active participation of trade unions in governance at the municipal level will help come out with developmental policies and programmes geared towards uprooting poverty and exploitation in our societies. The active participation of trade unions in decision-making process is a democratic right unions should get in their fight against unpopular government policies, says (Matlala, 2001).

In conclusion, development is a multifaceted concept that requires an inter-disciplinary approach to bring about the desired impact on the general living conditions of the people. For various historical reasons, South Africa has built a wide range of trade

unions, pressure groups, and other forms of civil society groups that should be used as ingredients of development in the form of effective participation at the municipal levels and not as agents of destruction. The role of trade unions and civil society groups in the decision-making process is therefore an essential ingredient in the development process.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter briefly explains the method used to conduct the study. It describes the research instruments and steps used to ensure the validity and reliability of the study. The research methodology was an action research. The findings and recommendation of the study were to change an incumbent practice and help find solution to a problem in a local setting. Even though the focus of the study was on the Buffalo City Municipality, the findings and recommendations were applicable to all other municipalities in the province and the country at large since the municipal government system is homogenous in nature.

According to Stringer (2008, p.550) 'action research sometimes is envisaged as applicable only to a localized processes within an institution or organisation, but both the practices and values of action research may be incorporated into much broader procedures of national policy development and implementation.' This therefore means the findings and recommendations were not only for Buffalo City Municipality, but for any other institution which needs them.

Both primary and secondary data were used in this study. The primary data was collected from a sample of forty respondents who were selected through probability and non-probability sampling methods. The rest of the chapter gives the details of the research procedure used.

3.2 Research design

The research problem was '*An assessment of the effectiveness of trade union participation in municipal decision making: a case study of the Buffalo City Municipality (BCM).*' In order to make sure that all the aspects of the research problem were well covered, and the findings to be representative as well as reflective of the situation, the topic was divided into the following research questions.

- (1) What is the current decision-making process at the Buffalo City Municipality?
- (2) Are trade unions involved in the process at all?
- (3) If yes, at what levels? If no, why not?
- (4) To what extent are their views incorporated into the micro-policies of the municipality.

These four research questions constituted the sub-foci of the research problem. Answers provided to these questions and further explanations the respondents gave helped made the findings of the study more reliable and valid.

3.3 Types of data collected

Both primary and secondary data were collected for the purposes of this study. One type of data was not enough to achieve the objectives of the study because of the nature of the problem.

Primary data was needed in order to know the real situation on the ground and to assess how the prevailing situation deviates from the ideal.

Secondary data on the other hand was required to establish the kind and nature of policy provisions that guide public, and particularly, trade union participation in the municipal government system. Furthermore, one needed to ascertain whether such laws and policies are flexible enough to guarantee adaptation to situations and circumstances.

3.4 Sources of the data

The primary data was collected from top management members of the municipality: (councilors, portfolio heads, committee heads, ward councilors), executive members of trade unions, site stewards of trade unions, and members of hawkers unions.

The secondary data was collected from existing information on the municipal administration, Acts of government, review of some policies, some of the municipality's by-laws, etc.

3.5 Sample size and sampling methods

In total, forty respondents constituted the sample of this study and both probability and non-probability sampling methods were used to select them. Below is the breakdown of the forty people and their respective groups and unions.

Table 3.5.1: Sample of respondents from the Municipality and Trade Unions

Group	Components	Number
Buffalo Municipality	City top Municipal management	7
	Ward councilors	3
Sub-total		10
Trade Unions	SAMWU	5
	IMATU	5
	SA National Taxi Council (SANTACO)	5
	UNCEDO Taxi Association	5
	Compo Hawkers Association	10
	East London Hawkers and Informal Traders Union	
Sub-total		30
Total number interviewed		40

Seven out of the forty respondents were top municipal management members and three ward councilors making the total respondents from the municipal set up ten. All these

ten respondents were selected through non-probability methods; snowball and purposive sampling to be precise were the methods used.

According to the municipality's internal administrative structures, the ten member executive mayoral committee, speaker, and the eighty-nine elected councilors are further structured into standing committees (operational and strategic), heads of ward committees, and nine different directorates which are also called portfolios. From the above breakdown, one respondent was first drawn from the office of the municipal manager. The office of the municipal manager is one of the nine directorates mentioned earlier. Having got the first respondent, snowball technique was then used to identify two standing committee heads, four portfolio heads, and three ward councilors. These ten respondents constituted the top management component of the study.

On the part of the trade unions, thirty respondents were selected from six different trade unions. These six trade unions were; The South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU), Independent Municipal and Allied Trade Union (IMATU), the South African National Taxi Council (SANTACO), UNCEDO Taxi Association, Compo Hawkers Association, and East London Hawkers and Informal Traders Union.

These trade unions were randomly selected from the list of recognised trade unions provided to the researcher by the municipality. Like the top management respondents from the municipality, apart from the respondents from the two hawkers associations, respondents from the four unions were purposely selected based on the nature of information or data needed and the size of their memberships.

Four executive members and one site steward from SAMWU and IMATU respectively, five officials from SANTACO, five decision-makers from UNCEDO taxi union and ten randomly selected people from the two hawkers associations mentioned above made up the thirty other respondents of the entire sample of forty. Only officials and representatives of SAMWU, IMATU, SANTACO, and UNCEDO were chosen because of the nature of the responses needed. They were the right respondents to give the correct responses. Their selection was non-probabilistic in nature.

However, the respondents from the hawkers associations were randomly selected.

3.6 Data collection methods and tools

According to Welman and Kruger (1999), a research technique is the specific procedure or tool used to collect data. Three different data collection instruments were used throughout the entire study. These tools were; questionnaire, focus- group discussion and face-to-face interviews.

Welman and Kruger (1999) state that questionnaire and face-to-face interviews are the most common instruments to collect data in social research. A questionnaire is the most appropriate and convenient technique to collect information from respondents on opinions, beliefs, practices, attitudes and convictions.

The following reasons support the fact that the researcher's choice of questionnaire, focus- group discussion and face-to-face interview was apt and a step in the right direction.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

Firstly, questionnaire had the greatest influence on reliability of the data collected as far as this study was concern. That is, since great care was taken to design the questionnaire, all the aspects of the study were well covered by the list of questions on the questionnaire. This therefore made it one of the appropriate data collection instruments in this study. Besides, the application of questionnaire was very flexible and adaptable to situations and circumstances. Finally, the anonymity of the respondents was fully assured with the use of questionnaire. It is so because columns for respondent's names, titles and positions were not provided. This therefore made it possible and easy for the respondents to confidently express their views fully.

3.6.2 Face-to-face interview

The same questionnaire which was given to some of the respondents for self completion was used as structured interview schedules for the face-to-face interviews. Face-to-face interviews were chosen as one of the data collection tools for this study due to the following reasons.

- It ensured uniformity and fairness. Each respondent who was interviewed was asked the same questions in the same way. The responses were therefore reliable and of high quality.
- It gave the researcher the chance to explain all ambiguous questions to the respondents.

- It offered the researcher the opportunity to interview the right people for the right information.
- It finally gave the researcher high response rate within a short period of time since the responses were recorded instantly.

3.6.3 Focus-group discussions.

Focus-group discussion was deployed to collect information from the well organized trade unions with large memberships. Officials of such unions were invited for a focus group discussion where the researcher played the role of a facilitator. Only the officials of the unions were invited because the membership of such unions has homogeneous characteristics and therefore the views of the leadership represent the views of the union as a whole. The following reasons supported the choice of this instrument.

- It helped reach consensus views, as it was a discussion.
- It generated rich responses by allowing participants or respondents to challenge each other's views before reaching a consensus.
- It validated the other information collected through other means.
- It finally gave very reliable responses.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

3.7.1 Top Municipal management

The municipal manager's office was the first point of contact and the first respondent was drawn from there. Through snowball technique, the rest were identified. The same questionnaire which was later given to the other respondents for self completion was used as an interview schedule for the face-to-face with all the top municipal management members. Responses given by the interviewees were then recorded by the interviewer.

This method best suited the study because of the nature of the work of the top municipal officials. Depositing the questionnaire with them would be very suicidal. Reasons being that, the questionnaire could get lost or could be answered by the wrong person, thereby giving wrong and misleading information.

3.7.2 Trade Unions

The ten respondents from the two Municipal Workers union were divided into two categories and information was collected from the two different groups with two different tools. Two focus groups were formed from the eight respondents with each group representing one union. Each group had four members or participants with the researcher playing the role of a facilitator. The memberships of the groups were the chairpersons, secretaries and the organizers. The secretaries in each section recorded the responses since the discussions were held separately.

The other two respondents were site stewards representing SAMWU and IMATU respectively. They were given questionnaire for self-completion.

Focus group discussion and questionnaire for the site stewards were the appropriate tools for this category of the respondents because of the size of the unions and the homogeneity of their duties and operations. The site stewards and the executives represent the unions and therefore their views and responses represented the views and responses of the entire unions.

The taxi associations (SANTACO and UNCEDO) were the most difficult ones to get because of the nature of their work. But through hard work, the researcher managed to form two focus groups separately; one for SANTACO and the other one for UNCEDO. There were five members in each group. The groups made up of the chairpersons and their deputies, secretaries and their deputies, and the organizers with the researcher playing the usual role as a facilitator.

Lastly, the ten respondents from the hawkers associations were interviewed with a questionnaire as an interview schedule. As mentioned earlier, the hawkers were randomly selected. The combination of questionnaire, focus group discussions and interviews helped the researcher to get highly reliable information from the respondents with different backgrounds and professions.

3.8 Data Analysis, Interpretation, and Communication Procedures

The data collected from the forty respondents were codified according to the various themes identified in the research problem. The content was then analysed thematically. The thematic analysis helped the researcher to deal with the research objectives to the fullest.

Statistical tools like frequency tables, pie charts, bar charts, etc were used to present and interpret the findings and to draw a clear picture of the situation. The diagrammatic presentation of the data made it easy to read and understand the findings of the research.

The findings were finally communicated in the treatise submitted to department of Development Studies of Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

3.9 Validity of the instruments

The validity of the data collection instruments used in this study was determined on the basis of 'construct validity.' According to Welman and Kruger (199:138) 'when a research instrument is used to measure a variable, it must measure what it is supposed to measure. If it measured something else, it would have led to incorrect conclusions.'

The construct validity was used because it refers to the degree to which a research instrument measures the intended construct rather than irrelevant construct. The data collection tools were proven valid because there were no instances of the following being encountered during the study:

- Acquiescence – the phenomenon where respondents tend to answer ‘yes’ to items irrespective of the content of the question.
- Socially desirable responses - the phenomenon where respondents deliberately provide answers which they believe are socially acceptable.
- Faking – the phenomenon where respondents distort their responses in order to create the desired expression.

3.10 Ethical issues

The following research ethics were strictly adhered to throughout the study period. They are;

- The privacy of the respondents.
- The anonymity of the respondents.
- The respondents’ right to confidentiality.
- And finally, the respondents’ right to consent.

3.11 Problems encountered

The following problems were encountered during the study.

- The first problem is financial constraints. The current economic situation makes it extremely expensive for students to undertake a study of this magnitude. External sponsorships will be of tremendous help to students in the future. It will be much appreciated if the University could liaise with the corporate world and other government bodies to organize a substantive funding for its post- graduate

students in order to avert the situation of compromising quality research work for cost.

- The second biggest problem was the blatant refusal of most people to co-operate with researchers. Typical among this group of people were government officials. No specific reason was given for their refusal to co-operate but from their utterances; one could cite the researcher's non-South African nationality as the main factor for the lackadaisical attitude from such officials. Again, some of them saw the nature of the information needed as sensitive taking the political history of the country into account and the researcher being a non- South African. Probably there is the urgent need to sensitize our societies on the role of research in development and that both public and corporate officials should co-operate with researcher to move the world forward.

3.12 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the method used to conduct the study and the technique employed to measure the variables. Scientific research approach was used with questionnaire, face-to-face interview and focus- group discussion as the data collection instruments. A sample of forty respondents was selected through both probability and non-probability sampling methods. The data collected was finally analysed statistically. The next chapter provides the data analysis and interpretations.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

In this study, thematic and content analysis approach was used to analyse the information collected. This helped the researcher to convert non-numerical responses into numerical description of data. The data was then presented in tables. With the use of frequencies and percentages, graphical representation was employed to make the reading and interpretation of the data easier.

The aim of the analysis was to help the researcher to provide a good picture of the findings and to further evaluate the attainability or non-attainability of the research objectives stated in the previous chapters.

4.2 Response rate

Forty respondents in all were involved in this study. Since the data collection instruments were effective, they therefore did not create enough space for refusal to respond, the researcher managed to get hundred percent response rate. The subsequent sections of this chapter will present and analyse the data collected from forty respondents.

Table 4.2.1 Distribution of the respondents and their percentages

<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>FREQUENCY</i>	<i>PERCENTAGE</i>
Top management	10	25%
Trade unions	30	75%
<i>TOTAL</i>	40	100%

Source: field study by the researcher.

From table 4.2.1 given above, 75% of the respondents were trade union members whilst the remaining 25% were municipal management members. This made the findings more representative of the situation on the ground as the unions have a larger population as compare to the municipal management.

The responses were analysed in the same categories given in table 4.2.1. The responses from the municipal officials were analysed first followed by those of the unions.

4.3 RESPONSES FROM THE MUNICIPAL MANAGEMENT

4.3.1 The decision- making body at the Buffalo City Municipality and its composition

The study showed that, the highest decision- making body in the municipality is the municipal council. The council is supported in its decision- making process by a ten-member mayoral committee. The council is made of eighty- nine elected councilors. Forty-four of them were elected in terms of the system of proportional representation and forty-five represent wards.

The council has got all the legislative and executive powers vested in it by the constitution of the country, the Municipal Systems Act, and other statutory provisions. To ensure the effective application of such powers and responsibilities vested in the council, the eighty-nine councilors are grouped into ward committees, standing committees and directorates in an ascending order. That is, the power flows is from the council, to the directorates, to the standing committees, and then to the ward committees.

The research found out that the ward committees are chaired by their respective ward councilors and consist of ten elected members. This therefore means that, the number of ward councilors in the municipality is equal to the number of ward committees. There are therefore forty-five ward committees in the municipality.

The study highlighted that, the ward committees are consultative community structures whose purposes are to broaden participation in the democratic process of the council and to assist the ward councilors in organizing consultation, dissemination of information and encouraging participation from the residents in the ward.

The second political structure in ascending order in the Buffalo City Municipality is the standing committees. There are two categories of standing committees in the municipality. These are; the operational standing committees and the strategic standing committees. Each of these categories has got separate committees listed under it. The following are the operational standing committees:

- Corporate Services Standing Committee.
- Development Planning Standing Committee.
- Engineering services and Infrastructure Standing Committee.
- Finance Standing Committee.
- Social Services Standing Committee.

Strategic standing committees on the other hand consist of the following:

- IDP, Budget policy, and Performance Management Committee.
- Environment Management Committee.
- Special Programmes Committee.
- Economic Development and Tourism Committee.

All the above mentioned standing committees; both operational and strategic are chaired by mayoral committee members and have members from all political parties.

The operational committees are limited to a maximum of fourteen members whereas the strategic committees are limited to a maximum of seven members.

The big hurdle which the study could not unravel was; what is the proportion of the political party representation on the standing committees?

However, the purpose of the standing committees is to deal with issues of cross-cutting nature that are shaving particular operational and strategic importance to the municipality. On paper, the administrative and political structures' aim of encouraging public participation in governance look beautiful, but there seems to be a mixing link somewhere with the application.

4.3.2 The council's acceptance of views from the public including trade unions

All the ten respondents from the municipal management interviewed answered in the affirmative to the issue above. The hundred percent 'YES' response on the acceptance of public views during decision-making process times indicates that the Buffalo City Municipality should be a well governed municipality where every resident is happy and satisfied with the municipal government.

However, further revelation from the study proved otherwise.

When asked how the council invites and accepts views from the public, the following responses were given. The table below shows the responses and their percentages.

Table 4.3.3 Responses on the medium of public participation

MEDIUM	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Ward meetings	4	40%
'Imbizo' (public hearings)	2	20%
Newspaper publications	1	10%
Other	3	30%
TOTAL	10	100%

Source: field study by the researcher.

Even though some respondents gave more the one and overlapping medium of community participation, the statistics given in table 4.3.3 give the correct categories of the main media of community involvement in governance and their respective percentages.

Four out of the ten respondents representing 40% said they use ward meetings to involve the public, including unions in the decision- making process. Two (20%) said the municipality's 'imbizo' initiative is used to invite views from the public.

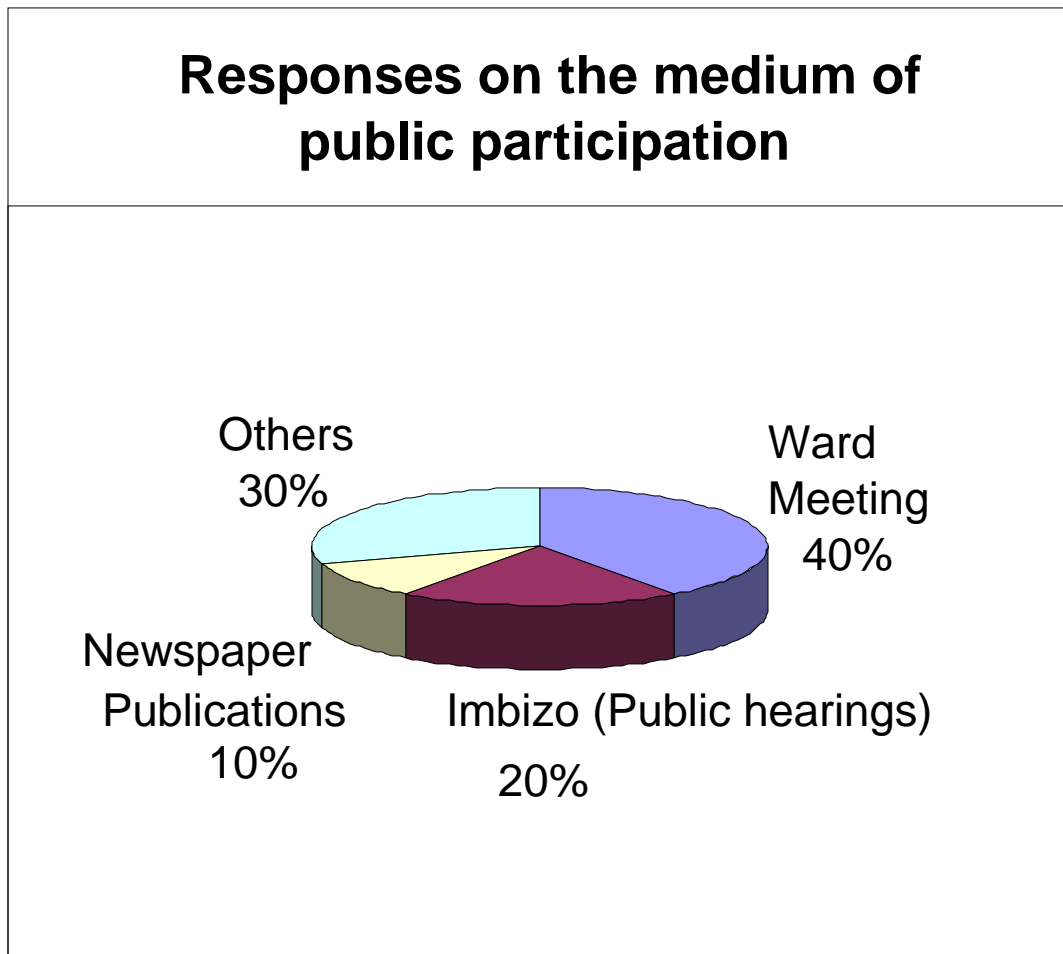
The 'imbizo' is a community hearing initiative instituted by the municipality to get first-hand information from the people on government policies.

One person (10%) said newspaper publications are used to invite public views on government policies. That is, before any drafted by-law is promulgated into a complete by-law and implemented, it is first published in the newspapers and a time frame is given to allow the public in including trade unions to respond and give comments. This method allows for public participation before any bill gets its approval from the executive mayor.

The remaining 30 percent said the views of the public are solicited and incorporated into the policies of the municipality through meetings with the various trade unions, consultations with stakeholders, and giving representation to civil society organisations on municipal sub-committees and boards.

The picture of the medium of public participation in decision-making at the Buffalo City Municipality is painted clearly with the diagram below.

Figure 4.3.3.1 A pie chart showing the media of public participation.



Source : researcher field study

4.3.4 Trade union representation on municipal committees

It came to light that all the trade unions with members working directly for the municipality have got representation on some of the municipal sub-committees like the Appointments Committee, Employment Equity Committee, Grievances Resolutions

Committee, Disciplinary Committee, Local Labour Forums, etc. Other unions like the taxi and the hawkers unions were said to have representations on Public Transport and Informal trading sub-committees respectively.

All the ten respondents stated that the impact of the views of the unions and the public at large on the policies of the municipality is a positive one. The participation of the unions during policy formulation times helps to shape such policies.

4.3.5 Rating of the participation level of the unions

The general response from the study was that, even though the municipality has made provision for the public, especially the unions to take part in the decision-making process, their level of participation is relatively poor. They do not attend meetings if the agenda is not politically inclined or labour related. Management could not give any reason for this lukewarm attitude on the part of the unions.

The scenario is explained more clearly by the diagrams below.

Table 4.3.6 Rating of the union’s level of participation in the municipal public consultation process.

LEVELS	FREQUENCIES	PERCENTAGES
Poor	7	70%
Fair	2	20%
Good	1	10%
Very good	0	0
Excellent	0	0
TOTAL	10	100%

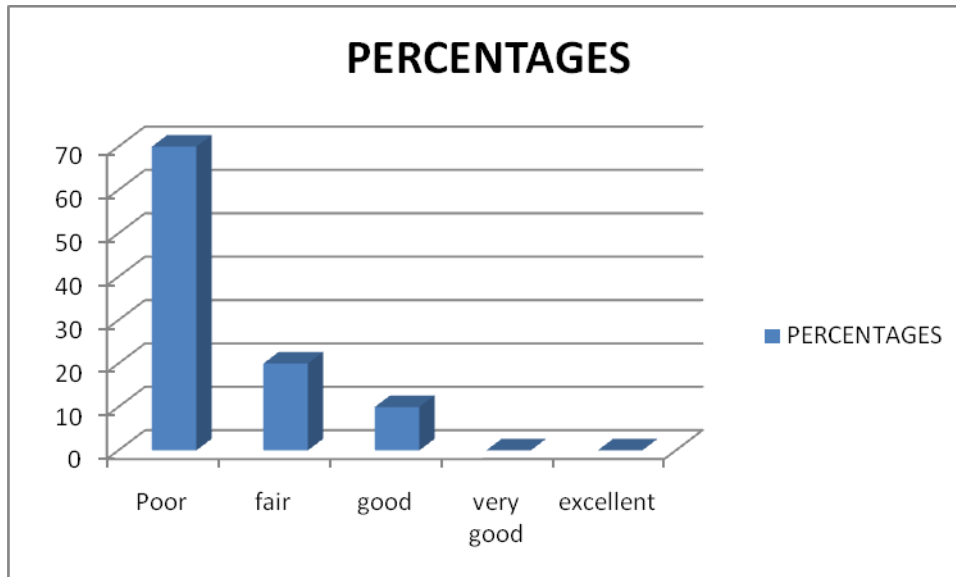
Source: field study by the researcher.

Seven respondents (70%) said the participation level of the unions is poor, two (20%) said it is fair. Only a single respondent said the unions’ participation is good. No one said their participation level is very good or excellent.

That is 90 percent of the entire top management respondents said the unions’ and the entire public’s eagerness and participation in the policy formulation process is less than good. Unions are only interested in political and labour related issues.

The histogram below shows the graphical picture of the unions’ participation level.

Figure 4.3.7 Unions' participation level.



4.4 RESPONSES FROM THE TRADE UNIONS

4.4.1 Sampling of trade unions and their participation in municipal decision-making process

In all, views from thirty union members were collected for the purposes of this study. They were from the South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU), The Independent Municipal and Allied Trade Union (IMATU), UNCEDO Taxi Association, The South African National Taxi Council (SANTACO- East London branch), Gompo Hawkers Association (GHA), and East London Hawkers and Informal Traders Association (ELHITA). The number of respondents from each union is given below.

Table 4.4.1.1 Distribution of trade union respondents

UNION	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
SAMWU	5	16.7%
IMATU	5	16.7%
SANTACO	5	16.7%
UNCEDO	5	16.7%
GHA	5	16.7%
ELHITA	5	16.7%
TOTAL	30	100%

Source: field study by the researcher.

The views from members of these six different unions were analysed in two separate categories namely; the municipal workers unions and the non-municipal workers unions.

4.4.2 Responses from the municipal workers unions (SAMWU and IMATU)

These two unions have been in the municipality for decades now but their role has not changed in line with the ever changing administrative and political dispensations.

4.4.2.1 Perceptions of the roles that the municipal unions play in municipal governance

All the ten respondents from SAMWU and IMATU said they do play a significant role in the municipal governance. According to them, some of the roles they play are;

- Helping the municipality to pass by- laws by giving constructive inputs.

- Representing workers during discussions and deliberations on labour related issues.
- Ensuring quality service delivery to the people by participating in public participation processes.
- Representing the workers at disciplinary committee
- Participation in interviews and appointment of workers.

The above findings show that, the participation of the unions that work directly at the municipality is predominantly labour focused. That is, they commit themselves to the well being and the conditions of service of their members. The study further revealed the committees which the municipal workers unions serve on are The Local Labour Forum (LLF), The Local Government Bargaining Council (LGBC), The Disciplinary Committee, and The Grievances Resolutions Committee which are all labour related. The unions' role in the municipality is to strive towards the attainment of the parochial interest of their members as against the general development needs of the whole society

4.4.2.2 Participation of trade unions on non-labour related committees

The response on the above issue was 'yes' but, respondents were quick to add that the municipal management hardly invite them to serve on such committees. In rare cases when they are invited, their presence there is needed by management to finalize issues that have already been decided on.

Their views do not make impact on the final decision. The data collected indicated that even though they attend such municipal committee meetings, they go there to help management to rubber-stamp already taken decisions.

4.4.3 Responses from the non-municipal workers unions (taxi and hawkers unions)

Like the other unions, the taxi and hawkers associations are not strangers in the municipality. They all have been operating in the municipality by always been part of the municipal public participation processes in one way or the other for decades now.

4.4.3.1 Perceptions of the role of non-municipal trade unions in the municipality

The respondents from the taxi and informal trading industry were twenty, representing 50% of the sample size. Their responses on the role of their unions in the municipality are tabulated below.

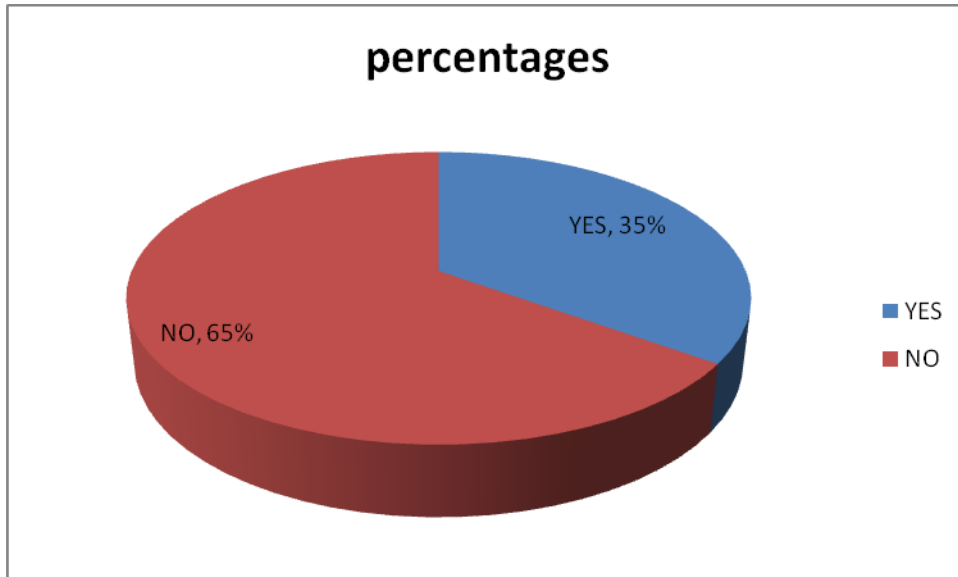
Table 4.4.3.2 Perceptions of the taxi and hawkers' unions on their role in municipal decision- making or public participation

<i>RESPONSE</i>	<i>FREQUENCY</i>	<i>PERCENTAGE</i>
YES	7	35%
NO	13	65%
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>100%</i>

Source: field study by the researcher.

One-third (35 percent) said they do play a role in the municipal government. The remaining thirteen respondents representing 65 percent said they do not play any role in the municipal decision-making process. The pie chart below explains the issue better.

Figure 4.4.3.3 Perceptions of the effectiveness of union participation in municipal decision -making.



Source: field study of the researcher

4.4.3.4 The role of non-municipal trade unions in the municipal government

The 35 percent of the taxi and hawkers unions who said they play a role in the municipal government gave the following as the roles they play.

- They said they do vote during elections to elect municipal councilors.
- They pay rents and rates to the municipality
- They pay traffic and other fines to the municipality.

The remaining 65 percent said they do not see the above as roles to warrant their participation in the municipal government. According to them, they pay the municipality, but do not receive much in return. The same 65 percent majority said they are only invited to take part in deliberations pertaining to their businesses. Even then, they are simply informed about decisions already made and are not called to participate in decision-making. *'They don't consult us when they are taking decisions concerning us'*, one respondent from the taxi industry lamented. *'We even went there one day to tell them not arrest our drivers or give them big fines on small traffic offences'* said one taxi official.

According to them, all these practices are killing their business as they work hard only to pay huge municipal fines. It is clear that the unions are more interested in protecting their members' interests than influencing municipal processes and decision-making.

4.4.3.5 Frequency of non-municipal unions' attendance of municipal meetings

The responses on their meeting attendance are given below.

Table 4.4.3.6 Responses on frequency of meeting attendance by non- municipal workers unions

ITEM	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1. Every meeting	0	0%
2. One out of every two meetings	1	5%
3. One out of every three meetings	4	20%
4. Two out of every five meetings	5	25%
5. Once in a while	10	50%
TOTAL	20	100%

Source: field work from the researcher

From the statistics given above, only one quarter of the respondents said their unions attend only one out of every three meetings (33.33%) of the meetings called by the municipality. One quarter (25%) said their unions attend two out of every four meetings (20% of the total meetings called). The remaining 50 percent said they attend meetings once a while, and even with that, they only attend such meetings when there is a problem involve that affects their members or industry.

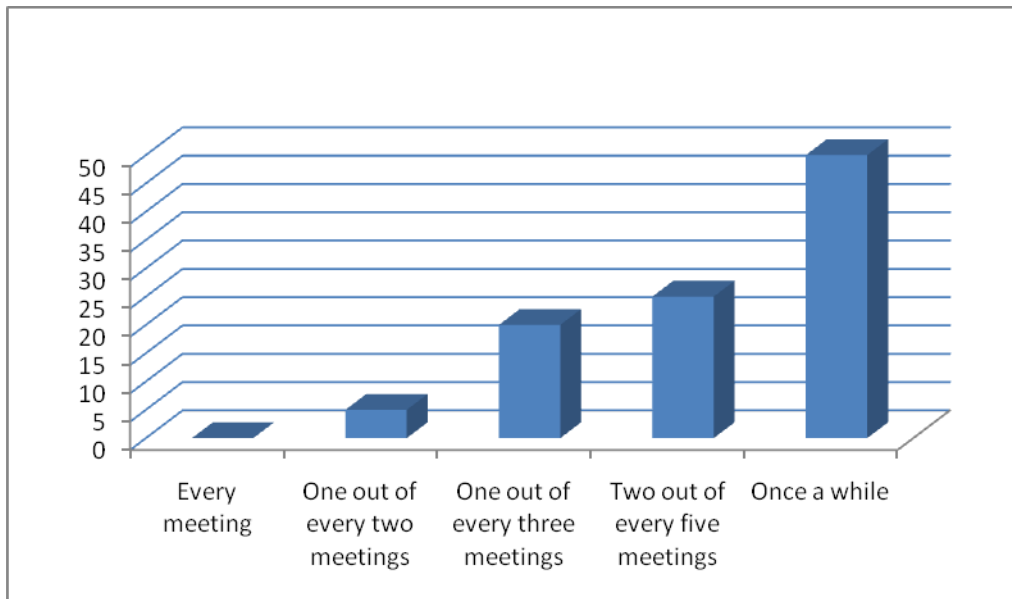
The reasons given for their poor attendance of meeting were that;

- Their views are not taken into serious considerations during such meetings. They go there only to listen.
- They again said such meetings are nothing but platforms for the municipality to make announcements on decisions already taken.

- According to them, their role is seen by the municipality as voters and ordinary members of the community and not as partners of development.
- What was more disheartening to them was the fact that sensitive developmental issues are over-politicized by the municipality.

The histogram below gives the clear picture of the pattern of meeting attendance by the non- municipal workers unions

Figure 4.4.3.7 A histogram of non-municipal workers unions’ meeting attendance.



4.5 SUMMARY

This chapter provided the analysis and interpretations of the data collected from the empirical research conducted to find out about the current decision-making process at the Buffalo City Municipality and further establish whether some alteration can be done to the current situation. The results demonstrated that, much still has to be done in

order to ensure an effective participation and co-operation from the public stakeholders, including the trade unions, to bring about more effective joint decision-making in the municipality.

The next chapter gives details of the findings and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, RECOMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter pulls together the main themes and findings running through the study. It gives recommendations, some of which, if implemented by the municipality, would improve governance and bring satisfaction to the trade unions. It starts by reiterating the research objectives and finally weighing the findings against the research objectives.

5.2 Reiteration of the research objectives

The objectives of the study were; (1) to identify the legislative and the executive structures in the municipality, (2) to examine the composition of the various structures identified, (3) to analyse the powers of the various bodies in the municipality, (4) to assess the functions of such bodies, and finally (5) to evaluate trade union participation in the decision-making processes at the Buffalo City Municipality

5.3 Findings

Below are the major findings of the study.

5.3.1 The municipal administrative structures, compositions and powers.

- The study found out that the highest decision-making body in the municipality is the eighty-nine constitutionally elected member council. It has all the legislative and executive powers as stipulated by the constitution of the country and the

Municipal systems Act 32 of 2000. The council executes its mandated duties through various committees, sub-committees, boards, portfolios, and directorates. The composition of such committees, boards, portfolios, and directorates cut across all political parties represented in the municipal council.

- The findings proved that, the representation of political parties on the standing committees is unequal as a result of unequal number of councilors representing each party in the council. The committees' membership is therefore skewed in favour of the ruling party which has majority of councilors in the municipality.

5.3.2 Trade union participation in the decision-making processes at the Buffalo

City Municipality

- It was found that during the decision-making process, the municipality considers that it consults the unions sufficiently, even if the unions' participation is poor.
- Moreover, despite the poor participation of the unions, on rare occasions when they attend meetings, the leaders of the unions who represent the unions are already allied to the government and therefore tend not to offer any meaningful counter suggestions during deliberations.
- Additionally, the study revealed that the internal unions participate almost entirely on labour related issues. Their duty as partners in development is overshadowed by the pursuit of the parochial interest of their members.
- Again, the study showed that the external unions perform poorly because they consider that their participation is not consultative enough. They are informed of decisions already taken. This has therefore made them dissatisfied with the

council and the municipality as a whole, as they see themselves only as voters and not as part of local government decision-making.

- The study further indicated that, the unions see ward committees, which are suppose to be consultative bodies and a medium of community participation in government, as nothing but an extension of the ruling party. .
- Finally, it came to light that newspaper publications as a means of community participation in governance does not work effectively in the municipality. This is because a large proportion of the inhabitants of the municipality is poor and illiterate. According to the last Quality of Life Survey conducted in the municipality in 2007, 82 percent of households in the municipality earned less than R3500 a month (GoL, 2007 p9). The same survey showed that, only 36.3 percent of the residents in the municipality had secondary school education and above. Even though the study was about the entire population of the municipality, the union members are, however, part of the larger community. Taking the above two important demographic parameters into consideration, communication done through newspapers will not yield the desired results, especially among the non-municipal workers unions, as the majority of their members can neither afford a newspaper nor, possibly, read and understand.

5.4 Recommendations

Below are the main recommendations the researcher gave to be taken into consideration by authorities of the municipality.

- In order to ensure satisfaction on the part of the various external unions and further to get their effective participation in the decision-making process, there is an urgent need to educate and sensitize them about their roles in the municipality. They need to be told that the only way they can have their grievances heard as well as becoming part of the decision-making process, is by attending meetings on a regular basis.
- Secondly, the municipal unions equally need to be informed that their duties go beyond labour issues and that they are, to some extent at least, the mouthpiece of the public in the municipality. Their effective participation in non-labour related development issues in the municipality would help the poor and the voiceless in the municipality.
- Thirdly, the municipality should get clarity in their own minds on the roles and responsibilities of trade unions, both internal and external, in municipal decision-making.
- The municipality should then re-evaluate its consultational and communication skills and mechanisms. The research has indicated that a greater part of the public feels excluded from municipal decision-making. They consider that they are not consulted enough on major issues. Revisiting the consultational and communication mechanisms will help diffuse public discontent with the actions of the municipality. In business, a satisfied customer is a loyal customer. Applying the same principle in public administration therefore means that satisfied citizens are more likely to be loyal and law abiding citizens. To ensure citizen satisfaction

and further propel development in the municipality, the public needs to be thoroughly consulted on all major issues.

- Again, the over-politicization of developmental issues should be minimised. This applies to both the unions and the council, as the general development of the municipality should be the paramount priority of all the social partners. Political affiliations should therefore be minimised during deliberations on sensitive developmental issues.
- Last but not the least, in order to improve communications with municipal stakeholders even further, all drafted by-laws (or summaries thereof) should be published in the freely distributed municipal bulletins and in the local languages, so that everyone can read and understand these by-laws clearly. The same issues should be routinely discussed on the local radio stations and again in the local languages to serve the interest of the poor and less educated residents in the municipality.

5.5 INTERESTING AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Having gone through the research process from the beginning to the end, the following two areas have being identified further studies;

- The accountability of the councillors to people who elected them into office.
- The impact of trade unions' affiliations to political parties on development.

5.6 LIMITATIONS

The findings of the study cannot be generalized due to the following two main reasons;

- The sample of this study was probably not big enough to represent the views of all the union members in the municipality.
- The majority of the respondents in this study were educated union members. Their views about the situation in the municipality might therefore not be the same as the views of the poorly educated majority union members in the municipality.

5.7 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings reported in this research provide strong evidence that there is a yawning gap between the municipality as an entity and the various trade unions as far as decision-making processes are concerned. Most union members do not feel satisfied, because they think they are not consulted enough during policy formulation. The few who are consulted also feel that their views are not taken seriously enough.

The municipality, on the other hand, feels that despite all the mechanisms for public participation that it has put in place, public co-operation in governance is very poor, especially by the various external trade unions. From the municipality's point of view, for example, the municipal unions show interest only in labour related issues.

According to the municipality, the external unions do not see themselves as part of the stakeholders in the municipality. Furthermore, in the opinion of the municipality, the poor participation of the external unions indicates their lack of commitment to the decision-making processes.

Blaming and pointing fingers at each other does not improve co-operative governance and joint decision-making in the municipality and elsewhere in the country. The various stakeholders in the municipality need to be brought together during both decision-making and implementation stages to ensure smooth and transparent governance. Such cooperation ensures the development of appropriate policies that respond to the needs of all the stakeholders, as well as attaining quality service delivery in the Buffalo City Municipality.

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APPENDIX I
QUESTIONNAIRE INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Dear Sir/Madam,

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION
IN MUNICIPAL IN DECISION MAKING: A CASE STUDY OF THE BUFFALO CITY
MUNICIPALITY**

This survey is part of part of a research project aimed at assessing the participation and role of trade unions in the decision-making process at the Buffalo City Municipality.

The information is required for the completion of my dissertation that is a partial requirement for my Masters in Development Studies at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

Please kindly look at the attached questionnaire for your perusal. You can complete it at own time or with your permission, we can complete the questionnaire together if you grant me a few minutes of your time. Your identity would be kept confidential as only your opinion is needed.

Yours sincerely,

Amos Apraku, (Researcher)

apprakuamos@yahoo.co.uk

(072-0111772/043-7220717)

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE 1- FOR MUNICIPAL TOP MANAGEMENT

The aim of this research is to find out how effectively does trade unions participate in the municipal government at the buffalo city municipality. Findings from this research will be used purely for academic work. The researcher will use the findings to write his treatise for masters degree. You right to anonymity, consent and any other research ethics are fully assured.

1. By constitutional provision, what is the highest decision-making body in the municipality?.....
.....
.....

2. How is this body constituted (i.e., who are the members of this body and how do they become members of this body)?
.....
.....
.....

3. What are the specific powers vested in this august organ of the municipal government?.....
.....
.....

4. (i) Does this body accept views from the public? Yes or No

(ii) If yes, how is this done?

.....
.....

5. Do you know of any organized trade unions in the municipality which the municipality can work during development policy formulations?

.....
.....

6. If yes, name the most significant of these trade unions ...

.....
.....

7. (i) how many of these trade unions have a representation on any of the municipal committees?

.....
.....

(ii) If there are any, mention the specific trade union(s) and the respective committees on which they serve

.....
.....

(iii) In your opinion, do they make good use of the mandate of serving in any committee by attending meetings anytime they invited and making inputs anytime needed?

.....
.....

8. How do the views of the trade unions impact on the final policy statements of the municipality?

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

9. How would you rank their participation level?

- (a) Poor
- (b) Fair
- (c) Good
- (d) Very good
- (e) Excellent

10. How does the municipality intend to maintain or improve upon current decision-making process?

.....
.....

APPENDIX III

QUESTIONNAIRE 2- FOR TRADE UNION MEMBERS

The aim of this research is to find out how effectively does trade unions participate in the municipal government at the Buffalo city municipality. Findings from this research will be used purely for academic work. The researcher will use the findings to write his treatise for a masters degree. Your right to anonymity, confidentiality, consent and any other research ethics are fully assured.

1. For how many years has your union been involved in the municipality?

- (a) 1 to 5 years
- (b) 6 to 10years
- (c) 11 to 15 years
- (d) 16 years and more

2. Do you know of any other union(s) apart from your union, YES or NO?

3. If yes, name some

.....
.....

4. (i) Does your union play any role in the municipal governance, YES or NO?

(ii) If yes, what role does your union play in the municipality?

.....
.....

5. Apart from representing workers, does your union have any representation in any municipal committee, YES or NO?

6. If YES, name the committee(s)

.....
.....

7. (i) Does your union honour invitations to serve on any other municipal committee, YES Or NO?

(ii) If NO, explain why not

.....
.....

8. If yes, how often does your union attend municipal committee meetings?

My union attends:

- (a) Every meeting.
- (b) One out of every two meetings.
- (c) One out every three meetings.
- (d) Two out of every five meetings.
- (e) Once a while.

9. Does the municipality consult your union any time when it is making decisions, YES or NO?

10. If YES, are your union's contributions incorporated into the policies of the municipality?

.....
.....

11. Can you specifically mention one decision your union helped the municipality to take?

.....
.....

12. How do you think your union can help improve the current decision-making processes at the municipality?

.....
.....