CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1   Introduction

Service delivery is a much talked-about phenomenon. According to Du Toit, Knipe, Van Niekerk, Doyle and Van der Walt (2002:88) service delivery originated thousands of years before the birth of Christ. Every individual, grouping, community and society requires particular services, which are basic to their existence. The diverse nature of services required is influenced by various factors. People want the delivery of services of all kinds in their different categories according to Maila in the Capricorn Voice (2006:10).

The debate on service delivery in South Africa is not unique, given the demands of communities. The legacy of under-development remains real in many communities. Despite the efforts to redress backlogs, many remain with inadequate infrastructure (Mbeki, 2000:15) The deprivation of basic services from communities before the 1994 democratic government put strain and exerted pressure on communities (Maila, 2006:10).

The triumphant and first all-inclusive democratic elections held in the Republic of South Africa in 1994 heralded a new dispensation in the lives of the majority of the country's citizens according to Parnell, Pieterse, Swilling and Woolridge (2002:141). The subsequent development of spheres of Government as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), provided hope to the majority of citizens of a better life for all. This was informed by the aspirations of the people as enshrined in the Reconstruction and Development Programme document (RDP, 1994:01-06), the Election Manifesto of the African National Congress (ANC) for the 1994 general elections. The RDP document is the end product of an extensive consultation process by the ANC with a diversity of stakeholders, role players, community organs, organs of civil society and many others. It is for these high expectations on the part of the community that service delivery is critical in the quest to achieve the objectives and wishes of the people.

This study is intended to focus on the delivery of services to the Mankweng community in the Polokwane area by the Polokwane municipality. The delivery of services implies the rendering of services by the municipality including essential services such as waste removal, electricity supply, water supply, graveyard management, sanitation and infrastructure development. The study will further focus on the identified problems and challenges among which are inconsistencies in waste removal, the lack of electricity cash points in the township, the lack of tarring of roads and streets, lack of storm water drainage systems and inadequate sport and recreational facilities.

1.2   Statement of the problem

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) requires of Government at all levels to provide services to its citizens. Such services are, among others, in the form of infrastructure development, social security, education, health services, safety and security and social development. This requirement is expected to be realised in all spheres of Government by all institutions of Government. It therefore becomes a serious challenge to municipalities to ensure the provision of services to all its communities. Given the diverse economic constraints of each municipality, and further noting that the basic source of income for municipalities is revenue collection and other levies, the challenges are enormous. The services the communities expect are necessities, in spite of the economic realities of municipalities.

Polokwane municipality, which is located in the Limpopo Province of the Republic of South Africa, is no exception to the above scenario. The municipality's layout reflects a considerable rural area, which requires extensive attention and services (Mbeki, 2000:7). The development of the rural areas falling within the Polokwane municipality is not at acceptable levels in contrast to the city and townships around it. Rural areas do not have the services currently provided in the city and townships. It is expected that all services must be provided to all the communities within the municipality, regardless of their location and distance from the city.

In April 1994, the government of the Republic of South Africa's eventual Constitution (1996:6) including the Bill of Rights, aimed at protecting the rights of each individual. The Bill of Rights further promotes equality, even in the provision of service. The various by-laws and regulations applicable in the city have, however, not yet been applied in the township settlements, thereby creating inconsistencies.

The environmental impact of the location of cemeteries to avoid underground water pollution and air pollution, among others, has not yet been considered. The management of cemeteries in the community has been left to the community itself. The old practices regarding the management of cemeteries are not in compliance with the prescriptions of the law, and are often chaotic and punitive in nature. It also impacts negatively on certain families. The traditions and cultures conflict with the rights of the said families or individuals.

Water is the basic source of life for every living creature and the need for water in the livelihood of the community and families cannot be overemphasised. The mainline pipe which supplies water to Polokwane city passes through some villages, but these villages do not have running water, let alone access to water within their premises (www.polokwane.org.za).

Some communities are compelled to use a communal water supply method of buying tokens that will enable them to access water. Such a system has proved to be very difficult and complex to manage. Many communities like the Ga-Thoka and Phuti communities located closer to Mankweng Township using the said facility have had to discontinue it and the infrastructure developed for the service is now unused. The municipality has therefore abdicated its responsibility, putting the blame on the communities for lack of organisation and co-operation.

It would have been expected of the Polokwane municipality to provide every household with a meter to access water and a monthly bill for each household, or alternatively, to provide each household with a pre-paid water meter in a similar manner to the way electricity is provided and managed. Moreover, the community is expected to pay for services which are either inadequate or non-existent. If their

municipality fails to administer the process adequately, the basic rights of the community are trampled on and denied.

Storm water facilities are not available in the township and nearby villages. This often leads to flooding of streets and houses when it rains, thereby disabling communities from continuing with their lives. The damages incurred are not compensated for, neither are they recoverable in any way. The creation of dongas in the roads and dams in some roads destabilises the life pattern of communities. This is caused by the poor maintenance of the roads.

In keeping with the development of mankind, electricity plays a crucial and central role in the modern lives of societies. Access to information and communication devices, food preparation and processing, family entertainment and leisure, depend on electricity as a source of energy. Institutional operations, management and many other functions and activities largely depend on electricity as well. This form of energy drives life and people depend on it almost entirely for their livelihood. Regrettably this source of energy is not made available to some parts of the communities as expected. Given this situation, it implies that the lifestyle of those communities is forced to differ from that of others, owing to the lack of electricity. This is further observed in the development of children coming from the two differing sections of the affected townships.

There appears to be a serious discrepancy in the supply of electricity between the city and the rural community. The reliability of Eskom electricity creates serious doubts amongst the residents since it easily switches off due to storms, rain and lightning on rainy days. Damage to electrical appliances due to the problem of the frequently interrupted supply of electricity is rampant. It therefore puts families into deeper economic crises and hardships. The electricity vending machines in the townships are not adequately provided. Where such machines are available they are only occasionally functional, thus causing members of such communities to have to travel to the city to purchase electricity. Unlike in the case where the municipality supplies electricity, the areas outside the city who have to rely on the electricity service provider, there are no supply points that are operational for 24 hours (Review 2006:10).

The state of the roads in the greater area of the municipality is appalling. Only some streets in the townships are considered for tarring, whereas the rest remain untarred. In the villages the main roads leading to them, which are often linking roads to more than two or three villages, are not even considered for tarring. This responsibility rests with the municipality since such village roads are the municipality's responsibility. The perception of services being made available only when high-profile visitors descend on a community is rife and positively confirmed. When politicians in government visit communities to open clinics, schools and tribal offices and for other public activities, community roads that are to be used are graded or even regravelled and a water supply made available to reduce dust. In certain communities some of the roads are only graded when death strikes certain families in the community.

Municipal offices are non-existent in some communities. Community members travel long distances to the city for enquiries and other services which should be available on their doorsteps. This denies the municipality an opportunity to experience and witness the living conditions of the communities and to encourage them to act decisively in providing strategic intervention. Where the municipal satellite offices are available electronic equipment is not provided, which could be linked with the head office, thereby availing the community of more services. This could be one strategy to bring the services closer to the community thereby allowing access to the municipality concerned. The government strategy of utilising tribal offices is inadequate because tribal offices do not provide comprehensive services to community members but serve more as political posturing by the government. Household services and individual needs services are not provided and only general community services are provided on particular days of the week.

The environmental aspects of communities do not receive priority treatment. Waste removal is non-existent in rural communities while in townships it is inconsistent. This inevitably results in littering which subsequently leads to ill health and an unsafe environment. Waste removal management is not properly regulated as facilities to ensure the use of acceptable structures that do not pose a threat and health hazard to communities are not prioritised. The pollution of underground water is not controlled as is evidenced by the use of pit toilets, which creates an unsafe environment. The

abuse or misuse of pit toilets is rampant in the rural areas with cases reported of abortions done in pit toilets. Yet no action is taken to ensure the safety of such facilities. Septic tanks are the route for rural communities as an improvisation, but given the inability of the Municipality to provide services compatible with the legal requirements their implementation thereof is not evident. Natural resources like underground water are therefore compromised.

In most municipal areas security of the community is not guaranteed. This does not necessarily refer to the presence of the state law enforcement agencies but the provision of street lights, free toll numbers for reporting crime and the establishment of effective policing forums, among others. Members of the communities ought to be encouraged to be reservists as a strategy to reinforce the security of the community members. This would be to the direct benefit of the community, with the community being empowered to protect itself. A secure environment would enable peace to prevail and better interrelations to be forged.

The location of recreational facilities in the community is a cause for concern as their location is for exclusive sectors of the community. The transformation of the city, given the population explosion and the accommodation the communities' residents is also a critical factor. The establishment of the city was premised, among others, on the notion that family members could easily access the municipal facilities by driving to them. This was based on the apartheid mindset as captured and explained by Du Toit, et al. (2002:58) when they say that some freedoms in the past were curtailed, including the right to associate freely and the right to use facilities reserved for white people. The trend is that more and more families resident in the city do not have vehicles, thus finding it very difficult to reach such facilities.

There is therefore a need for the revision of infrastructure development with specific focus on recreational facilities, to locate them where people reside, for them to be in close proximity to the users. The increase in the number of such facilities will also accommodate the population increase. The rural areas find themselves excluded from the provision of such facilities. The little that is done in some areas is of an inferior standard, having little impact. Children are therefore deprived of the opportunity to explore their potential in diverse sporting codes.

Regrettably the Polokwane municipality has also abdicated its responsibility by leasing a considerable number of its recreational facilities. Such facilities are now privatised and thus exclude community members on various grounds. Such grounds are, among others, that the leasing parties argue that they use the facilities for professional sport and thus need more time for professional training. In other instances exorbitant fees are charged for the use of such facilities if one is not a club member. This is the only appropriate mechanism for revenue generation and service maintenance.

The primary revenue base of each municipality consists of levies and taxes. Indigent policies are put in place to ensure that the community members earning low incomes are accommodated. Regrettably, due to lack of proper management, some services are provided at a flat rate, even to those that can afford to pay, depriving the municipality of a fortune in revenue. The disparity between rates, levies and taxes payable to the municipality is matter for concern. This inevitably implies that some areas subsidise other areas, hence the lack of development in some areas. The municipality is missing the opportunity to collect considerable revenue due to lack of systems and strategies to ensure that members of the community understand why they should pay for their services.

1.3   Research questions

The research questions that were posed to all the interviewees were as follows:

- What is your level of satisfaction regarding the basic services provided by the Municipality?
- What are your experiences in terms of assessment rates?
- Is the much talked-about level of corruption impacting on the delivery of services?
- How does under-spending impede the speedy delivery of services?

1.4   Aims and objectives of the study

The aim of this study is to contribute positively to the solution of the community's services provision problems in Polokwane. It is also to emphasise the critical issues that are troubling and hindering development in certain areas of the Polokwane Municipality.

In order to realise this aim, the following objectives are identified for the study:

- to reflect on the strategic importance of the Polokwane municipality in service delivery;
- to examine the problems and challenges the community is confronted with in relation to service delivery;
- to suggest possible mechanisms towards addressing service delivery problems and challenges confronting the municipality.

1.5   Significance of the study

This study is critical as it intends to expose the poor state of services experienced by the residents of Mankweng Township to the Polokwane Municipal officers. It is believed that the findings will propel and compel the municipality to put into place mechanisms and resources to address the problems as experienced by the community. It is also hoped that the municipality will ensure that there is quality control and proper/adequate supervision to their projects undertaken through contractors in the communities. The outcomes of the study will further avail information and concerns of the community on matters of development and service delivery which they may find useful for preliminary IDP developments processes.

1.6   Delimitation or demarcation of the study

Polokwane Municipality is located in the Limpopo Province of South Africa. It is the Capital City of the Limpopo Province located in Capricorn District or Capricorn District Municipal demarcation area. Polokwane municipality has a considerable number of Townships and Mankweng is one of them. The Township has for many

years enjoyed a dominant standard of life created by the influence of one of the oldest Black Tertiary Academic Institutions, University of the North (now University of Limpopo Turfloop Campus). The nature of the community of Mankweng comprises of Academics, Educators, Public servants like nurses and general administrators, University's general employees and other categories.

1.7   Ethical considerations

Ethical guidelines and practices that will be considered in this study include anonymity, privacy, confidentiality and the liberty to withdraw from participation. The participants will be approached personally and given the choice of participating in the research through informed consent, typed information and free choice (Brink, 2003:42)

1.8   Chapter outline

In order to have a systematic and logical presentation of facts in the study, the following plan is followed:

Chapter two: Literature review.
In this chapter the literature relevant to the research topic is reviewed. Presentations on the exposition of local government as a sphere of government are done, linking the relationship with the other two spheres of government, which are the National and Provincial spheres, and the local sphere.

Chapter three: Research design and methodology.
This chapter focuses on the research design, followed by the research methods with reference to methods of data collection, methods of data processing methods of data interpretations and consolidation of data. In addition, reliability and validity as well as ethical issues are presented.

Chapter four: Findings and Data analysis

In this chapter, the findings regarding the impact on the community of service delivery by Polokwane Municipality as a third sphere of government will be discussed.

Chapter five: Recommendations and Limitations

The recommendations based on the findings will be discussed, determining the achievability of the findings and their applicability.

1.9 Conclusion

The above depicts a systematic order and approach to the study. It shows the flow of themes per chapter and issues to be focused upon. It further gives a breakdown of how the work has been approached in order to have a systematic the exposition of facts in the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1　Introduction

This Chapter is devoted to the exposition of local government as a sphere of government and attempting to link it with the other two spheres of government, which are the national and provincial spheres. It will begin by dealing with the objectives of local government, and then going deeper into the roles, purposes and functions of local government.

2.2　The historical and legal evolution of municipalities in South Africa with focus on Polokwane municipality

In an attempt to give an exposition of the South African scenario, it is imperative to give an international overview which will ensure a better understanding of how the South African scenario evolved. South Africa has learnt its lessons from established countries that have dealt with matters of governance for a long time prior to the new dispensation in South Africa.

2.2.1　International context, historical perspectives and current research

Service delivery is a universal phenomenon. Citizens all over the world demand some form of service delivery from those in authority. It is for this reason that a comparison is done on service delivery from an international perspective. This will focus on the two kinds of local government, being counties and cities. Given the nature of settlements in the western world, the county is regarded as the district municipality in South Africa and the city as cities in South Africa. The county takes care of the rural settlements outside the cities while the cities focus only on themselves (Benton, 2002:472-473).

2.2.1.1 *County Service Delivery*

According to Benton (2002:472-473) little research has been done to determine policy effects of changing the form of county government. The findings of his study suggest that efforts to modernise county government structure may enable county officials to respond successfully to increasing citizen demands for higher levels of services and extension of the variety of services offered.

Bowman and Kearney (2000:249-250) argues that Counties are general-purpose units of local government. He further asserts that counties were created by states to function as their administrative appendages. He also indicates that Counties were traditionally assigned functions of property tax assessment and collection, law enforcement, elections, record keeping of land transactions, births and death and also road maintenance.

Benton (2002:472) goes further to argue that there has been a need for efforts to eliminate graft and corruption thus advocating municipal governments that are efficient, businesslike and more responsive to the popular will. He concludes by indicating that the modern or reformed form of county government that is probably best able to satisfy the expanding service needs of a rapidly growing population is one that has an appointed administrator or elected executive as well as a charter.

The reformers equated reform with ridding cities of political corruption and their adoption of businesslike practices according to Benton (2002:473). He further indicates that reformers urged state governments to grant county governments greater home rule authority to enable them to respond to the rapidly growing service needs of their citizens.

According to Bowman and Kearney (2000:250), they agree with Benton in saying that "the pressures of modernization and population growth placed additional demands on County governments." As a result, their services offerings have expanded. He further states that state governments have awarded greater decision making authority and flexibility to counties through home rule.

Benton (2002:473) indicates that efforts to reform or modernise county government have usually been associated with seeking greater home rule in three principal areas: structural, functional and fiscal. He further gives an exposition of the areas as below:

- Structural reform in the form of permitting counties to choose between a commission-administrator and a commission-elected executive form of government would bring about the flexibility, centralisation and professionalisation necessary for countries to function successfully in a rapidly changing society.

- Functional reforms-permitting counties to provide optional services (that is, services not mandated by the state) and to consider alternative service-provision arrangements would give counties the flexibility to adapt and respond to new service demands and complex issues, something they cannot do as administrative arms of the state.

- Fiscal reform would ensure budget stability through financial flexibility. For instance, granting counties greater authority in setting tax and fee rates, issuing bonds and raising debt limits. Establishing benefit service districts would enable counties to adjust revenues and expenditures to changing circumstances.

Benton (2002:474) summarises the outcome of reform in saying that "it is no longer just record-keeping units or legal extensions of state government; counties provide fire protection, utilities, water and sewer services, solid waste disposal, and manage intricate health care and social service programs."

2.2.1.2 *City Service Delivery*

Benton (2002:479) indicate that due to increased demands for public services and strong resistance to further tax increases, city officials across America's largest cities have been forced to re-examine the way they provide city services. This was done in order to save money and find ways to do more with less. Dilger, et al. (1997:21) goes

further to argue that "city officials are shifting away from a focus on what government should do towards a focus on how government can get things done more efficiently and effectively". This new focus, according to Dilger, et al. (1997:21), "has contributed to the increased use of strategic planning initiatives that use citizen surveys, public hearings, and town meetings to help city officials define their cities' long term objectives and develop a strategy to achieve those objectives".

Clingermayer and Feiock (1997:231) assert that municipal service delivery decisions often generate considerable controversy and political turmoil. They argue that one of the more controversial and contentious issues regarding municipal service delivery in recent years is the decision to contract out, "privatise," or employ some other form of external delivery of particular services. It is their argument that "this mode of service delivery has been promoted as a means of providing services more efficiently and effectively". They go further to argue that sometimes it is a way of providing services that otherwise could not be provided at all. On the other hand, Clingermayer and Feiock (1997:231) argue that contracting out has been accused "of providing services of lower quality, of exploiting government employees, and of denying constitutional protection both to those who should receive government services and to those who deliver them."

Warner, Ballard and Hefetz (2003:32) indicate that contracts are used to provide new services. Such contracts are basically outsourcing activities. They argue that contracts provide "a flexible way for governments to meet new or expanding service demands."

Clingermayer and Feiock (1997:232) go on to indicate that advocates of privatisation have long argued that governments can provide services more cheaply through private providers than through direct in-house delivery. This advantage is said to derive from the motivation induced by a competitive market, profit motives, the less restrictive managerial and personnel practices in the private sector, and the lower labour costs generally found for unskilled and semi-skilled labour outside of government.

Considerable research executed by Clingermayer and Feiock (1997:232) has also found that external service delivery decisions are greatly influenced by the political pressure of particular interests and groups within the community. It is therefore not

surprising that government workers whose jobs might be threatened by external suppliers of services often oppose privatisation plans.

In an effort to pursue the research on the extent of privatisation and quality service delivery, city officials were asked to indicate the city services that were contracted out to the private sector (Dilger, et al. 1997:22). The officials were presented with a list of 47 services in the following five categories: public works/transportation, public safety, health and human services, parks, recreation, and culture, and support functions. Dilger, et al. (1997:22) also indicate that it has been suggested that the privatisation movement may be strongest in the West because cities there have been known to be particularly innovative in experimenting with alternative service delivery systems.

According to Warner, et al. (2003:32) the survey by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) done in 1997 indicated that privatization, which is explained as profit making, rose in USA states from 22% in 1982 to 24% in 1997 across all city services.

The figures concerning the number of privatized services in America's largest cities according to Dilger, et al. (1997:22) suggests that the privatisation movement has made a significant impact. Only three of the 66 cities had not privatised any services in the city. However, a relatively large number of large-population cities have not fully embraced the privatisation approach in a broad-based manner.

According to Dilger, et al. (1997:22) it was found that the ten most privatised services in America's 66 largest cities in 1995 were:

- Vehicle towing: 53-80 percent of the cities.
- Solid waste collection: 33-50 percent.
- Building security: 32-48 percent
- Street repair: 26-40 percent.
- Ambulance services: 24-36 percent.
- Printing services: 23-35 percent.

- Street lighting/signals: 17-26 percent.
- Drug/alcohol treatment centres: 16-24 percent.
- Employment and training: 16-24 percent.
- Legal services: 16-24 percent.

Warner, et al. (2003:32) question on the reasons for outsourcing. They ascertain if it could be a reflection of politics, labour opposition or bureaucratic resistance to innovation. They further ask if it could be the result of innovation or process improvements that increase the internal efficiency of government.

According to Dilger, et al. (1997:23) city officials were asked which one of the seven reasons below was the single, most important factor in their decision to privatise services in each of the five service categories: reduce costs, improve service, reduce the number of public employees, limit legal liability, raise revenue, reduce union influence, and existing employee skills were inadequate. The city officials' responses suggested that reducing costs and improving service were the two most important factors in the decision to privatise services (Dilger, et al. 1997:23).

Bowman and Kearney (2000:253) argue that cities generally offer a broader array of services to their citizens. However such services may not be directly provided by the municipality. Critical to the argument is whether this brings efficiency, a saving and quality service.

Dilger, et al. (1997:24) indicate that "some opponents of privatization concede that it may decrease city expenses in the short term but they argue that privatization actually increases city expenses in the long term." The same opponents argue that many private firms are able to provide services for less money than public employees because they rely heavily on part-time employees who do not receive health care benefits and rarely qualify for overtime pay. Even when these firms claim that privatisation will save the city money, when their employees require medical care, the city and state government end up paying for their health care expenses, either through the state's share of medical aid expenses or through the city or county's share of expenses in operating the local public hospital. Dilger, et al. (1997:24) argue further

that these "hidden" health care expenses, which are rarely, if ever, considered by public officials when they take the decision to privatise a public service, make privatisation a bad deal for many cities.

Devas and Rakodi (1993:170) indicate that "inadequate financial resources remain one of the key constrains on the provision of satisfactory urban services in almost every developing country." Based on the above, local governments then opt to privities certain services in order to generate revenue and use it for the needy areas.

Dilger, et al. (1997:24) indicate that "privatization's opponents argue that because private companies are driven by the profit motive they may be tempted to cut corners on service unless the city closely monitors the private company's performance". Dilger, et al. (1997:24) then conclude by arguing that previous research has suggested that cities do not do a very good job in performing their oversight functions. Dilger, et al. (1997:25) say that "although this survey suggests that privatization may not be as widely employed in large cities as previously thought, it has, in most instances, saved cities money without sacrificing service quality". However, privatisation understandably creates anxiety among public employees and it saves money by reducing the total compensation package available to those performing the service.

Mhone and Edigheji (2003:237) indicate that local municipalities are still weak in capacity whilst they are obliged to ensure sustainable delivery of services. In an effort to achieve this goal, municipalities are forced to consider the municipal partnership in order to meet the particular municipal service needs of their communities. This therefore calls for the assessing of the advantages and disadvantages of entering into a partnership with the private sector or other interested groups/organizations.

Dilger, et al. (1997:25) say that as cities are more familiar with privatisation, they increasingly recognise the need for monitoring the private sector's performance and for specifying in precise, easily understood language what is expected. The most common responses were the need to make certain that the city's requests for proposals were very thorough and easily understood to ensure that the low bidder was actually capable of doing the work at acceptable city standards and the need for an effective system of evaluating and monitoring the contractor's performance.

Although privatisation seems or is perceived to be working, it should be noted that several city officials stressed that not every privatisation effort in their city was a success. One city official indicated that their city privatised the operation of the city's golf courses but they were dissatisfied with the results and took back that responsibility to gain greater control over the golf courses' operation and to reduce costs (Dilger, et al. 1997:25). Another city official reported that their city had privatised several government facilities, including its convention centre, and was disappointed in the results at the end. When the contract expired, the city took back the management of those facilities. Two other city officials noted and concluded that privatisation was generally successful when the services were labour intensive but less successful when they are capital intensive because labour costs were generally lower in the private sector than in the public sector, whereas capital expenses were generally lower in the public sector than in the private sector (Dilger, et al. 1997:25).

2.2.2 The South African context – historical perspectives and current research

In the past ten years of the new political dispensation government has, through pieces of legislation and regulations, created a policy environment which is conducive and supportive to service delivery. In the same context government has gone further to put in place extensive direct support in the form of various projects and programmes targeted at various service delivery institutions across all these spheres of government.

2.2.2.1 *Constitutional framework of local government as a sphere of government*

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996:25-35) indicates that the "government is constituted as national, provincial and local spheres of government which are distinctive, interdependent and interrelated." This section of the constitution defines the location of local government in the broader context in relation to the other two spheres of government. It is that level of government closest to the people which is expected to deliver services to the people. Gildenhuys (1997:07) define local government as a decentralised institution with general and specific powers devolved on it in respect of an identified restricted geographical area within a state." Therefore

in the context of the above statement local government is established for the residents of areas demarcated by law of a competent authority.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) gives due regard to the local government sphere and thus assigned much more responsibility to it as it is designed to be a local sphere of government operating within communities. It is again the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) that makes it lawful for the establishment of the local government sphere. The roles and responsibilities assigned to it thus become a constitutional imperative.

2.2.2.2 *Local Government as a sphere of government*

According to Van Der Waldt and Helmbold (1983:88) "a local government is autonomous and is entitled to regulate matters relating to local affairs itself." Powers are conferred to local government to make by-laws, which do not conflict with or contradict the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. The three spheres of government are distinctive in terms of their mandates. Each has its own functions, responsibilities and competencies. All the spheres share the common goal of the better welfare of society. The spheres are interrelated and interdependent and the success of each sphere depends on the others. Each sphere has its own responsibilities and functions, but interacts with other levels to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the policies and programmes. Local government is the third sphere of government, and the most important sphere as it is seen as the key instrument of service delivery. Both National and Provincial policies and programmes are implemented at this sphere of government. It is at this sphere that the welfare of society is made better or worse.

The ability or inability of the local government sphere to carry out its duties, has a serious impact on government's overall achievement of set goals and objectives. It is on this basis that mechanisms to ensure that the local sphere performs its duties have been clearly outlined in the constitution. Among these mechanisms is the mandate to build the capacity of local government spheres in order to perform their functions.

Section 154 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) advocates for mechanisms to ensure that the local sphere of government performs its duties. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) further stipulates that both national and provincial governments must, by legislature and other measures, support and strengthen the capacity of municipalities to manage their own affairs, to exercise their powers and to perform their functions. Section 155(6) (a & b) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) compels provinces to monitor, support, and also to promote the development of local government capacity to enable the municipalities to perform their functions. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) Section 155(7) maintains that both national and provincial governments have legislative and executive authority to see to the effective performance by municipalities of their functions in respect of matters listed in schedule 4 and 5 by regulating the exercising by municipalities of their executive authority.

Although the local government is a sphere on its own, local government functions are under the supervision of provincial government. Noting that the local government's activities are regulated by the other two spheres it may imply that while local government is a sphere on its own, it is to a certain extent dictated to by the two spheres of government. However section 151(4) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) indicates that neither the national nor the provincial government may compromise or impede a municipality's ability or right to exercise its powers or perform its functions. This therefore guarantees that the Municipality may exercise its authority in line with its objectives. It is critical for the Municipality to observe the constitutional framework within which it functions.

Section 139 goes beyond section 156(1) in that it gives the provinces the power to intervene when a municipality cannot or does not fulfil its executive obligation. This role is about the monitoring and supervision of local governments. It is a measure designed to ensure delivery of services and set the community free from internal wrangles and incapacity to deliver. This therefore shows that the local government is an integral part of the other spheres of government and all the spheres are interrelated.

2.2.2.3 *The objectives of local government*

Gildenhuys (1997:08) indicates that "local government must have a purpose in mind and a goal towards which they strive". He argues further that the goal must be clearly defined. He goes on to emphasise that the goal of a municipality is to create circumstances within its municipality and its legal jurisdiction for the attainment of a satisfactory quality of life for each of its citizens. The municipality cannot create this satisfactory quality of life. People have to develop it themselves.

This therefore implies that the municipality has a duty to level the playing field. The municipality must strive to create opportunities for the economic, cultural, sporting and social development of its communities. Gildenhuys (1997:08) acknowledges that community members also have a role to play in the improvement of their lives.

Section 152 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) indicates that the objectives of the local government are:

- to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities;
- to ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner;
- to promote social and economic development;
- to promote a safe and healthy environment; and
- to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in matters of local government.

2.2.2.4 *The roles, powers and functions of local government*

Gildenhuys (1997:09) argues that local government categorises the functions of local government, as a public institution, into line functions and supporting functions. According to Botes, et al. (1996:215) local government should be assigned such powers and functions necessary for service provision for the maintenance and promotion of the well being of persons in its jurisdiction. Botes, et al. (1996:217) indicate further that the local government shall provide for access by all its residents to water, sanitation, transportation facilities, electricity, primary health services,

education, housing and security. All this should happen within a safe and healthy environment and such amenities should be rendered in a sustainable manner and are financially and physically practicable. Botes et al.(1996:217) go further to indicate that local government has the power to make bylaws. Such bylaws should be consistent with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), or an act of parliament or an applicable provincial law. All the powers indicated above are meant to ensure that local government is able to discharge its responsibilities properly.

The functions of local government as per Gildenhuys (1997:10) are summarised below. These are the functions that every municipality is adjudicated on as a benchmark:

2.2.2.4.1 Line functions

These are the functions that directly contribute to the delivery of services to the public. These functions bring a direct relationship between the public and the staff responsible for the delivery of services. Such line functions are classified as Control and protection functions, Social welfare functions and Economic welfare functions.

2.2.2.4.1.1 Control and protection functions

Functions in this category are aimed at maintaining order in the community. Such an order may be desirable between households and individuals, thus protecting them and their property from all kinds of threats. Such functions are, among others, Building control functions, Civil protection functions, Fire protection functions, Floodwater control functions, Land use control functions, Pollution control functions, Security and Traffic and general policing functions.

2.2.2.4.1.2 Social welfare functions

Functions in this category are aimed at social aspects and social development of the community. They are related to the personal physical health and mental development of the individual. Some of these are Ambulance functions, Burial and cremation functions, Comprehensive environmental health functions, Cultural functions, Housing functions, Personal health functions, Parks, and Sports and recreation functions.

2.2.2.4.1.3   Economic welfare functions

The purpose of this category of functions is to create a suitable environment and amenities for the development of the economic welfare and prosperity of the individual. They focus on providing and maintaining economic infrastructure for economic development purpose. The common denominator is the economic welfare of the individual who may be producer, manufacturer, trader, and households. All these sectors may not survive and progress economically without these economical infrastructure services. Some of the functions are as listed below:

Abattoir function, Electricity supply function, Fresh produce marketing function, Public transport function, Roads, streets and rainwater drainage function, Sewage disposal function, Solid waste removal and recycling function, and Water supply function.

2.2.2.4.2   Supporting functions

Supporting functions are regarded as those functions contributing indirectly, through their support of line functions, to the realisation of the goals and objectives of a local government. Without these supporting functions the line functions would not be able to operate properly. Such functions are, among others, the Auditing function, Economic development function, Financing function, Judicial function, Office and secretarial function, Personnel function, Resource supply function and Town planning function.

2.2.2.4.3   Public Service Delivery

Du Toit, et al. (2002:88-90) assert that the concept of public service delivery is a comprehensive one. Public Services refer to a variety of services or benefits that the public receive directly or indirectly from government institutions. Such services may be safety and security, water and electricity, health services, transport service, education and many other more. The delivery of services is therefore the responsibility of government institutions.

Bowman and Kearney (2000:249) indicate the services that the local government undertakes been to fight crime, extinguish fires, pave streets, collect trash, maintain parks, provide water, and educate the children.

The responsibility of service delivery denotes the delivery of some kind of collective or common services. Originally services delivered were collective and basic. Examples in this regard could be defending the community and members of the community against aggression and turmoil. As communities grew and became more sophisticated, so their need for more and better services increased. This has been the trend since many years back to this day, according to Du Toit, et al. (2002:90). The public outcry for better services is further compounded by town planning, which has not been able to provide for the population explosion and will not be able to do so for years to come. The spate of protestation as reflected in the IRIN (www.irinnews.org) entitled 'South Africa: Rising anger over slow pace of service delivery' is nothing but an outcome of lack of proper planning. The violence experienced is as a result of frustration and discontent with lack of progress in addressing backlogs. The IRIN indicates that the "absence of a drainage system, flowing streams of sewage flood the untarred streets, uncollected buckets loaded with human waste line the backyards, and rubbish is piled up between the houses and outside the township's clinic". This clearly articulates the fact that waste removal in this scenario is not taken seriously. Inevitably this leads to illness, an unhealthy environment and unaccounted forms of ill health.

Mhone and Edigheji (2003:233) argue that service delivery represents yet "another avenue for municipal action in obtaining redress for previously excluded local communities." Failure to live by this expectation leaves communities with no option but to protest in an attempt to draw the attention of those responsible.

This state of affairs leaves the communities with no other alternative except to group themselves outside the legislative structures into concerned groups. Their concerns are genuine concerns, given further that they pay for services, regardless of how much they pay. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) sets the statutory framework for service delivery in South Africa according to Du Toit, et al. (2002:100). Such a framework depicts clearly which level of municipality should execute which services and to what extent. This includes, among others, the Municipalities (local authorities) whose role it is to provide services to the local

inhabitants under their jurisdiction. Such localised services are critical to the development and continued existence of the community.

Du Toit, et al. (2002:101) go further to indicate that during the past ten years, since the new political dispensation, government has through pieces of legislation and regulations, created a policy environment which is conducive and supportive to service delivery. In the same context government has gone further to put in place extensive direct support in the form of various projects and programmes targeted at various service delivery institutions across all these spheres of government. Du toit, et al. (2002:101) indicate that there are still many more challenges to be confronted. Such challenges include uneven trends, inadequate service delivery capacity, misguided government support interventions as well as distrust among government spheres.

Since 1994 government has shown success in its attempt to deliver services by providing more services to more people, thereby ensuring equity in service delivery. In spite of the above, however, there are areas where government lacks capacity to deliver and sustain quality services. Many weaknesses within certain service delivery institutions, sector departments and across geographical areas have been observed. Moreover the important aspect regarding service delivery is what clients expect from public institutions, informed by their desires and environment challenges. Du toit, et al. (2002:101) argue that "the primary function of a municipality is to serve its community by providing water, electricity and sanitary services". These identified services are often classified as basic services.

The IRIN experience has provided an objective assessment of scenarios where failure or lack of public services unite people in action resulting in damage to and disruption of other services like schools, health provision and others. This situation clearly depicts the community's expectations of better services, for they are the consumers of such services.

2.2.2.4.4   Community Participation

The core business of municipalities is to deliver services to communities. This function is ensconced in the legislations governing municipalities, in particular the Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000). The Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000) is a legislation ensuring the delivery of services. The Act (Sec. 16 (1) (b) (i) and Polokwane Municipality IDP, 2005-2006:107) propagates and encourages community participation in municipal government. The Act provides that a Municipality "must develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance". It therefore attempts to create co-ownership of the programmes of the municipality.

The involvement of communities in the determination of services to be provided is imperative. The Municipal Systems Act [(Act 32 of 2000)Sec. 29(1)(b)(ii)] indicates that municipalities must allow direct participation by local communities in the drafting of the integrated municipal development plans (Polokwane Municipality IDP, 2005-2006:107). This is in an effort to ensure that the priorities set are determined by the community members themselves. The establishment of Ward Committees in municipalities as per the Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000) is an attempt to ensure direct participation of community members in matters of local governance. This should further be understood in the context of ward-based elections of community leaders above the party politics elections. This effort entrenches the community's role in determining its destination politically. Section 42 of the Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000) further says that communities must be involved "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".

The above provisions of the Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000) directly pave the way for community determination of targets and also ensuring that the targets are met. It thus avoids misunderstandings and lack of information to community members on services to be delivered since such services would have been jointly agreed upon through consultation.

The Capricorn District Municipality through its Executive Mayor, reports that "the district Integrated Development Plan (IDP) identifies several basic priorities for service delivery including access to water and sanitation, health services and economic development" BUANEWS,2004:20. This reflects the priorities that the people, being members of the community, have determined for themselves. Such priorities then constitute the service delivery programme of the Municipality. The ownership of the programme thus ensures continued community participation in Municipal activities.

2.2.2.4.5   Improving Service Delivery

The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997:12-23) aims to address the need for a specific policy and criteria for the transformation of public service delivery. The principles for public service delivery outlined in the white paper include aspects such as consultation with the public as the client, service standards, access to services, courtesy, information, openness and transparency, redress or responsiveness and lastly value for money.

It is through these aspects that an attempt is made to restore the communities' confidence in the government and its image. The past tendencies of negligence and a less than caring attitude is addressed, including the need to view and respect community members as the targets of services on which they are consulted.

According to Du Toit, et al. (2002:100-101), the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) and the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997) both make an important contribution towards a new attitude among public servants and citizens regarding service delivery. Both these pieces of legislation attempt to reposition the recipients of services as the most important people whom the public servants have a duty to satisfy.

A highly-contested approach to the improvement of service delivery is the privatisation and outsourcing model that argues that while recognising and acknowledging the noticeable delivery level of government, there are still areas in which government does not have sufficient capacity to deliver and sustain quality services. This therefore opens up for outside assistance to close the gap that the

Municipality experiences. On the other hand it is argued that a function which is not a core function of the Municipality needs to be left to those who specialise in same. This will ensure that the Municipality focuses on its core business and also draws in expertise in areas of need. It will further ensure quality of services from specialists.

Pelikan (2000:12) wrote an article in The Business Day on the service delivery debate in the Cape Town Municipality. The document is said to have been designed to provoke discussions on the future of service delivery. At some point the document takes up the debate on "redefining the role of the uni-city with the aim of assuring the provision of municipal services rather than necessarily providing those services". The document goes further to mention "a core package of services to be delivered to all citizens and providing a range of other services that address the special needs of different constituencies". This debate paves the way for outsourcing and privatisation as the key to alternative service delivery.

Pelikan (2000:31) further indicates that the South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU)'s response to the document "asserted that outsourcing and privatisation of service delivery invariably meant a breach of the system of accountability of local government to its constituents". Moreover, the South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU) according to Pelikan (2000:31), indicate that "by treating citizens as customers means that those who are unable to pay for the services will be left unserviced". This argument finds its basis in the point that once services are treated as a commodity for which payment is expected, invariably commission is expected thereby escalating costs. The maintenance of quality service cannot be guaranteed, as the motivating force will be profit.

Hope exists, however, in the manner in which regulations have been developed to protect the communities in the outsourcing or privatisation of services. Section 80(2) of the Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000) provides that a Municipality wishing to establish an alternative service delivery mechanism is also obliged, before it enters into a service delivery agreement for a municipal service, to "establish a mechanism and programme for community consultation and information dissemination regarding the service delivery agreement".

28

The Municipal Structures Act (Act 117 of 1998) has clear procedures for engaging external agencies for municipal service provision. However, the Municipality remains ultimately responsible for the delivery of the service. This ensures that municipalities do not abdicate their responsibilities. It is the Municipality that becomes accountable for the lack of services, not the service providers engaged by them. Consequently the Municipality, as indicated in Section 81(1) (e) of the Municipal structures Act (Act 117 of 1998) must not only ensure "uninterrupted service delivery of the service in the best interests of the local community", but it must also ensure the application of the new principle of municipal governance which is performance management, integrated development planning, and the design of a local tariff policy.

2.2.2.4.6   Alternative Service Delivery

Russell and Bvuma (2001:03) argues that many countries that are faced with the difficulties of reforming the traditional bureaucracy and further having the desire and being anxious to speedily improve service delivery, have adopted privatisation. This is also aimed at cost-effectiveness in public sector operations. The concept privatisation is also better understood as marketisation and the process or initiative is already promoted by international agencies. In South Africa this argued solution or process is one of the key focuses referred to as Public Private Partnerships (PPP) initiative (Russell and Bvuma, 2001:01-03). Russell and Bvuma (2001:03) go further to contend that "this initiative postdates a variety of unilateral instances of privatization, contracting out, leasing and concessions for major projects such as tollways." It is a picture of a nation seeking alternatives to the traditional bureaucracy in the interests of better service delivery (Russell and Bvuma, 2001:05).

The Treasury Regulations, according to Russell and Bvuma (2001:06), provide the definition of public private partnerships which involve three elements, namely:

- a contractual element whereby a private party performs a departmental function on behalf of a national or provincial department for a specified time;
- substantial risk transfer to the private party; and

- a schedule of outcome-based financial rewards derived either from service tariffs or user charges, from a departmental budget or from a combination of these sources.

A major distinction evolved from the above to the effect that a contract for the supply of goods and services were not seen as PPPs.

The guidelines for public private partnerships provide for or distinguish five types of PPP contracts. Such contracts are service contracts (1-3 years, e.g. facility repairs and maintenance like laundry), management contracts (3-8 years like regional water supply), leases (8-15 years like airport or port facilities) build operate transfer (15 – 25 years like schools, prisons, hospitals, office space/buildings) and concessions (15-30 years like new airport, seaport, toll road, bridge).

The guidelines further provide a systematic approach to the issues. The guidelines insist, according to Russell and Bvuma (2001:07), that PPPs must demonstrate value for money, be affordable, be procured using transparent and competitive processes, show substantial risk transfer to the private party and be implemented within a sound project management framework (Clingermayer & Feiock, 1997:09).

Service delivery improvement in the public sector, inclusive of municipalities, is a pressing national priority. A wide range of measures beyond those identified, inclusive of PPP, and not the reform of the bureaucratic structures or even Batho Pele advocacy will be needed to achieve the objective of service delivery. Further measures such as systematic IT modernisation, significant management improvements, accelerated training and development of staff at all levels, redeployment of resources in the budget to higher priority areas amongst others will be required according to Russell and Bvuma (2001:07).

Given the above various delivery strategies, alternative service delivery offers considerable promise according to Russell and Bvuma (2001:07). This "alternative service delivery means the identification, development and adoption by public departments and agencies of means of delivery public services other than through traditional, hierarchical bureaucracy" (Russell and Bvuma, 2001:07). It seeks to focus

attention on innovative delivery solutions to the customer's satisfaction. Alternative service delivery is thus developmental, as it involves the nurturing and support of creative solutions by those directly responsible for customer service innovation (Russell and Bvuma, 2001:07). Alternative service delivery focuses on identifying and spreading practical approaches that make the service required by the public at once more effective, more equitable and more accessible.

The South African President, President Mbeki's speech of February 2006 at the opening of parliament, emphasised the acceleration of service delivery. Service delivery is prioritised as a key objective, and highlighting the following factors:

- Service delivery to communities must be accelerated.
- Accessibility of services to communities must be increased.
- Service delivery mechanisms must accord with Batho Pele principles.

A variety of alternative service delivery models where initiated and tested. Such models yielded the desired results, particularly at the initiation phase and had to be measured with time. In Limpopo Province (then Northern Province) a new approach of corporatisation, commercialisation and labour-intensive approach to roads backlogs was initiated. This new approach involved the creation of a new entity called the Road Agency, modelled along the National Road Agency. This Agency became responsible for the maintenance and construction of provincial roads. It had a duty to manage its affairs through its Board and raise funds beyond the budgetary allocations. The commercialisation of the function sought also to approach the issue of job creation. The Lesotho model of Labour intensive road maintenance was adopted. In so doing the Province ensured that their excess staff in the Public Works Department of more than 3 000 was refocused to operate as a business entity with a business ethos. This greatly reduced redundancy and much wasted public funds.

Another model that also worked wonders was the privatisation of government Chauffeur services in the Western Cape. Given that the seat of Parliament is in Cape Town, the service delivery of chauffeur services was seriously affected by the negative human element. In an attempt to ensure effective and efficient service

delivery, all the government chauffeurs not attached to Cabinet Members and Members of the Provincial Executive Council were retrenched and grouped together in a Private Company with 60% shares and 40% shares to Hertz.

The government gave them a long contract for chauffeur services to the government for visitors, diplomats and all other needs, save chauffeur services for Cabinet members and MECs. The Company had other opportunities open to them, also to service the private sector, using government contacts. The chauffeurs became more committed, since they were working for their own business and realised better returns. In return the VIP chauffeur services improved tremendously, to the satisfaction of the customers.

Niksic (2004:353) says that in South Africa "the neo-liberal macro-economic strategy of the African National Congress (ANC) involves support for fiscal and administrative decentralisation, partly as a way to bring the private sector into basic service delivery and supposedly to make local government more efficient and effective". The ANC also sees decentralisation as a way to empower the historically disadvantaged black population. Niksic (2004:354) argues that private sector participation in service delivery is seen as necessary to provide cost effective services. Government requires to contract services out, in order to decrease administrative costs, and maintain economies of scale.

According to Jackson and Hlahla (1999:07), South African Municipalities require R100 billion in investments for infrastructure development. Municipalities lack the institutional and financial capacity to address their needs as indicated and thus have to raise private sector finance to supplement their own resources, and also government grants. It therefore becomes what is known as municipal services partnerships (msps) as a way of improving efficiency and accessing capital markets.

2.3   Historical background of Polokwane municipality

Polokwane municipality is a municipality anchored in Polokwane city. The city was known as a town before. It was proclaimed as a town in 1886. The town was named

after General Petrus Jacobus (Piet) Joubert according to the Website information on Polokwane Municipality (www.polokwane.org.za). The town underwent tremendous changes and was subsequently declared a city in 1996. It underwent a name change in 2002 from Pietersburg city to Polokwane city. Polokwane refers to a place of safety in Northern Sotho. The city's municipal jurisdiction covers 34 demarcated wards.

In terms of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) of 2005 & 2006, the population of the municipality is 508 277 out of a Limpopo Province population of 4 900 000. The IDP further divides the municipality into 4 clusters of communities.

The Baseline study on sustainable Livelihood commissioned by the Polokwane municipality in partnership with the then University of the North (Now Limpopo University) and Tlhavhama Training Institute qualify the clusters as follows:

Cluster A: Molepo/Maja/Chuene is identified as a total rural population area with a population of 57 792.

Cluster B: Mankweng/Sebayeng is identified with six wards as rural and seven wards as urban population area with a population of 194 614.

Cluster C: Moletji is identified as a total rural population area with a population of 103 755.

Cluster D: Polokwane City/Seshego is identified as a total urban population area with a population of 140 943.

Based on the Polokwane Municipality Annual Report of 2003-2004, the Municipality had a staff complement of 139.

2.4   Conclusion

Service delivery is a core function of every municipality. It is this sphere of government which is closer to the community and thus expected to serve the interests of the community. The improvement of service delivery cannot be executed exclusively by the municipality, noting the complexity of some functions. This therefore calls for outsourcing of those complex functions since there are no personnel in the employ of the municipality who can execute them. The aspect of alternative

service delivery cannot therefore be ignored in the interests of the delivery of quality services. Therefore the service delivery expected for the community is supposed to be championed by the local government.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

In this chapter the research design will be described followed by research methods with reference to methods of data collection, data processing, data interpretations and data consolidation. In addition, reliability and validity as well as ethical issues will be presented.

3.2   Research design

Mouton (1996:107) refers to research design as a series of guidelines and instructions towards addressing a research problem. According to Macmillan and Schumacher (1993:31) and Leedy (1993:127) the purpose of research design is to provide the most valid, accurate answers possible to the research questions. Moreover it helps the researcher in creating the common sense and clear thinking necessary for the management of the entire research study, which is the complete strategy of tackling the central research problem. The research design that is adopted for this study is qualitative, descriptive and contextual. It is a study inquiring into the impact of service delivery in Mankweng Township by Polokwane Municipality as a third sphere of government.

3.2.1   Qualitative Research Design

The qualitative nature of this study is naturalistic enquiry involving the use of non-interfering data collection strategies to discover the impact of service delivery from the participant's viewpoint as proposed by Macmillan and Schumacher (1993:372). For the purpose of this study a qualitative paradigm was used to suit the aim of gaining greater understanding of service delivery through the perceptions, beliefs, thoughts and actions of the participants on the impact that service delivery has and the role played by the municipality as the third sphere of government.

The aim of qualitative research is to gain insight into the meaning that people attach to experiences in their lives and how they structure their words through interviews according to these meanings (Merriam, 1988:16-17). This is done by means of what Miles and Huberman (1994:10) refer to as thick descriptions that are vivid, nested in real context, and have the ring of truth with a strong impact on the participant. In this study, data in the form of words rather than numbers or figures were gathered and used to convey what the researcher learned about the delivery of services in the Township of Mankweng.

This study is contextual, based on the locality of the municipality as a third sphere of government and the community it serves in Capricorn District in Limpopo Province. According to Leedy (1993:141) qualitative research considers the self as an instrument, engaged in the situation trying to make sense of the situation.

Smith (1993:35) describes a descriptive research strategy as a systematic, actual, description of a situation made in order to gain increased understanding, insight and knowledge. Rich description of the lived experiences of the community formed the foundation of this interpretation. Furthermore, Merriam (1988:11) refers to the descriptive research as a way of examining events and phenomenon in such a way that there is no manipulation or maltreatment of the participants. As stated previously, the aim of this study is to describe the impact of service delivery in Mankweng Township by Polokwane Municipality as a third sphere of government.

3.3   Research methods

3.3.1   Selection of participants

Qualitative researchers usually work with small samples of people situated in their context and studied in depth (Miles and Huberman, 1994:27). A purposive sampling method was used in this study. In carrying out the purposive sampling, the researcher thought critically about the parametres of the population and then chose the sample accordingly. It is further emphasised by Creswell (1994:118) that clear identification and formulation of criteria for the selection of the participants are of cardinal importance. In this study a particular sample of community members was chosen,

including the youth, people with disabilities, professionals, academics, the elderly and other ordinary people directly affected by the level of service delivery in their community.

3.3.2   Individual and Focus Group Interviews

In this study, one individual interview and two focus groups interviews were held. Interviewees were all given informed consent letters to sign, and filled in a biographic form (see appendix A) to explain the interview procedure and inform them about the questions. These interviews were spread over a period of seven days. All interviews were tape recorded and immediately transcribed to ensure the validity and authenticity of the information as provided by the participants. The recorded interviews allowed the researcher to listen attentively and the ability to record the data permanently preventing the possibility of the researcher becoming biased regarding the data (Slavin, 1992:89).

The interviews targeted professionals, public servants, the aged, women, youth, the disabled and the general members of the community. The interviews were conducted in a challenging manner, maintaining the flexibility to elicit information in a tolerant environment and encouraging participants to share perceptions, points of view, experiences and concerns without pressure, as supported by Kruger and Casey (2000:04).

All the interviewees were asked the following questions:
- What is your level of satisfaction regarding the basic services provided by the Municipality?
- What are your experiences in terms of assessment rates?
- Is the much talked-about level of corruption impacting on the delivery of services?
- How does under-spending impede the speedy delivery of services?

3.4 Data analysis procedure

According to Marshall and Rossman (1995:114), data analysis is the most difficult, complex, ambiguous, creative and enjoyable phase. The challenge of data analysis is to make sense of the data. This process is initiated by the transformation of verbal data into text, which is achieved by transcribing the interviews (see attached CD ROM: appendix E). The analytic process demands a heightened awareness of data, focused attention on the data and openness to the subtle, tacit undercurrents of social life. It involves identifying salient themes, recurring ideas or language, and patterns of belief that link people and settings together. It is the most challenging phase of research and one that can integrate the entire endeavour (De Vos, et al., 2002:344).

In this study the approach followed for data analysis was mainly based upon the content data analysis method suggested by Henning (2002:26). Data was reduced by means of coding the categories and themes. The aim of this data analysis method is to identify patterns and draw conclusions in order to generate appropriate recommendations.

3.5 Measures used to ensure validity and reliability

The methods that were used to ensure validity and reliability in this study will now be discussed.

3.5.1 Internal validity

Internal validity refers to the degree to which the interpretations and concepts have mutual meaning for the participants and researcher (Macmillan & Schumacher, 1993:391). In other words, it is essential for the researcher to capture and portray the reality of the world as it appears to the participants. The researcher's self-monitoring is called disciplined subjectivity, and submits all phases of the research process to continuous and rigorous questioning and evaluation.

According to Leedy (1993:41), internal validity is the freedom from bias in forming conclusions in view of the data. The methods suggested by Macmillan and

Schumacher (1993:391-392), Leedy (1997:167-169) and Maykut and Morehouse (1994:146) were mainly used to ensure the internal validity of this study. These methods are discussed below:

3.5.2 Disciplined subjectivity

In order to achieve disciplined subjectivity in this study the researcher wrote out all potential biases about the topic before the beginning of the study, and kept a memo and reflex journal. The memo and reflex journal kept the researcher alert during the process of formal data analysis (Macmillan & Schumacher 1993:392).

3.5.3 Peer collaboration

The findings of the study were discussed with colleagues by requesting them to make comments upon the findings, and the main categories and themes that emerged (Merriam, 1988:169).

3.5.4 Chain of evidence

A strong chain of evidence flows through this study, and research questions, motivation, methodology, data and findings serve to make the validity stronger (Leedy, 1997:169). The reader and other researchers can use this study as an operating manual and as an attempt to establish the chain of evidence.

3.5.5 External validity

It is concerned with the generalisation of the conclusions reached and whether those conclusions drawn from one study can be generalised to other situations (Leedy, 1997:41 and Merriam, 1988:173). In other words, in this study the researcher does not aim at generalisation of results but at the extension of the understandings and detailed descriptions that can enable others to understand similar situations and extend these understandings in subsequent research. Knowledge is produced not by replication, but by preponderance of evidence found in separate studies over time (Macmillan & Schumacher, 1993:394). Merriam, 1988: 73 (in Guba & Lincoln 1981:81) reaffirm the

importance of first establishing internal validity before external validity is discussed. Therefore, it is important that what the researcher learns from a specific situation can be transferred to another situation, depending on the degree of similarity between the two studies that are different in context (Miles & Huberman, 1994:229).

3.5.6 Reliability

Reliability is the extent to which independent researchers could discover the same phenomenon on which there is agreement in the description of the phenomenon between the researcher and the participants (Macmillan & Schumacher, 1993:385).

Lincoln and Guba in Merriam (1998:171) reliability and validity are inextricably linked in the conduct of research. They state that "… demonstrations of internal validity amount to a simultaneous demonstration of reliability." Therefore, the same methods that will be used to ensure internal validity will consequently ensure reliability.

3.5.7 Member Checks

All participants were given the transcriptions of their interviews, as well as the coding and clustering of the provisional categories. Member checks are described as taking data collected from the study by participants and the researcher's tentative interpretations of data and transcriptions back to the participants to verify the plausibility of the results (Merriam & Simpson, 2000:102). This enabled the participants to check whether they agreed with the transcribed interviews and provisional categories arising from the data.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Merriam (1988:179) refers to the fact that ethical dilemmas are likely to emerge at two points during the study, during data collection and in the dissemination of the findings. Various authors make reference to the ethical considerations that the researcher has to bear in mind while doing research (Miles & Huberman, 1994:240; Creswell, 1994:148; Merriam, 1998:179; Macmillan & Schumacher 1993:182-185;

Leedy, 1993:128). The methods employed to control the ethical standards of this study are briefly discussed below.

3.6.1 Confidentiality and anonymity

All the participants of the individual and focus group interviews were reassured that their names would not be used in the transcriptions, ensuring that they would be protected from any possible risk concerning their rights and privacy by making certain that data cannot be linked to the participants' names.

3.6.2 Informed consent

Informed consent of all participants was obtained by asking participants to sign a letter that indicates understanding of the research and consent to participate (see appendix A).

3.6.3 Voluntary participation

All the participants were also reassured that they were under no obligation to participate and could leave at any time they pleased should they become uncomfortable. Certainly they were not coerced into participating. The procedure, time requirements and type of participation expected of them were explained at the onset of the interviews.

3.6.4 Feedback

All the participants concerned were assured that the findings of the study would be shared with them at the conclusion of the study and that their concerns would be raised with the relevant authorities.

3.7 Conclusion

In this section the research design was described. The nature and the unique characteristics of the qualitative research methods were discussed, as well as the data collection and data analysis. Measures for ensuring validity, reliability and the ethical considerations of this study were also discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1   Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the research methodology and on how the research was conducted. In this chapter, the findings of the study are discussed.

4.2   Background and context of data collection

The aim of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by the communities regarding service delivery in the Polokwane Municipality of the Capricorn District. As discussed in the previous chapters, data for this study was collected by means of individual and focus group interviews. The data were then transcribed and analysis was done by means of content data analysis. Categories and themes emerged throughout the analysis process.

The researcher has been a resident in the township for the past thirty years, which was very challenging and rewarding at the same time. It was also difficult to ask questions of the community members while at the same time working for the same government that is supposed to be providing such services. It was equally difficult when the participants expected answers from the researcher and expected intervention as well. The most upsetting experience was when they requested feedback each time they met the researcher.

4.3   Data analysis, procedure and presentation

The data was analysed in two phases. During the first phase the data from interviews were analysed for provisional categories. The second phase was the interpretation of the provisional categories in order to identify main themes. Thereafter the themes were discussed using the other collected data as well as the literature collected for the sake of exercising control.
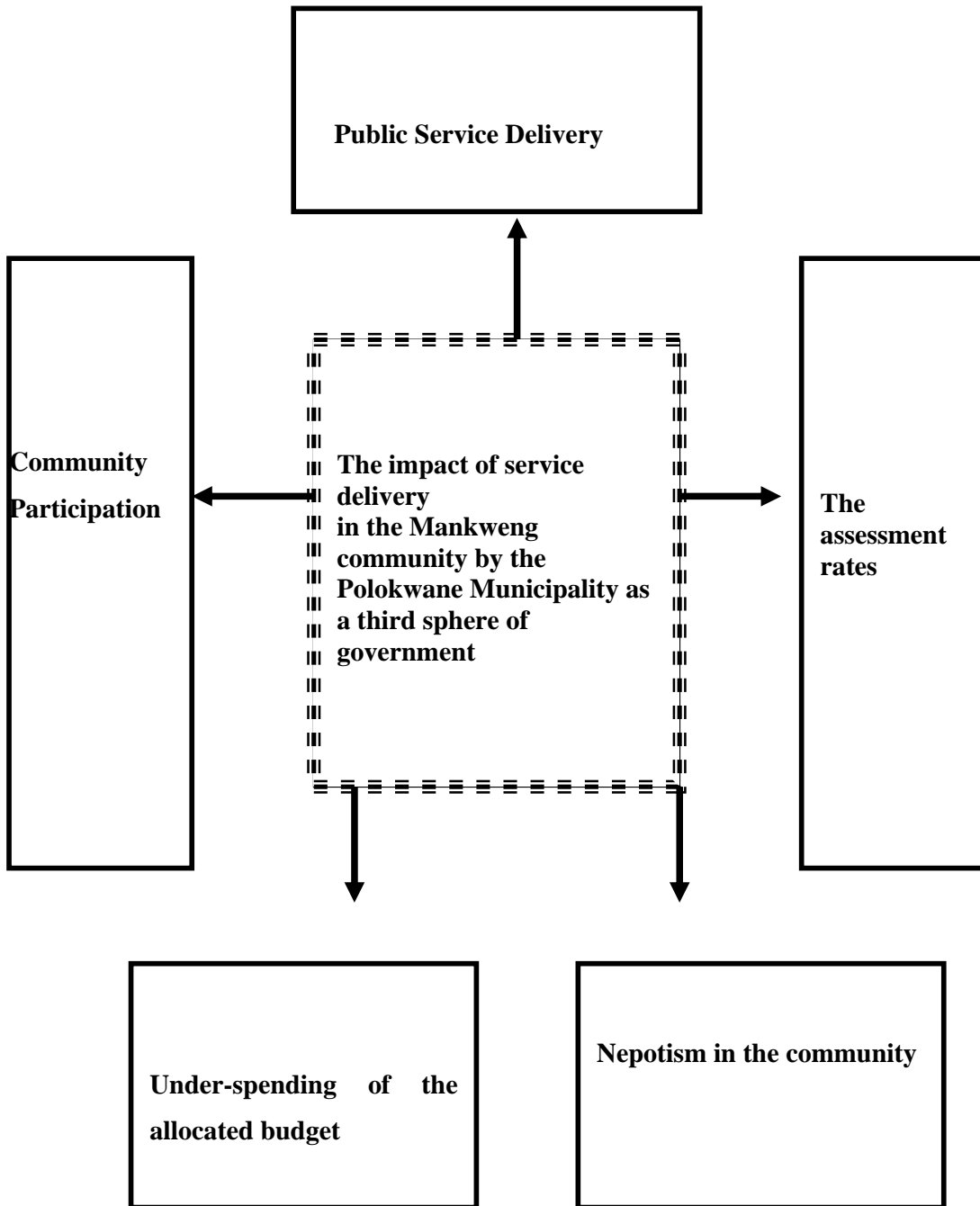
4.4   Findings

The categories and themes that emerged from the analytic process are discussed in this chapter. These themes are the public service delivery, standardisation of the assessment rates, nepotism in the community, community participation and under-spending of the allocated budget.

4.5   Main categories

The concept map, Figure 1, serves as an advance organiser for the discussion of the categories.

Figure 1:

Public Service Delivery

Community Participation

The impact of service delivery in the Mankweng community by the Polokwane Municipality as a third sphere of government

The assessment rates

Under-spending of the allocated budget

Nepotism in the community

4.5.1 Category One

Public Service Delivery

Public Service Delivery refers to a variety of services and benefits that the communities are entitled to, directly or indirectly, from the Municipality as a government institution. The services include water supply, electricity, health services, education, security and many others. The community is aware that they are entitled to receive services as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996).

The concept map below in Figure 2 indicates all the themes that emerged during the interviews from the main category:

Figure 2
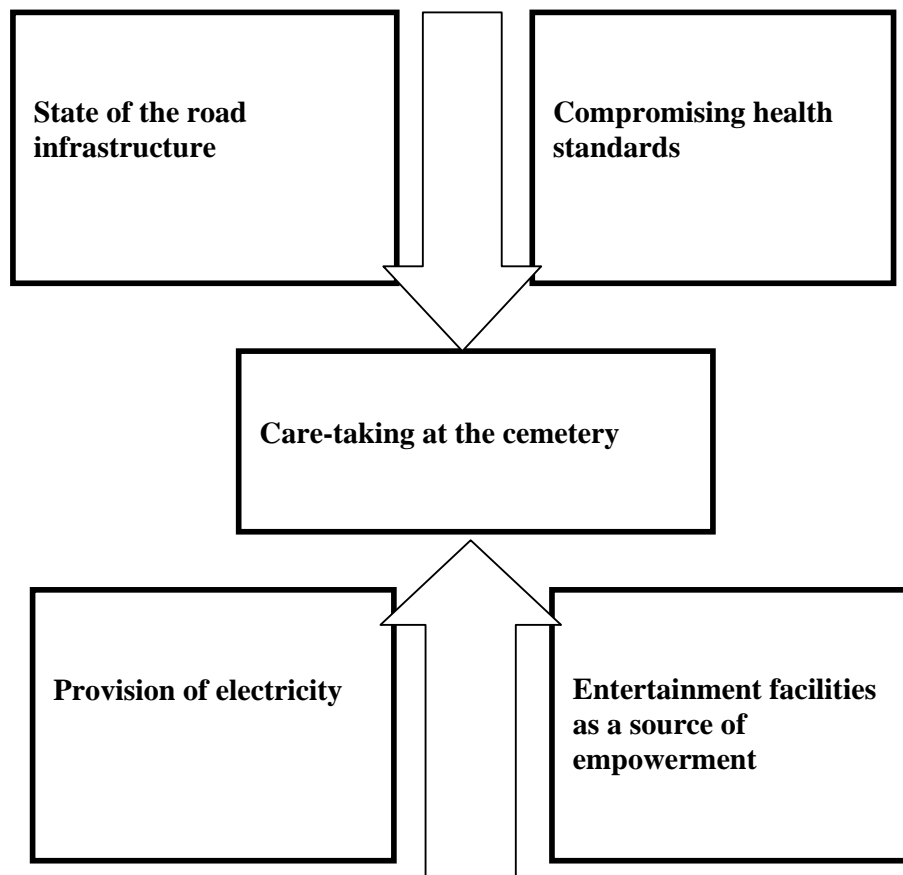
A significant category that emerged throughout the interviews was the general outcry regarding lack of proper public service delivery in relation to almost all services that the community expected from the municipality as a state institution.

The community expressed their dissatisfaction with regard to the state of the roads infrastructure. There was general concern that some of the roads in some sections of the township are in a very bad state. The roads lack storm water drainage systems and during heavy rains the roads are flooded, which leads to accidents. In some streets, especially the untarred streets, the residents are unable to enter their own yards as the water is overflowing and making holes in the road. This state of affairs has a negative impact on learners as they are unable to travel to schools and this causes interruption of their educational activities. Cars cannot travel to the cemeteries in order to bury their loved ones as the roads are full of water, making traveling virtually impossible.

This lack of planning disrupts the life of the community. The roads and streets are of poor quality as the tar on the roads easily peels off, especially during hot and rainy days. The construction of the tarred roads is such that there are some levels below the pavements. The soil on the pavements is frequently washed into the roads and this causes road accidents.(See Appendix F, Picture 01) The frequency of cleaning the streets, when it is done at all, is very inconsistent, resulting in the community members having to do it themselves. Many households in the low-lying areas of the Township have experienced floods frequently due to lack of drainage systems. The worst scenarios occur when heavy rains are experienced during the night, preventing them from sleeping and causing them to evacuate their houses. Gravel roads are inconsistently maintained. After every rainfall large holes and furrows develop and remain unattended to for months. (See Appendix F, Picture 02).

The community is devastated by this state of affairs and their pleas for help have not been heeded. At night it is impossible to drive as the markings on the roads are either nonexistent or covered by sand washed onto the roads by water during the rainy season.(See Appendix F, Picture 03). On their own initiative the community members help out by sweeping the roads and where construction is taking place they try to advise construction staff about their experiences, but seemingly their advice has been disregarded by those in authority. The participants expressed their concerns by saying:

"Roads are in a very bad state; roads are without a drainage system; water is everywhere like a river; cars won't pass; learners are unable to go to school ... During funerals, we are unable to travel to cemeteries ...Roads are terrible, the markings are not clear and not serviced and cared for ...."

The community members indicated that they experienced harsh and painful situations especially when there was power failure ("... *rape of children and women...").* In other sections of the residential areas electricity was connected to households, but the major problem was the constant power failures. During such power failures crime incidences were reported including house-breaking, hostage scenarios, and at worst situations the raping of women and children. The situation was even worse where there was no provision of electricity at all. It was further indicated that when street lights were switched on, the incidents of rape were lessened and eventually it curbed the rate of crime in the community. However the problem is their maintenance. (See Appendix F, Picture 04).

Another significant concern that was raised was the lack of electricity units purchase machines near to the residential areas. As a result of this people had to travel long distances to buy electricity units at allocated cash points. This confusion caused serious stress as community members criss-crossed the township and even commuted to buy electricity units in the city. It is expected that electricity should be purchased within walking distance of each unit. In certain instances there are limits that one may not exceed which are very low, thus causing many purchases in the same month. Due to this problem the cards are frequently changed without prior notification to the residents. The public service provision is therefore considered to be poor due to all the inconveniences experienced. There is no certainty that when one arrives at a vending machine, the card will work. This poor service and lack of proper maintenance of the machines causes more hardship and misery than the anticipated relief to the community. This was highlighted as follows by the participants: "... *service provider runs out of order ... vending machines, system of new cards, voltage burns our electrical appliances...".* Furthermore, the incapacity of the transformer aggravates the situation, resulting in frequent power cuts as even a minor wind blowing triggers the non-functionality of the transformer. The community indicated that they are losing out as they constantly have to fix their electrical appliances at a very high cost. Some

community members are reported to have converted their refrigerators and stoves to gas which has also increased in price due to the demand. They are therefore compromised whereas they have electricity, but which is unreliable and failing them.

The participants in this study indicated that the services of the caretaker at the Mankweng township cemetery are crucial in the community. In their culture the burial site has to be respected and taken care of as their ancestors' resting place. An indication was given of the appalling state of the gravesite, which has become a hive of criminals.(See Appendix F, Picture 05). Many incidences of crime are reported taking place in the cemetery. The cemetery is used as the launching pad for an assortment of criminal activities. It is reported that lost and stolen goods and other items are discovered at the graveyard. It has been reported that the municipality deliberately made provision for a thoroughfare through the graveyard. On the northern side of the graveyard and also the southern side turnstile gates have been erected which are not even locked at night. (See Appendix F, Picture 06). This makes it official that people can use the thoroughfare at any time without hindrance. (See Appendix F, Picture 07).

Due to the delay in the construction of a proper fence around the cemetery, some community members have invaded the cemetery premises thus reducing the size of the new fenced cemetery. This delay has also resulted in the community establishing a soccer ground in the cemetery. The community is surprised by the lack of management of the cemetery by the municipality in spite of having constructed a caretaker's house and toilets within the graveyard. The toilets are always locked and unutilised yet they are a necessary facility, the absence of which causes members of the community to pollute the environment when relieving themselves. Community members are questioning themselves and wondering what is going to become of them when they die, whether they will also join those buried and not be respected, as is evidenced now.

Comparisons were made by one of the participants, saying, *"…it is because it belongs in the townships not town ……. We buried lions perhaps not our beloved families…"*

The participants further indicated that all problems at the graveyard were due to the fact that there was no caretaker allocated to the cemetery. Even though the community sacrifices to clean it regularly, it makes no difference. (See Appendix F, Picture 08).

At the same time the community is challenged by the high death rate in the township, given the space available in the cemetery. It has been discovered that the non-residents of the township are not restricted as to the use of the graveyard, which is supposed to be meant only for the residents of that township. There was a further indication of fear among the participants that due to the escalating rate of crime people might as well be killed and buried at their graveside without anyone's knowledge, due to lack of security at the cemetery. In the quest to find solutions the community has discovered that the management of the graveyard in the city is far advanced compared to theirs. The damage to the tombstones are a serious loss to the affected families as they have to reconstruct their tombstones.

The community members have noted the softness of the soil in the graveyard which easily gets eroded during rains and graves cave in due to the wetness of the soil. This surface softness causes some of the tombstones to collapse, also creating additional expense to the affected families. The cleanliness of the graveyard leaves much to be desired. The growth of weeds presents a hiding place for criminals. The municipal employees tasked with the responsibility of cleaning hardly ever do anything as they are poorly supervised.

In addition, participants were concerned about the management of waste removal, as it is inconsistently executed. An indication was given that this service has been outsourced by the municipality, whereas in the city and other surrounding townships the municipality is responsible and the services are well rendered: "... *the waste is not properly disposed of but it is thrown next to the village and this is a health hazard and the community is in danger…*". (See Appendix F, Picture 09). The community indicated their concern about the improper disposal of waste, which is neglected, and this invites the children to play next to the dumping site, which is highly risky. Self created dumping sites in the township are a health hazard and thread to children and animals. (See Appendix F, Picture 10).

The waste disposal area is not demarcated and protected. Waste, in particular paper and plastic, are scattered all over and prominently hang on trees. This results in pollution and environmental degradation. The dumping site is close to some sections of the community, causing these residents to suffer the unbearable stench. This has resulted in many diseases among the people of the affected areas. Waste management procedures such as burying the waste are not carried out. Waste management and collection have became a thorny issue: *"… waste management collections is done on Thursdays only, but some days are skipped, even weeks, people carry waste into the bush but next to the streets, place is filthy and dogs also keep tampering with the uncollected waste…''* .

At the same time, sanitation has become an area of concern for the participants as the sewerage pipes are constantly blocked and this results in the smell of sewerage. Although they indicated that they report the problem to the municipality, the pipes may as well be fixed after a week or more. When the pipes are unblocked seemingly it doesn't take time before they are blocked again. The township is growing but there is no proper upgrading of the infrastructure. It was complained that dirt then flows back to households, blocking some parts of the township. Seemingly the bursting of pipes is caused by poor infrastructure, and lack of proper drainage systems that causes the blockage, eventually causing outbreaks of diseases.

"…Children throw dirt into the drainage system, causing the blockage of the drains, children drown as well in the drainage system, they are not closed at all times…".
As a result the community lives in constant danger and in fear of losing their children due to negligence and lack of maintenance. (See Appendix F, Picture 11). The community has experienced situations where due to high rainfall the sewerage system is affected. This results in the waste being scattered all over the affected area. (See Appendix F, Picture 12). On numerous occasions when the system is blocked, unwanted objects are discovered in the overflow of the sewerage system. It is evident that the system is not tightly closed and may lead to the drowning of children as well.

The lack of recreational facilities is recorded as one of the major problems. The township is reported to be having open sites earmarked for the development of parks and other recreational facilities. It was reported that, regrettably, only one site has

been fenced but not well equipped, rendering it non functional. The community's invasion of such sites for residential purposes is not accepted by other community members, but given the failure of the municipality to improve such areas, alternative use of such sites is unavoidable.

Furthermore, the youth has been singled out as one sector in the community that is not afforded recreational facilities, thus encouraging them to indulge in other unacceptable activities. As they wander the streets without attending schools properly, they end up drinking heavily and engaging in crime. One of the participants said the following with regard to the youth:

"...they are all over the streets, there is no place to go, we are losing a lot of potential in our children as they turn to shebeens when they are bored or after school ...Shebeens are not regulated in terms of age limit, it affects children as they are not allowed and they are abusing alcohol and drugs causing mental illness and in turn they are killed…"

The community raised their concern regarding the use of the community hall. This facility which is ideal for recreational activities is put out of the reach of the community due to its exorbitant fees.(See Appendix F, Picture 13) The community is uncomfortable with the differing fees applicable for the use of the hall when compared to the use of other similar facilities in other townships and the City in the same municipality.

4.5.2   Category two

Standardisation of the assessment rates

This category and its themes are illustrated in Figure 3 in the concept map below.

Figure 3

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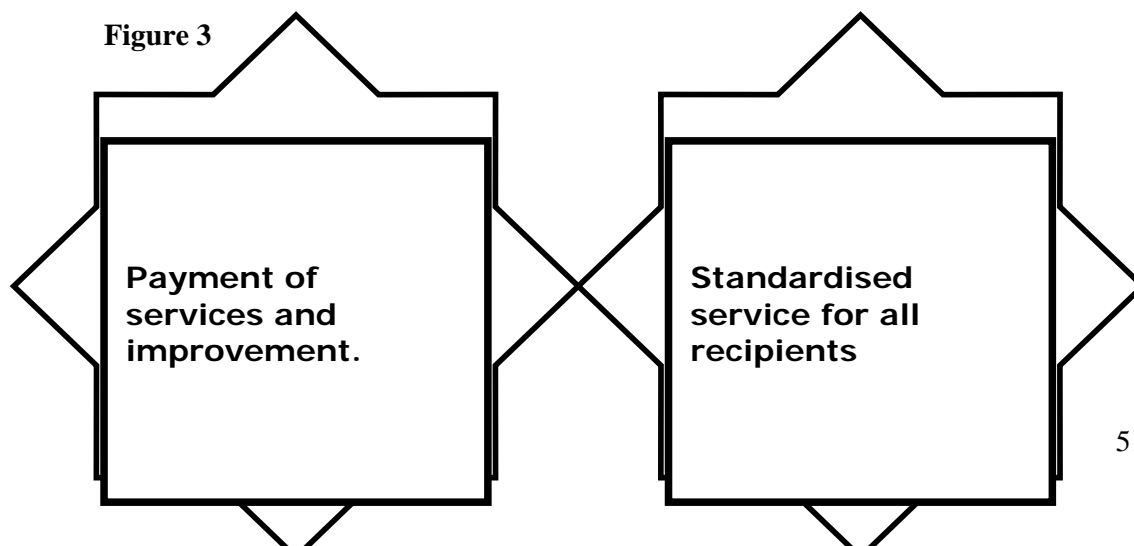
The payment of assessment rates in the community directly contributes to the delivery of services to the residents. It helps bring order to households and individual members of the community thus protecting them from threats by giving them a guarantee in terms of delivery of services and control. The community of Mankweng is a middle-income community according to the Baseline Study Report of 2003. Thus most residents are public servants, employees of the University of Limpopo and some work at industries in the City. It is expected of them to pay for their services since they can afford to do so.

The participants in the community are under the impression that the rate for assessment is supposed to be the same for each household. It was emphasised in this manner:

"...rates are not paid evenly and its illegal some are not paying at all.... We have gone beyond worrying about lack of service delivery. Big stands pay larger sums of money whereas smaller stands pay less...We are paying but we really don't see any tangible changes where our money is going to. "We pay every month but our money is not serving the purpose...''

This thinking is reported by the community to have been brought about by the resistance of the past and the culture of non-payment for services. The flat rate approach has been reported to be a compromise among many communities in the country and Mankweng is no exception, although some residents have been paying in accordance with the standardised requirements of the Municipality.

The Satellite Office of the Municipality in the township seems not to be fully integrated with the City operations. Payment for Municipal services is done at two differing offices whose records are not merged. This has brought confusion in the community in terms of meeting their obligation of paying for services.

The office in charge had a different view which was stated as follows: "... *rates can never be the same but will differ as per improvement of the property ... assessment rates are charged as per property in square meters, when such development is improved then the rates will not be the same as the house that is smaller hence the assessments rates are never the same but differ as per household and a study has been*

done on this… they are not charged for services as such they only pay for assessment. In fact they are subsidized by other township residents under the Municipality we deliver infrastructure that they do not pay for but that will change soon when we take over and exercise control for in case when people default we cannot cut their services as we are not the service provider…''

Given this confusion, the state of affairs may remain the same for some time until the integration process has been concluded. The participants in this case are also under the impression that they are paying for water and electricity from the municipality. There is an indication that change will soon be evident when the municipality takes control of providing for all services. Control measures will then be put in place.

The participants further expressed the concern they have for the pensioners and people with disabilities in terms of rates charged. Another participant continued to indicate that:

"… the hall is not properly used; Pensioners and disabled earn their grants in the cold as they don't have money to pay for the hall…Pensioners and people with disabilities' rates must be reduced, give those low percentages and free water …as for the hospital, they call it '…Re boile feela…' (translated as we came back empty handed) as the elderly die due to lack of care even when they are supposed to receive proper health care..."

4.5.3   Category three

Nepotism in the community

This category and its themes will be illustrated in figure 4 below.

Figure 4.
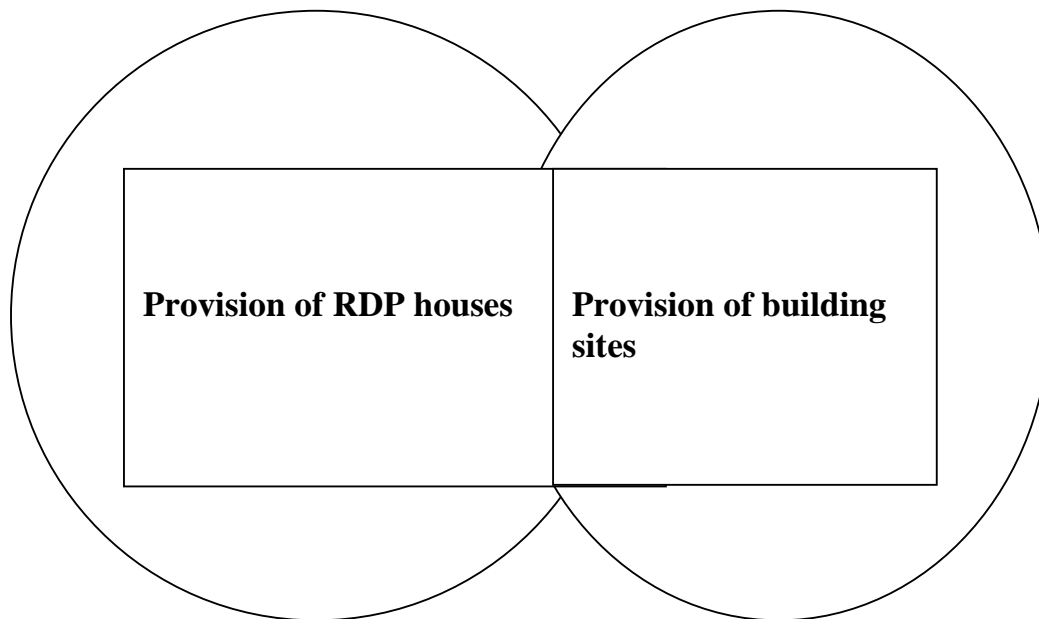
The community members raised examples of nepotism experienced in the allocation of low-income houses to the beneficiaries. Such houses, commonly referred to as RDP houses, are supposed to be given for free to the poor and the unemployed. In allocating such houses it is reported as being done in a manner better known by the Councillors as an attempt to win support, favour and at times in exchange for bribes. It was reported that the community members affiliated to the ruling party are given priority and in certain instances even those not qualifying are allocated houses. Public servants are also reported to be benefiting in the process. Relatives of Councillors and some Municipal office staff are reported also to have benefited.

The above was further emphasised in the following manner:

"…*The process of providing RDP houses is very slow and has taken about two years. It's corrupt, there is corruption in the provision of RDP houses - they are not built for people without accommodation but for those whose relatives are councillors and the needy people who are entitled and qualify do not get them...*".

It was said that the process does not serve the purpose it was initially intended for. The needy people in the community are still stricken by poverty without shelter over their heads whereas other people who can afford it become the recipients and the beneficiaries of an endeavour that was not meant for them. The other concern that emerged was the construction of the RDP houses, which is not of good quality as the houses fall apart during heavy rains and strong winds. As a result, poverty alleviation and the targeted output is not reached as people are enriching themselves. Participants kept on making reference to the way this affects the entire community. (See Appendix F, Picture 14).

Nepotism was also cited by the participants in the provision of sites by the Councillors. Two people are able to be allocated the same site, as was reported to have occurred in the Township. "… *one site is allocated to more than one person which is irregular and amounts to corruption…*". In some cases it has been reported that people have been unlawfully evicted from their stands because they don't have enough money to give officials needing bribes.

This situation is causing a lot of disharmony in the community. It is perceived in such a way that a person who is not known may never benefit even when they qualify for RDP houses or building sites. It was further emphasised that tenders for projects are awarded to people from far without looking into empowering community members first.

4.5.4   Category four
Community participation

The themes that emerged during the interview regarding this category are as follows:

Figure 5.

Level of interaction between the community and the municipality.	Level of satisfaction in the Community
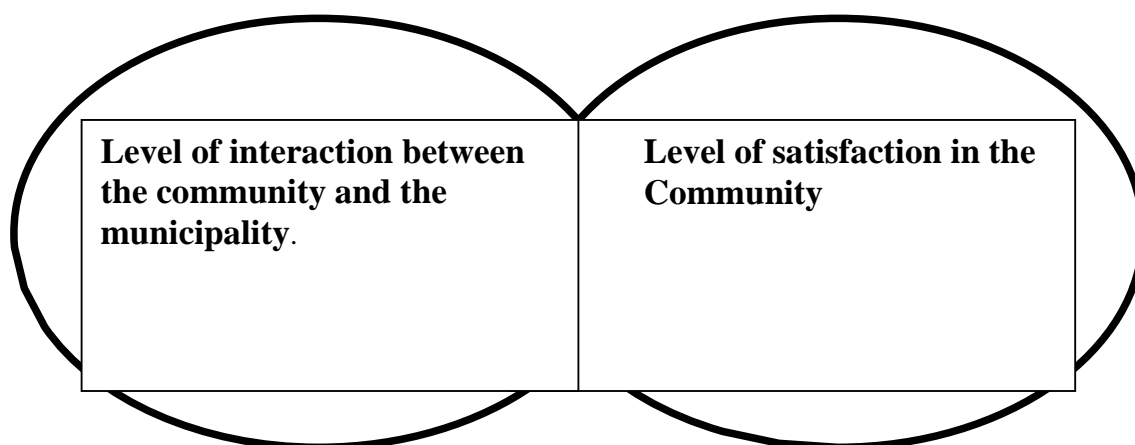
The Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000) propagates the communities' participation in the Municipality as a government institution. It further encourages the Municipality to develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative governance structures with a system of participatory governance creating co-ownership of the programmes of the municipalities.

In spite of this, the participants continued to indicate the low levels of interaction between the community and the municipality as a state institution. Regrettably the Ward Committees expected to be established in every Municipal Ward are reported not to have been chosen by community members but by individual Councillors. Councillors are reported not to be convening regular meetings as expected and if such meetings are convened late notices are issued.

They emphasised the need for interaction to take place between the community and government through imbizos and ward meetings. At present, due to lack of proper interaction, the community is demoralised as they continue to write many reports, with no response. They confirmed these statements by saying, *"...thorough ward meetings, meetings attended, blocks write reports, send them to ward committees and reports are not dealt with thoroughly as there are no written responses, the council does not attend meetings even when they are called..."*

While the participants in the community are concerned about the lack of proper interaction between community and the municipality, the office in charge of providing services stated their argument: "….We *have an office in the township where the people can go and enquire about their accounts in case they have queries …. As for meetings, they are held regularly with the community members to explain and give clarity about some of the things they might need to be clarified about ...*"

The office went further to indicate that*, "...through imbizo's and meetings we are able to interact with communities and they as well are able to tell us their needs and problems … we were able to as well pick up the problem of pensioners earning their grants in the cold as such the community hall will be available for them ...*"

According to the researcher the observation done is that indeed the community is not convened frequently on developments in the township. It is mainly when provincial politicians convene public meetings that the community is able to raise issues that are critical to them. The situation has also been evidenced by the community members' inability to know their municipal leaders.

4.5.5   Category five

Under-spending of allocated budget

Figure 6 below illustrates the category that deals with under-spending of the allocated budget.

The theme in this category is:

Figure 6.

Non-completion of budgeted money

It was indicated that the community is never informed about the amount of money allocated for a particular financial year. As a result they are not aware if there is under-spending or even overspending. The only thing that was indicated that they are aware of is the non-completion of projects that were started including incomplete RDP houses awaiting roofing. As a result they assume that the municipality was not allocated enough money to complete the projects, whereas the office of the Municipality indicated that they hope to overcome the challenge of under-spending. This was indicated as follows: "... *we are hoping to have the MTEF stretching to a period of over three years as we have little time for spending as our financial year ends in June and we have a period of inactivity during the three months extending up to the festive season which gives us very little time really ... we are overcoming that challenge by this new initiative..''*.

There is an indication that a feasibility study has been conducted mainly on improving services related to waste management collection in the community with the aim of improving services provided.

4.6   Conclusion

The data analysis confirms the theoretical stance of this study. The community experiences a number of challenges in their daily lives. The service provider is also trying in various ways to improve the provision of services in the community. The Municipality has to demonstrate and integrate extra strategies towards committing themselves to improving the provision of services. Ongoing improvement is needed to improve public service delivery from the municipality as a government institution.

CHAPTER FIVE

RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

5.1   Introduction

The aim of this study was to reflect on the strategic importance of the municipality in service delivery and to examine the problems and challenges Mankweng township faces in terms of the provision of public services, and to recommend guidelines towards addressing service delivery.

5.2   Summary of the findings and recommendations

The study focused on the problems of service delivery experienced in Mankweng Township located within the Polokwane Municipality. Service delivery is guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and therefore makes it the constitutional right of members of the Mankweng community.

The study focused on the management of the following services provided by the municipality: management of the cemetery, provision of water, state of the roads and condition of the streets, waste management, access to recreational facilities and payment of municipal levies and taxes. The presence of the municipal offices in the township was also given attention as a point of interaction between the community and the municipality.

The study went further by investigating the strategic importance of the Polokwane municipality in service delivery with the focus ont Mankweng Township. It went further to explore in depth the problems and challenges facing the community. At the end possible mechanisms are suggested for addressing service delivery problems and challenges facing the municipality.

Chapter One: The chapter presented the statement of the problem in relation to service delivery in the community of Mankweng Township, which were exposed in depth.

Such problems ranged from lack of management of services, unavailability of basic services in the community, inadequate provision of critical community needs and maintenance, the negative impact of the inadequate management of the environment and also revenue management.

Chapter Two: This chapter focused on a literature review on service delivery in the international and the South African context. The international brief highlighted a high level of privatisation of services in both county and the city municipalities. Efficiency and effectiveness was obtained as a result of the outsourcing approach.

The South African scenario depicts a situation of in-house service delivery in a substantial number of areas. This is primarily because of the fact that the municipality is expected to serve the community as its primary responsibility. The community in return is expected to play a positive and active role in ensuring that quality services are provided. The aspect of outsourcing is also applicable in the South African situation but on a very limited scale. The use of Private Public Partnerships is encouraged which must demonstrate value for money, be affordable and also promote transparent and competitive processes.

Chapter Three: This chapter focused on the methodologies used in the research. The selection of participants was based on the diversity of community representation. Individual and focus group interviews were held where participants were asked similar questions.

Chapter Four: The chapter presents the findings of the research in particular the interviews held. It further analysis the data collected in the six categories using diagrams for a better reflection. The findings of each category are clearly stipulated and are ensured to be relevant to the findings.

Based on the critical issues raised, the following recommendations are made:

1. Ward committees that are representative of all the community members, regardless of political affiliation, should be established as guided by the relevant legislation. This is intended to ensure that the community is afforded

an opportunity to raise matters affecting them with their leaders who, in turn, must ensure that the municipality receives the issues as tabled. Ward Committees will therefore serve as the communication channel between the municipality and the community. The councillors as part of their responsibility to serve the community must as part of their performance undertaking convene such meetings and encourage all community members to freely and openly raise issues in the interests of building and encouraging community participation. The councillors must be held responsible and be taken to task if they fail to convene such meetings. The code of conduct must be evoked in the interest of ensuring that they execute their responsibilities.

Communities should be involved at implementation and decision making levels and in the implementation of projects. Projects are suppose to be part of the IDPs of each municipality. They are intended to achieve the objectives of services availability and concomitantly provide the much needed jobs. The Ward committees of municipality must be vigilant in ensuring that projects benefit the communities in which they are located. Communities should benefit directly from programmes in matters such as employment and training. Certain projects can also be coordinated by ward committees to ensure better mechanisms of completion and progress of projects. Moreover, ward committees have to be trained and their involvement will minimise the mistrust prevalent in the community.

2. The Municipality must improve on the management and provision of electricity. The municipal officers must ensure that the electricity vending machines are at all times functional. The maintenance of the machines may be contracted to service providers whose service level agreement will determine their ability and continued contract. The shortage of electrical power points and their accessibility must be addressed through the acquisition of more of them and further ensure that they are located within a walking distance. The damage that is caused to electrical appliances owing to electricity cuts must be avoided to avoid losses to the community.

3. The environmental management issues raised need to be taken seriously into consideration. The provision of toilet facilities must be such that underground water is not polluted. Noting the extend of the under spending of allocations of infrastructure development like sanitation, the municipality must involve direct beneficiaries as a form of their contribution and utilise the services of local builders in building acceptable ablution facilities. The waste removal, disposal and general waste management must be in keeping with the prescriptive legislation on this matter. Members of the public must be encouraged to formally lodge complains in respect to the manner in which the municipality manages its waste. This should be done through public awareness programmes and activities. This will ensure that the health risks facing the community are drastically reduced and healthy living conditions are created.

4. Infrastructure provisioning, management and maintenance need serious attention. The municipality must ensure that knowledgeable people are assigned to supervise or monitor the development of infrastructure like roads. This will ensure that value for money is attained. Contract management aspect of the municipality must be reinforced and applicable standard measures be observed. The provisioning of houses must be done in accordance with the stipulated requirements and further ensure that the intended beneficiaries are benefiting. The municipality must also ensure provisioning of recreational facilities. This will serve better to afford the youth avenues for leisure and recreation and assist in the reduction of crime and indulgence in alcohol and drugs.

5. The municipality must put better systems into place to ensure effective and efficient spending. The under-spending currently experienced is due to lack of proper planning, management and co-ordination of activities and projects. The community lacks a great deal of infrastructure development yet funds are not spent, which is perceived in a serious manner by the community. To correct the history of under-spending, finances must be controlled for local government development activities. The introduction of Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) to address the challenges of under-spending will improve financial management.

5.3   Recommendations for further research

Further research in this field is recommended that will enhance and supplement the study on the impact of service delivery in Mankweng Township by Polokwane Municipality as a third sphere of government. The following research that is not covered in this study is recommended for further study:

- unlocking the existing resources necessary for the development of the community in order to improve the quality of life, especially the most poor and marginalised sections of the community;

- improving living conditions through better access to basic physical and social services and health care for the community;

- the control and regulation of the electricity distribution system in the community;

- promotion of efficient and compassionate delivery of basic health care systems in the community.

5.4   Critical reflections and limitations of the research

This study was conducted at a township serviced by Polokwane Municipality with twenty participants as community members and one officer working at the Municipality. All the participants in this study are from Mankweng township located in Polokwane municipality, Limpopo Province. The participants in this study are representative of the views of only some specific groups of people in the community. These views may not represent the entire community. This field is a relatively less researched area as the researcher found that there was a lack of literature related to the study. These limitations are mainly related to the qualitative nature of the selection.

All the data that was collected from the participants was done by means of individual and focus group interviews. To verify data that was collected, the main categories and

themes that emerged during the study were taken back to the participants for verification purposes. Data were also verified through a peer verification process. A colleague was also requested to go through the interviews and the categories and themes that emerged in order to verify the data. Thus the study's limitations are directly related to the research design, which is a qualitative sampling and data collection method.

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