CONTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS TOWARDS POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, LIMPOPO PROVINCE

Student Name
Shandukani Shedwin Malovha

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Supervisor: Prof KS Milondzo

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DECLARATION

I, Malovha Shandukani Shedwin, do hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my investigation and research and that it has not been submitted, in part or full, for any other degree to any other University.

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             SS Malovha   **Date**

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This work is dedicated to the following people:

To God be the glory – I would like to thank God my heavenly father and source of my strength. I wouldn't have completed this work if He is not by my side; He brought me this far by His grace. I would say "Ebenezer",meaning thus far has the Lord helped me.

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Executive Summary

The research study investigated the contribution of community development projects towards poverty alleviation in Thulamela Local Municipality of Limpopo province. This research study seeks to investigate the factors that hinder community development projects from contributing positively towards the improvement of the lives of rural communities in the area of the study. This study is also concerned with the development of effective strategies that will enhance the capacity of community development project managers and change their perception and that of other stakeholders with regard to the implementation of community development projects.

The literature review established the relationship between community development project and project management. In this regard, the study showed that community projects run by project managers with proper knowledge of and skills in project management impact positively on the improvement of the lives of the rural communities.

In this study, a mixed research design approach was used in the investigation of the factors that hinder community projects to contribute positively towards poverty alleviation in Thulamela Local Municipality. Questionnaires and structured interviews were used to collect data from the target population.

The findings of the study suggest that most managers of the community development projects lack training in project management.They also revealed that there were inadequate resources; there is a lack of community participation in decision-making, and shortage of funds hampered the sustainability of community development projects.

To conclude, it is expected that the recommendations of this research study will highlight the strategies that could be put in place to improve the management of community development projects in order to improve the livelihoods of people in the Thulamela Local Municipality.

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List of Acronymes

MBO: Management by Objectives

STRS: Stratified Random Sampling

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

TQM: Total Quality Management

RDP: Reconstruction and Development Programme

GEAR: Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy

ISRDS: Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy

PFMA: Public Funds management Act

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION, PROBLEM STATEMENT, PURPOSE OF THE STUDY AND CONCEPT DEFINITION

1.1 Introduction

Recent changes in community development in South Africa have compelled many stakeholders to change their ways of doing things. Thulamela Local Municipality is not excluded from this transformation. One of the main challenges facing project managers of community development projects is to ensure that projects are contributing positively towards the alleviation of poverty and to manage donors' funds in an appropriate and efficient way. This issue continues to challenge most project managers in Thulamela Local Municipality today. Amongst the challenges facing these project managers is adherence to the PFMA, developing strategies that improve the livelihood of the people in the rural community, managing scarce resources in the area, and understanding the role of the three spheres of government in the area of the study.

The main purpose of this research is to analyse the problem and to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of community development projects towards poverty alleviation in the area of study. This study will also propose strategies that may contribute towards the improvement of the livelihood of people in Thulamela Local Municipality. For many years, the emphasis was on subsistence farming and on the need to provide social grants for rural people in the area of study. This study is one of the first attempts to address the above-mentioned problem, although some reference has been made to the need for the research in this area.

1.2 Background of the study

South Africa's history of colonialism and apartheid has divided the country in such a way that some people enjoy a high standard of living, while many live in poorly developed rural areas and townships under very poor conditions. The first democratically elected government in 1994 was faced with the challenge of bridging this gap by improving the standard of living and quality of life for all South Africans.

Community development projects are considered by the government of the day as one of strategies to address the problem of rural poverty and to improve the standard of living of those previously excluded from the mainstream economy, especially women and the youth. Mawila (2006:3) found that in South Africa, there was a considerable decline in poverty, particularly in the period between 1996 and 2004, due to the massive expansion of the social grants system and possible job creation projects. However, there is little information that shows the significance of the contributions made by community development projects towards poverty alleviation.

The Thulamela Local Municipality will be the area of study for this research. Community development projects such as poultry farming, bricklaying, stone crushing, community bakeries, and vegetable gardens were started through the assistance of various government departments and some non-governmental organisations with the aim of alleviating poverty and improving the living standards of the rural communities.

1.3 Problem statement

Government departments and non-governmental organisations have initiated several community development projects in the Thulamela Local Municipality, aimed at improving the living conditions in rural areas. However, rural communities in the Thulamela Local Municipality still seem to be struggling to break the poverty cycle, which makes them depend on state support in the form of grants. One of

the main challenges facing the funders is that community development projects are given funds, yet they fail to make a positive impact on the livelihood of the rural communities. Consequently, solving these problems becomes a challenge to most of the project stakeholders in the Thulamela Local Municipality.

The above-mentioned challenges motivated the researcher to investigate the contribution of community development projects towards poverty alleviation in Thulamela Local Municipality.

1.4 Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to investigate the contributions made by community development projects towards poverty alleviation in the rural communities in the Thulamela Local Municipality.

1.5 Objectives of the study

In order to achieve the above aim, the following objectives will be pursued:
- identify the contributions made by community development projects towards development of rural communities in the Thulamela Local Municipality;
- investigate challenges of the community development projects in the area of study; and
- identify the role played by all three spheres of government and other stakeholders towards the sustainability of community development projects.

1.6 Research questions

With the above-mentioned challenges, the following research questions arise:

1.6.1 Main question

What contributions are made by community development projects towards poverty alleviation in rural communities within the Thulamela Local Municipality?

1.6.2 Sub-questions

- What types of challenges emanate from the implementation of these in the Thulamela Local Municipality?
- To what extent do community development projects contribute towards human development in the area of study?
- What kind of a support do community development projects receive from all spheres of government and other stakeholders?

1.7 Significance of the study

The researcher believes that the study on the contribution of community development projects will assist in the following ways:

- The study will assist stakeholders to identify strategies that will improve the implementation of community development projects;
- It will assist policy-makers to develop relevant programmes that will help the community to sustain its life through community projects; and
- The implementation of the recommendations of the study will assist project stakeholders provide sustainable strategies and effective implementation of projects in Thulamela in particular, and in the Vhembe District as a whole.

1.8 Research methods

Research methods that will be used in this study include a review of relevant literature, research articles, and acts of parliament, municipal bylaws, and other related literature on community development projects. These methods will be supplemented by an imperical research which involves the use of survey methods, namely questionnaires and interviews. These methods will be discussed in full in Chapter Three. The relevance and application of this research method will be explained in Chapter Four.

1.9 Definitions of operational concepts

The researcher will use concepts to analyse and clarify the research problem stated in this proposed study. Concepts are the primary instruments that a researcher employs to understand reality and the essence of meaning. The following key concepts will be regularly used to achieve the intended goal of the proposed study:

1.9.1 Poverty

According to Kambur and Squire (1999:1) and Hall (1999:8), poverty implies that significant numbers of people are living in intolerable circumstances where starvation is a constant threat, sickness is a familiar companion and oppression is a fact of life. According to them, poverty includes dimensions such as living standards; longevity; literacy; health and vulnerability to risk; powerlessness and lack of voice; uncertainty; peace; and security. Listening to the poor explaining what poverty is like in their own words is more vivid than to read a description of it.

The following are some voices of the poor:
- According to one poor woman in Uganda, when one is poor, one has no say in the public, feels inferior, has no food, and as such there is famine in the house, no clothing, and no progress in her family.
- A blind woman from Tiraspol, Moldova, said: "For a poor person, everything is terrible – illness, humiliation, shame, we are cripples, we are afraid of everything, we depend on everyone, no one needs us, and we are like garbage that everyone wants to get rid of."Kambur and Squire (1999:3)

The South African movement defines poverty in terms of both the access-based approach and the income-measure approach (Smith 2005:46). The access-based approaches focuses on the type of dwelling, access to safe water, energy for lighting and cooking, sanitation and refuse removal (Mawila 2006:146).

1.9.2 Community

A community is made up of people going about their daily lives, and who already use what they know and their resources towards making a living and develop themselves. A community usually has geographical boundaries, and it usually consists of a group of people who share interests.

1.9.3 Community Development

According to De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:5), community development is the process in which people learn or are assisted in gaining skills, knowledge and an attitude that will release them from poverty. Community development efforts do not primarily aim to benefit individuals, but rather groups in a community.

1.9.4 Project

According to Schwalbe (2006:4), a project is a "temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique product, service or results". Dale (2004:59) defines a project as "a planned intervention for achieving one or more objective, encompassing a set of interrelated activities that are undertaken during a delimited period of time, using a specified human, financial and physical resource".

1.9.5 Project Management

Project management is defined as "a method and set of techniques based on the accepted principles of management used for planning, estimating and controlling work activities to reach a desire end result on time-within budget and according to specification". In other words, project management is the discipline of planning, organising and managing resources to bring about the successful completion of specific project goals and objectives (Milondzo, 2004:5).

1.10 Outline of research report

Chapter 1

Introduction

Orientation to the problem, purpose of the study, research methods, significance of the study and the outline of the study.

Chapter 2

Literature review on community development, project management and strategies for sustaining community development projects.

Chapter 3

The research design and methodology used in conducting the study is discussed in full.

Chapter 4

Data collection, analysis and interpretation of results.

Chapter 5

Presents an overview of the study, findings, recommendations and conclusions.

1.11 Conclusion

In this chapter, the background of community development projects in Thulamela Local Municipality was given. The statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study and definitions of operational concepts were also given. In the next chapter, a review of the selected relevant literature on community development and project management will be presented in full.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, literature related to community development is reviewed. The purpose of exploring what has already been studied is to locate the current study within the existing body of knowledge .This chapter is organised as follows:

- A brief of the conceptual framework regarding community development;is provided

- A critical analysis of the previous and relevant research work which may place the present study in the appropriate context in terms of its research questions stated in Chapter One is given., and

- A conclusion in the form of a summary will be given at the end of this chapter.

Community development projects serve as a valuable strategy for a government to address issues of poverty. The contribution they make to the community can be directly related to their management. Presumably, the governments which invest in community development projects obtain better results in addressing the issue of poverty in rural communities if the projects are managed effectively .Thus, government will be able to provide effective ways to improve the livelihood of the people living in rural areas.

Changes in the ruling government have brought challenges to the local municipalities regarding improving the livelihoods of the communities within their jurisdiction. One such attempt is the introduction of community development projects; hence, the need for effective management of these as part of the strategy to improve the livelihoods of the communities in the area of the study.

2.2 The concept community development

Community development cannot be divorced from the basic concept of development. Hence, development as a concept has been defined by various

authors differently to accommodate the different aspects of development. Unfortunately, the meanings attributed to many of the terms and expressions used by students of development are a source of confusion. As a consequence, it is necessary to consider in some detail the way in which a number of common terms are used (Hulme & Turner, 1990:3).

Development is the leading objective of many governments. State bureaucracies are oriented to its achievement. Multilateral agencies spend large sums of money trying to produce it. Once governmental organisations are set up to deliver it, millions of people eagerly await its arrival. Some worry about its adverse consequences and therefore development policies are formulated and development plans are drawn up.

There are several development programmes and development projects. Industrial development, rural development, urban development, institutional development, social development and a host of other developments are in evidence (Hulme & Turner, 1990:3).

From the above discussion, it is clear that there are many conflicting views about the concept and the nature of community development. It is surprising to note that very few people know about it. An attempt to define development reflects a variety of viewpoints. However, different authors defined development from different perspectives to accommodate their different views.

2.2.1 Development in economical perspective

In strictly economic terms, development has traditionally meant the capacity of a national economy, whose initial economic condition has been more or less static for a long time, to generate and sustain an annual increase in its gross national income (GNI) at a rate of 5% to 7% or more (Todaro & Smith, 2009:14). When many developing nations did reach their economic growth targets but the level of living of the masses of people remained for the most part unchanged, this signalled that something was very wrong with this narrow definition of development. An increasing number of economists and policymakers clamoured

for more direct attacks on widespread absolute poverty, increasingly inequitable income distributions, and rising unemployment. In short, during the 1970s, economic development came to be redefined in terms of the reduction or elimination of poverty, inequality, and unemployment within the context of a growing economy. "Redistribution from growth" became a common slogan. Dudley Seers posed the basic question about the meaning of development succinctly when he asserted:

The questions to ask about a country's development are therefore: What has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all three of these have declined from high levels, then beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central problem have been growing worse, especially if all three have, it would be strange to call the result "development" even if per capita income doubled (Todaro & Smith, 2009:15).

The "capability" approach definition of development

According to Sen's "capability" approach, poverty cannot be properly measured by income or even by utility as conventionally understood; what matters is not the thing a person has – or the feeling these provide – but what a person is, or can be and does, or can do, what matters for well-being is not just the characteristics of commodities consumed, as in the utility approach, but what use the consumer can and does make of commodities.

To make any sense of the concept of human well-being in general, and poverty in particular, we need to think beyond the availability of commodities and consider their use; to address what Sen calls functioning, that is, what a person does (or can do) with the commodities of given characteristics that they come to possess or control (Todaro & Smith, 2009:16).

So what conclusion can be reached about the meaning of development? For most writers, authentic development is perceived as being broadly concerned with the improvement of the conditions of existence of the majority of the population and

particularly of the poorest. It is supposed to be a beneficial process which "carries with it not only the idea of economic betterment, but also of greater human dignity, security, justice and equality" (Bowden 2002:48).

2.2.2 Sociology and development

Development is a strategy to enable a specific group of people, poor women and men, to gain for themselves and their children more of what they want and need. It involves helping the poorest among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas to demand and control more of the benefits of development (Martinussen 1997:15). For most writers, authentic development is perceived as being broadly concerned with the improvement of the conditions of existence of the majority of the population and particularly of the poorest.

2.3 Objectives of development

We may conclude that development is both a physical reality and state of mind in which society has, through some combination of social, economic, and institutional processes, secured the means for obtaining a better life.

Whatever the specific components of this better life, development in all societies must have at least the following three objectives (Todaro and Smith, 2009:22):

- To increase the availability and widen the distribution of basic life-sustaining goods such as food, shelter, health, and protection.
- To raise the level of living, including, in addition to higher income, the provision of more jobs, better education and greater attention to cultural and human values, all of which will serve not only to enhance material well-being but also to generate greater individual and national self-esteem.
- To expand the range of economic and social choice available to individuals and nations by freeing them from servitude and dependence not only in relation to other people and nation/states, but also to the force of ignorance and human misery.

2.4 Theory of development

The development theory seeks to answer questions such as the following:

- How can the chosen and specified development objectives be promoted?
- What conditions will possibly obstruct, delay or detract from the objectives?
- What causal relationship and law of motion apply to societal change processes?
- What actors play dominant roles and what interests do they have?
- How do the changes affect various social and various geographical regions? (Martinussen, 1997:14)

Theories thus contain significant normative elements, but can none - the - less be subjected to validating or invalidating tests through empirical analysis of the actual condition and historical experiences. There are various types of theories of development; However,due to the nature of the study, the researcher has only discussed the following theory below:

2.4.1 The Basic Needs Approach Theory

The Basic Needs Approach Theory represents a shift in emphasis away from economic development in the direction of a human-centred approach. The declaration of Cocoyoc in 1974 contained the early point of departure of basic needs as a practice theory: It stresses the importance of addressing basic human needs such as food, health, clothing, shelter, and education .It further emphasises that any process of growth which does not address these needs, makes a mockery of the process of development (De Beer and Swanepoel 1998:27).

2.4.1.1 Principles of the Basic Needs Approach

Mass poverty: Within this perspective, poor people should be able to communicate what their preferences are.
People's participation: In this perspective, the view on participation influences the ideas on basic needs. It is regarded as a government function to provide the basic necessities to the poor. It is seen as the right of the poor to prioritise their needs

and make decisions on how these should be addressed (De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:27).

The importance of growth: Economic growth should be part and parcel of a broader process of change, including the redistribution of scarce resources (De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:27).

The effectiveness of the development theories stated above depends on the mechanisms put in place for the realisation thereof. Strategies are meant to strengthen and enhance community development in a particular area so as to improve the livelihood of the people. The South African government is not excluded from these processes.

2.5 Strategies for enhancing community development in South Africa

The community development strategy adopted by the South African government is a post-apartheid attempt to bridge the economic disparities created by the apartheid regime, leaving other people trapped in the poverty cycle – especially the rural communities.

Due to the diversity in rural livelihood, the government has started employing a number of strategies in an integrated manner for rural development. The main aim of the government is to secure a sustainable livelihood for rural people. Community development projects were introduced as part of the community development strategy. Furthermore, the government also developed macro policies, which have a direct bearing on rural development. Todaro and Smith (2009:229) states that policy design to alleviate poverty must be directed to a large extent towards rural development in general and agricultural development in particular. To this end, the South African government has developed the following key policies: The National Macro-Policy Framework and the Rural Development Policy Framework guided by the International Policy Framework.

2.5.1 National Macro Policy Framework

This framework includes policies such as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), the Constitution of South Africa (1996) and the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR).

2.5.1.1 The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)

The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) is an integrated, coherent socio-economic policy framework published in 1994. It sought to mobilise all people and the country's resources towards the eradication of poverty and the building of a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist future (Reconstruction and development Programme 1995:1). The centre objective of the RDP is to improve the quality of life of all South Africans, in particular the most poor and marginalised sections of the communities.

Due to the injustices of the past, linked to unequal distribution of resources, the RDP focuses on people's most immediate needs, especially in the rural areas, as one of its key programmes. In order to meet the basic needs of the majority of the poor, the first priority was the creation of jobs through community development projects such as bricklaying, poultry farming, vegetable gardens, etc. This initiative was encouraged by the government and communities were encouraged to initiate projects that will generate income and provide skills for future employment within these communities.

The implementation of the RDP encountered many obstacles. Nkoana (1995:6) indicates that in Limpopo province alone in 1995, about 80% of the population did not participate in the economy of the province and were poor. The majority of these people were rural people living in different kinds of settlements with no infrastructure. As such, the rationalisation of the rural villages and settlements did not satisfactorily provide a viable plan of improving the quality of customary life in accordance with the RDP. The demand for basic needs such as employment, housing, health, water, security, and land was extremely high as a result of that

situation. It was clear that achieving of the objectives of the RDP would take considerable time and was constrained by lack of resources (Nkoana 1995:11).

2.5.1.2 The Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR)

GEAR as a macro-policy framework was introduced in 1996 and is based on the principle of the RDP. As such, GEAR identified areas in the RDP in which to set targets such as employment creation in a competitive economy, investing in people, delivery of services, creating a safe and secure environment, welfare and safety issues as well as transforming the public sector (Growth, Employment and Redistribution, 1996:2). GEAR made a fundamental shift in government policy in that government policy was prioritised over poverty alleviation. The expansion of foreign investments and the industrial sector were regarded as the bases of economic growth

Although the GEAR policy had limitations on the rural development strategy and policy, it has contributed significantly to rural development. Its integrated strategy focuses on budget reform to strengthen the distribution thrust of development, and it is updated annually to provide clarity regarding public expenditure trends and priority. The budget is the primary vehicle through which access to social services is assured. Nearly half of all government spending is devoted to education, health and welfare, housing and related services (Growth, Employment and Redistribution, 1996:11).

Since many rural areas lag behind in the development of education, social services and housing, GEAR advocates such development. GEAR gives first preference to educational opportunities of the historically disadvantaged communities by creating a sustainable improvement in the quality of public schools and education for the poor. Furthermore, GEAR emphasises the systematic restructuring of services with a strong emphasis on universal and free access to comprehensive primary health care. Increased parts of social spending are devoted to social grants to assist the poor to provide poverty alleviation in the rural areas. Land reform programmes which are important to address the issue of landownership are also considered important by GEAR, because land reform

programmes contribute towards agricultural development which serves as a source of employment and income - generation in the rural economy.

2.5.2 Rural Development Policy Framework

This framework includes policies such as the Rural Development Strategy (1995), the Development Facilitation Act, (Act No. 67 of 1995), the Rural Development Framework (1997), and the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS, 2000).

2.5.2.1 Rural Development Strategy

The Rural Development Strategy (1995) spells out the principles and components of rural development interventions. The Strategies outlined in the Rural Development Strategy include the creation of structures of local government and land coordination that allow rural people to set up a local development agenda and have access to the information for planning and implementing development projects and programmes at local level (National Land Committee 2005:3). The involvement of people in the planning process facilitates development, as people are given the opportunity to prioritise their needs and feel free to participate in development projects.

2.5.2.2 Development Facilitation Act (Act No. 67 of 1995)

The Development Facilitation Act (Act No. 67 of 1995) introduced measures to facilitate and speed up the implementation of the Reconstruction and Development Programme and projects in relation to land. According to this Act, objectives are set in relation to the standard of service requirement for land development. These include the development of public transport, water supply, health and other facilities. The Development Facilities Act (Act No. 67 of 1995) offers a significant scope for land development and the regulation of land use. As such, it facilitates rural development.

2.5.2.3 Rural Development Framework

The Rural Development Framework (1997) describes how government aims to achieve a rapid and sustainable reduction in absolute rural poverty among rural people. It indicates the direction of the involvement of rural people in decision–making, affecting their active participation in the rural/local government (Rural Development Framework 1997:4). It provides rural people with information about the procedures for the provision of affordable infrastructure to improve service in the rural areas. This is achieved through consultation with the affected areas so as to identify their specific needs.

The Rural Development Framework (1997) also gives guidelines for solving problems in low potential areas, which were overcrowded during the apartheid era. As such, it ensures social stability and increases the local government capacity plan and implementation. This also enhances the assembling of essential information for planning, monitoring and evaluation of both the process and the progress of rural development projects.

2.5.2.4 Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy

The Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS) is the result of the Rural Development Strategy (1995) and the Rural Development Framework (1997). The ISRDS aims to contribute towards sustainable rural development through the integration of activities and the decentralisation of decision-making (Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy, 2000:iv). Successful rural development is implemented in a participatory fashion by the local people in collaboration with the local municipality. Rural people are given the opportunity to contribute more actively towards the development of their communities. The strategic objective of the ISRDS is to ensure that by the year 2010, rural areas would have attained the capacity for integrated and sustainable development.

Irrespective of the strategies set by the government to develop the rural areas, there are still a large number of problems pertaining to rural development. Hornby (2992:6) states that, despite the integrated rural policy set, the government has

experienced little success in addressing poverty in rural areas. The fact that poverty and inequality persist despite enormous amounts of money being used on rural development, prompted Roth et al. (2004:318) to suggest that there is a need to re-think what development really means.

To solve the above challenge, government has introduced a policy in various units in different departments to initiate and manage community development projects to improve the lives of rural communities. Project management has been introduced as a mechanism to strike up a relationship between community development projects and poverty alleviation in various communities.

2.6 Community development and project management

Community development is the process in which people learn or are assisted in gaining skills, knowledge and an attitude that will release them from poverty. Community development efforts do not primarily aim to benefit individuals, but rather groups in a community (De Beer and Swanepoel, 1998:5). The success of every community development project depends on the knowledge and skills of project management

Mawila (2006:12) defines project management as the "the application of knowledge, skills and techniques to project activities in order to meet stakeholders' needs and expectations from a project". This idea is supported by Heerkens (2002:11) who defines project management as "the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to project activities to meet project requirements".

Milondzo (2005:8) defines project management as "temporary endeavours taken to create a unique product or service'. The word "temporary" implies that ultimately, every project has a defined end. The word "unique" means that the product or service is different in some distinguishing way from all similar products or services. In order to fulfil or to achieve stated product and service, the project manager must have appropriate techniques and methods based on sound principles. As if to support this statement, Khosa (2003:18) defines project management as a method and set of techniques based on the accepted principles

of management used for planning, estimating and controlling work activities to reach a desired end result on time, within a budget and according to specification". Project management is defined as "a dynamic process that utilises the appropriate resources of the organisation in a controlled and structured manner to achieve some clear defined objective identified as strategic needs" (Young, 2000:13).

2.6.1 The need for and the role of project management

The need for project management can be realised from its benefits and the role it can play in every organisation. A project is a set of interrelated activities, usually involving a group of people working together at one time on a task for a period of one to eighteen months (Mofokeng, 2004:14). This definition implies that project management involves many interrelated activities such as time, period of completion and a group of people who intend to accomplish a particular task (Mofokeng, 2004:14). From this statement, it is clear that the project manager has a big task to fulfil in completing project in time. A project manager needs skills such as leadership, management skills, communication skills and other related activities. Apart from these skills, a project manager should know how to plan, lead, organise and control, so as to achieve the intended goal of an organisation within a specific period.

Van der Waldt and Knipe (2006:180) attest that "managing projects is characterised by the application or implementation of actions and implies and application and/or adjustment of management functions to exercise more effective control over limited resources". Thus, project management functions include planning, organising, leading and motivation, control and coordination.

2.6.2 Benefits of project management

The concept "project management" and "project' can only be understood when viewed in terms of their importance in the organisation. The period in which a project is completed and the intended goals achieved is an important consideration in project management. Good results and less cost emanating from project management prove that it is a cost-effective way of managing an

organisation; hence, most public institutions are opting for it (Mawila, 2006:17). Nickson and Siddons (2003:2) confirm this statement in arguing that "in any job that is undertaken there is an element of planning".

The success of every project depends on the role and the function which the project management fulfils in an organisation. Khosa (2003:22) argues that "project managers are responsible for the successful delivery of a project as a one-time endeavour with a goal, scope, deadlines, budget and other constrains". According to Russell (2007:23), a project manager's primary responsibilities are "to plan, organise and control a project to its successful completion". He further argues that the project manager should also do the following if he/she wants to manage a project successfully:

- Figure out what work needs to be done;
- Find and allocate the right resources to the right work;
- Mange the communication among all the people involved; and
- Adjust the plan when the project requirements change (Russel, 2007:23).

In order to understand how a project creates organisational change, a project manager must understand his role and functions within the organisational sphere. Mawila (2006:9) indicates that, "for the project managers to attain the goal and objectives in the organisation, they must be conversant with their roles in their sphere of operation". This means that project managers must be conversant with their roles in their sphere of operation in order to attain the goals and objectives in the organisation.

The role of the project manager

Letsoalo (2008:80) identifies the following roles of the project manager :

- Selection (if possible) and development of the operational team;
- Leadership;
- Information management;
- Problem-solving (including anticipating potential challenges);
- Managing relationships with stakeholders;

- Operationally flexible;
- Able to identify opportunities for improvements;
- Plan and implement accordingly;
- Sound negotiation and conflict resolution skill;
- Understanding the project environment;
- Manage within a constantly changing environment;
- Monitor and control;
- Administer the contract, the scope of work and scope change;
- Ensure a positive working environment for the team; and
- Ensure client satisfaction about the project at all times (Letsoalo, 2008:80)

In order to execute their roles better, project managers must have knowledge of how the rest and project management process unfold. Figure 2.1 clearly shows that project management does not just happen; the process takes place step by step until a logical conclusion is reached.

Figure 2.1: Project management process
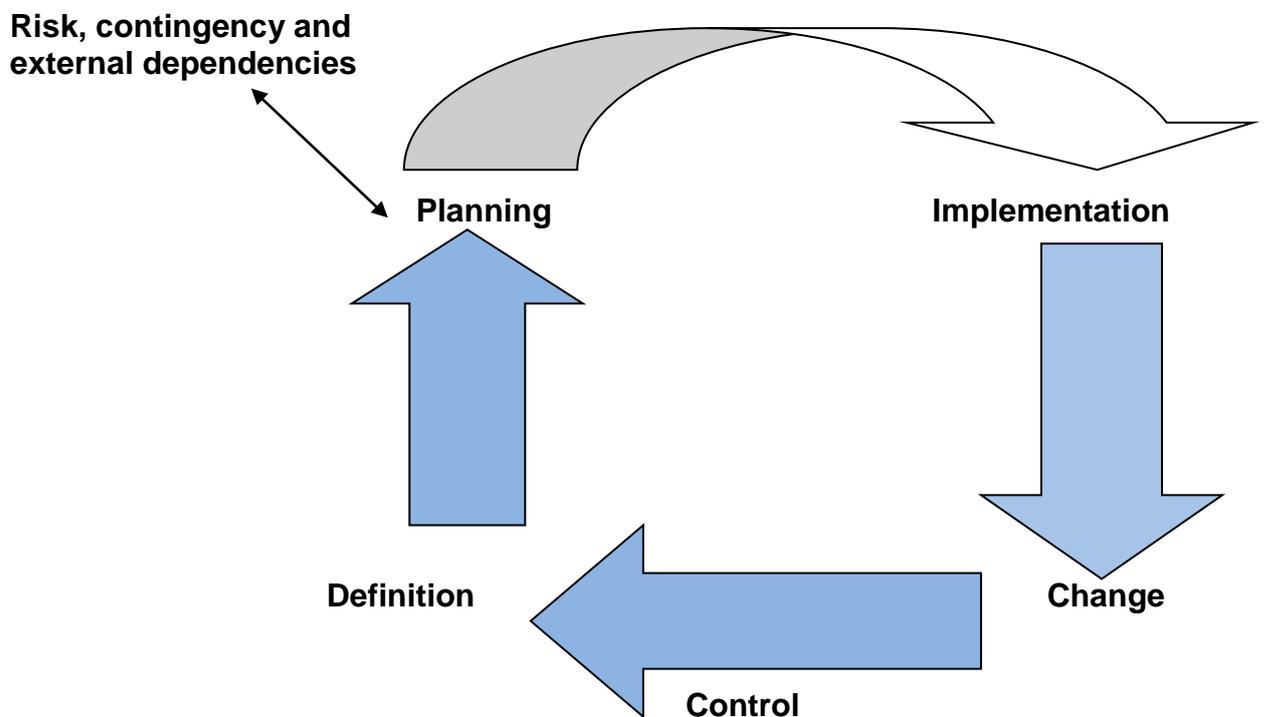
Source: Nickson and Siddons, (2001:4)

Before the planning stage, the project manager should take cognisance of the following aspects of project management during the definition stage:

- Establish the project statement;

- Identify the goal and objectives;

- Define the project deliverables;

- Set up the project file;

- Set up the risk register;

- Produce initial cost estimates;

- Produce a work breakdown structure; and

- Define the resources requirements (Nickson and Siddons, 200:4)

These strategies can be used by community development project managers to ensure sustainability and productivity of these projects.

2.7 Community Development and Management by Objectives (MBO)

Apart from coaching, the leader should manage their projects according to objectives started by the initiators. Every community development project in the area of the study should have clear objectives in their sphere of operations. Furthermore, the objectives should be clearly stated so as to help to work towards the intended objectives. One of the key responsibilities of the community development projects is to improve the livelihoods of the rural communities or to alleviate poverty.

Objectives are needed in every community development project where performance and results directly and vitally affect the livelihoods of the community. They are implicit formulation or explicit statements, which establish the fundamental direction or the purpose of a project (Milondzo, 2003:139)

2.7.1 What is an MBO?

In essence, management by objective (MBO) is a dynamic system which seeks to integrate a project's need to clarify and attain its profits or results and growth goals

with the needs of managers to contribute and develop themselves. Thus it is a highly participative style of managing, placing their emphasis on results and leaving the individual managers a wide discretion as to the manner in which they achieve them (Milondzo, 2003, 140).

MBO is a technique whereby the fixing of targets is the basis for achieving greater effectiveness throughout the whole or part of an organisation. This is lucidly illustrated in Figure 2.2 below

Figure 2.2: The basic elements of the MBO approach
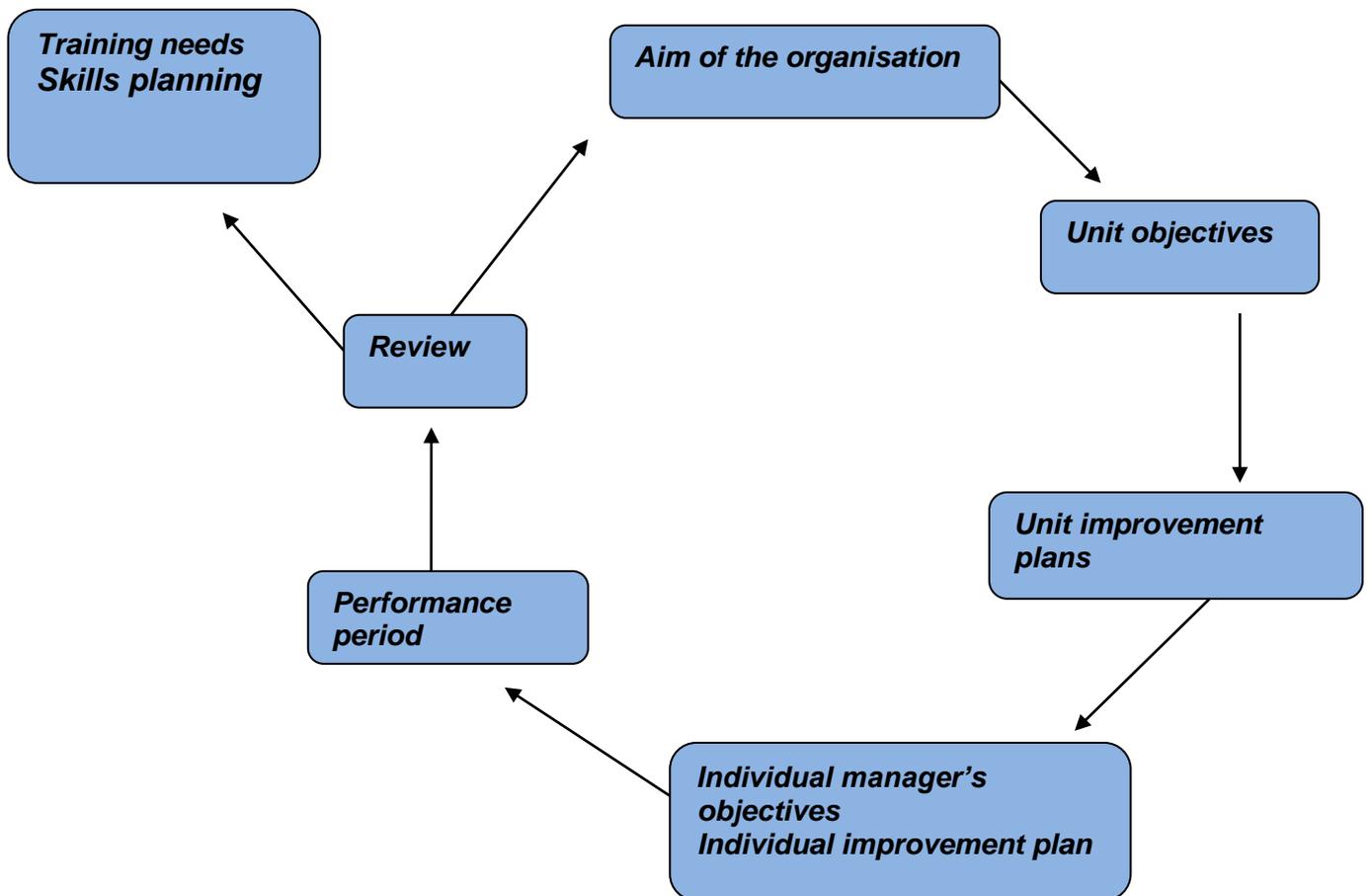
An MBO seems to be a system approach for achieving desired ends. As advised by Aristotle: "…first have defined, clear, and practical ideals, goals and objectives.

Second, have the necessary means to achieve these ends – wisdom, money, material and methods. Third, adjust the means to that end" (Milondzo, 2003:12).

Its purpose seems to be to encourage integration, to create a situation in which a subordinate can achieve his or her efforts towards the objectives of the organisation. It attempts to satisfy the esteem and self-actualisation needs. It seems to be generally acknowledged that an MBO cannot be successfully foisted in the wrong management style. It appears that the entire management style and approach must be supportive of MBO. An MBO seems to thrive better in the participative style of management which encourages maximum participation by staff. While it can have some measure of success in a bureaucratic atmosphere, its effectiveness is likely to be greatly decreased by the excessive of red tape, control and procedures (Mavuso, 2009:14).

2.7.2 MBO implications for community development projects and suitability

Every community development project should have objectives. These will help project to achieve intended goals. The Management by Objectives (MBO) system comprises:

- Objectives
- Plans
- Management direction and action
- Control (Monitoring)
- Feedback

As steps are commonly integral parts of any MBO scheme, top project management should–

- Determine the objectives qualitatively and derive from them the main plan of action. This is often called the 'strategic plan', and may cover a long period.
- Derive detailed plans which will contribute to the attainment of the main plan.
- Deduce from each tactical plan which aspects of present practice can be changed to give the most significant contribution to achieve the objectives. These are often called 'key results areas'.

- Discuss and agree with the managers responsible for each aspect what performance standards should be achieved in respect of each such key result area.
- Assist managers to achieve the planned targets by:
  a) Providing them with full control information;
  b) Freeing them from over supervision; and
  c) Providing them with fair salary and succession incentives.

Performance should be reviewed at regular intervals to measure progress, to modify objectives where needed and to discuss further managerial development (Milondzo, 2003:143). Research and experience have led to the identification of five needs which, if catered for satisfactory, could do much towards ensuring the achievement of the objectives set by project managers and those of the community. Table 2.1 below demonstrates the steps of the components in action by Chauke (2008:15).

Table 2.1: Organisational responses

Community needs	Community development project responses
'Tell me (or agree with me) what you expect'	Clarification of project objectives Establishing priority areas and tasks Developing improvement plans Project activity plans
'Give me an opportunity to perform'	Project planning Resource allocation Delegation and authority
'Let me know how I am getting on'	Control information Performance review Project monitoring
'Give me help and guidance where and when I need it'	Career development Performance review Training
'Reward me according to my contribution'	Salary Potential review Succession planning Training

Source: Milondzo (2003:145)

Implications

'Tell me (or agree with me) what you expect from me'

This is the stage of establishing specific, time-limited, measurable and clearly assigned objectives. The project managers are responsible for delivering results that can be achieved only with the assistance of the project initiators or donors. It seems they cannot obtain these results without making known what it is that the community development projects are expected to achieve. The starting point is that both the project managers and initiators should have a clear understanding of the work they are supposed to be doing and their personal responsibilities in relation to it.

This should be recorded, regularly reviewed and updated if necessary. The clarification of an individual's responsibilities and objectives seems to provides the foundation on which a constructive system of staff can rest. It does not seem possible to say with any certainty how well a person is performing without knowing what the performance is intended to achieve.

'Give me an opportunity to perform'

Community members seem to be motivated if they are provided with adequate resources. These include equipment, time and space, to carry out the job. If they are given authority and freedom to get on with the job, instead of being over-controlled and over-supervised, the potential of achieving is increased manifold.

Self- supervision or self-direction means that once objectives have been agreed upon, subordinates should be left fairly free to supervise themselves with only a minimum of control from above. Taking this point further, delegation seems to be an important tool for the management of work and development of a community. If properly used, it can increase motivation and job satisfaction and probably enhance performance.

'Let me know how I am getting on'

This is the method which is established to measure the project performance against objectives. An achievement-oriented community seems to be more motivated when they know how they are doing. Effective monitoring of results, with regular discussion on progress made, seems to be essential for good community appraisal. The discussions of the job tend to form part of the normal exchange between the manager and the managed, and create the basic working relationship. It also provided an opportunity to focus jointly on the extent to which objective target dates are being achieved, what improvements might be made, difficulties being met, or any corrective action needed. People tend to learn and change as a result of objective feedback.They normally feels happy to talk about their work, their ideas and their hopes. They seem to gain motivation through achievements and job satisfaction.

'Give help and guidance where and when I need it'

This stage seems to involve managerial direction and control when carrying out objectives. The project managers should be accessible and available for guidance and counselling. Regular review will help the project managers to decide how best to assist the development of the abilities of the community and that they are effectively deployed. If specific skills are needed, training may be arranged for personal development. The development of potential and self-actualisation is a highly motivating device. Although it is the responsibility of the project manager to identify job related training needs, community development projects should also take some initiative for their development and growth.

'Reward me according to my contribution'

Reward can either be positive or negative. If community development project managers are doing their job well, project initiators or donors should recognise their contribution by rewarding them and awarding them a salary increment. This seems to be a good motivating device as community seems to appeal to high-order needs. Negative rewards can be in the form of disciplining in the event that

subordinates are not doing their job well. If the cases are genuine, the community can be motivated to better performance.

From the above information, it is clear that the success of an MBO depends on the achievement of the intended objectives in the project. The achievement of these e objectives depends on the level of participation by the community in the project. The participation of project managers in project management can improve the lives of the communities in the area of the study.

2.8 Community development and participation in decision-making

Participation is one of the key elements in managing projects to sustain development. It also motivates communities to take part in decision-making. Participation allows communities to decide what kind of action to take to achieve the intended goal. Participation also implies an active investment of the community in decision–making, which means they become the subject and not the object in community development projects.

To support the above statement, Van der Waldt and Knipe (2002:142) attest that, "community participation is an active process in which the client, or those who will benefit, influences the direction and improves the welfare of people in terms of income, personal growth, independence and other volumes regarded as valuable".

The purpose of community involvement in decision-making is to encourage them to identify their own priorities in the light of available resources within their projects. Upward planning programmes with downward support are often acceptable because the community is committed to them (Muvuso, 2009:5).

Participation involves different activities (stages), namely, decision-making, implementation, benefits and evaluation.

Figure 2.3 below provides a diagrammatical synopsis of decision-making.

Figure 2.3: Diagrammatical synopsis of decision-making
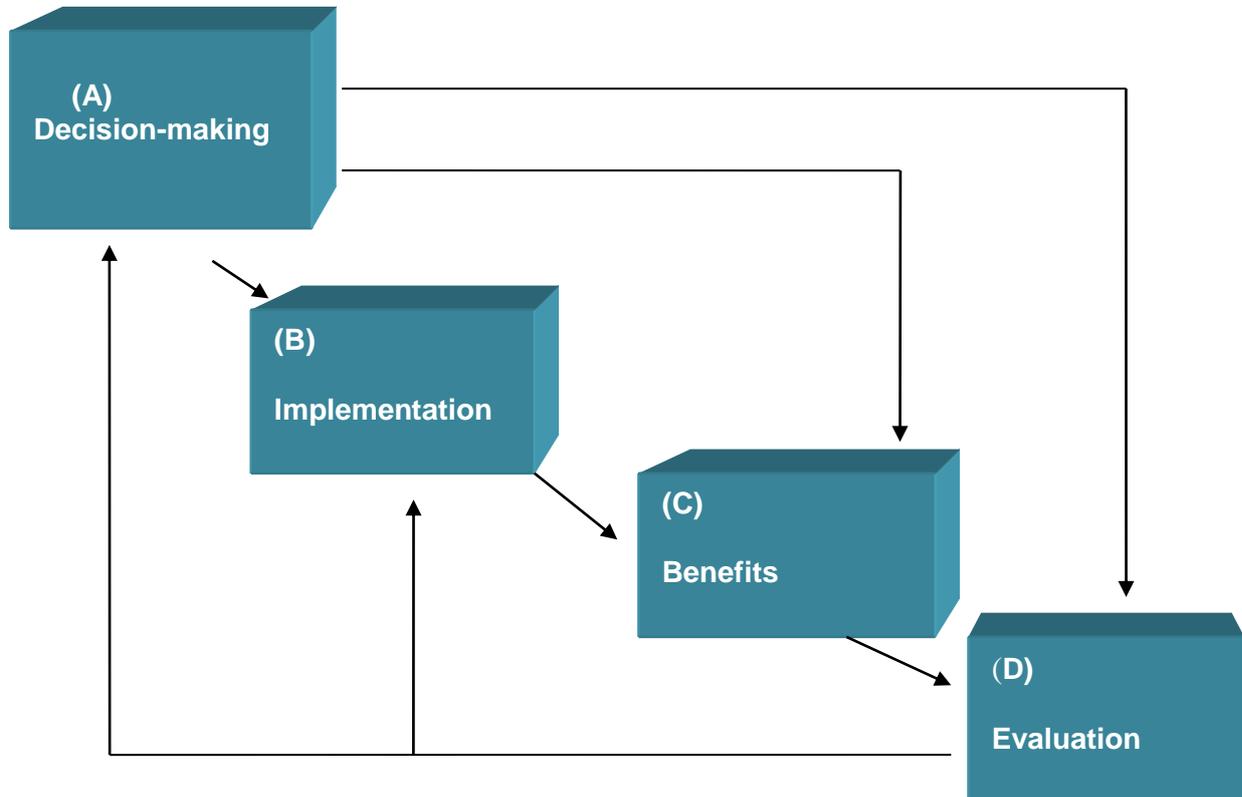
Source: Qhosola (2011:35)

The above diagram implies that the community should be involved in decision-making, implementation and evaluation of projects since they are the beneficiaries of the programme.

Participatory management in community development projects implies the involvement of the community in planning, organising, guiding and controlling in the community development project activities and the implementation of the projects (Mavuso, 2009:6). In addition, Mavuso (2009:8) argues that participation management does not mean that all stakeholders have equal powers. Once the

organisation has elected representation in the decision-making process and is appointed democratically, the rest of the members in the community development projects should support them and give them the right to make decisions on their behalf. In other words, participatory management is both a democratic and an undemocratic process.

Traditionally, the manager was expected to make decisions in isolation. This practice has been condemned as being undemocratic. Undemocratic managers want to have their way and they alone determine the policies. All decisions are taken by them and only certain tasks are allocated to the community. They take full responsibility for the decisions made and ensure that set goals are attained.

The undemocratic project manager is the ruler, and as it were the commander. Such a project manager gives instructions to communities individually instead of delegating via a pyramid structure. That is why the authoritarian type of community project manager tries to be personal in their praise and critics, but stand apart from the group. These types of project managers are inclined to dominate and have difficulty in working with others. They are a stumbling block to the democratisation of farms in the country (Mawila, 2006:12).

A good community development project requires that project managers be oriented to manage the project democratically, as managers who 'involve the people'. Such a manager involves the community by mutual consultation in decision-making. Decisions are made by means of voluntary and spontaneous communication and the community plays an active role in the process, to provide the community with an opportunity to make contributions. Definite efforts are made to create positive interpersonal relationships. They offer opportunities for original and creative contributions by the community and in this way, they may contribute to attaining goals. New perspectives open up during team-building and communities are free to choose who they would like to work with.

Studies have supported the desirability of participation in decision-making in community projects. Paul (2005:9) has supported the desirability of participation in decision-making in the development sector, namely:

- The opportunity to share in formulating policies is an important factor in the morale of the community and their enthusiasm for the municipality as an organisation;

- Participation and decision-making is positively related to the community development projects' being satisfactory as a developing strategy;

- Communities prefer managers who involve them in decision–making;

- The community neither expects nor wants to be involved in every decision; in fact, too much involvement can be as detrimental as too little;

- Participation in decision-making has consequences that vary from situation to situation;

- The role and functions of both community and project managers in decision-making needs to be varied according to the nature of the problem; and

- Typical project managers are likely to prove ineffective due to deficiencies of acceptability by subordinates as well as due to limitations on the quality of decisions.

From the above information, it is evident that the involvement of the community, supervisors and project managers in community development projects will depend on the nature of the problem and situation. The participation of the community and other stakeholders in the management structures of community development projects and in decision-making, and in related to matters such as managerial functions is necessary. If this process can be applied correctly, it may improve the quality of production and sustain community development in the area of the study. The success of participation and decision-making also depends on the trust that the managers have on their communities.

Project managers who are involved in the process of negotiation and communication should take issues such as ethics and suitability into consideration. Project managers should be able to differentiate between good and bad, right and wrong, and other related moral issues.

Community development and negotiation

Apart from the above-mentioned participation in decision-making, the success of every community development project also depends on the project managers' negotiating skills. According to Van der Waldt (2002:196), there are seven common skills that can improve project managers' negotiation skills, namely:

- A positive approach to negotiate and a positive attitude;
- Communication skills;
- Communication to the point of view of the project team;
- The ability to analyse the negotiation situation and choose the right time for negotiation
- The ability to ensure that the information is credible (information based on hearsay and not supported by facts will seriously damage the credibility of the project team);
- The ability to ensure that the project team trusts in them as project negotiators; and
- The ability to guard against false perceptions.

Negotiation skills assist project managers at various levels of project development, including contract negotiations, planning, and the designing stage and construction changes.

In many cases, negotiations establish working relations in the projects. The negotiation process can be used to develop mutual respect and to learn the most effective way to communicate, as well as how best to work together (Motaung, 2009:7). In support of this statement, Letsoalo (2008:9) argues that "project contracts which have been effectively negotiated result in for fewer incidences of misunderstanding leading to claims and litigation, which in itself is time consuming, frustrating and expensive. As a result, the process of negotiation must be treated with the same level of respect as the preparation and execution of the project". For this to happen, the project manager should know the various steps on how negotiations should be prepared and conducted.

Preparing for negotiations

This involves the following steps:

- Establishing the scope to be negotiated.
- Determining the bottom line.
- Justifing your scope.
- Determining who will negotiate and their level of authority.
- Discussing and agreeing upon scope before negotiating fee.
- Determining which areas of scope are flexible and can be modified.
- Determining why the other party is negotiating with you and how to maximise those benefits.
- Brainstorming the "what ifs" and developing creative options.
- Practising internal rehearsals and role -playing the negotiations.

According to Mawila (2006:8), there are ten steps that can assist a project manager in conducting negotiations in the day-to-day management of his or her department or areas of responsibility.These are the following:

- Develop rapport.
- Focus on the issue and the scope.
- Offer justification for the scope.
- Establish your credibility.
- Listen to the other party; understand the needs and interests underlying their demand.
- Use creativity options with deadlock.
- Make the other party's decisions as easy as possible.
- Keep a tally of the concessions/get reciprocal concessions.
- Say "no" without breaking down the negotiations.
- Close the negotiations successfully.

Negotiation model and its implication to community development projects managers

Every project manager in a municipality should have negotiation skills. Furthermore, the steps involved in conducting negotiations should be clarified and clearly stimulated. One of the key responsibilities of municipal managers is to empower community project managers with negotiation skills. This will help them build confidence as they will be able to negotiate and seal some deals on their behalf rather than their (municipal managers and project initiators) having to employ somebody else to handle negotiations at an extra cost to the municipality (Van der Waldt, 2002:196).

From the above discussion, it is clear that effective negotiation depends on proper and clear communication. In support of this statement, Van der Waldt and Knipe (2002:196) reiterate that "the success of the project depends on people who can communicate effectively".

2.9 Community development and communication

The larger and more complex the projects , the greater the probability that information will get lost along the project team structure. Project communication management therefore focuses on insuring proper collection, dissemination and storage of project information (Motaung, 2009:12).

In order for one to understand the concept and the meaning of the term 'communication', one needs to define it. The term 'communication' is defined as the process in which a message is transmitted from a sender to a receiver (Van der Waldt and Knipe, 2002:196). According to Mawila (2006:11), project communication is divided into three processes, namely:
- Communication planning (determining the information and communication needs of the project, who needs what information, when and how it will be given);
- Information distribution and performance reporting (collecting and disseminating progress information, status reporting); and

- Administrative closure (gathering and disseminating information to formalise project completion) (Mawila, 2006:11).

The above processes consist of basic elements of communication. These elements can be outlined as follows:

- Different project stakeholders and role-players require different types of information, and have different expectations.
- The project team should adapt information and the medium of communication to suit the profile of stakeholders and role-players (e.g. contractors and community leaders).
- The project team should communicate the status of projects.
- The larger the project, the more sophisticated the communication.
- Communication should facilitate the integration of the project with institutional processes and systems.
- Institutions need to be transparent and open and keep the public informed (Batho Pele)
- Communication has many dimensions; namely:
  a) Written, verbal, listening, non-verbal;
  b) Internal and external;
  c) Formal (reports, business plan, briefing, minutes) and informal (memos, conversations, etc.); and
  d) Vertical and horizontal (Khoza, 2009:18).

2.9.1 Typical communication processes

Apart from the basic elements of communication, there are processes which project managers, team members and other stakeholders should take into consideration. These processes have been identified as follows:

- Project team members send status updates to project managers on a weekly basis;
- Project managers send status update to project sponsors and stakeholders on a bi-weekly/monthly basis;

- The project team attends regular project status meetings (uncover issues, scope changes, potential risk, etc.);
- The frequency of meetings depends on timetable (time remaining); and
- Status meetings should be formal and planned for during Work Breakdown Structure (have time/cost implications)(Khosa, 2009:18).

According to Van der Waldt and Knipe (2002:196), the success of a project depends on people who can communicate effectively. Some of the aspects that project managers should consider when they communicate with team members, the community and other managers within the public institution, include the following:

- They should know the audience and its likes and dislikes.
- They should know the topic (project) to be communicated.
- They should know what the project team wishes to achieve.
- Timing is important. For instance, avoid a time of political unrest or an important sports day.
- Choose the right channels; it is advisable to consult with community leaders first.
- Credibility. Information can be misused by people for personal gain and to manipulating others.
- Project managers must consider cultural and language differences.
- Body language: Non-verbal communication is an important means of forming perceptions. Tone of voice, body language and facial expressions are important in forming an impression of the project managers and the message they convey.
- Overloading: Project managers should keep the message simple, and specific ideas must be formulated clearly.
- Perception: The tone and content of the message should be considered.
- Project managers should ensure feedback by making sure that the message has been understood correctly. They should ask questions to gain feedback from the community, project team and/or management.

Project managers who are involved in the negotiations and communication process should take issues such as ethics and sustainable development into consideration.

2.10 Community development and sustainable development

Sustainable development is a pattern of resources used that aims to meet human needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but also for future generations (Nkuna, 2010:7).

From the above definition, it is clear that there is a relationship between project development and sustainability. According to Mawila (2008:16), the relationships between these terms unfold in two:

- Projects (for their specified duration), need to be sustainable in order to be successful; and
- When projects are completed in time they will only be deemed truly successful if their respective impact has proven sustainable (certain a more holistic way of viewing the 'ripple effect' of our project).

Ensuring sustainability of the community development projects requires the community to think beyond the boundary of just the project at hand. The following questions can be asked:
- Will these projects be worthwhile?
- Will they have a positive effect in the long run?
- Which factors contribute towards sustainability of the project?

If project managers can answer the above questions positively, projects in the area of the study can be well - implemented, managed and sustainable.

Stakeholders should take the following factors into consideration if they want their projects to be sustainable:

- Coduct comprehensive research on and understanding of the environment of the proposed project;

- Creating a vision of the desired future impact of the project;

- Engaging with suitable stakeholders;

- Developing suitable mechanisms within the project parameter, which will continue to function constructively beyond the project life-style;

- Ensure ongoing knowledge sharing and development about the concepts related to the project and its envisaged long-term impact, thus;

- Keeping the concept alive and active;

- Constant monitoring and evaluating constantly, to ensure that the 'core message/service/product' intended is never lost or skewed; and

- Recognition of fellow humans' success (Mawila, 2008:16).

From the above discussion, it is clear that the suitability of project in the municipality involves different issues such as research, vision, working mechanisms, knowledge - sharing, conceptualisation, monitoring, evaluation, recognising the success of others and engagement with other stakeholders. Stakeholders and project managers can only be totally engaged if they are allowed to into participate and negotiate, and adhereing to the principles of project management and other related issues which project managers can employ to maintain project sustainability.

2.11 Conclusion

The South African society (of which our rural communities form a part) is undergoing rapid social and economic changes, despite the resistance of certain stakeholders within the local municipalities in their sphere of operation. The success of the community development projects in the local municipalities depends on the knowledge and skills of the project managers with the organisation.

These stakeholders and project managers are required to have skills such as negotiation, communication, decision-making, participation and other related competencies, to solve the ills within their communities. Project managers must grapple with the theory and practices of community development suggested by different authors from different perspectives, and to achieve this, the researcher has reviewed relevant the literature that will empower the project managers in Thulamela Local Municipality in their day-to-day operations.

In the next chapter, the research paradigms, approaches, methods and techniques that were used to collect analyse and interpret data in the study will be discussed in detail.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided a literature review on the role of community development projects in poverty alleviation. This chapter will focus on the research methodology, design and approaches that were used to collect and analyse the data obtained during the course of the study.

These approaches and methods were supplemented by empirical investigation. The research method used to identify, appraise and investigate the factors that hamper the contribution of the community development projects towards poverty alleviation are discussed in detail in this chapter.

3.2 Research methodology

Research methodology is defined as "a systematic process of collecting and logically analysing information for some purpose" (Moodley, 2001:30). He further attests that there is no single method that is perfect for collecting and analysing data.

There are many methods of research that can be used to investigate the problem stated in Chapter one (1). This study sought to ascertain contributions made by community development projects towards poverty alleviation in Thulamela Local Municipality. To achieve this, the research method had to be stratified, so as to be purposeful and relevant to the area of the study.

In this study the researcher used questionnaires and structured interviews to as survey methods to investigate the problem stated in Chapter one.

3.3 Research design

A research design is the manner in which the research is visualised and carried out, and how the findings are eventually put together (Henning et al., 2004:30). According to Cooper & Schindler (2001:75), a research design is defined as the "blueprint" for fulfilling objectives and answering questions that pertain to a problem or phenomenon that is being investigated. According to Hussey and Hussey (1997:117), determining a research design consists of the following:

- Identifying the research problem
- Determining the purpose of the research
- Developing a theoretical framework
- Defining research questions/hypothesis
- Defining terms
- Identifying limitations of the study
- Choosing the methodology
- Determining the expected outcome

The following subsections describe the design of this research study with the preceding definitional descriptions in mind.

3.4 Research paradigms

Different research paradigms also informed the study. There are many research paradigms that can be employed in research; the researcher chase/salected three of them, due to their relevance to the study. The following research paradigms will be discussed in turn:

- Positivism
- Phenomenology
- Hermeneutics

3.4.1 Positivism

A positivism approach to research fundamentally involves an attempt by social and human scientists to use research methodology normally applied to the natural science. Consequently, this paradigm basically focuses on mathematical calculations. Milondzo (2005:19) stated that the researcher adopts the position of objective analyst and accepts results based on precise, quantitative data. Furthermore, the researcher used the survey method, experiments and statistics. The positivism position is based on the understanding that the truth needs to be revealed.

3.4.2 Phenomenology

According to Lamina (2001:26), phenomenology postulates that the meanings about the world are determined by what is within the eyes of the beholder. They further state that what appears to be reality to the researcher could be different to that which appears to be reality to the people, constituting the given research sample. What is important is that which appears in the consciousness of the researcher. This demands a universe of power relations between the researcher and the research sample. The purpose of the phenomenology approach is to establish the essential attributes of a given phenomenon, ideas or object within which, in the eyes of the beholder, such phenomenon, ideas or object cease to be known as such (Lamina et al., 2001:26).

3.4.3 Hermeneutics

This approach is concerned with studying some historical and literary content, understanding the dialogue, art and cultural traditions of people (Lewis, Saunders and Thornhill, 2003:27). The historical research will try to come up with an underrating of the past by taking into consideration the dynamics and vitality of events being investigated, in order to get some meaningful outcome from the investigation. Nyathi (2003:31) points out that this approach seeks to give the researcher an opportunity to experience a living relationship with humans who

were present when the events took place. In this way, the researcher is placed in opposition to overcome the barriers of time and cultural differences that exist.

On the contribution of community development projects in poverty alleviation in Thulamela Local Municipality, it was not possible to use all the approaches outlined above. The researcher opted therefore to use the qualitative and quantitative research approaches to collect data in the area of the study. This approach to research is referred to as a mixed-method research design.

3.5 Research approaches

3.5.1 Qualitative research design

Qualitative research design refers to the "design where data is collected in the form of words and observations as opposed to numbers, and analyses are based on the interpretation of data collected as opposed to statistical analyses (Partington, 2003:109). This approach is used to gain insight into people's attitude, behaviour, value system, concerns, motivations, inspirations, culture or lifestyle. It is used to inform business decisions, policy formation, communication and research (Qhosola, 2011:45). According to Dumisa (2010:36), the qualitative approach can be applied to the study of current and past events; when applied to the past it is called historical research, and when applied to current events, it is called qualitative research.

The purpose of choosing a qualitative research design was to use individual interviews to obtain in-depth idiosyncratic information from community development project managers and participants about the challenges encountered in the implementation of community development projects in the area of the study.

3.5.2 Quantitative research design

The quantitative research method places heavy emphasis on using formalised standard questions and predetermined response options in questionnaires or surveys administered to large numbers of respondents (Hair et al.; 2000:216). This

design is applied in order to describe current conditions or to investigate relationships, including cause-effect relationship results in casual, comparative or experimental research, depending on whether the relationship is studied after the fact or in a controlled environment (Letoalo, 2007:54).

In this study, the researcher employed quantitative research design to check the availability of the resources that could be used by community development projects to achieve the intended objectives in the area of the study. The researcher also analysed and appraised different variables that impact the management and the implementation of community development projects in the Thulamela Local Municipality. Statistical analyse and interpretation of the results derived from the targeted population are discussed in full in Chapter four.

3.6 Population

Steyn, Smith, Du Toit and Strasheim (2003:16) define a population as "…the total group of persons or universal collection of items or elements to which the study relates". According to Dumisa (2010:39), a population is a full group of participants from whom the researcher wants to generalise the findings of the study". In the current study, the target population is all participants and managers of community development projects operating within the Thulamela Local Municipality. Taking into account the fact that it is not possible within reasonable time and resources at the disposal of the researcher, the researcher drew a sample from the population using the statistical sampling methods to generate a fairly representative sample of the entire population group.

3.7 Sampling

Sampling involves selecting a relatively small number of elements from a larger defined group of elements and expecting that the information gathered from the small group will allow judgment to be made about the larger group (Fouché, 1998:127). Sidhu (1995:253) defined sampling as "the process of selecting the aggregate or totality of objects or individuals regarding which inferences are to be made based in the sample study". Saunders et al. (2003:151) indicates the

challenges that are encountered when it is not feasible to survey the entire population and states that sample surveys are a valid alternative under the following circumstances:

- When it is not practical to survey the whole population;

- The researcher has budget constraints to survey the entire population;

- When time constraints prohibit the successful survey of the entire population; and

- When the researcher has collected all data but needs results quickly.

The above-mentioned reasons are justification for choosing the sampling method in this study, rather than a survey the entire population. There are two main sampling methods which are discussed in detail below, namely probability sampling and non- probability sampling.

3.7.1 Probability sampling

Cooper and Schindler (2001:166) maintained that probability is sampling based on the concept of random selection in which each sampling unit in the defined target population has a known, on-zero probability of being selected for the sample.

It is further stated that with probability sampling, every element has at least some chance of being part of the sample.Neither of these conditions generally holds for non-probability sampling. Probability sampling allows the researcher to estimate approximately what the he/she will find if he/she had considered the total population (Saunders, Lewis, Phillip and Thornhill, 2000:152). The various techniques for drawing a probability sample are outlined below.

3.7.1.1 Simple random sampling

A sample is drawn from the population in such a way that each element of that population has the same chance of being drawn during the first and each successive draw. Since this method is not always a good reflection of the population as a whole, it is not always the best sampling method to use (Holiday, 2002:60).

3.7.1.2 Stratified random sampling

It is referred to as the process by which the sample is selected to include elements from each of the segments within the population (Cooper and Schindler, 2006:416). Here the sampling is divided into subgroups (strata). After dividing the sampling frame, the researcher draws a random sample from each subpopulation. He can sample randomly within each strata, using simple random or systematic random sampling.

3.7.1.3 Systematic sampling

In this approach, every zth element in the population is sampled, starting with the random start of an element in the range of 1 to z. The zth element is determined by dividing the population by the sample size to obtain a skip pattern applied to the sampling frame (Cooper and Schinder, 2006:415).

3.7.2 Non-probability sampling

According to De Vos et al. (2005:295), non-probability sampling is a type of sampling technique whereby all the units of a population do not have an equal chance of being selected in the sample. It may further be divided into:

Convenience: Sampling units are selected as per convenience of the researcher
Purposive: The units selected in a sample are selected because they posses some requires characteristic, e.g. clinical knowledge, etc.

Non-probability sampling indicates that selections for the sample are not made at random. Steyn (2008:58) states that in non-probability sampling, each element of analysis in the population has an equal chance of being included in the sample.

A few subtypes of non-probability sampling are outlined below.

3.7.2.1 Haphazard sampling

Such samples are cheap and quick, which includes things such as interviews with people on the street.

3.7.2.2 Accidental sampling

This is the convenient type of sampling, as members of the population that are readily available for research purposes can become participants. If the research is about learners in general for example, then the sample will comprise those learners who happen to show up in class.

3.7.2.3 Snowball sampling

This method is based on the analogy of a snowball that starts small but becomes larger as it rolls and picks up additional snow. De Vos and Fouche (1998:72) attest that snowball sampling refers to when few individuals from the relevant population are approached, and then those individuals act as informants and identify people from the same population for inclusion in the sample.

3.7.2.4 Purposive sampling

This sampling method is used when the researcher relies on his/her experience or previous research findings to deliberately obtain units of analysis in such a manner that the sample they obtain may be regarded as being representative of the relevant population (Bestwell 2004:69).

The nature of this study allows the researcher to use the qualitative method in which non-probability sampling was not employed. The employees of Nketoana Municipality, both male and female, were given an equal chance to avoid gender sensitivity and justify inclusivity in the representation of data. Random sampling was selected since the researcher believes that the data mirrors the whole population.

The difference between non-probability and probability sampling is that non-probability sampling does not involve random selection and probability sampling does. Does that mean that non-probability samples are not representative of the population? Not necessarily. But it does mean that non-probability samples cannot depend upon the rationale of the probability theory. At least with a probabilistic sample, we know the odds or probability that we have represented the population well. We are able to estimate confidence intervals for the statistics. With non-probability samples, we may or may not represent the population well, and it will often be hard for us to know how well we have done. In general, researchers prefer probabilistic or random sampling methods over non-probabilistic ones, and consider them to be more accurate and rigorous. However, in applied social research there may be circumstances where it is not feasible, practical or theoretically sensible to do random sampling.

3.8 Data collection and instruments

3.8.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a set of questions and scales designed to generate enough primary raw data for accomplishing the information requirements that underlie the research objects (Hair et al., 2000:440; 661). The advantage of using a questionnaire is that the questionnaire can be used for both closed and open-ended questions. It is also cheaper and less time-consuming than conducting interviews and very large samples can be taken (Hussey & Hussey, 1997:162). A questionnaire is a form of instrument prepared and distributed to secure responses to certain questions. It is a device for securing answers to questions by using a form, which the respondents usually fill in when requested by the researcher. A questionnaire is an important instrument in normatic-survey research and it is useful for gathering information from widely scattered sources. The questionnaire procedure normally comes into use where one cannot readily and personally see all the people from whom one requires responses (Letsoalo, 2003:33).

3.8.2 Interview

Interviews are regarded as the predominant method of data collection in qualitative research to establish meanings that ostensibly reside with the participants (De Vos et al., 2005:285). According to Brakes (2004:8), the reliability of an interview is influenced by four variables, namely the researcher (interviewer), the respondent (interviewee), the measuring instrument, and the research context. In this study, the reliability of the interviews was enhanced by the interviewer. This was done through good interview questions and the consistency of the researcher in asking the same questions to all interviewees.

The researcher conducted an interview with the selected project manager and beneficiaries of the community development project in the Thulamela Local Municipality to get an overview and more information about factors that prohibit community development projects from making a positive contribution towards poverty alleviation in the area of the study.

3.9 Data analysis

Data analysis refers to the process of 'unpacking' an object, phenomenon, entity, process or event that the researcher will be investigating (Saunders, Mark, Lewis, Phillip and Thornhill, 2003:234). De Vos et al. (2005:333) maintain that data analysis is viewed as the bringing of order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. In this regard, the main objective of the study was to investigate the contribution of community development projects towards poverty alleviation in Thulamela Local Municipality. A selected sample of project managers and beneficiaries was involved in generating data that would assist the researcher in the identification of the problems, and factors and issues related to the implementation of projects in the area of the study.

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objective, the study used data collected through questionnaires and interviews. The data collected was processed and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) so as to maintain the validity and the reliability of the data.

3.9.1 Validity

Mondy and Noe (2005:173) defined validity as "the extent to which a test measures what it claims to measure". To achieve content validity, all components of the intended construct to be measured must be included. The research instruments were piloted to view participants before it was finally used to collect data. This process was possible through piloting the instruments and appropriately modifying the instruments to achieve the intended outcomes, which answered the research questions and objectives of the study projects. Construct validity measures the degree to which scores reflect the intended outcomes, which are intended to be measured, using the instruments, as pointed out by Heppner and Heppner (2004), cited in Motsiri (2008:3) ,who stated that the instruments used in the collection of data must be constructed in such a way that they collect valid data required in order to answer the research questions as closely as possible.

3.9.2 Reliability

According to Bestewell (2004:85), reliability is established when testing and retesting get the same results and when the same respondents give the same score under similar conditions. The outcome of the research should be able to hold if similar research is conducted by another researcher .The researcher eliminated bias in the interviewing process by concentrating on the research questions and eliminating posing personal views in leading the respondents to the answers. The respondents were prepared for the interviews, to establish credibility of the information collected. The respondents that are targeted were closely managed to ensure that the data is not contaminated; and the researcher did not divulge information about who the other respondents were.

3.10 Limitations of the study

The study focused on the contributions of community development projects towards poverty alleviation in Thulamela Local Municipality in the Limpopo province. Therefore, the analysis of the study does not include other community development projects in other municipalities in the Limpopo province and indeed other provinces in the country

Furthermore, this study cannot claim to have successfully exhausted all the problems experienced by community development projects in Thulamela Local Municipality with regard to the challenges emanating from the management of these projects. This would be virtually impossible as these are not static but dynamic and situational. In addition, due to financial constraints and time factors r, only operating community development projects were selected for the study by the researcher.

3.11 Ethical considerations

Ethics is a set of moral principles that are suggested by an individual or group that are widely accepted and which offer rules and behaviour expectations about the most correct conduct for experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students (Mawila, 2006:47). In this case, the following ethics issues were taken into consideration.

3.11.1 Right to privacy and voluntary participation

Participation in this study was voluntary and people were not forced to divulge certain information about themselves. This right to privacy demands that direct consent for participation should be obtained from adults and, in the case of children, consent will be obtained from their parents or guardian. The participants were fully informed about the positive or negative aspects or consequences of participating in the study.

3.11.2 Harmful to respondents or participants

The researcher avoided emotional harm during the interviews with the respondents, by applying only the necessary professional techniques.

3.11.3 Confidentiality

In many studies, anonymity cannot be maintained. This is sometimes the case when data is collected using interviews. The interviewer has direct contact with all participants and is able to recognise each one of them. In this study, respondents were treated with confidentiality, that is, they were assured that data will only be used for academic purposes and that no other person will have access to interviewed data.

3.11.4 Professional code of ethics

Because ethical issues in social research are both important and ambiguous, most professional associations have created and published formal codes of conduct describing what is considered acceptable professional behaviour (Bobbie: 1998). In this study, professional codes were considered when the interviewer interacted with the respondents.

3.12 Conclusion

In this chapter, the different research paradigms, approaches, methods and techniques employed in collecting data for the study were discussed. The population of the study and sampling methods used were also described, and the choice of research designs and their applicability to the area of the study were discussed.

From the discussions in this chapter, it is evident that no research approach or method can be regarded as panasia for all in collecting data. All approaches, methods and techniques are relevant as long as they are used appropriately.In this study the researcher has used varous research techniques to collect data from the participants in Thulamela Local municipality

The next chapter focuses on the analysis and interpretation of the data collected. The applicability and relevance of the data collected in the study to ascertain the contribution of community development projects towards poverty alleviation at Thulamela Local Municipality will be examined in detail.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the empirical investigation, research methods and techniques employed in collecting and analysing data related factors that hamper the implementation of community development projects in Thulamela Local Municipality. Due to the number of villages in Thulamela, the present researcher chose the the stratified random sampling (STRS) method to select villages in the rural areas for sampling.

The objectives of the analysis were to identify and appraise factors that affect the implementation of community development projects. The factors that assist project managers to manage projects in a professional and effective manner were also investigated.Data analysis and interpretation will enable the researcher to arrive at suitable conclusions and recommendations that answer the research questions stated in Chapter one.

4.2 Data collection

Data for this study was collected by means of questionnaires and interviews. Milondzo (2003:5) attests that a questionnaire is a popular method for collecting data because it is cheap and less time-consuming than other data collection methods, and it can be distributed to get information from a very large sample.

The linked scale which involves the use of a rating scale that asks respondents to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with a series of beliefs or behaviours about a given subject, was incorporated into the questionnaire employed in this study (Cooper and Schindler 2006:36).

Fifty (50) questionnaires were distributed to selected community project managers in the Thulamela Local Municipality. Respondents were requested to complete

questionnaires and submit them within a specified time at a specified venue. Data was also collected from fifty (50) other respondents by means of structured interviews. The total number of respondents in the study was therefore one hundred (100).

4.3 Data analysis and interpretation

4.3.1 Data obtained through questionnaires

Data collected from structured questionnaires was analysed by a computer program; the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). The researcher received full participation and feedback from the respondents who were requested to participate in the research study.

The analysis of data collected is provided in the tables and figures included in the rest of this section. The tables show findings (F), percentages (%) and total frequencies (Fx), which reflect the total number of the respondents in the table. Data from the sample was generated by using statistical inference in order to reach valid conclusions about characteristics of the population as a whole (Mawila, 2006:5). The profile of respondents used in the empirical research is summarised in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Community development project and gender

Item	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Q.1. What is your gender?		
Female	25	50
Male	25	50
Total frequency	**Fx = 50**	100

The researcher obtained 100% of the data requested from the project managers, of which twenty-five (50%) of the respondents were female and twenty-five (50%) of them were male.

Equal distribution of gender was done to avoid bias in the study. This is in line with the equity policy of South African government.

Table 4.2: Community development projects and impact on livelihood

Item	F	%
Q.2. Do community development projects have an impact on the livelihood of the community in your area?		
Agree	3	6
Strongly agree	2	4
Disagree	10	20
Strongly disagree	30	60
Uncertain	5	10
Total frequency	**Fx =50**	**100**

Q.2. Forty (80%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Five (10%) of the respondents agreed with the statement, while five (10%) of the respondents were uncertain.

From the above information, it is clear that community development projects are not making a positive impact on the livelihood of the people in the Thulamela Local Municipality. This problem can demotivate community members from participating in any project that might be initiated.

Table 4.3: Community development projects and benefits

Item	F	%
Q.3. Do you get any benefits from the community development project established in your area?		
Agree	5	10
Strongly agree	3	6
Disagree	9	18
Strongly disagree	30	60
Uncertain	3	6
Total frequency	**Fx =50**	**100**

Q.3. Thirty-nine (78%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement .Eight (16%) of the respondents agreed with the statement, while three (6%) of them recorded unsure.

From the above analysis, it is evident that the majority of the community members were not benefiting from the community development projects initiated in their area. These anomalies can cause resentment amongst community members towards future projects initiated in the area.

Table 4.4: Community development projects and training

Item	F	%
Q.4. Did you receive any training on project management?		
Agree	8	16
Strongly agree	6	12
Disagree	40	80
Strongly disagree	30	60
Uncertain	6	12
Total frequency	**Fx =50**	**100**

Q.4. Forty-four (88%) of the respondents did not receive any training on project management. Fourteen (28%) of the respondents agreed with the statement, while six (12%) recorded uncertain.

From the above findings, it is clear that community project managers did not attend any training on project management. These circumstances have a serious impact on the successful implementation of community development projects.

Table 4.5: Community development projects and the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA)

Item	F	%
Q.5. Do you adhere to the PFMA when managing community development projects?		
Agree	3	6
Strongly agree	2	4
Disagree	10	20
Strongly disagree	33	66
Uncertain	2	4
Total frequency	**Fx =50**	**100**

Q.5. Forty-three (86%) of the respondents confirmed that most of the project managers did not adhere to the PFMA when managing community development projects. Five (10%) of the respondents supported the statement, while two (4%) recorded uncertain.

From the above analysis, it is evident that the majority of project managers do not not adhere to the PFMA when managing community development projects. This practice causes financial mismanagement, which in turn can compromise the quality of the community development projects in the area of study. This problem has caused many project managers to be expelled and prosecuted in some areas of the country, including in the Thulamela Local Municipality.

Table 4.6: Community development projects and policy implementation

Item	F	%
Q.6. Were you exposed to any policy related to the implementation of community development projects?		
Agree	4	8
Strongly agree	2	4
Disagree	31	62
Strongly disagree	10	20
Uncertain	3	6
Total frequency	**Fx =50**	**100**

Q.6. Forty-one (82%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement, six (12%) of the respondents agreed with the statement, while three (6%) recorded uncertain.

From the above findings, it is clear that most of the project managers were not exposed to policies related to the implementation of community development projects. Lack of clarity and knowledge on policy issues always cause misunderstanding and polarity among policy-makers, project initiators and project managers in the area of the study.

Figure 4.1: Community development projects finance and sustainability
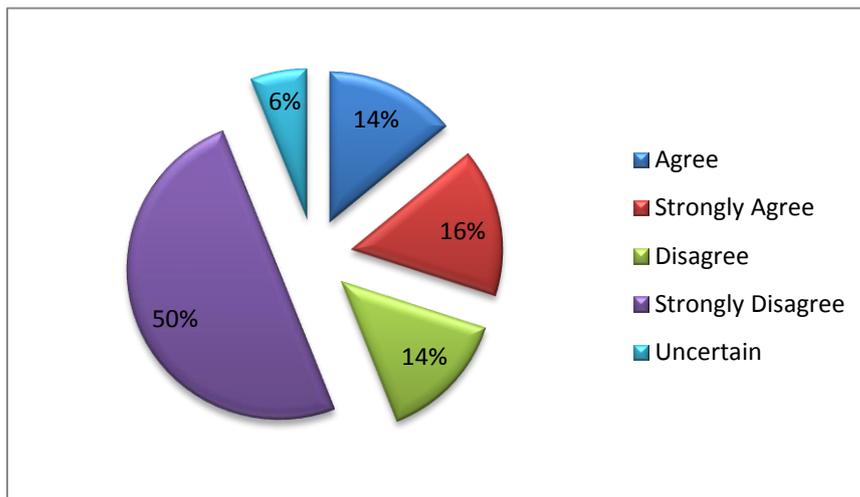
Q.7. Did you receive sufficient funds to sustain community development projects?

Q.7. Thirty-two (64%) of the respondents revealed that they did not receive sufficient funds to manage community development projects. Only fifteen (30%) of the respondents indicated that they had received enough funds for community development projects, while three (6%) recorded 'unsure'.

From the above information, it is clear that most of the community development projects received insufficient funds to operate sustainably. The scarcity of financial resources can have a negative impact on the success and sustainability of community development projects in the area of study.

Table 4.7: Community development projects and strategic planning

Item	F	%
Q.8. The community development project does no not have a strategic plan which aligns their outputs (products) with the objectives.		
Agree	8	16
Strongly agree	34	68
Disagree	3	6
Strongly disagree	3	6
Uncertain	2	4
Total frequency	**Fx =50**	**100**

Q.8 Forty-two (84%) of the respondents agreed with the statement. Six (12%) disagreed with the statement, and only two (4%) recorded unsure.

From the above findings, it is clear that the majority of the community development projects do not have a strategic plan that can help to align project outputs (products) with the intended objectives. Lack of strategic planning can cause project managers to deviate from the original intended goals or objectives of the project in the area of the study.

Figure 4.2: Community development projects and job creation
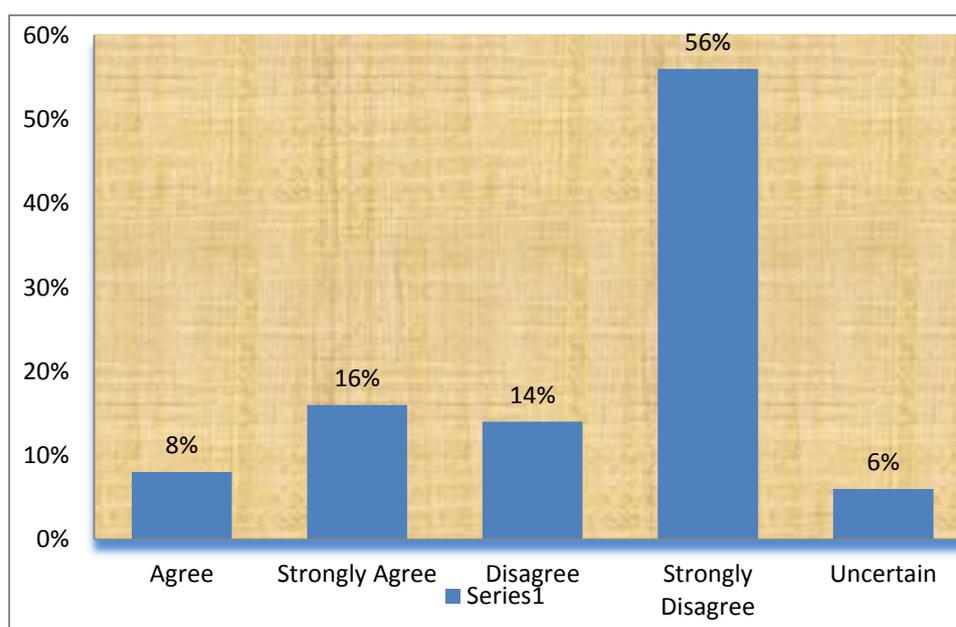
Q.9. Community development projects create jobs for rural communities.

Q.9. Thirty-five (70%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Twelve (24%) of the respondents agreed with the statement, while three (6%) of the respondents recorded uncertain.

From the above findings, it is evident that community development projects do not create jobs for rural communities. If community development projects fail to create jobs, these communities will continue to depend on state grants to sustain their livelihood, and will find themselves stuck in the poverty cycle.

Table 4.8: Community development projects and spheres of government

Item	F	%
Q.10. Do you know the different functions of the three spheres of government in South Africa?		
Agree	15	30
Strongly agree	30	60
Disagree	2	4
Strongly disagree	1	2
Uncertain	2	4
Total frequency	**Fx =50**	**100**

Q10. Forty-five (90%) of the respondents revealed that they did not know the different functions of the spheres of government. Three (6%) of the respondents claimed that they knew the different functions of the three spheres of government in South Africa, while only 2 recorded uncertain.

From the above information it is evident that the majority of the respondents need awareness on the functions of the three spheres of government. This will assist them in understanding the role and contribution of the spheres of government towards the implementation of community development projects in the area of the study.

4.3.2 Data obtained through structured interviews

In this section, the data collected from community development project managers is presented. The responses from the above stakeholders gave the researcher a clear picture about the situation and the factors that hamper the effectiveness of community projects at Thulamela Local Municipality.

In this research study, the following challenges were identified by the researcher as the main factors that hamper the contribution of community development projects for poverty alleviation in Thulamela Local Municipality.

- Inadequate training programmes: Out of the fifty (50) respondents who were interviewed, forty (40) of them revealed that few training programmes were offered for project management, hence there was no sustainability of community projects in the area of the study.

- Lack of resources: Out of the fifty (50) community project managers interviewed, forty-four (44) of them confirmed that lack of resources impacted negatively on the implementation of community projects in the area of the study.

- Lack of monitoring and evaluation: Forty-two (42) of the fifty (50) respondents interviewed indicated that community projects were not monitored and evaluated; hence there was little contribution from these community projects towards to poverty alleviation in the area of the study.

- Lack of alternative strategies: Out of fifty (50) respondents interviewed, forty–six (46) claimed that lack of alternative strategies had contributed negatively to the effectiveness of community projects with regard to poverty alleviation in Thulamela Local Municipality.

4.4 Conclusion

The main objective of this chapter was to present and analyse the research results of the empirical study. Responses from the interviews were also analysed. The findings concerned the contribution of community projects, as well as the factors that affect the implementation of community projects in the area of the study.

The conclusion may be drawn that the contribution of community development projects towards poverty alleviation depends on the availability of resources, relevant training programmes, alternative strategies, policy orientation and monitoring and evaluation of the community development project by the initiators.

This chapter also revealed that the problem of managing community projects needs a thorough investigation so as to create awareness on how community development projects can contribute positively towards poverty alleviation in Thulamela Local Municipality. This chapter also analysed and evaluated challenges that potentially hinder the contribution of community development projects in the area of the study. These will eventually assist the project initiators, project managers and other stakeholders to work harmoniously to alleviate poverty in the rural communities within Thulamela Local municipality.

In the next chapter, the overview of the research as well as its findings, conclusions and recommendations will be presented.

CHAPTER FIVE

OVERVIEW, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The people who run community development projects in the Thulamela Local Municipality need strategies that will empower them to be good project managers. The data collected in Chapter four revealed that funds directed to project operations are not managed according to the PFMA and other related policies governing public funds.

In order to minimise this problem, the project initiator should empower project leaders to manage community development projects according to the requirements of financial management public policies and acts, to manage scarce resources well, to understand the role of the three spheres of government and to develop appropriate strategies that will improve the livelihood of the rural community. This chapter will also present the findings and recommendations suggested in this study.

5.2 Overview

Challenges faced by project leaders have necessitated the researcher to discuss the research problem, purpose and significance of the study in Chapter one. To understand these challenges well, relevant literature has been reviewed so as to locate the study into the appropriate context. Research design and methodology were used to collect analyses and assess data in Chapter three and Chapter four. In this chapter, the researcher has summarised the information provided in the previous chapters. The findings and recommendations are also outlined in this chapter.

5.3 Findings from the literature review

- The concept "community development" is not static but dynamic.
- The term "community development "is defined in different ways by different authors, but basically has the same meaning and impact.
- Correct implementation of community projects alleviates poverty and improves the standard of living in rural communities.
- The concept "project management", as a tenet of good management practice, should be analysed properly, so as to assist community project leaders to handle their scarce resources appropriately.
- Monitoring and evaluation of projects will assist project initiators and leaders to achieve the desired goal of alleviating poverty amongst rural communities.
- Community development projects, through good financial practices, could make a positive impact on poverty alleviation and human development.

5.4 Findings from the structured questionnaire

- Eighty percent (80%) of the respondents confirmed that community projects were not making any impact on their livelihoods.
- Seventy-eight percent (78%) of the respondents revealed that these were few benefits from community projects in the area.
- Eighty-eight percent (88%) of the respondents claimed that they did not attend any training to enhance their skills in project management.
- Eighty-six percent (86%) of the respondents agreed that they did not adhere to the PFMA as required by law.
- Eighty-two percent (82%) of the respondents revealed that they were not exposed to any policies related to the implementation of community projects .
- Sixty-four percent (64%) of the respondents confirmed that they received insufficient funds to assist them towards the implementation of community projects.
- Eighty-four percent (84%) of the respondents revealed that they did not have any strategic plan that would align the project outputs with the intended objectives.

- Seventy percent (70%) of the respondents disagreed that community projects created jobs for the community in which they were operating.

- Ninety percent (90%) agreed that community projects were not sustainable in their sphere of operation.

- Ninety percent (90%) of the respondents revealed that they did not know the different functions of the three spheres of government.

5.5 Findings from the structured interview

Interviews were conducted to get a general feel for the project managers which are members of the community and to find out whether there're were any benefits that they derived from the implementation of community projects.

- Out of the fifty community members who were interviewed, forty of them confirmed that they were not benefiting from their local community projects.

- Forty-four of the respondents reported that they did not receive any training related to project implementation.

- Out of the fifty respondents interviewed, thirty-five revealed that community projects implemented in the area did not bring any improvement to the standard of living of the people in the area of the study.

- Forty of the respondents confirmed that project funds were not managed properly to achieve the intended goals in the area of the study.

- Out of fifty respondents interviewed, forty-five indicated that community project leaders did not have any strategic plan to achieve the intended goals of the project.

5.6 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings from the imperical investigation and the structured interviews, the following motivated recommendations are made:

- Project initiators should develop a strategy that will compel project managers to come up with programmes that will make an impact on the livelihood of the people in the area of the study.

- Project initiators should ensure that local people benefit from the projects that are initiated in their area.

- Project initiators should train project managers on project management, so as to manage community projects in an efficient and effective way.

- Community development project managers should adhere to the PFMA, to avoid corruption and mismanagement of funds.

- Project initiators should empower community development project managers on issues related to policy implementation.

- Policy-makers should create awareness among community project leaders about the functions of the three spheres of government in the area of the study.

- Project initiators should provide enough funds for the implementation of community development projects, so as to have sustainable projects in the community.

- Community development project managers should be encouraged to develop strategic plans that will help them align their outputs with the intended outcome(s).

- Project initiators should initiate projects that will create jobs for local communities.

- Project initiators should encourage community members to identify projects that will be sustainable within their respective communities.

5.7 Recommendations for further research

Every research is intended to suggest further research, because no research is complete in itself. The following topics are suggested for further research:

- The impact of sustainable community projects in Thulamela Local Municipality

- The perception of young people towards the implementation of community projects in Thulamela Local Municipality

- The importance of cost-effective approaches in the implementation of the community projects

- Challenges faced by women in managing community projects in Thulamela Local Municipality

5.8 Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to investigate the contributions made by community development projects towards poverty alleviation in Thulamela Local Municipality. Problems and factors were discussed and appraised in detail in the previous chapters. The findings and recommendations for problem-solving are briefly stated and outlined in this chapter. This will assist policy-makers and project initiators to develop appropriate strategies that will enhance the capacity of local community members and establish sustainable community projects. It is now the responsibility of the project initiators and leaders to look at possible ways of implementing some of the recommendations made by the researcher to alleviate poverty through community projects in the Thulamela Local Municipality.

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