AN ANALYSIS OF TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF uMHLATHUZE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

BY

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DECLARATION

I **Bongani M Mhlongo** declare that:

i.   This research study on An Analysis of Transformation Initiatives. A Case study of uMhlathuze Local Municipality, which is hereby submitted for the Degree of a Master in Public Administration (MPA) in the School of Management, IT & Governance in the Discipline of Public Governance, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, is my own original research work.

ii.   The dissertation has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

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Date: 20 February 2018

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ABSTRACT

With the advent of democracy in 1994, the South African government made a commitment to deliver services to all citizens irrespective of race. To achieve this objective, service delivery was decentralized to local government. However, the wave of service delivery protests in South Africa raises questions around the successful implementation of this strategy. The journey to transform the South African local government system has not been an easy one. While the vision set out in the Constitution (1996) is clear, implementation is confronted by significant challenges. Scholars present conflicting results on decentralization. Some contend that decentralization resulted in substantial achievements in some regions and countries, but partial developmens with less positive impacts in others.

The study sought to investigate the effects and impact of decentralization on governance, closely examining community participating in budgetary and policy-making activities. It further sought to establish if there is any correlation between audit outcomes and service delivery using the uMhlathuze Local Municipality as a case study. Finally, the study sought to establish factors that drive/impede the implementation of transformation initiatives. To realize the objectives of the study, the researcher utilized decentralization model as a lens to investigate whether governance practices are effective in improving service delivery through responsive, accountable, and efficient democratic participatory local government.

For purposes of this study, the researcher adopted a quantitative research approach because of its objectivity and its ability to draw inferences. The researcher utilised purposive and convenience sampling. Convenience sampling was utilized to identify key informants. The results are presented using the

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. The SPSS analysis made it possible to formulate propositions.

The study found that participatory democracy is present within the uMhlathuze Local Municipality but has not spread across all the areas within the municipality's jurisdiction. Most of the study participants were of the view that the Municipality consults through ward councillors and/or headmen (izinduna), suggesting that ward committees are active. However, some areas still lack adequate services, especially peri-urban and rural areas. Party-political conflict is said to be the cause for concern.

The study participants felt strongly that audit outcomes have a positive correlation with the service delivery and the quality thereof. In the last five financial year periods, the uMhlathuze Local Municipality has received clean audit opinions consecutively. At the same period, the municipality is reported to have achieved great strides in service delivery. These findings raise some doubt of the authenticity of the claims that local government is over-legislated, thus resulting in municipalities spending more time complying with the law than delivering services.

It is however, concluded that participatory democracy in the local government is witnessed mostly during the run-up to elections, during budget and IDP processes. Endemic corruption, inadequate community participation, and undue political interference in local government are some of the reasons for the failure to implement good governance through decentralization.

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ACRONYMS

AG	Auditor-General
AGSA	Auditor-General of South Africa
ANC	African National Congress
AsgiSA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiatives for South Africa
CCG	Community Care Givers
CBA	Community-Based Adaptation
EIA	Environment and Impact Assessment
EMF	Environmental Management Framework
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
ICC	Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
HOD	Head of Department
KCDM	King Cetshwayo District Municipality
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LED	Local Economic Development
LGTA	The Local Government Transition Act, 209 of 1993
LGSETA	Local Government Sector Education Training Authority
LGTAS	Local Government Turnaround Strategy
MFMA	Municipal Finance Management Act, No 53 of 2003
MIG	Municipal Infrastructure Grant
NDP	National Development Plan
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
NGP	New Growth Path
NPM	New Public Management
NSDP	The National Spatial Development Perspective
NYDA	National Youth Development Agency
OSS	Operation Sukuma Sakhe Programme
PGDS	Provincial Growth and Development Strategy Guidelines
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEDA	Small Enterprise Development Agency
SMMEs	Small, Medium and Micro-sized Enterprises
SOEs	State-Owned Entities
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TLC's	Transitional Local Councils
TMS	Transitional Metropolitan Structures
UK	United Kingdom
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
USA	United State of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The focus on service delivery and governance has taken a centre stage across the disciplines and most platforms of social sciences. Scholars and analysts view governance and service delivery as interrelated and inseparable (The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, 2016). The recent waves of service delivery protests in South Africa have compelled scholars including the likes of (Fakir and Moloi, 2011; Pietersen and Oni 2014 ; Twala, 2014) to raise concerns about the new South African democratic dispensation. The democratic government that came into power in 1994 undertook to transform the South African society by delivering sustainable basic services to all citizens irrespective of race. To achieve this objective, service delivery was decentralized to local government. Since local governments are amongst the communities they serve, they are considered to be perfectly placed to meet the needs of their communities. As they are responsible for delivering basic services to their communities. Since the local government has an obligation (as per the Constitution) to plan the services delivery points in an accessible and economic way. The local government has a responsibility to work closely with other spheres of government, private and non-government organizations to ensure that services are planned and built around the clients' needs. Mbuyisa (2013) is of the view that government officials' lack of accountability and a dearth of community involvement are among the features contributing to service delivery protests.

This chapter presents the framework of the study and a concise overview of uMhlathuze Local Municipality. The study employed the decentralization of services to local government sphere as a lense to investigate the extent to which local government's transformation initiatives to promote development to communities through effective public participation and consultation. The study further sought to investigate if there is any correlation between audit

outcomes and service delivery. Finally, the study investigated factors that drive/impede the implementation of transformation initiatives within the local government, using uMhlathuze Local Municipality as a case study.

1.2   Background to the Study

With the dawn of democracy in 1994, there was a hope for improved quality of household life through an improved service delivery since government made a commitment to provide services to all inhabitants irrespective of race. According to Layman (2003), the new dispensation created high expectations, especially amongst the poor and the impoverished Black Africans that bore the brunt of the racial segregation imposed by colonization and apartheid. The apartheid era resulted in huge disparities in income levels and development. According to Cloete (1995), the apartheid value system manifested most strongly at local government level, with the white population enjoying privileges at the expense of other race groups.

During the reconstruction and transformation of the South African society and institutions, the South African's new Constitution created three realms of government, being the national, provincial and local government respectively. The executive and legislative authority of local government is bestowed in the municipal council (Local Government: Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000 and Regulations).   In reference to section 152 (1) of the Constitution, local government is mandated to provide for basic needs of the community and to promote social and economic development. The December 2000 local elections represented the final phase in the evolution and transformation of the local government that is positioned as the key delivery and development organ. Local government is therefore considered a key player in transforming the lives of the South Africans through the decentralization of services. It is believed that local government is well-positioned to address many socio-economic challenges as it is the sphere of government that is close to the people (Madumo, 2012). The establishment of local government as an independent sphere, but

interdepended to the other two spheres of government, was an important shift and a milestone from the legacy of colonization and apartheid (SALGA, 2015a).

Section 152 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996, (hereafter referred as the Constitution) sets out the objectives of local government as follows:

a) To provide democratic and accountable government for local communities;
b) To ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner;
c) To promote social and economic development;
d) To promote a safe and healthy environment; and
e) To encourage the involvement of communities and community organizations in the matters of local government.

Whilst government has adopted several pieces of legislation (including the Constitution, the Municipal Finance Management Act No. 56 of 2003 (MFMA), the Municipal Systems Act, No. 32 of 2000, The White Paper on Local Government, 1998, etc.) with the aim of improving the quality of the lives of all South Africans, implementation has however been uneven and non-existent in some of the local municipalities. Twala (2014) mentions that, despite the Constitutional mandate to local government, the local government has however been unsuccessful in some areas to provide and deliver services such as water and sanitation, electricity, refuse removal and shelter. This failure resulted in community protests.

According to Ramjee and van Donk (2011) and Chikulo (2016), the South African local government sphere is very unstable due to low fiscal reserves, poor management, poor and/or a lack of service delivery, service delivery backlogs resulting in increased community protests. However, they contend that these challenges are not new to democratic local government as many were inherited

from the apartheid regime. SALGA (2015a) and (Chikulo, 2016) contend that the perceived corruption among public officials and politicians have compounded the problem and has resulted in the South Africans losing faith in public institutions' ability to responding to their needs. Throughout the country, communities struggle to gain access to services. Further, Mbuyisa (2013) posits that government officials' lack of accountability and the absence of public partaking are among the reasons that contribute to service delivery protests and grievances. Mbuyisa (2013) concurs with Ramjee and van Donk (2011) and Chikulo (2016) but argues that community protests are due to "the narrow base for meaningful and inclusive public participation in local governance and development".

Poor communication between local government and communities, growing poverty and inequality and perceived corruption suggest that municipalities are unable to deliver on their developmental mandate. Indeed, these factors are considered the key drivers of protest in South Africa (SALGA, 2015b; Chikulo, 2016). It is thus imperative to explore the extent to which local government is fulfilling its constitutional mandate to identify and drive transformation initiatives in partnership with citizens to improve the livelihoods of local communities. The White Paper on Local Government (1988) asserts that local government is well placed to engage citizens not only through the election of their councillors, but by participating during budgetary processes and during policy-making.

1.3   Focus of the Study

The study sought to investigate the role of local government transformation initiatives in promoting development through service delivery based on public participation and consultation. It investigated whether decentralization as a 'service delivery model' epitomises public participation within the local government sphere and to establish if there is any correlation between audit outcomes and service delivery, using uMhlathuze Local Municipality as a case

study. In view of the accolades received by uMhlathuze Local Municipality over the past five consecutive financial periods, this local municipality is considered as an appropriate case study to analyse the role of transformation initiatives in promoting development within its jurisdiction, and investigate how local government ensures that communities, especially those in the lower-income bracket, participate in policy and decision-making processes that impact on their livelihood. The question is whether the municipality's transformation initiatives, through the decentralization of services led to development while adhering to the principles of good governance.

1.4   An overview of uMhlathuze Local Municipality

uMhlathuze Local Municipality (commonly referred as the City of uMhlathuze) is one of 44 local municipalities in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), and it falls within King Cetshwayo District Municipality (KCDM). The Municipality was established simultaneously with the establishment of the democratic local government in December 2000. The Local Government Turnaround Strategy: Working Together, Turning tide in Local Government, 2009 (LGTAS) has categorized the uMhlathuze Local Municipality as a B1 Municipality. It is one of three municipalities in KZN (excluding Ethekwini Municipality which is categorized as a Metro), including the Msunduzi Local Municipality and the Newcastle Local Municipality with the largest budget and is also referred to as a secondary city (LGTAS). uMhlathuze Local Municipality is situated on the north-east coastline of the Province of KZN and is approximately 180 kilometers north-east of Durban. It covers a land area of approximately 795km^2 (uMhlathuze Local Municipality: Final IDP Review: 2016/2017; (Statistics South Africa, 2011)).

In the opening remarks in the Municipality's annual report of 2015-2016, His Worship, the Mayor Councillor Mhlongo defines good government as "one that exercises maximum and inclusive participation" of all stakeholders and that holds dear the principles of transparency and accountability to its citizens

(uMhlathuze Local Municipality Annual Report, 2015-2016). The Mayor adds that, "these are the hallmarks of a caring and responsible government as envisaged by the Freedom Charter and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa". In the concluding remarks, the Mayor states that the Municipality prides itself on good, clean governance since it has received a clean audit opinion in the past consecutive five years (uMhlathuze Local Municipality Annual Report, 2015-2016. In the same report, the Municipal Manager, Dr Sibeko, reveals that the Municipality was recognised by CoGTA at the 2016 Municipal Excellence Awards ceremony held at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Conventional Centre (ICC) in Durban as the best performing municipality in the provision of basic services (uMhlathuze Municipal Annual Report, 2015-2016. He adds that the Municipality received the following awards:

a) Most credible IDP recipient – for five consecutive years;
b) Best Rural Housing Project;
c) Best Residential Units;
d) National 1st Runner up – Greenest Municipality Awards;
e) Blue Drop recipient – 2012 - 2013;
f) Green Drop recipient – 2012 - 2013:
   ➢ Vulindlela Waste Water Treatment Plant;
   ➢ Enseleni Waste Water Treatment Plant;
   ➢ Ngwelezane Waste Water Treatment Plant;
g) Blue Flag status at Alkantstrand for 2014 - 2015;
h) Govan Mbeki Awards for Human Settlements:
   ➢ Best Performing Level 2 Accredited Municipality 2013-14;
   ➢ Best Performing Family Units 2013-14;
i) Municipal Service Excellence Awards 2013-2014:
   ➢ Best Performance in Providing Basic Services;
   ➢ Best Performance in Infrastructure Innovation (Technical Operating Centre); and
   ➢ Clean Audit from 2012-2013 and 2016-2017 (in five consecutive years).

According to the Municipal Manager, these achievements reflect the manner in which the uMhlathuze Local Municipality takes cognisance of all government priorities {i.e. the National Development Plan (NDP) and Provincial Growth Development Strategy (PGDS)}, the adherence to the MFMA, government legislative framework and the Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000. In his concluding remarks, the Mayor argued that such accolades reflect a visionary leadership and good governance. The Municipality has been acknowledged by the National Department of Finance for having a budget that is credible and well-funded and relevant to the needs of the local communities. The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the same municipality has been appointed by the Minister of Finance to serve on the Accounting Standard Board. Thus, the uMhlathuze Local Municipality was considered for the case study.

1.5 Economic profile of the Municipality

The uMhlathuze Local Municipal area comprises three types of settlements, that is; the city centres, peri-urban and rural areas. The main city centres are Richards Bay and Empangeni. Empangeni is an important commercial and service centre for the sub-region, while Richards Bay is a significant commercial node. These urban centres include formal residential areas, comprising the high-rise flats, former R293 towns (i.e. the old townships), and recently constructed low-income residential areas. Felixton, Ngwelezane, eSikhaleni, and eNseleni are smaller urban centres within the Municipality and are surrounded by large tracts of land under traditional leadership. The traditional authority areas within the Municipality are characterized by dense unplanned settlement; particularly those on the borders of towns, and ad hoc land allocation by traditional leaders (*Amakhosi*). Some of these densely settled rural areas are, in effect, urban. Commercial farmland is under sugar cane and timber.

The main entry to the municipal area is through the N2 in a north-south direction and the R34 from Ntambanana in an east-west direction. Other major roads in the area include the MR431 (a northerly access into Richards Bay from the N2) as well as the Old Main Road that overlap the N2. Railway lines are dominant within the municipal area but are devoted to commercial/industrial services; no passenger service is offered. John Ross Parkway links the two-main urban centres (Empangeni and Richards Bay) and has recently been reconstructed and transformed. This road brags the country's longest bridge. It was constructed to meet increasing transport needs in line with the Municipality's and harbour's development plans. In addition to be an industrial and economic hub, the Municipality has a diverse natural environment including the Richards Bay deep-water port that was instrumental in the spatial development of the area and impact its future development. There is also an airport and few of landing strips in the municipal area.

Major players in the uMhlathuze Local Municipality's economy include Richards Bay Minerals (RBM), two aluminium smelters, Hillside Aluminium and Bayside, both operated by BHP Billiton, and Foskor which operates a fertilizer plant at the Richards Bay harbour. RBM mines iron ore, rutile (titanium oxide) and zircon from the sand dunes close to the Richards Bay lagoon. Local exports include aluminium, coal, other heavy minerals, granite, and paper pulp. Richards Bay harbour is one of eight large ports in South Africa (uMhlathuze Local Municipality, 2016a). Although the Municipality is rich in minerals and has the large port, unemployment rate is relatively high as it stands at 31% (uMhlathuze Local Municipality, 2017; Statistics South Africa, 2011). The job creation, economic development and transformation roadmap focuses on key industries like, agriculture, agri-processing and the rural economy, tourism, the maritime and blue economy, manufacturing, mining and beneficiation, the built environment, wholesale, retail, trade and services, and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and innovation within the Municipality. These industries are the key contributors of the economy within the municipality, the district and the province.

1.6   Demographic Information

According to the uMhlathuze Local Municipality IDP Review (2016-2017) and (Statistics South Africa, 2011), the Municipality is home to an estimated 334 459 people within 86 609 households.   uMhlathuze Local Municipality's population has grown faster than that of other local municipalities within KCDM. Population growth within the Municipality was 15.65% followed by uMfolozi Local Municipality at 14.91%.   In contrast, Nkandla Local Municipality's population shrank by 14.36%, followed by Ntambanana Local Municipality at 12.31% and uMlalazi Local Municipality at 3.38%. This high population growth in the uMhlathuze Local Municipality as compared to population shrinkages in the Nkandla Local Municipality and Ntambanana Local Municipality could be attributed to better job opportunities that are available in the uMhlathuze Local Municipality.   Population growth between the census of 2001 and 2011 was estimated at 0.24% per annum within KCDM.   Household sizes within KCDM have decreased from 4.7 to 4.5 persons per household, but uMhlathuze Local Municipality's household sizes have remained the same at 3.9 persons per household. This figure has remained unchanged since 2001 and the Municipality has the smallest average household size in KCDM. The breakdown by population group, home language, and gender is as follows:

Table 1: Population Groups

Population Group	Black Africans	White	Other (Indians, Asians, Coloured etc.)
No. of people	293 354	24 563	16 541
Percentage	87.72%	7.34%	4.94%

Source: Adapted from Stats SA (2011)

Table 1 above shows that Black Africans are in overwhelming majority, constituting 87.72% of the population within the Municipality's jurisdiction, followed by Whites and others at 7.34% and 4.94% respectively.

Table 2: Home Language

Home Language	IsiZulu	English	Afrikaans	Other (IsiNdebele, Setswana, IsiXhosa etc.)
No. of People	263 341	31 265	16 546	12 563
Percentage	81.35%	9.66%	5.11%	3.88%

Source: Adapted from Stats SA (2011)

Table 2 above indicates that IsiZulu as a home language is used by 81.35% of the Municipality's inhabitants, with English in second place at 9.66%, followed by Afrikaans at 5.11%. Other languages, like IsiNdebele, IsiXhosa and others are at 3.88%.

Table 3: Gender breakdown

Gender	Female	Male
No. of People	171 517	162 942
Percentage	51.28%	48.72%

Source: Adapted from Stats SA (2011)

Table 3 above shows that females make up 51.28% of the Municipality's population and 48.72% are males. This could account for the increase in the number of female-headed households, although some women are divorced or widows.

1.7   Transformation Initiatives in South Africa

With the advent of democracy, the South African government faced enormous pressure to reconstruct and transform the lives of citizens, particularly Africans, females and people with disabilities.   All state institutions were called upon to redress the inequalities shaped by centuries of racial segregation under colonization and apartheid (Layman, 2003). Cloete (1995) notes, that the apartheid value system manifested most strongly at local government level, with whites enjoying privileges at the expense of other race groups.

During the reconstruction and transformation of the society, the Constitution established three spheres of government that have autonomous authority but are inter-dependent, viz: the national, provincial and local government. The local government's executive and legislative authority is bestowed in its municipal council (The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 and Regulations). The Constitution mandates local government to provide for democratic and accountable government for local communities through the provision of services in a sustainable manner by promoting sustainable social and economic development.

Commenting on the White Paper on Local Government (1988), the former Chairperson of the White Paper Political Committee, Mr. Pravin Gordhan stated that:

> *The process of transforming the institutions of the South African State is premised on the fact that the new democratic state has a specific mission; that of meeting the new developmental objectives which will help to create a better life for all.*

> *The policies in the White Paper Local Government (1998) are the result of a long process and an even longer history. A history of a strong civic movement, a history of popular participation, and the development of principles which will underpin local government structures through the years of struggle.*

> *The process for developing a new policy for local government was done against the backdrop of globalization and the redefinition of the nation state as well as a new emphasis on decentralization.*

Mr. Gordhan further added that the White Paper on Local Government (1998) was a manifestation of the belief in the decentralization of services to local government of a distinctive type that culminated in the creation of three spheres of government to govern cooperatively, but independently. In contrast

to Gordhan's confident predictions, Madumo (2012) asserts that local government has been unable to achieve the set developmental goals, but the author acknowledges that was because of the inherited dysfunctional local government system based on ineffective structures.

In the lead-in to the first local government elections, political parties promised communities a better life for all; placing the provision of services at the top of the socio-economic transformation agenda, but these promises were barely realized (Madumo, 2012; Twala, 2014). Transformation initiatives introduced after the 1994 national elections to fast-track development included policies like, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) in 1994. The RDP aimed to integrate growth, development, reconstruction and development into one programme. The Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy adopted in 1996 was a market-oriented programme that had little impact in alleviating the plight of poor. Other political transformation and administrative reforms included the Accelerated Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (AsgiSA), which was introduced in 2005 and the New Growth Path (NGP) adopted in 2010. However, these transformation initiatives failed in improving the socio-economic environments and the lives of the African Black South Africans. These transformation initiatives were implemented at the national level with a belief that with a fully functional local government system, the initiatives will lead to improved living standards of the society. Shaidi (2013) asserts that this was partly due to the legacy of apartheid policies that were broad in scope and could not be reversed by means of short-term programmes such as those listed above. These were macroeconomic policies that were implemented at a national level and could not be easily be filtered down to local government leve. The decentralization of services to local government is one of the transformation initiatives that Madumo (2012) believes can appropriately address certain socio-economic challenges as local government is closest to the citizens.

1.8   Aim of the Study

The study seeks to investigate the effects and impact of decentralization on governance, closely examining community participating in budgetary and policy-making activities. It further seeks to investigate if there is any correlation between audit outcomes and service delivery. Finally, the study seeks to establish factors that drive and/or impede the implementation of transformation initiatives using uMhlathuze Local Municipality as a case study.

The study focuses on transformation initiatives at local government level that seek to promote development and provide basic services to communities through effective public participation and consultation. It investigated if decentralization as a 'service delivery model' epitomises public participation within local government as envisaged in the White Paper on Local Government of March 1988 and the Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000 and Regulations. The study also examined the extent to which the public participate during the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and budgetary planning processes, including policy formulation. Finally, it sought to establish if there is any correlation between audit outcomes and service delivery.

1.9   Problem Statement

Rondinelli (2007); Nleya (2011) and Cele (2015) draw attention to the growing incidences of service delivery protests country-wide. Communities appear to be increasingly dissatisfied with the services provided by local government. Cele (2015) posits that poor comprehension of the responsibility of the local government and the importance of public participation in the development process are the main cause of such protest action. Furthermore, the author acknowledges the lack of understanding of the roles of national and provincial governments. However, Nleya (2011) contends that the linkage between service delivery and protest is somehow overstated, and contends that protests are related to a variety of factors beyond service delivery.

Although public sector governance and transformation initiatives in promoting development have been documented in the literature, it has become clear that each public-sector entity is unique despite that they are governed by the same legislative framework, but each municipality operates and serves the public in a unique way. The uMhlathuze Local Municipality is a typical example in KZN. The journey to transform the local government system has however not been easy. Challenges included the coming together of personnel from different race groups and different cultures; inability to raise sufficient revenue, poor community participation, undue party-political interfering, political infighting, ubiquitous corruption, inadequate capacity due to a shortage of skilled human resources, and the fact that the youth lack the skills required to take up positions at the local government level.

1.10 Objectives of the Study

The research study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. To establish the impact of decentralization within uMhlathuze Local Municipality.
2. To determine the impact of audit opinions on transformation initiatives in uMhlathuze Local Municipality.
3. To identify factors that drive/impede the implementation of transformation initiatives in uMhlathuze Local Municipality.

1.11 Research Questions

The study aimed at answering the following research questions.

1. What impact has decentralization had on the implementation of transformation initiatives in uMhlathuze Local Municipality?
2. Have previous unqualified audit opinions impacted on the transformation initiatives?

3. What factors drive/impede the implementation of transformation initiatives in uMhlathuze Local Municipality?

1.12 Significance of the Study

The study sought to investigate the effects and impact of decentralization on governance, closely examining community participating in budgetary and policy-making activities. It further seeks to establish if there is any correlation between audit outcomes and service delivery. Finally, the study sought to establish factors that drive/impede the implementation of transformation initiatives. The findings of the research study will add to the body of learning on decentralization of services to local government sphere. The findings will stimulate new research directions within the good governance framework and assist policy-makers in the uMhlathuze Local Municipality and other local municipalities, including the other spheres of government to formulate and implement sound development plans and strategies.

1.13 Research Methodology

For purposes of this study, the researcher adopted a quantitative research approach due to its objectivity and its ability to draw inferences. The researcher utilised purposive and convenience sampling. Convenience sampling was utilized to identify key informants. The results are presented using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. The SPSS analysis made it possible to formulate propositions.

1.14 Research Ethical Considerations

Creswell (2014) and Terre Blanche et al. (2012) state that researchers need to protect the welfare of their research participants in order to develop trust, ensure the integrity of the research, and ensure that neither the participants

nor their organisations are exposed to harm. Terre Blanche et al. (2012) are of the view that the research ethics also extends to plagiarism. Compliance with ethical codes has become mandatory for social scientists, with most universities requiring that research with human participants be reviewed by an independent research ethics committee.

The researcher took the following steps to comply with ethical principles:

a. The study was conducted in line with the ethical guidelines adopted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal's (UKZN) School of Management, Information Technology and Governance.
b. The researcher applied for an ethical clearance and clearance was received from the University.
c. Subsequent to obtaining the clearance and prior to collecting data from the participants, a permission to conduct the study was sought from the uMhlathuze Municipal Manager and was subsequently obtained.
d. The aims and objectives of the study were explained to all potential participants. All the participants signed an informed consent form.
e. Participants were advised that their participation was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw at any time. Furthermore, they were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Participants were provided with the contact details of both the researcher and the supervisor
f. The researcher undertook to respect the dignity of the Local Council and other authorities including the Traditional Authority.
g. The researcher undertook to acknowledge the work of others and reference accordingly.
h. Upon completion of the study, the researcher undertook to run the report on Turnitin as required by UKZN to ensure the authenticity of the information.

1.15 Outline of the Study

The study is divided into six chapters, as follows:

Chapter 1 sets out the background of the study, as well as an overview of uMhlathuze Local Municipality. This chapter also highlights the economic profile of the municipality, the demographical profile of both the uMhlathuze Local Municipality as well the that of the King Cetshwayo District Municipality. The chapter highlights few national transformation initiatives policies. These policies were found to be ineffective and failed to improve the socio-economic environments for the Black Africans. It presents the study's aim and objectives, the problem statement and the research questions, research methodology, ethical considerations. Finally, this chapter discusses the study's significance and outlines its structure.

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework employed for this study, with a focus on the identifiable theories, like Public Governance Theory (PGT), Decentralization Theory (DT) and the Participatory Democratic Theory (PDT). These theories formed the theoretical groundings for the study. This chapter also made some observations on the theoretical aspects underpinning auditing in the public-sector environment. It examines different theories on governance, including the New Public Management (NPM).

Chapter 3 presents literature review on local government utilizing decentralization model as a theoretical lens, relating to service delivery. The chapter investigated the impact of municipal audit outcomes and the national imperatives. The chapter presents various views on decentralization as an element of good governance for participatory democracy, public participation, and the causes of community protest across South Africa. Finally, the chapter deliberates on the initiatives carried out by the Provincial government and other local municipalities including the uMhlathuze municipality, such as the Operation Sukuma Sakhe as an integrated service delivery model.

Chapter 4 presents the research methodology employed to conduct this study together with the research design. The chapter provides a better justification

for the positivist quantitative research paradigm, methods and approaches that were adopted by the researcher. Further, the chapter discusses the research approach used in the study, research philosophy, research design, sampling, data collection tools used, data analysis techniques employed and the limitations of the research study. Finally, the chapter closes by highlighting the ethical considerations that were considered to conduct this research.

Chapter 5 presents; discusses and analyses the research results. It highlights the study participants' demographic details that impact on community participation in council meetings, including gender, age, educational level, employment status, distance to meeting venues, mode of transport and the medium of communication used to invite community members to such meetings. Sections of this chapter discussed the descriptive statistics for the study, reliability and validity of measures used.

Chapter 6 presents a summary of the research results, an overall conclusion, the study's limitations, and recommendations arising from the findings.

1.16 Conclusion

The journey to transform local government in South Africa is a complex one. With three spheres of government and overlapping roles in some cases, it is difficult for the public to differentiate the different levels of responsibilities. This is one of the reasons for the wave of service delivery protests across the country.

The uMhlathuze Local Municipality has done well in terms of service delivery as confirmed by the accolades it has received. It has also performed well in terms of compliance with the local government legislative framework and has received a clean audit opinion in the past five consecutive years. This

Municipality was therefore appropriate for the use in the case study to analyse the role of transformation initiatives in promoting development, and investigate how local government ensures that communities, especially those in the lower-income bracket, participate in policy- and decision-making processes that affect their livelihood.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical framework employed for this study, with a focus on the identifiable theories, like Public Governance Theory (PGT), Decentralization Theory (DT) and the Participatory Democratic Theory (PDT). These theories formed the theoretical groundings for the study. This chapter also made some observations on the theoretical aspects underpinning auditing in the public-sector environment. It examines different theories on governance and the New Public Management (NPM).

2.2   New Public Management and Governance

Local government is viewed as the nucleus of development and service delivery. It is consequently expected to lead and manage transformation initiatives to eradicate poverty by providing basic services, including, *inter alia*, water and sanitation, refuse removal, and to create job opportunities through local economic development. Fast and Kallis (2011) describe South Africa as a country characterised by developed and underdeveloped areas due to the spatial arrangements imposed by the colonial and apartheid governments, where whites lived in well-developed and serviced areas, whilst most Black Africans resided in poorly serviced rural and peri-urban areas. By and large, this remains the case even today. Albeit limited resources available, public administration is expected to stimulate and support socio-economic and socio-political development.   With limited resources available, Nel and Binns (2001) and Sebudubudu (2010) posit that good governance structures are in place and are effective to ensure that development is about empowering people, especially at the lower end. Good governance structures will ensure that suffering amongst the most impoverished, rural communities, women, children, and the elderly is alleviated.

Post-1994, South Africa embraced market-based New Public Management (NPM) reforms that emphasise value-for-money, cost reduction, efficiency, effectiveness, and citizen/community participation to safeguard democratic government (Rizvi, 2007; Hughes, 2012; Siddle and Koelble, 2012). Despite the limitations of the neo-classical approach to the African public sector, Dassah (2013) contends that NPM had a major influence on how government conducted its affairs and instituted public sector reforms.   This resulted in the decentralization and democratization of local government, disaggregation and downsizing of services, the adoption of performance management and outsourcing of public services. Hughes (2012) and Dassah (2013) add that, in embarking on public sector reform, the South African government adopted the enterprise culture and neo-liberal theory that underpinned such reforms in the Western countries during the 1970s and the 1980s. The predicament of governance during the 1980s led to re-conceptualisation on how the state conducted its affairs in Western countries. Classical economists' views have dominated public management reform, drawing on neoclassical economics and neo-classical theories such as public choice theory, agency theory, stewardship theory, stakeholder theory, resource dependency theory, transaction cost and political theory.

Peters (2012) and Shareia (2015) are of the view that like globalization, decentralization as a form of governance has become a popular concept in the past few decades, and is now the most commonly used term in political science. Both these concepts have had positive and negative effects. To comply with the prescripts of global institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), African states adopted the same neoliberal policies following neo-classical orthodoxies. While the adoption of governance principles in local government has been extolled as it promotes democracy, the effects of globalization and governance with their neoclassical prism have, according to (Mkandawire, 2001), subdued the role of government. However, (Mkandawire, 2001; Peters, 2012) note that effective governance requires the participation of the government/state as governance is a political concept.

According to Nyalunga (2006), the crisis in South Africa has been the key driver of reforms that led government to decentralize services to local government while other servives remain the responsibility of the Provincial and National Government spheres. Section 152 of the Constitution mandates the local government play a pivotal developmental role within its residents. If local government is to be perceived by citizens as acting within acceptable norms, public officials (both politicians and administrators) must been seen to be acting justly and fairly to all, displaying transparency and openness (Vyas-Doorgapersad and Ababio, 2010) in line with the *Batho Pele* principles.

2.3   Decentralization Theory and the Public Governance Theory

While some argue that the living standards in South Africa have improved since the advent of democracy in 1994, but Alexander and Kane-Berman (2014) posit that wastage, incompetence, and corruption continue to plague the public sector leading to community protests continuing. They further observe that it is easy for analysts to praise the government for progress made in terms of service delivery as well as castigate local government for failing to fulfil its mandate. Their view is that analysts tend to reach 'naïve' and obvious conclusions regarding local government's lack of capacity, while consultants recommend skills training and bringing skilled personnel on board to improve service delivery. Picard and Mogale (2015) observe that, in reality the situation is more complex and dynamic due to the human dynamics of governance in local government sphere, and the brunt of apartheid legacies in townships and rural areas, and on intergovernmental relationships and civil society.

Pradeep (2011) advocates for the adoption of decentralization as an alternative service delivery model to promote effective and efficient allocation of public goods and services. Weylandt's (2013) study on decentralization and corruption in sub-Saharan Africa concludes that, "the theoretical literature on decentralization and corruption points in different directions and provides no clear-cut conclusions". He adds that, while scholars acknowledge the benefits

of taking government closer to the people, decentralization has its own potential pitfalls. While Weylandt (2013) notes that the recent literature presumes that decentralization reduces corruption, the author adds that there are no studies that have focused on this subject due to neopatrimonialism in politics. He concludes that case studies on Uganda and South Africa demonstrate the challenges in successful implementation of decentralization. In Uganda, decentralization is believed to have steered to a reduction in corruption, since local democracy proved operative and effective in disciplining unethical bureaucrats and administrators. In contrast, in South Africa, it is held that decentralization has increased corruption levels due to an overworked bureaucracy and the absence of democracy at the local level. Literature postulates that this seems to be a common problem in many sub-Saharan African countries. The author further advocates that the enthusiastic embrace of decentralization by many international organizations might be somewhat overzealous and suggests that the findings on decentralization and corruption should not be generalized across contexts. It follows that assumptions in relation to the advantages of decentralization may not hold, particularly in developing countries like those in sub-Saharan Africa that do not have the same institutional capacity as the developed countries to monitor public officials.

According to Chigwata (2016), the demise of the Soviet bloc between 1980 and 1990 opened the flood gates for capitalism and market-driven policies, including democratic liberation and decentralization of powers to local government. Chigwata's study that focused on fiscal decentralization in Zimbabwe paints a bleak picture in relation to local government. The author asserts that local government is constricted by several factors, some of which, such as global financial crises, are outside the local government's ambit of control and influence. However, local government can control many other factors, including administrative capacity, corruption, mismanagement and embezzlement. The author points to unjustified political interference from other spheres of government. The Zimbabwean experience regarding the decentralization is similar to that of South Africa. Reddy (2016) asserts that the

relationship between the administration and politicians determines the implementation and success of decentralization within the local government sphere. The politics-administration dichotomy that was articulated by Woodrow Wilson remains an issue for debate. Reddy (2016) notes that, politicians believe they are mandated to make decisions on behalf of the electorate, while the administration's role is to ensure policy implementation. In emerging states like South Africa, the separation of powers between politics and administration impacts on the implementation of policies (Reddy, 2016).

2.4   Decentralization and the Efficient Allocation of Public Goods and Services

Ryan and Woods (2016) describe decentralization as a global trend that aims to strengthen subnational governance. They define this concept as a "structure and dynamic process" relating to the question of authority. Since decentralization enables local government to serve local communities, as it improves performance and accountability, resulting in greater efficiency in the allocation of resources, and enhances government legitimacy by promoting the welfare of individuals and communities (Mehrotra, 2006; Ryan and Woods, 2016).

Black, Calitz & Steenkamp (2009) mention that the allocation of public resources in South Africa was historically skewed, resulting in the poor having limited access to basic services, like potable water and sanitation, sustainable electricity supply and refuse removal. Given the contemporary fiscal challenges and a growing global consensus on the need for efficient management of economies that requires smaller budget deficits, there has therefore been a shift towards market-based economies, resulting in the restructuring of the public sector as well as changes in the private sector. The way business is conducted has changed as well as the nature of public goods and services provided by government. Restructuring in the public sector also impacted on the basis upon which employees are appointed and managed, the interaction

between politicians and bureaucrats, and the interaction between bureaucrats and the community (Black et al., 2009). In terms of the neo-classical view that is promoted by proponents of a free-market economy, government's role is that of correcting market failure. The neo-classical view is concerned with efficient allocation of resources and economic growth, whereas the collectivist approach focuses on combating poverty and equitable income distribution, which justifies government intervention. According to Black et al. (2009), the justification for decentralization from an economic perspective is its potential to improve allocative efficiency in the public sector. Both schools of thought are represented in developmental states like South Africa.

(Pradeep, 2011) notes that decentralization has the following effects on production and service delivery:

Productive Efficiency – this result when local government is able to produce goods and services more cost-effectively than national government because the existing productive resources are utilized in the most efficient manner by allocating them in accordance with the wishes of the consumers (community). According to Black et al. (2009: 16) an efficient economy produces at an optimal mix where utility-maximising consumers respond to prices that reflect the true costs of production.

Improving the efficiency of National Government – decentralization allows the national government to focus on national and international issues by concentrating on macro-economic policies for the whole economy.

The literature notes that decentralization is a rich and complex field of study. Ryan and Woods (2016) argue that decentralization has varied effects and is arduous to measure as it encompasses the quantification and distribution of power. Moreover, decentralized governance structures are multidimensional, as they not only exert fiscal influence, but also affect economic development, social equity and other outcomes in complex ways. The two authors add that there is strong impetus to pursue decentralization in that the transfer of resources to local government would result in a more efficient provision of public goods and services and improved economic growth. Local government is thought to be better equipped to manage resources effectively and efficiently

to produce the goods and services required by clients in the right quantity and quality. Schoburgh (2016) concurs with Ryan and Woods (2016) in that decentralization facilitates efficient local economies, but notes that this occurs in the name of neoliberalism. Through fiscal decentralization local output is distinguished according to local preferences and situations, improving social welfare. However, Schoburgh (2016) notes that, local government often lacks the level of administrative and human capacity required for successful decentralization. Weak institutional and administrative capacity results in inefficient and ineffective service delivery (including infrastructure), thus limiting the achievement of local economic development goals. Schoburgh (2016) asserts that, while decentralization could result in a small privileged group increasing their participation at local level, this group could potentially undermine local economic development, and decisions made might benefit a few individuals rather than promoting the overall welfare of the community. Ryan and Woods (2016) offer a different view and argue that national government is better equipped to provide services as it has skilled human resources.

2.5 Participatory Democratic Theory – A Conceptual Framework for Democracy

While some progress has been recorded in the delivery of services in South Africa, local government confronts major challenges that led to community protest. The literature indicates that the grievances leading to community protest vary from protest to protest and community to community and the majority have been associated with deficiencies in the delivery of housing, water and sanitation and electricity. It is also observed that perceptions of uncaring, unresponsive, self-serving and corrupt political leaders (councillors) and municipal officials (administrators) have fuelled such protest (Alexander, 2010; Jakoet-Salie et al., 2016; Nleya, 2011). In March 2017, community protest erupted in the uMlalazi Local Municipal area in KCDM in KZN. According to (Bently, 2017), this protest was sparked by allegations of corruption, resulting

in a King Dinuzulu bus route project taking longer than was planned for, and was costing the public purse more than what was initially budgeted for.

Madumo (2014) states that social contract theory can be used to analyse public participation at municipal level. Tshishonga (2016b) notes that this theory draws on theories relating to co-operative governance and intergovernmental relations (IGR). The author posits that government enters into an agreement with its inhabitants, and views public participation as a crucial tool in modern democratic government that promotes effective governance and efficient delivery of services at local government level. Sebake (2016a) refers to the community as the bolt and the leadership the nut, and the author considers the two as inseparable, thus public participation is considered a critical and important attribute and ingredient of democracy, this type of relationship ensures that service delivery is collectively owned by the community and bureaucrats, as well as politicians.

The evolution of the new local governance model that aims to facilitate and strengthen local democracy was marked by three distinct phases. Reddy (2016) observes that the constitutionalization of developmental local government was the first critical step towards good governance in South Africa. Several key principles driving the evolving principles of non-racialism, non-sexism, redistribution, efficiency, and effectiveness, all of which are prominent on the municipal agenda were established during this process. According to Sebake (2016a), the conceptual framework for public participation symbolizes a governance system that values community involvement in the matters of local government. It is also accepted that such participation is the cornerstone in advancing participatory democracy in the sphere of local government. However, Reddy (2016) adds that participatory democracy calls for a move beyond representative democracy to facilitate active community involvement in the day-to-day management of their affairs through, for example, participating in council decision-making processes.

2.6 Theoretical Aspects Underpinning Auditing in the Public Sector

Local government in African countries has undergone transformation through decentralization of services to enhance the delivery of services to societies. This sphere of government is expected to play a significant developmental role. It is therefore important to examine the reforms adopted to strengthen the operations of local government, especially in terms of financial management. Financial management is viewed as critical in ensuring an organization's functionality and success. This is especially true in the space of public sector due to the environment of its operations. According to Ng'eni (2016.), the main purpose of decentralization was to assign administrative, political and financial responsibilities to local government, to ensure sound and transparent financial management, and ensuring equitable provision of public services.

Several pieces of legislation have in the past been adopted to ensure that auditing and financial administration in the public sector are performed to curb mismanagement and misuse of funds which are critical resources for service delivery and developmental purposes. These include the Constitution, the MFMA and the Public Audit Act (25 of 2004). The office of the Auditor-General South Africa (AGSA) is a Chapter 9 Institution instituted in terms of the Constitution. In terms of Section 181 (2) of the Constitution, these institutions operate independently but are interdependent to each other and are subject to the Constitution and the law. They are to be independent in exercising their powers without fear, favour or prejudice. Section 181 (3) of the Constitution calls on other organs of state to assist Chapter 9 institutions through legislative and other measures to safeguard their independence, objectivity, dignity and effectiveness.

The AGSA is mandated to strengthen democracy by permitting oversight, accountability and good governance in the public sector through auditing, thus building confidence within the public sector space. The leadership is expected

to promote an understanding of the AGSA's mandate amongst stakeholders, where the ultimate goal of the AGSA is to achieve clean administration through good governance that is characterized by clean audit findings (Auditor General South Africa, 2010).

2.7   Conclusion

This chapter examined theories on governance, NPM, governance, decentralization, and participatory democracy as well as the efficient allocation of public goods and services. Is also examined the role of the AGSA in promoting good governance in the public sector. Despite good intention for the decentralization of services, there are some gaps that need to be filled when it comes to service delivery. There are, as has been alluded above, some positive results brought in by the decentralization of services, but in some instances, decentralization did not bear the expected results.

The following chapter presents a literature review on decentralization, focusing on its impact at local government level. It also examines the legislative framework underpinning auditing in the local government sphere and the provision of integrated services through the OSS programme.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1   Introduction

The journey to transform South African local government from a racially based system with multiple structures that lacked accountability has not been an easy one since the apartheid system fundamentally damaged the "spatial, social and economic environments" where people live and work ((Twenty Year Review, Background Paper: Local Government: 2015). The vision set out in the Constitution, the White Paper on Local Government, the Municipal Systems Act, No. 32 of 2000 and other local government legislation is clear, but implementation has been a challenge. The obstacles include inability to raise adequate revenue, inadequate intergovernmental fiscal transfers, a lack of community participation, undue party-political interference in municipalities, political infighting, corruption, and lack of capacity due to a lack of skilled human resources in the technical fields and finance.

This chapter presents literature review focusing on decentralization as an integrated services delivery model to local government sphere as one of the transformation initiatives. The emphasis being on public participation and development as prescribed by the Constitution. According to the White Paper on Local Government 1998, the decentralization model provides a blueprint to promote good governance at the local government level, enhancing responsive, accountable, effective and efficient service delivery and community participation. The model entails, *inter alia*, service delivery based on sound intergovernmental relations, effective financial management, skilled human capital and human resource management and ethics and governance to curb corruption. According to (Thornhill, 2012)   the guiding principles of good governance   include   citizen/community   participation,   transparency, accountability, equity, partnerships, access, efficiency and effectiveness, adherence to the rule of law and being responsive.

The chapter presents various literature views on decentralization as an element of good governance for participatory democracy. It examines the impact of decentralization as a service delivery model, the relationship between decentralization and public participation within the uMhlathuze Local Municipality, and finally the causes of community protest across South Africa. This chapter also gives an overview on the conceptualization of the audit functions within the local government sphere and concludes with a discussion and analysis of the Operation Sukuma Sakhe programme which is an integrated service delivery model.

3.2   Transformation Initiatives

The changes in the global landscape for a decentralized local government geared towards providing better services through the creation of lively and pulsating communities involved in participatory democracy, led the South African government to revise interim measures with a purpose to restructure and transform the local government. The same process took place in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and in other African countries (The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, 2012; Moyo, 2002) during the transition process. Local government is viewed as a sphere of government that is closer to its communities and is therefore considered accountable and responsible to its citizens. This view is echoed by Pradeep (2011), where the author regards local government as the nucleus of economic development as they are more conversant with the needs of the communities they serve. In line with the South African Constitution, Makinde et al. (2016) views local government as an agent for developmental change and for effective and efficient service delivery. Further, The White Paper on Local Government (1998), views local government as a promoter of democratic participation in socio-economic development, and infrastructure provision.   Local government is thus directly associated with participatory democracy where citizens are central to policy-making, creating a complex link between public involvement and development (Thornhill, 2012; The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, 2016).

Because of the fragmented and incoherent range within the local government system, Thornhill (2008) argues that local government could not be transformed in one process since not all legislations and policies could be abolished at once.   But there had to be interim phases starting with the approval of the Interim Measures for Local Government Act 128 of 1991. This Act allowed for a review of the existing system of the local government. This process allowed the racially based local authorities, management and local affairs committees to enter into certain agreements, thus it was possible for the redistribution of financial resources amongst the local authorities.

During the transformation phase, there were challenges encountered, one of them was the establishment of the new municipalities boundaries. To provide for procedures for the determination of the local municipalities boundaries, the Local Government: Municipal Demarcation Act 27 of 1998 was passed. Some of the municipalities 'original boundaries were extending over existing provincial boundaries and this resulted in passing legislation to regulate the administrative consequences of such municipalities' (Thornhill, 2008).   The author further asserts that the demarcation process was able and succeeded to reducing the number of municipalities from 1100 racially separated municipalities to 843 in 1995.   There was a further demarcation process in 1998 and this process resulted in a reduced number of municipalities from 843 to 283. From 2016, the number of municipalities were further reduced to 257.

3.2.1 Local Government Policy Framework

a. The transformation process of the local government underwent three phases. The pre-interim phase commenced with the establishment and implementation of the Local Government Transition Act 2019 of 1993, pending the first local government. The Local Government Transition Act 209 of 1993 (LGTA) determined the pre-interim phase period from 1993 to 1995. The main purpose of this act was to provide for revised interim measures for the promotion of the restructuring of local government and for

the creation of Provincial Committees. Although the Act was broad, but it was specific on how each section should be handled during the implementation phase. This Act was however applicable throughout the Republic of South Africa. In the event of conflict between the Act and any other laws (i.e. where the Act did not apply before 27 April 1994), the provisions of this Act prevailed. Koma (2012) contends that this Act did not have a blue print for local government, but it provided a process for change.

b. The first local government elections were held in 1995/96. This was the second phase of transformation, a period where integrated municipalities were established. One has to indicate these municipalities were not yet fully democratically elected.

c. Transitional Local Councils (TLC's) and Transitional Metropolitan Structures (TMS's) that replaced local authorities ensured that basic services, including water and sanitation, refuse removal, roads and storm water drainage system are accessible to all citizens irrespective of race and colour.

d. According to Madumo (2015), the developmental policies have, in addition to legislation, made significant contributions for the transformation of local government systems. Some of the legislations that were promulgated after 1994 are:

   i. **The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)**

   The objectives of a local government as developmental sphere of government was clearly set out in section 152 and 153 of the Constitution respectively (Thornhill, 2008; Govender and Reddy, 2015) are as follows:

- To provide democratic and accountable government and accountable government for local communities;

- To promote social and economic development;

- To promote a safe and healthy environment; and

- To encourage the involvement of local communities and organizations in the matter of local economies.

   Section 153 of the Constitution calls out the developmental responsibilities of a local government, being:

- To structure and manage its administration;
- Budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community;
- To promote the social and economic development of the community; and
- Participate in the national and provincial development programmes.

 ii. **The White Paper on Local Government (1998) explains that a developmental local government has four requirements (Koma, 2012):**
- Maximisation of social and economic growth – which is about the provision of basic services, including water and sanitation, electricity and refuse removal thus ensuring that local communities are maintaining the minimum standard of living. Economic growth is about the role played by a municipality in guiding local economic development to mobilise the available resources to achieving local economic development goals. This includes creating employment opportunities.
- Integration and co-ordinating;
- Democratisation of development; and
- Leadership and learning.

 iii. The Municipal Structures Act of 1998;

 iv. The Local Government: Municipal Demarcation Act 27 of 1998;

 v. The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 and Regulations;

 vi. The Municipal Finance Management Act, 56 of 2003 (MFMA);

 vii. The Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Amendment Act, 41 of 2003; and

 viii. The Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 13 of 2005.

3.2.2 Developmental Policies

i.   The National Spatial Development Perspective (NSDP);
ii.   The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of 1994;
iii. The Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy of 1996;
iv.   The White Paper on Local Government of 1998;
v.   The Accelerated Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (AsgiSA) of 2005;
vi.   The New Growth Path (NGP) of 2010; and
vii. The National Planning Commission: Vision 2030.

3.2.3 Effects of Transformation and Decentralization

Whilst government has adopted different transformation initiatives, including policies and legislations listed above aiming to improve the South Africans' standard of living, but the implementation of these policies and compliance with the legislative framework for local government remained a challenge. Some of the national developmental policies, including the RDP, their success was, according the ANC-led government dependent on the ability of local structures in delivering basic services to its citizens (Koma, 2012). Since capacity within the local government was previously racially determined and developed, the new democratic has however been unable to support the democratic developmental needs and has been unresponsive to the needs of the societies within the local government.

Local government, in particular, lacks capacity including *inter alia*, personnel with engineering/technical and financial and project management skills to implement its developmental mandate (Powell, 2012). The amalgamation and integration of the previously divided communities from different municipalities into a single local municipality with a common tax base has, according to Franks (2014) led to an exodus of skilled white personnel who took early retirement and packages. Given that Black Africans were deprived of quality education under apartheid, this resulted in a skills vacuum at the level of local

government sphere. Local municipalities in the former Black areas, especially those in rural areas did not have tax base which could be used to develop their local areas. Due to lack of development in the rural municipalities, there has been great influx into urban areas and townships and this has increased the enormous pressure to municipalities to provide services beyond their capacities. A typical example is the amalgamation of some of the wards of the Ntambanana Local Municipality to uMhlathuze Local Municipality. The Ntambanana Local Municipality did not have a tax base and the infrastructure in this municipality was almost non-existent. Because of the Constitutional mandate to local municipalities, the uMhlathuze Local Municipality, with a mandate to providing basic services, had no alternative, but to deliver water into the communities of the Ntambanana Local Municipality. Such provision was not budgeted for. Challenges brought by the restructuring and transformation processes in the local government, which was the amalgamation of the previously divided local municipalities' territories, brought an increase in population for which the municipal administration is responsible. The increase in population was not counterbalanced by increases in taxes and financial resources. Other challenges brought by the restructuring and transformation of the local government:

a. There was a general collapse in infrastructure with noticeable weakening in borrowing capacity and credit worthiness.
b. The financial crises within the local government are fuelled by increasing demands and expectations on service delivery.
c. Inadequate financial management capabilities and training programmes with municipalities.

After the December 2000 local elections, local government was positioned as the key delivery of services to local communities and a developmental organ of the state. It is therefore considered as a key player in transforming South Africans' lives. The establishment of local government as an independent sphere but interrelated and dependent to the other two spheres of government was an important shift from the legacy of colonization and apartheid. Shaidi

(2013) is of the view that government will not be able to eradicate the service delivery backlogs inherited from the apartheid government unless there is "a paradigm shift and the development of a new model" of service delivery. As part of achieving the paradigm shift, the new democratic government implemented the neo-liberal policies that were implemented in United Kingdom (UK) and in United State of America (USA) during the Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan eras respectively. During the 1980s, the UK local government system experienced two major changes where powers were curtailed but strengthen top-down grip. Tony Blair the successor of Margaret Thatcher implemented a performance management system, which had two measures – Best Value and Comprehensive Performance Assessment. The Best Value requires councils to ensure continuous improvement in all their undertakings and responsibilities (The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, 2016). In the same vein, the local government's new system provides for performance management where administration is to be responsive to the needs of its citizens. Following the steps of the Western and European countries, South Africa implemented the four service delivery models. These were the privatization of services, direct service delivery, decentralization of services to local authorities and public-private partnerships.

Scholars like Tambe Endoh (2015) contend that with the decentralization of services to local government, South Africa made progress in advancing the well-being of the majority and in addressing service delivery backlogs since 1994. But Twala (2014) and other scholars contend that the country still confronts serious challenges including the high crime rate, unemployment, inequality and poverty. Scholars like Chibba and Luiz (2011) contend that the four key national transformation initiatives (the RDP, the GEAR strategy, AsgiSA and the White Paper on Local Government of 1998), implemented in the post-apartheid period had little impact in improving the lives of impoverished South Africans. Consequently, poor service delivery could be attributed to flawed implementation of transformation initiatives which were the consequences of incapacity within the local government sphere. In concurrence to Chibba and

Luiz (2011), Madumo (2012) asserts that local government has been unable to achieve the developmental goals as outlined in Section 152 of the Constitution, and the reasons for the failure is because the democratic government inherited "a dysfunctional local government system based on ineffective structures".

3.3   Literature on Decentralization

Contrary to Madumo's (2012) assertion that local government has been unable to achieve developmental goals, a comparative study by Dickovick and Riedl (2010) on decentralization in Africa produced mixed results. The study was commissioned by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and draws lessons from ten countries' experiences of decentralisation, namely, Botswana, Tanzania, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda. It found that decentralization has been fundamental to the democratic transition in Africa. Many African countries have sought to expand democracy by decentralizing power to local municipalities, districts and provinces (Dickovick and Riedl, 2010). The study concluded that this resulted in modest improvements in service delivery across the ten countries resulting from the constraints emanating from the lack of skills in the engineering and technical fields, and financial and project management (Powell, 2012).   Franks (2014) is of the view that the amalgamation of municipal staff from different race groups and cultures in South Africa contributed to the failure or modest success of decentralization as those from municipalities formerly run by Black African personnel did not have adequate skills.

The findings of Dickovick and Riedl (2010) concur with those of Siddle and Koelble (2012) that decentralization resulted in substantial accomplishments in some regions but partial developments with "less positive impacts" in others. Antwi-Boasiako (2010) contends that the rich body of scholarly literature on decentralization presents conflicting results. Caldeira, Foucault & Rota-Graziosi (2015) used Benin as a case study to examine decentralization in

developing countries. They argue that decentralisation brings into play the proximity principle, such that decentralisation moves local public decision makers closer to citizens. As such, it improves preference matching by providing greater diversity in public services to a heterogeneous population. Furthermore, decentralization is believed to reduce information asymmetry between those in power and those who are governed, thus inducing more "accountability in governments and greater efficiency in public spending" (Caldeira et al., 2015). Less information asymmetry is said to enhance the agent-principal relationship. Dickovick and Riedl (2010) found that decentralization in African countries has advanced the transfer and deconcentration of legal authority to provincial and local government. In terms of development and service delivery, the study found modest confirmation that decentralization improves or hinders economic growth in Africa. However, they are of the view that there is discreet evidence that it could improve service delivery. The authors state that "a longstanding research tradition holds that decentralization can improve the efficiency of governance" by providing enticements for economic growth where local governments compete among themselves (Dickovick and Riedl, 2010). However, Caldeira et al. (2015) argue that this practice, labelled the 'competition principle' by Tiebout, which induces interjurisdictional competition cannot be applied to developing countries since population mobility is limited. In summary, a view expressed by Dickovick and Riedl (2010) is that decentralization is compatible with democratization as it supports democracy by improving transparency and giving a voice to women, the youth, and minority communities who are usually not fairly represented in government due to African traditions and culture.

In South Africa, the Municipal Systems Act 32, of 2000 makes provision for community participation in the so called 'developmental' local government through ward committees established in terms of section 17(1) of the Municipal Structures Act No. 117 of 1998. These committees are expected to establish a democratic culture for local community participation and accountability (Chikulo, 2016: 56). In the same vein, Siddle and Koelble (2012) contend that

the all-inclusive public participation is considered to be an important objective and a critical element of decentralization.

Cameron (2001) examined local government in the democratic era in South Africa and developed a framework to measure the degree of decentralization. Cameron (2001) contends that in theory, South Africa is one of the few states in Africa that has the most advanced systems of local government in the world with constitutionally established powers and functions. The author used two conceptual models to assess the autonomy of the local government system. The first is an autonomous model that views local government as a distinct sphere of government as enshrined in the Constitution, while the second is an integrated model that acknowledges functional interdependence between the spheres of government. In the first model, Cameron (2001), contends that decentralization promotes autonomy by empowering local government through the promotion of participatory democracy, while in the second model it positions the state within the world economy.

Wunsch (2014) is of the view that developing countries embraced decentralization after the end of the Cold War. The reasons included the need for economic stability in the wake of the global slowdown in the early 1970s that resulting in the collapse of various economies in the 1980s. During that era, most of these countries were run by a single party or by the centralised government with questionable legitimacy, leading to their eventual collapse and much hardship amongst citizens. International donors and civil society called for decentralization since it was regarded as the panacea to promoting economic stability, social and economic development and good governance (Wunsch, 2014). The author laments the complexity of African politics that must be navigated to enable viable subnational governance units to be established. He also concedes that although there may be valid reasons to pursue decentralization in African countries, but due to the complexity of the challenges and puzzles surrounding decentralization, it could take many years

to make a positive distinction in people's lives. Poteete, Mothusi and Molaodi (2014) concluded that decentralization is a double-edged sword since it cannot be assumed that it enhances local democracy and it can be designed to reinforce upward rather than downward accountability (Poteete et al., 2014).

In his presentation of case studies of democratic decentralization drawn from urban and rural areas in Latin America, South Asia and Africa, Mehrotra (2006) posits that there are not as many examples of remarkable success as one would expect. However, he cautions that quality was not used to assess the effectiveness of decentralization. Furthermore, the case studies were limited to schooling in India, participatory budgeting in Brazilian cities, health outcomes in Brazil and accountability of public health services to communities in sub-Saharan Africa. Success was reported in all cases, but at a lower level in sub-Saharan Africa (Mehrotra (2006). His contention is that accountability has been a challenge at local government level. The author further contends that the failure of the state to provide and deliver basic services is not only the result of financial constraints and allocative inefficiencies alone, but due to the bureaucratic and organizational context of state provision. His argument is that, despite the continued academic debate on the advantages and disadvantages of decentralization, the type of decentralization matters and is critical to the success of the transformation (Mehrotra (2006). Scholars like Mehrotra (2006) and Hoffman and Metzroth (2010) identified the following three types of decentralization:

a) *fiscal decentralization* – *where revenue collection and expenditure are decentralized to local municipalities;*
b) *Political decentralization* – *where local authorities are not appointed but elected by the people; and*
c) *Administrative decentralization* – *where the administration and appointment of personnel is done at a local level.*

Mehrotra (2006) then proposed that effective and successful democratic decentralization requires that:

a) *The national government must be democratic;*
b) *The state must decentralize key functions related to service delivery to local government; and*
c) *There must be an enabling environment and mechanisms within institutions for a collective community within local government.*

But Reddy (2016) is of the view and argues that the politics-administration dichotomy impacts the success of democratic decentralization in Africa. As in Ghana, South African politicians perform an indispensable role in the appointment of senior administrative staff and ruling party loyalists are appointed to carry out the party line. According to Mehrotra (2006), this create instability when there is a change of political head, resulting in dysfunctionality and poor performance in most of municipalities in South Africa. This is in line with Antwi-Boasiako (2010) findings in sub-Saharan Africa and Ghana.

3.4   Decentralization and Governance

Following the advent of democracy, the first local government elections were held in South Africa in 2000, with the most recent taking place in August 2016. Both national and local government elections have ensured that communities participate in political affairs. The creation of democratic local government in the new South Africa involved decentralization of power. Decentralization was however practised albeit in different forms prior to 1994. At that time the country operated two governance systems viz. a democratically decentralized system for the white South African minority and a centralised system for the Black African majority. In the lead-up to the first elections in South Africa, political parties engaged in protracted negotiations on devolving power to local communities by decentralizing services and bestowing certain powers on local government.

Picard and Mogale (2015) perceive decentralization as an elusive concept that is used by practitioners and scholars to understand the role of local government. Woods (2016) posits that decentralization involves a combination of fiscal, administrative and political transformations that make subnational government accountable for equitable service delivery through efficient fiscal and human resources management. Decentralization thus emphasizes good governance by encouraging community participation and accountability of the government to the people it serves. While there are different views on this phenomenon, Siddle and Koelble (2012) contend that decentralization has become a cornerstone of public governance for effective and efficient service delivery through democratic participation of citizens. In South Africa and other African countries, decentralization has been viewed as a panacea for good governance; but there are still major gaps in relation to access to services, especially in rural areas. Sebake (2016b) posits that in a democratic local government, service delivery is understood to be pro-poor where the decentralization of service delivery aims to bring government closer to the communities it serves. This is in stark contrast to the colonial/apartheid era where society was segregated on racial lines and the majority of the population received inferior services. The apartheid regime denied the oppressed the entitlement to partake in policy decisions that impacted on their lives. Their movement was restricted, thereby removing them from decision-making processes (Sebake, 2016b). In the democratic era, the legislation provides for all citizens to partake and contribute in policy-making. However, many have yet to taste the fruits of democracy.

While policies and legislation have been adopted to advance the transformation of South African society, including decentralization and participatory local government, progress has been slow. One of the reasons for the slow progress are the settlements reached during the hand-over of power, when concessions were made (Siddle and Koelble, 2012). Apart from these settlements, Weylandt (2013) contends that decentralization in African countries increased corruption due to an overburdened bureaucracy, and this has also contributed to the slow

progress. This is a common problem among sub-Saharan African countries. However, he notes that in Uganda, it resulted in less corruption since local government proved effective in disciplining corrupt officials. The other contributing factor is the lack of skilled personnel. In South Africa, 95.5% of senior civil servants were white and only 0.6% of Black Africans were in senior positions in local government prior to transformation of the local government system (Franks, 2014). During the transition period, affirmative action and Voluntary Severance Packages were introduced. This led to countless skilled and experienced public servants exiting the public sector with those left behind lacking the skills to manage local, provincial and national government departments and state-owned entities (SOEs).

Pradeep (2011) and Picard and Mogale (2015) state that decentralization involves four categories of transfer of power from the national government to subnational organizations. While Siddle and Koelble (2012) identify 12 dimensions of decentralization, Ryan and Woods (2016) focus on four, namely fiscal, administrative, political and market decentralization. The three types of administrative decentralization are defined below:

Devolution – refers to the full transfer of powers, functions and responsibility from national to local government bodies to deliver public goods and services including making laws and raising revenue (Pradeep, 2011; Picard and Mogale, 2015). As defined by Ryan and Woods (2016), local government is given the financial and legal authority to decide what needs to be done, but is accountable to the central government. Although some South African municipalities have the capacity to raise their own revenue, most still rely on central government for their allocation of the equitable share and other project funding like the Municipal Infrastructural Grant (MIG). If the municipality fails to account for its expenditure, central government has the power to withhold funding until the municipality provides proof of delivery.

Deconcentration – Pradeep (2011) defines deconcentration as a process that involves the transfer of powers and functions within the national government hierarchy. Pradeep (2011), Picard and Mogale (2015) and Ryan and Woods (2016) state that this is done by shifting the workload from national ministries to field offices by creating agencies or by shifting responsibility to local bodies that are part of national government (Pradeep, 2011; Picard and Mogale, 2015; Ryan and Woods, 2016).

Delegation – refers to the transfer of power from the central/national government and responsibility for decision-making to autonomous or semi-autonomous organizations that are not directly controlled by the national government, but are accountable to it. Ryan and Woods (2016) note that local government and/or agencies carry out certain functions on behalf of the national government, but the latter retains the ultimate authority and the former are accountable to the national government. For example, the Human Settlements Department (which is part of national government) delegates the housing function to local government, but the latter is accountable to the Department.

Ryan and Woods (2016) describe these three aspects of administrative decentralization along a continuum of administrative autonomy as presented in Figure 1 below.
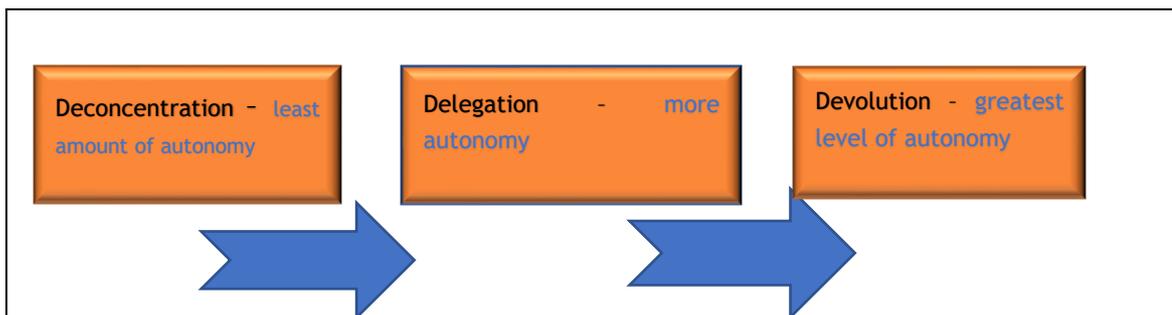
Figure 1: Administrative autonomy continuum, adapted from Ryan and Woods (2016)

3.5 Decentralization as a Service Delivery Model through Public Participation

One of the transformation initiatives implemented by the democratic government was to decentralize services to local government. As noted above, the literature shows that decentralization has succeeded in some countries but not in others. Caldeira et al. (2015) regard decentralization as a powerful and effective tool to reducing poverty and improving governance in Africa. It has been adopted in many developing countries, notably in Africa over the past two decades in response to the failure of national governments to achieve development. Decentralization is also regarded as an instrument to promote political stability in ethnically fragmented nations. Improved accountability and approachability of local leaders, leads to more effective public policies that alleviate poverty (Caldeira et al., 2015). Antwi-Boasiako (2010) adds that efficiency is an essential component of decentralization in emerging democracies.

Siddle and Koelble (2012) examined decentralization as a global phenomenon and as a new service delivery model for South African local government. They also examined the challenges encountered in the local government sphere. Their study mainly focused on local municipalities with special attention to rural municipalities with small towns – the so-called forgotten municipalities. They excluded metropolitan municipalities as these are generally considered to have better resources. The multi-disciplinary model draws on different fields. They concluded that the South African local government system is not effective in delivering democratic community participation and satisfactory services. However, progress is uneven, with some areas relatively well serviced, while others are not, especially rural regions. These findings concur with those of studies conducted in Africa and other parts of the world.

Tsatsire (2008) argues that a local government system is incomplete without structures for public participation. Section 153 of the Constitution requires a municipality to:

a) *structure and manage its administration and budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community and promote the social and economic development of the community; and*

b) *Participate in national and provincial development programmes.*

Section 152 (e) of the Constitution states that communities and community organizations' involvement/participation should be encouraged in all affairs of local government. It is therefore conspicuous that, in giving urgency to the community's basic needs, local government has to ensure effective public participation and consultation. The uMhlathuze Local Municipality: Final IDP Review 2015/2016 states that, public participation and the engagement of interested and concerned parties is a legal requirement of an Environmental and Impact Assessment (EIA) and all applications that are subject to environmental approval will need to go through meticulous public participation processes. This is also cascaded to other processes such as the Environmental Management Framework (EMF) and conceptual planning for proposed developments. In the case of the Waterfront planning in uMhlathuze Local Municipality, a public participation exercise was conducted upfront to inform the conceptual design (uMhlathuze Local Municipality, 2016a). However, the Final IDP Review 2015/2016 creates a sense that only those with a vested interest in the project or proposed development would participate during the conceptual design of the project. This runs contrary to Section 152 (e) of the Constitution. Furthermore, Section B (3.3) of the White Paper on Local Government of 1998 states that public participation in local government affairs should take place at four levels:

a) As voters – to ensure maximum democratic accountability of the elected political leadership for the policies they are empowered to promote.

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

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

d) As organised partners involved in the mobilization of resources for development via for-profit businesses, non-governmental organizations and community-based institutions.

In terms of the Municipal Systems Act, No. 32 of 2000, the fundamental aspect of the new local government system is the active engagement of communities in the affairs of municipalities of which they are integral part, and in planning, service delivery and performance management. However, in many instances, performance management does not seem to have been implemented.

3.6   Public Participation in uMhlathuze Local Municipality

Cele's (2015) study on public participation in service delivery in uMhlathuze Local Municipality observes that public participation is confined to service identification during the IDP process. The IDP is a five-year plan that local government is mandated to compile and establish the development needs of the public within its jurisdiction. The research results also reveal that there are perceptions within the community that the political environment negatively impacts service delivery. However, her study found that although community members were willing to participate (as was evidenced during IDP road shows), but a break-down in relations between government structures, service providers and the community results in service delivery failures (Cele, 2015). Where such failures are due to community unable to bring this to the fore, and the officials not being accountable, Kuncoro, Adrison and Isfandiarni (2012) found that the media, especially print media is capable of counterbalancing a deficiency of accountability from government.

3.7   Community Protest and Community Participation in South Africa

Tirivangasi and Mugambiwa (2016) paint a bleak picture of democratic local government. They draw attention to on-going service delivery protests that

create the impression that democratic local government is failing to deliver basic services to the community as mandated by section 153 (1) of the Constitution. Tirivangasi and Mugambiwa (2016) posit that while South Africans, especially the poor and the dispossessed, had high expectations that basic human rights would be respected in the new dispensation, but Sebake (2016b) is of the view that the current situation highlights the contradictions in the discourse of public administration. Some scholars, including Tirivangasi and Mugambiwa (2016) are of the view that the increased urbanization and rural government strategies are the underlying perpetuators of first and second-class citizens and had produced an unequal society. However, Sebake (2016b) notes that success stories of decentralization include increased public participation and Local Economic Development (LED) strategies. Other success stories of decentralization include urban construction and development of South Africa's cities aimed at addressing apartheid inequalities. Tirivangasi and Mugambiwa (2016) assert that poor service delivery can be attributed to a variety of problems, including citizenship, xenophobia and socio-economic issues which fuel the rate of protests and most of them, result in violence.

Research commissioned by the Local Government Sector Education Training Authority (LGSETA) found that many of those that participate in protests are unemployed young people with a grade 9 or higher qualification; many had National Senior Certificates. Many lived in areas characterised by increasing inequality, rampant urbanization, and poor living conditions. They have little or no prospect of finding employment. The authors of the report contend that violence could be an expression of "legitimate anger, but often spills over into social relations" breeding fear in their communities.

3.8   Conceptualization of the Audit Function in Local Government

The Auditor-General (AG) is mandated to fortify democracy by enabling oversight and governance that will build public confidence in the government. The AGSA is a Chapter 9 institution. This means that it is an independent

organisation that is impartial in exercising its powers.   The Constitution empowers the AGSA to execute its functions impartially, but subject only to the Constitution and the law (Auditor General South Africa, 2016).

Chapter 9 institutions were established to strengthen constitutional democracy by ensuring good corporate governance within government institutions. This calls for mechanisms to promote management that protects stakeholders' interests. Australian National Audit Office (2003) maintains that local government/municipalities' actions should enhance public and stakeholder confidence. Good governance requires that municipal leadership and staff are accountable for their actions, decisions and policies to the government, Parliament and the population at large.   The AGSA notes that leadership's actions and decisions are critical for financial and performance management including respect for the law (Auditor General South Africa, 2016). Section 60 of the Municipal Finance Management Act No. 56 of 2003 (MFMA) provides that, as the accounting officer, the municipal manager has fiduciary responsibilities, in terms of section 61, to:

a) *Act with fidelity, honesty, integrity and in the best interests of the municipality in managing its financial affairs;*
b) *Disclose to the municipal council and the mayor all material facts which are available to the accounting officer or reasonably discoverable, and which in any way might influence the decisions or actions of the council or the mayor; and*
c) *Seek, within the sphere of influence of the accounting officer, to prevent any prejudice to the financial interests of the municipality.*

Mathebula (2016) states that the original objective of auditing was the detection and prevention of errors and fraud within a municipality. However, it has expanded to include whether the accounts are true and fairly present the state of affairs. He further adds that decisions are based on the information presented to the municipality, and if there is no coherence between a decision

and what informs it, such information is unreliable. Using unreliable information in the local government sphere would result in ineffective and inefficient usage of resources with undesirable outcomes regarding service delivery. The audit is a final key governance structure which provides oversight of financial reporting, internal controls and audit matters. The audit function includes internal audit, audit committees and the AGSA. Their role is to ensure effective and smooth running of governance activities (Motubatse, 2016).

Since local government is a complex institution, untrustworthy information could therefore be provided to council and other stakeholders by management to hide inefficiency and/or corruption. It is for this reason that auditing practices are in line with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). The GAAP are used by independent institutions like the office of the AGSA to acquire reliable information. The audited information is then used during the decision-making processes with the assumption that it is complete, accurate and unbiased.

Former AGSA Mr. Nombembe commented that the office is mandated to not only audit financial statements but must include other matters that are significant to oversight and the public interest. These include *inter alia*, reporting against predetermined objectives of service delivery reports, and compliance with laws and regulations (Auditor General South Africa, 2012). He noted that since 2004, the AGSA has phased in audits of predetermined objectives of service delivery where it reports on the usefulness and reliability of municipalities' annual performance reports when they had indicated in the previous year that there was a need to measure results and enhance service delivery. Good governance take into account both performance and conformance of legislation within a risk management framework instead of "trading one off against the other" (Australian National Audit Office, 2003). Apart from reporting on weaknesses in organisational performance management, the AGSA also works with other relevant role players in

government to address the root causes thereof. In the report of 2012, the AGSA notes that efforts towards this end increased awareness among clients/auditees and resulted in improved services delivery across all levels of government.

While the current AG, Mr Makwetu accepts that an audit is, by design a backward-looking process, he notes that it provides an overview of progress towards the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that were adopted by the United Nations (Auditor General South Africa, 2017). Since South Africa is now part of a global society, the auditing institution must adopt a broader and much more integrated outlook on public expenditure. Mr. Makwetu adds that auditing institutions are now expected to move beyond the efficiency and cost effectiveness of a specific entity or programme but must deliberate how they contribute to social, economic and environmental progress.

3.9   The Legislative Framework Underpinning Auditing

Transformation initiatives adopted by the democratic South African government included several pieces of legislation aimed at promoting auditing and financial management in the public sector that minimises and curbs the misuse of funds. Financial resources are critical resources for service delivery and development. However, Mathebula (2016) argues that, the Constitution, the MFMA, the Public Audit Act No. 25 of 2004 and the White Paper on Local Government are not sufficient to curb corruption and financial mismanagement that is prevalent within the three spheres of government, especially in the local government sphere. The AGSA must work with other relevant role players in tackling the root causes of the maladministration within the local government sphere. Although there has been continued improvement in reporting across all levels of government, but the AGSA contends that progress has been slow. The AGSA, in the 2016-17 annual report showed concerned with the slow rate of improvement from 2015-16, and points to a lack of internal controls and failure to address root causes by the municipalities' authorities (Auditor General South

Africa, 2017). As Mathebula (2016) observes, this state of affairs shows non-compliance with the legislation.

Mathebula (2016) in his study found that most municipalities in the Limpopo Province failed to produce trustworthy and reliable financial statements. He added that continued reliance on the AGSA to identify misstatements to produce an unqualified audit opinion is unacceptable. He also highlighted that 52% of the municipalities in the Limpopo Province did not correct all the misstatements identified by the AGSA during the audit process. The large number of repeat and new qualifications is also cause for concern. Finally, Mathebula (2016) and the AGSA conclude that more radical actions need to be adopted to hold accounting officers responsible for managing municipal financial affairs. In the 2016-17 report, the AGSA states that the office currently does not have a mandate to prosecute individuals. To address this situation, Omarjee (2017) is of the view that the office of the AGSA should be reconfigured and that Parliament should review AGSA's powers. This could enable the AGSA to refer government departments and municipalities for investigation and legal action could be taken against those who divert and misappropriate public funds. Other concerns raised by the AGSA were management's reluctance to participate in head-on engagements with AGSA officials to discuss issues identified during the audit process and how to rectify them. Associated with this, is the unavailability of the political leadership interest to address the identified issues (Auditor General South Africa, 2017). In the interests of clean administration and of alleviating the plight of the poor, Mathebula (2016) calls for the implementation of the AGSA's recommendations and states that, those who fail to implement such should be criminally charged. He adds that this can be achieved by using the Deterrence Theory.

The failure to achieve clean audit opinions undermines citizens' confidence in government. Decisive leadership is required to curb embezzlement by corrupt government leaders and officials. While a legislative framework is in existence

to combat corruption, the AGSA needs to be empowered to take corrective measures other than recommendations. Finally, Sebake (2016a) maintains that community involvement is a fundamental tool to ensure that the "the people shall govern" and ensure effective service delivery.

3.10 The Integrated Service Delivery Model in KZN through Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS)

The former Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa (RSA), Honourable M.C. Ramaphosa mentioned that poverty, inequality, disease and lack of economic opportunities are global challenges. Alongside other countries, South Africa needs to ensure that the SDGs are achieved. The former Deputy President also revealed that the 20-year diagnostic reviews of government performance showed that service delivery remains a challenge despite the major achievements of the past two decades (The Presidency, 2015). In achieving the SDGs and the objectives of the NDP and fighting the triple challenge engulfing South Africa (poverty, inequality and unemployment), national government has prioritised economic opportunities and poverty eradication through the engagement with all the stakeholders. This includes public participation through the izimbizos (community gatherings), labour movements, business sector, civil society and the NGOs.

The former Deputy President recognises the various inventive best practices in relation to service delivery adopted by the three realms of government including the business population and civil society, across the country. Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS), a programme introduced in KZN in 2011 under the ledership of Dr Mkhize (the former Premier of KZN) is one such best practice that is considered a prime example of transversal integrated service delivery (The Presidency, 2015). The programme evolved from several former initiatives to address widespread poverty in South Africa. In his State of the Nation address in February 2008, former President, Mr. Mbeki announced the launch of a national War on Poverty Programme. This became the Flagship Programme of

the KZN Provincial Government in 2009 (Tshishonga, 2016a; Ndlovu and Msweli, 2016). In March 2011, the programme was re-launched as OSS, which means 'Stand up and build'. The re-launching of the OSS was in fact the embracement of a pro-poor policy-making with a developmental agenda to improving the quality of life of communities, especially the marginalized and excluded, including women, disabled people and the very poor (White Paper on Local Government, 9 March 1998). According to Tshishonga (2016a), the OSS programme was designed to accelerate service delivery and development by addressing community challenges such as poor and/or non-existence services as a result of uncoordinated government programmes. The author is of the view that the triumph of the programme hinges on political commitment and support through cooperative governance and social contracts with various departments, including the SOEs, communities, non-governmental organizations (NGO) and citizens as beneficiaries/clients and representatives of service delivery.

Operation Sukuma Sakhe is viewed and recognized by government and scholars as an integrated service delivery model that requires government departments, businesses and civil society, district and local municipalities to contribute to service delivery using the concept of War Rooms for community-driven service delivery (Ndlovu and Msweli, 2016). Tshishonga (2016b) uses the OSS integrated service delivery model as a lens to investigate the developing social contract that brings together government branches, groups of civil society including business communities in KZN. The author investigated if the social contract theory provides an analytical and conceptual framework to assess government's commitment to delivering decentralized services in partnership with communities. The assertion is that the social contract theory proposes popular sovereignty as the definitive source of the authority where the "ruler governs with consent of the governed". Further, the author contends that in a social contract, the municipal only exists to deliver collective goods and services not for profit purposes, but for enabling the benefits to be distributed amongst all

residents, irrespective of race, gender, religion, culture, etc. (Tshishonga, 2016b).

One of the reasons for the KZN Provincial Government to launch the OSS programme was to integrate government services to wrestle poverty, battle social-ills and promote healthy lifestyles and a better life for all (Operation Sukuma Sakhe: Five-Year Review, 2015). In embracing community participation, the KZN Provincial Government acknowledged that eradicating poverty and other social ills would require the mobilization of grassroots cadres, government departments across the board, SOEs, communities and civil society, NGOs, traditional structures and other stakeholders. In the efforts to embracing community participation, government had to (through the OSS pramme) provide the services with the assistance of community fieldworkers. The Community Care Givers (CCG) would visit households to provide education on health, government services and providing psychosocial support to the needy households.

The OSS programme brought relief to some of the families and individuals. However, much remains to be done since the KZN province remains confronted by numerous challenges that adversely affect all communities, especially the rural areas where communities bear the brunt of underdevelopment (Tshishonga, 2016b). Eradication of poverty and delivery of basic services, including access to water and sanitation, electricity, refuse removal, etc. has become a paramount political, societal and moral necessity. The challenges are complex and therefore require integrated service delivery models coordinated at various levels including the ward, local municipality, and district and provincial levels (Deputy President, 2015). Despite the OSS programme's milestone achievements, Tshishonga (2016a) is of the view the lack of participation by ward councillors and communities, including government departments' lack of responsiveness, and the insufficient involvement of NGOs that are engines of development is the added challenge that needs to be

overcomed by the society at large. The author further asserts that the lack of participation by ward councillors renders the War Rooms dysfunctional since the OSS programme became a battle field for personal gain and manipulation. Where traditional leadership co-exists with democratically elected councillors, and where these councillors are the chairpersons of the War Rooms, some of these councillors are accused of consolidating their powers to the exclusion of traditional leaders and other councillors belonging to opposition parties.

A study on the OSS as a service delivery model in Ugu District Municipality, conducted by Tshishonga found that despite challenges mentioned above, the programme has a potential to addressing socio-economic and service delivery challenges by "recommitting and activating intergovernmental relations" with affected people and communities. The study further established that among the challenges hampering the OSS in Ugu District Municipality was the lack of participation by ward councillors and affected communities. Government departments' failure to respond to outstanding issues is another challenge that prevents the OSS from fulfilling its developmental mandate.

Contrary to the common view presented in the literature that local government has been unable to deliver on its developmental mandate, Alexander and Kane-Berman (2014) present another perspective. They contend that the number of homes in South Africa increased by 60% between 1996 and 2011, the resultant being an additional 5.4 million households. During the same period, the population increased by 28%, or 11.4 million; the number of households using electricity for lighting increased by 135% or 7.1 million and there was an 82% or 5.9 million increase in the number of households with access to piped water. The number of households with access to flush or chemical toilets increased by 99%, and 90% were provided with refuse removal services by their municipalities. However, Alexander and Kane-Berman (2014) add that high unemployment and poverty rates undermine these achievements. They observe that these problems are, in many ways the manifestation of systemic problems in local government. Although Chikulo (2016) acknowledges improvement

made in tackling service delivery backlogs, but he and other scholars like (Olowu and Wunsch, 2004; Ndou and Sebola, 2016; Powell, 2012) are of the view that much remains to be done to reduce poverty and inequality. Chikulo (2016) states that the Human Poverty Index increased from 20% to 25% between 1998 and 2009 and this is a sign indicating that government has much to do to accomplish the stated goals.

3.11 Conclusion

Literature has shown that decentralization has succeeded in some countries, but not in others. Scholars like Caldeira et al (2015) regard decentralization as a powerful and effective tool to reducing poverty and improving governance in Africa. Scholars like Siddle and Koelble (2012) are of the view that although the South African local government system is not effective in delivering community participation and satisfactory services, there has however been progress in some areas. These areas have been relatively well serviced, while others not, especially the rural areas. Although decentralization of services, including fiscus, political and administration is believed to be a solution to existing problems, there are however challenges like:

a. A general collapse in infrastructure with noticeable weakening in borrowing capacity and credit worthiness.
b. The financial crises within the local government are fuelled by increasing demands and expectations on service delivery.
c. Inadequate financial management capabilities and training programmes with municipalities.

Participatory democracy in local government needs to be revitalized. The disconnect between public participation and the development trajectory and outcomes is partly the result of the conceptualization of the relationship between local government and communities. The 20-Year Review suggests that, in practice, public participation has been regarded as something that is necessary in order to comply with legislation but has little bearing on priority

setting and development at local government level. At times, it is argued that effective public participation is a necessary requirement for participatory democracy.

Municipalities that have improved their audit opinions have shown some improvement in service delivery in their jurisdictions. Municipalities like uMhlathuze that obtained a clean audit opinion for five consecutive years, have reported great strides in service delivery.

The following chapter presents the research methodology employed to conduct this study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology employed to conduct this study together with the research design. The chapter provides a better justification for the positivist quantitative research paradigm, methods and approaches that were adopted by the researcher. Further, the chapter discusses the research approach used in the study, research philosophy, research design, sampling, data collection tools used, data analysis techniques employed and the limitations of the research study. Finally, the chapter closes by highlighting the ethical considerations that were considered to conduct this research.

4.2   Research Paradigm

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) state that the mixed method research approach supplements qualitative and quantitative research methods respectively. This approach emerged in response to on-going debate on the merits and demerits of the qualitative and quantitative research paradigms and represents an attempt to move beyond such debate. These scholars posit that the mixed method research approach does not seek to replace either of these two approaches, but to draw on their strengths to minimize their weaknesses. Mixed method research approach is deemed to have the capacity to cover issues not catered for by either qualitative or quantitative approaches and thus offers researchers a promising research tool (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

According to Feilzer (2009), the mixed method research approach is a response to a longstanding and unproductive debate between those advocating for a quantitative versus qualitative research paradigm. While the positivism/post-positivism school of thought favours quantitative research, the qualitative

approach is preferred by constructivists/interpretivists. Feilzer (2009) adds that mixed method research bridges this gap.

In contrast, Firestone (1987) contends that the positivist paradigm holds that behaviour can best be explained by objective facts. The author further posits that the phenomenological paradigm assumes that there are several realities that are socially defined. To argue the point further, the author adds that the purist school of thought holds that these two paradigms are in conflict, while pragmatists are of the view that there is no logical relationship between paradigms and the method adopted. Table 4 below presents the discrepancies between the quantitative and qualitative research approaches.

Table 4: Differences between the quantitative research approach and the qualitative research approach

	Quantitative Research Approach	**Qualitative Research Approach**
Assumptions about the world	This approach is based on a positivist philosophy that assumes the existence of social facts with an objective reality that exists independently of individual beliefs.	This approach is engrained in a phenomenological paradigm which holds that reality is socially constructed through individual or collective definitions of a situation.
Purpose	Seeks to explain the causes of change through social facts, primarily through objective measurement and quantitative analysis.	Is more concerned with understanding social phenomena from the researcher's perspective through participation in the lives of the actors.
Approach	The quantitative researcher employs experimental or correlational designs to reduce error, bias and other factors that prevent one from clearly perceiving social facts.	The prototypical qualitative study is ethnography which helps the reader to understand the circumstances of those under study.
Researcher's role	The quantitative researcher is detached to avoid bias.	The qualitative researcher becomes immersed in the phenomenon of interest.

Source: Firestone (1987)

In a quantitative approach the researcher is detached to avoid bias, while in the qualitative approach, the researcher is submerged in the phenomenon of interest. According to Golafshani (2003), quantitative research allows the researcher to become familiar with the problem/concept under study and generate and test hypotheses, with an emphasis on facts and the causes of behaviour. The data is in the form of numbers that can be quantified and

summarized using mathematical processes. Quantitative research is underpinned by the positivist or scientific view that holds that observable facts are measurable. While Golafshani's (2003) definition is similar to that of other scholars discussed above, he defines quantitative research as one that adopts a naturalistic approach to understand a phenomenon in context-specific, real world settings. The researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomena of interest, but to understand it and extrapolate the conclusions to similar environments.

Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter (2012) assert that the research process encompasses three dimensions, viz: ontology, epistemology and methodology. They describe the research paradigm as an all-encompassing system of interrelated practises and thinking that defines the nature of these three dimensions. The term paradigm originated from the Greek word *paradeigma* and is defined by Feilzer (2009) as an accepted model or pattern. It is an organisational structure with a philosophical position relating to the nature of social structures and phenomena shared by a community of scientists to examine problems and identify solutions. The word paradigm could also be defined as a simple belief system or theory guiding how things are done and it establishes customary practices that can vary between thought patterns to actions. The paradigm is the epistemological stance that directs research efforts. It refers to the set of research beliefs, values and assumptions that structure academic work.

Mathebula (2016), views research methodology as a systematic process to collect and analyze data that includes interviews, surveys and other research techniques with the theoretical analysis. The author also contends that the research methodology incorporates the principles associated with a certain branch of knowledge, and the publication of the research results.

4.3   Problem Statement

Rondinelli (2007), Nleya (2011) and Cele (2015) draw attention to the growing number of service delivery pickets in South Africa. Communities appear to be increasingly dissatisfied with the services provided by local government. Cele (2015) posits that poor comprehension of the local government responsibility and the importance of public participation in the development process are the main cause of such protest action. Furthermore, she contends that there is a lack of understanding of the roles of national and provincial governments. However, Nleya (2011) maintains that the linkage between service delivery and protest is somehow overstated, and contends that remonstrations are linked with a variety of issues outside service delivery.

The study focuses on the transformation initiatives at local government level that seek to promote development and provide basic services to communities through effective public participation and consultation. The study seeks to investigate if decentralization as a 'service delivery model' epitomises public participation within the local government sphere as envisaged in the White Paper on Local Government of March 1988 and Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000 and Regulations. Finally, the research study seeks to establish if there is any correlation between audit outcomes and service delivery.

4.4   Research Objectives

The research study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. To establish the impact of decentralization within uMhlathuze Local Municipality.
2. To determine the impact of audit opinions on transformation initiatives in uMhlathuze Local Municipality.
3. To identify the factors that drive/impede the implementation of transformation initiatives in uMhlathuze Local Municipality.

4.5   Research Questions

The study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What impact has decentralization had on the implementation of transformation initiatives in uMhlathuze Local Municipality?
2. What impact has the previous unqualified audit opinions had towards the service delivery?
3. What factors drive and/or impede the implementation of transformation initiatives within the uMhlathuze Local Municipality?

4.6   Significance of the study

The study investigates the effects and impact of decentralization on governance, closely examining public participation in budgetary and policy-making processes. It further sought to establish if there is any correlation between audit outcomes and service delivery. Finally, the study sought to investigate factors that drive/impede the implementation of transformation initiatives. Its findings will add to the body of knowledge on decentralization of democratic local government institutions.   The research results will stimulate new research directions within good governance framework and assist policy-makers in uMhlathuze Local Municipality and other South African municipalities to formulate and implement sound development plans and strategies.

4.7   Justification for the study

The study aims to support local authorities in their quest to drive the developmental agenda through democratic public participatory processes mandated by the Constitution and extend service delivery to all citizens. Decentralization of services to local government sphere seeks to transform the lives of the South African population, especially Black Africans including women, people with disabilities and the poorest of the poor. The study also

aims to identify sound governance structures within municipalities that will enable the realization of the developmental objectives; including public participation, financial viability, curbing political interference and improving institutional capacity.

4.8 Research Approach

As indicated above, scholars generally categorise research into three paradigms – qualitative, quantitative and mixed method. According to Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2012) quantitative research is a method of collecting and converting data into a numerical form for use in statistical data analysis. Creswell (2014), Leedy and Ormrod (2005) define quantitative research as an approach to test and answer questions about a relationship among variables that can be measured on instruments so that data can be analysed to explain, predict and control a phenomenon.

This study adopted a quantitative research approach due to its objectivity and its ability to draw inferences. The results are presented using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. The SPSS analysis made it possible to formulate propositions.

4.9 Study Site

The study site is defined as the 'physical place' where-upon the study is conducted to collect the required data. uMhlathuze Local Municipality was the study site for this research study. uMhlathuze Local Municipality (commonly referred as the City of uMhlathuze) is one of the 44 local municipalities in the Province of KZN. It falls within the KCDM (formerly known as Uthungulu District municipality). The Municipality was established after the local government elections on 5 December 2000, when the new municipal boundaries were drawn across the country. According to the Local Government: Municipal Structures

Act No. 117 of 1998, there are three types of municipalities, Category A (metropolitan municipalities), Category B (local municipalities) and Category C (district municipalities). uMhlathuze Local Municipality is categorized as a B1 Municipality (Local Government Turnaround Strategy: Working Together, Turning tide in Local Government, 2009:63) . It is one of three municipalities in KZN (excluding Ethekwini Municipality which is categorized as a Metro) with the largest budget and is also referred as a secondary city (LGTAS). Only three municipalities are categorized as B1 Municipalities in KZN, namely: Msunduzi, uMhlathuze and Newcastle Municipality. uMhlathuze Local Municipality is situated on the north-east shoreline of the Province of KZN and is approximately 180 kilometers north-east of Durban. It covers a land area of approximately 795km² (uMhlathuze Local Municipality: Final IDP Review:2016/2017; (Statistics South Africa, 2011)).

The Municipality has been acknowledged by the National Department of Finance for having a budget that is "credible, and relevant", with its Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Mxolisi Kunene being appointed by the Minister of Finance to serve on the Accounting Standard Board.

4.10 Target Population

According to Lavrakas (2008), the target population is defined as all the units to which the study's findings can be generalized. Therefore, the target population is a group/set of units and/or people with specific features that the researcher is interested in. For the purposes of research, a sample is drawn from the target population.

The target population for this study includes all persons that are in the database of the municipality. These persons are already or intend doing business to provide goods and or services to the municipality.

4.11 Sampling Technique

Sampling involves the selection of a quota of the population which represents the total target population (Cele, 2015). Apart from the selection method, data collection is equally an important and critical process in a research as it determines the quality of the research outcome (Tongco, 2007). The representatives selected are called a sample (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005; Kothari, 2004; Terre Blanche et al., 2012). Creswell (2014) advocates for the use of random sampling where everyone in the population has an equal probability of being selected. However, there are cases where such sampling is not suitable due to the sample size, and cost constraints. Bhattacherjee (2012), Kothari (2004) and Leedy and Ormrod (2005) state that convenience sampling is recommended in some instances based on ease of access to the population. It is therefore imperative that sound decisions are made on what type of data will be collected and from whom since no amount of analysis will make up for poorly and improperly collected data.

For purposes of this study, the researcher utilised purposive and convenience sampling. In a purposive sampling, units are selected for a specific purpose and selection depends not only on their accessibility and preparedness to participate, but because they represent a broader population (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005; Terre Blanche et al., 2012), and convenience sampling was utilized to identify key informants. Purposive sampling is defined as an informed selection tool that is widely used in ethnobotany (Tongco, 2007: 147). It is also called judgement sampling since the researcher deliberately selects participants based on certain qualities they possess.

As has been mentioned above, the researcher obtained access to a municipal database to obtain contact details, for example; names, telephone numbers (mostly cell phone numbers and in some instances landlines as well), and email addresses. Attempts were made to call these people, but some numbers were

no longer in use. Emails were sent, but some were returned undelivered. Only five responses were received from emails.   Those that were accessed telephonically were asked to attend meetings in nearby community halls/churches. Meetings were held in the Esikhaleni, Ngwelezane and Enseleni townships respectively. Many that attended are attached to Small, Medium and Micro-sized Enterprises (SMMEs), some are in the start-up stage and some are employed while others are unemployed.

4.12 Sample

A sample is defined in different ways. In simple terms, it is a subcategory of the target population or elements that represent the population from whom data is collected (Yin, 2014). Sampling is used to gather information about the entire population when it is not feasible to approach each individual due to time and financial constraints.   The total population of uMhlathuze Local Municipality is 334 459 (uMhlathuze IDP Review: 2016-2017; Statistics South Africa, 2011). With this size of the population, it extremely difficult to collect data for the entire population.

4.13 Sample Size

The sample size is the entire population selected to participate in a study.

The population was taken from the municipality's database, which contained 1 000 individuals. The sample size was therefore calculated at 278 using the following formula:

$$Sample\ Size = \frac{\frac{z^2 \times p(1-p)}{e^2}}{1+(\frac{z^2 \times p(1-p)}{e^2 N})}$$

Where, N = population Size, e= Margin of error, z = z-score

4.14 Research Instrument

The research instrument was developed using issues raised in the literature survey. It was then piloted amongst the municipal senior employees. Concerns raised were considered and addressed accordingly before finalising the questionnaire. Questionnaires were used to gather data. According to Kazi and Khalid (2012) and Terre Blanche et al. (2012), a questionnaire consists of written questions designed to solicit information from respondents. Questionnaire is considered as the most common tool used to gather data in the social sciences. Terre Blanche et al. (2012) add that a questionnaire consists of several measurement scales and other questions that solicit demographic information from respondents.

This research study utilised demographic and scaled questions consisting of statements and/or questions with a rating scale. Croasmun and Ostrom (2011) and Terre Blanche et al. (2012) observe that scaled questions are useful for measuring attitudes and personality because they capture subtle gradations of opinion and perception. A Likert scale was used for rating. It assigns a scale value to each of five responses. According to Kothari (2004), the respondent is asked to answer each of the statements in terms of several scales, usually 5 to 7. The responses range from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Questionnaire was divided into biographical questions and governance issues in relation to transformation initiatives.

4.15 Structure of the Questionnaires

Closed-ended questions were used in line with Burgess (2001) recommendations. This allowed the researcher to solicit a set of standardised responses. Personal questions were avoided to prevent bias. To ensure confidentiality, no personal information was requested from the respondents except biographical information. Furthermore, the respondents received a letter stating that their personal information would not be used for any

purposes other than academic research. Since English is the language used for communication purposes in the uMhlathuze Local Municipality, and all database forms are completed in English, the questionnaire and covering letters were therefore written in English.

4.16   Data Collection and Reliability

Data collection forms an integral component of the research design as it determines the quality of the data collected (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013; Yin, 2014). Various methods are used to collect data, and each is suitable for different usage. This study used questionnaires to collect data. Questionnaires are considered to be an effective data collection tool that is less costly and less time consuming than interviews and observation (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013).

While data collection is an integral part of a research study, reliability is equally essential. Reliability as defined by Golafshani (2003), as the extent to which the results are dependable and consistent over time and accurately represent the entire population under study.

Since some of the participants did not have email addresses, appointments were made using telephone calls. Meetings were held in the areas where participants reside but were organised in groups to save time and money. While a few had email addresses, these were mainly business people already providing services to the municipality.

Eight meetings were held in Esikhaleni township with different groups. Esikhaleni had substantial number of persons registered on the municipality's database. Each meeting was attended by a minimum of 20 people. Three meetings were held in Ngwelezane township, attended by at least 15

respondents. Enseleni township is the smallest amongst the three townships. Only one group meeting was held with 15 people in the Enseleni township.

The researcher explained to participants the purpose of the meeting, highlighting that participation was voluntary and that the respondents' identities will not be divulged at any stage. The whole questionnaire was explained in IsiZulu to ensure that all understood its content. The questionnaire was administered by the researcher with the assistance of two assistants to ensure that all completed responses were collected and to clarify any questions should they arise.

From the database of 1 000 persons, only 300 people were invited to attend group meetings instead of 278 being the sample size. This was to cater an allowance if there were those who could accept invitation but decide to not turn up. Out of the 300 persons invited only 285 confirmed their attendance. However, only 230 attended. Two hundred and twenty (220) completed questionnaires were returned. Five of the 20 emailed questionnaires were returned, making a total of 225 completed questionnaires, representing 97% of those that participated in the study.

4.17 Research Ethical Considerations

Creswell (2014) and Terre Blanche et al. (2012) state that researchers need to protect the welfare of their research participants in order to develop trust, ensuring the integrity of the research, and that neither the participants nor their organisations are exposed to harm. Terre Blanche et al. (2012) add that research ethics also extends to plagiarism. Compliance with ethical codes has become mandatory for social scientists, with most universities requiring that research with human participants be reviewed by an independent research ethics committee.

The researcher took the following steps to comply with ethical principles:

i. The study was conducted in line with the ethical guidelines adopted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal's (UKZN) School of Management, Information Technology and Governance.

j. The researcher applied for an ethical clearance and was received from the University.

k. Subsequent to obtaining the clearance from the UKZN and prior to collecting data from the participants, a permission to conduct the study was sought from the uMhlathuze Municipal Manager and was subsequently obtained.

l. The aims and objectives of the study were explained to all potential participants. All the participants signed an informed consent form.

m. Participants were advised that their participation was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw at any time. Furthermore, they were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Participants were provided with the contact details of both the researcher and the supervisor

n. The researcher undertook to respect the dignity of the Local Council and other authorities including the Traditional Authority.

o. The researcher undertook to acknowledge the work of others and reference accordingly.

p. Upon completion of the study, the researcher undertook to run the report on Turnitin as required by UKZN to ensure the authenticity of the information.

4.18 Conclusion

This chapter described the research methodology employed to conduct this study and the design strategies that underpinned it. It presented the problem statement, followed by the research objectives and questions and the justification for the study. The target population, sampling technique, and sample size were described. The chapter concluded by highlighting the ethical considerations considered in conducting the study.

The following chapter presents, discusses and analyses the research results.

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS

5.1   Introduction

This chapter presents, discusses and analyses the research results. It highlights the study participants' demographic details that impact on community participation in council meetings, including gender, age, educational level, employment status, mode of transport and the medium of communication used to invite community members to such meetings. While the first part of the questionnaire addresses the biographical information, the second part of the questionnaire addresses governance issues in relation to community participation in the affairs of local government and the factors that drive and/or impede transformation initiatives within the municipality. The last question of the second part of the questionnaire examined the correlation between audit outcomes, service delivery and the quality thereof.

Since the questionnaire had two sections, the analysis and interpretation of the findings is also divided into two, presenting biographical analysis and governance issues, respectively. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was utilized for the analysis of data. The sample size was 273 but only 230 persons turned up for participation. Out of the 230 persons that attended only 225 (i.e representing 97% of the participants) completed and returned their questionnaires while 5 was from those who were emailed.

5.2   Data Analysis

Once data has been collected, it needs to be systematically analysed. Analysis brings structure, order and meaning by interpreting the findings, and providing detailed answers (Creswell, 2014; Leedy and Ormrod, 2005; Terre Blanche et al., 2012). Data analysis enables the researcher to organise the data collected

in order to reach conclusions. It allows the researcher to achieve the research objectives, answer the research questions and derive useful information. By analysing the data, the researcher unveils its meaning.

The data was coded using the Likert scale and was subsequently captured on an excel spread sheet. The Likert scale ascribes a quantitative value to qualitative data, enabling statistical analysis. The statistical data and content were exported to the SPSS for analysis. Frequencies and tables and pie charts were used to present the results.

5.3   Biographical Information

This section presents and discusses questions 1-7 of the questionnaire. According to Statistics South Africa (2011) unemployment within uMhlathuze municipal area stands at 31%. Most of the unemployed people in this area are young people and women.   The Statistics South Africa (2011) also indicate that 51.3% of the population in uMhlathuze represents female and male constitute 48.7% of the population.   However, an equal number of females and males responded to the survey (i.e., 50% each).   It is important to ensure that women's voices are heard as they are most affected by inadequate basic services in residential areas.

The responses to the questionnaire revealed that 43% of the respondents were under the age of 30 years and 87% (i.e. 43%+30%+14%) were under the age of 50 years old. Seventy-three per cent of the respondents were younger than 40 years old (consisting of 43.1% of people aged 25-30 and 30.2% aged between 31 and 40 respectively). This suggests a youthful population with a long-life expectancy. Only 13% of the respondents were above the age of 50 years (comprising 8% of those aged 51-60 and 5% of respondents older than 60 respectively).

Table 5: Age Distribution

Age	<30 years	31-40	41-50	51-60	>60 years
Proportion (%)	43%	30%	14%	8%	5%

Statistics South Africa (2011) states that, 87.7% of the population within uMhlathuze Local Municipality speaks IsiZulu, while 9.7% and 5.1% speaks English and Afrikaans, respectively. However, 96% of the respondents indicated that IsiZulu is their home language. Only 1.8% cited English as their home language, with a mere 0.9% citing Afrikaans and 1.3% another home language.

Table 6: Home Language

Language	IsiZulu	English	Afrikaans	Other
Proportion (%)	96%	1.8%	0.9%	1.3%

Table 7 below presents the results on marital status. It shows that 63.1% of the respondents were single at the time of the survey. This is probably because most fell into the 25-40 years age category. Only 24.4% of the sample was married, with the remainder either divorced or widowed.

Table 7: Marital status

Marital Status	Single	Married	Divorced	Widow/er
Proportion (%)	63.1%	24.4%	4.4%	8%

The majority (69%) of the respondents in Table 8 below completed post-secondary education and 20% secondary education. Four respondents did not answer this question.

Table 8: Educational Level

Educational level	Never Attended	Primary Level	Secondary Level	Tertiary Level	Not responded
Proportion (%)	4.9%	4.4%	20%	68.9%	1.8%

The employment status of uMhlathuze Local Municipality residents was considered because it influences access to the basic services provided by the municipality, like water and electricity. Although some of these services are provided free of charge to indigent people, they are usually paid for. Of the 225 participants, 32% were in permanent employment at the time of the survey and 17.8% were unemployed (see figure 3 below). Figure 3 below shows that 21% were studying, 10.7% were self-employed, and 3% were pensioners, with the remainder employed as casual or seasonal workers. According to Stats SA, the unemployment rate decreased from 40.6% in 2001 to 31% in 2011. Table 8 above and Figure 2 below, point to the close relationship between educational level and employment. Table 8 above shows that 68.9% of the respondents have a tertiary qualification and Figure 2 indicates that 32% and 10.7% of the respondents are in permanent employment and are self-employed, respectively. Being employed enables one to access basic services since one can afford to pay for such services, while lack of income suggests the opposite.
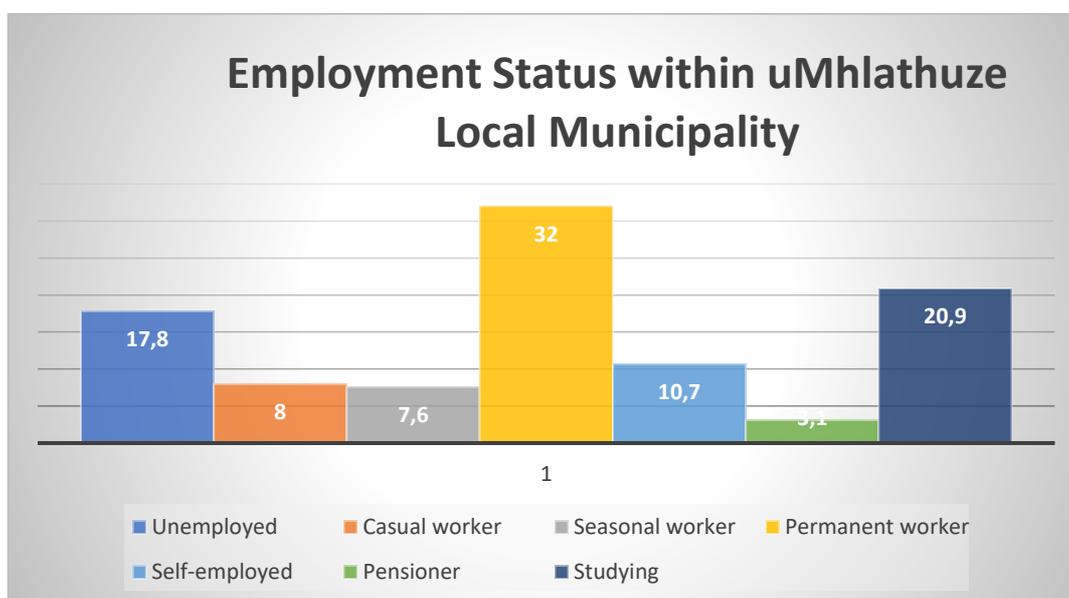
Figure 2: Employment status

Although Stats SA (2011) indicates that most of the inhabitants of uMhlathuze Local Municipality reside in rural areas, the majority (60.9%) of those who participated in the study indicated that they resided in townships, while 22% and 17% indicated that they reside in rural and urban areas respectively. These results are possibly due to the exodus from rural areas to townships in search of employment opportunities, better school facilities and access to basic services. Access to services is much better in townships and urban areas than in rural and tribal authority areas.

Percentages of persons per Area of Residence

- Rural/Tribal Authority — 22%
- Township (Esikhaleni/Ngwlezane/Enseleni) — 61%
- Urban (Richards Bay/Empangeni) — 17%
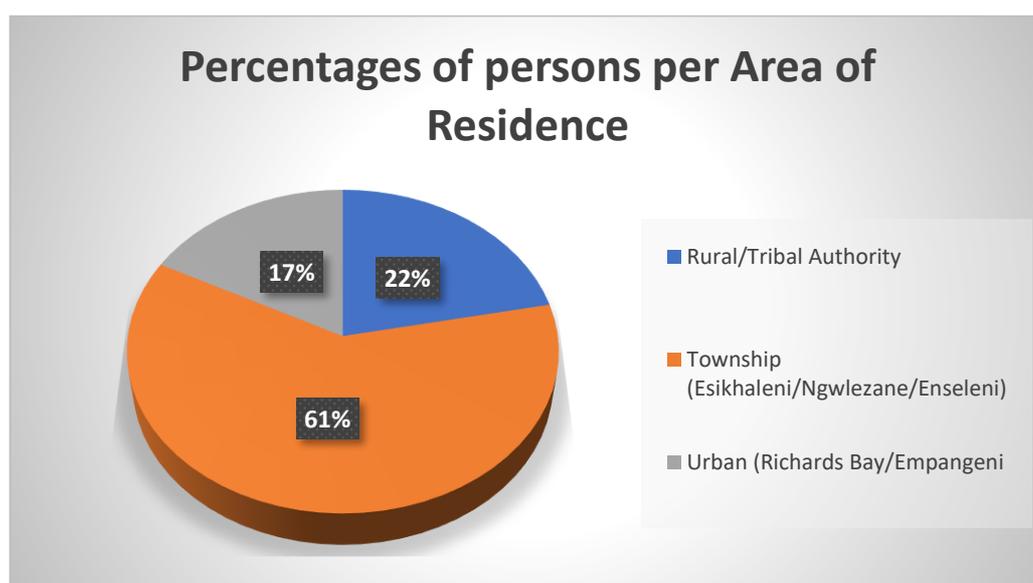
Figure 3: Residential area

5.4 Other Information Considered

This section covers questions 8-14 of the questionnaire. It examines the distance travelled to community/council meetings and whether the municipality provides transport where long distances are involved, and transport is lacking. It thus seeks to determine the reasons for community's failure to attend meetings.

The language used to invite community members to meetings and during such meetings is also discussed. Finally, the questions sought to determine which community members attend meetings (the youth/ adults; males or females).

Figure 4 below shows that 68% of the study participants live within 3 and 5 km from the meeting venues (29% within 3km, and 38.8% between 3.1 and 5km.), while 21.1% travel up to 10km and 12.1% travel more than 10km to attend community meetings. One participant did not answer this question.

Distance travelled to community meetings
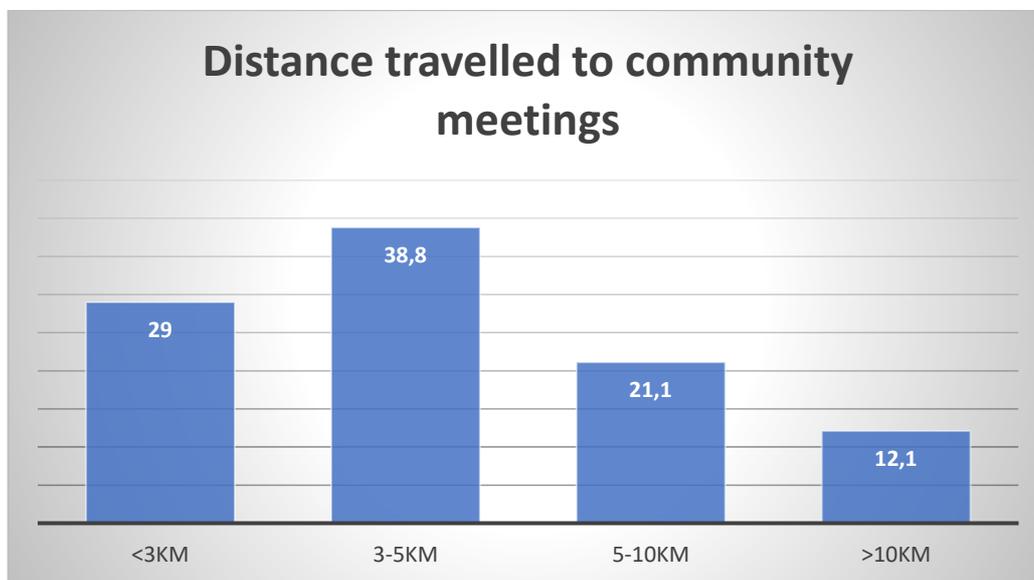
Figure 4: Distance travelled to attend council meetings

Only 222 participants responded to the question on the mode of transport used to attend community meetings. The study found that 37% of the respondants walk to meeting venues, while 38% use their own transport, 14% receive a lift from friends, 5% use transport provided by the municipality and the remaining 5% use other means of transport.

Turning to the language used to communicate with community members, 53% of the respondents stated that invitations are issued in IsiZulu while 34% indicated that a combination of IsiZulu and English is used. Of the 223 participants that responded to this question, 63% received invitations through their ward councillors and/or *headmen (izinduna)*. This suggests a positive relationship between residents and local government leadership. Newspapers were the second most common medium of communication at 19.3%, while 11%

of the participants relied on the municipality's website. Only 5.8% relied on the post/email for communication with the council.
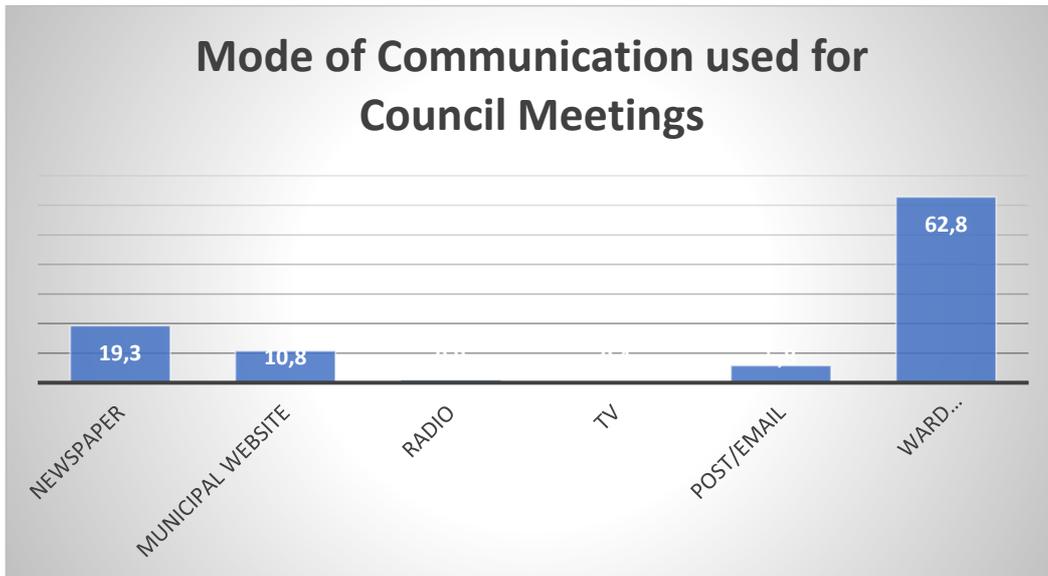
Figure 5: Medium of Communication used to invite Community to Council Meetings

Figure 6 below, shows that, 79% of the people that attend the meetings are adults while the youth constitute 21.2%. For this question, only 217 participants responded. This is worrying since, as Table 5 above shows 73% of the study sample is under the age of 40 years.

Figure 6: Who attend council meetings between youth and adults?

5.5   Governance: Decentralization and Implementation of transformation initiatives

This section considers the responses to scaled questions that consisted of statements and questions using a rating scale. Croasmun and Ostrom (2011) and Terre Blanche et al. (2012) contend that scaled questions are indispensable in measuring attitudes and personality traits since they capture subtle gradations of opinion and perception. A Likert scale apportions a scale value to each of five to seven responses (Kothari (2004). This section discusses questions 15-45 relating to governance structures in order to determine whether the Municipality involves the public in its affairs, including IDP and budget preparation.

5.5.1 Discussion and Analysis of the findings

Initially, the study sought to establish whether local government officials use the language understood by their clients and what happens if an official does not speak the same language as the customer/client. Of the 223 participants that responded to this question, 56% agreed that when visiting municipal offices for services, officials use the language that they understand or else another person interprets for them. Sixteen per cent were unsure and neutral, and 28% disagreed (23% disagreed and 5% strongly disagreed) with this statement. One of the survey participants was Afrikaans-speaking. While completing the survey, he indicated that he experiences difficulty whenever he visits the municipal offices as officials assume that he is an English-speaking person and address him as such. He is not comfortable speaking in English. However, when he requests to be served in Afrikaans, he is told that no one can do so. A few of the women from the Enseleni Township that participated in the study shared that they only speak IsiZulu and are not comfortable when they are served by a white or coloured person because they cannot communicate with them in English.

In terms of community participation, the study sought to establish the views of the participants regarding consultation by the municipality during IDP and budget preparations. Table 9 below shows that, most of the respondents agreed with the statements from question 16 through to question 19. For question, 16, 38.6% agreed while 30.9% were neutral.

For question 17, 50.7% of the respondents were of the view that community involvement and participation enhance service delivery and 28.4% remained neutral. The mean for this question is 3.47. Participants thus felt strongly that public/community participation in the matters of local government is important and necessary for development as this ensures that government policies dovetail well with the needs of the community.

Table 9 below also shows that, 51.3% of the respondents agreed that the low turnout in the recent local elections pointed to community dissatisfaction with municipal service delivery (question 18). The high mean of 3.6 suggests that community members were of the strong opinion that this was the case. Turning to question 19, the responses indicate that when the Municipality fails to deliver services, community members resort to protest. This result is in line with Rondinelli (2007) and Powell (2009) contention that increasing community dissatisfaction with government services has led to increased protest in recent times. While Nleya (2011) assets that not all community protest relates to a lack of service delivery, the high statistical mean of 3.38 suggests that this is indeed a major cause of dissatisfaction.

Table 9: Community Participation

Community Participation	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev.
16. I feel that the municipality fairly consults the community about their needs, especially on the nature, quantity and quality of services to be provided?	3.1	21.5	30.9	38.6	5.8	3.22	.956
17. Community involvement and participation does enhance service delivery?	4.0	9.8	28.4	50.7	7.1	3.47	.911
18. Low turnout in the recent local government elections was an indication of community dissatisfaction with the municipal service delivery?	1.8	9.8	25.9	51.3	11.2	3.60	.877
19. Community protests is another form of community participation which has positive consequences since politicians and officials take these protests seriously?	2.7	13.8	31.6	46.7	5.3	3.38	.884

Operation Sukuma Sakhe was introduced to tackle the challenges of service delivery, disease, lack of economic opportunities, joblessness, and crime and other social ills. Tshishonga (2016a) and Ndlovu and Msweli (2016) assert that OSS is an integrated service delivery model that utilizes the concept of a War Room for community-driven service delivery. This programme was introduced in KZN in 2011 by Dr Mkhize, the former Premier of the Province. In this programme, all stakeholders, from communities to those who hold senior positions in government engage one another on an equal basis.

Turning to questions 20-22, approximately 9% of the study participants (from Enseleni township) stated during the survey that they know nothing about the OSS programme. However, Table 10 below shows that, 41.3%, 36% and 45.8% agreed with the statements in questions 20 through to 22. There is thus a strong sense that the Ward committees are functional within uMhlathuze Local

Municipality and that the War Rooms enable community members to raise their concerns and participate in service delivery.

The statistical mean for questions 20-22 is above 3, showing that the respondents agreed with these statements that relate to participatory democracy. These results concur with Madumo (2014) and Sebake (2016a) assertions that the relationship between the community (the bolt) and local government leadership (the nut) is inseparable, resulting in collective ownership of service delivery.

Table 10: Functionality of Ward Committees through the War Rooms

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev.
20. The ward committee system is fully functional in deepening democracy and promoting public participation?	4.4	16.4	37.8	36.9	4.4	3.20	.922
21. The War Rooms in your ward are fully functional and they enhance community participation in their affairs of local government?	6.2	19.6	38.2	31.6	4.4	3.08	.967
22. Members of the community are engaged with through the war rooms, by bringing in their issues of concerns and they participate in the service delivery?	5.3	19.6	29.3	38.2	7.6	3.23	1.022

The responses to question 23 show that 55% of the respondents agreed (44% agreed and 11% strongly agreed) that the OSS is a vehicle to assist the government to create a better life for citizens and represents renewed government commitment to deliver essential services to all communities. Only 16.4% of the respondents disagreed with this statement; this could include those that knew nothing about the OSS or had not been invited to War Room meetings.

Table 11 below indicates that the mean for question 24 through to question 26 is above 3. This shows that most of the participants agree with the statements. The majority (58.2%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that community participation ensures that the Municipality successfully implements its programme. Only 15.1% disagreed with this statement while 26.7% remained neutral.

For question 26, Table 11 below indicates a mean of 3.84, suggesting that respondents strongly agree with the statement that the municipal council should engage with its stakeholders for effective service delivery. This highlights that consultation and stakeholder engagement are key elements of democracy, a view that is also expressed in the literature. According to (Sebake, 2016a; Ogundiya, 2010; Nsingo, 2014), the conceptual framework for public participation emphasizes a governance system that values community involvement in the affairs of local government. They add that effective public participation is the cornerstone in advancing participatory democracy at local government level.

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q24: It is a benefit to both the municipality and the community of that municipality if the community is involved and included in various stages of planning and implementation program?	225	3.49	.996
Q25: IDPs and budgets in the uMhlathuze Local Municipality are driven by municipal officials and councillors instead to be driven by the people?	224	3.47	1.033
Q26: Consultation and stakeholder engagement are elements of democracy. Councillors need to adopt these principles as the basis of their operation. This provides opportunities for the community to participate in issues affecting their lives?	225	3.84	1.047
Valid N (list wise)	224		

Questions 27-29 sought to determine the respondents' perceptions of accountability and responsibility as these are elements of governance. The

mean for the three questions is above 3, at 3.87, 3.58 and 3.13, respectively. This is a strong indication that the respondents are concerned about corruption among bureaucrats and politicians.

For question 27, the statistical mean is the highest amongst the three. Vyas-Doorgapersad and Ababio (2010) and Wiseman et al. (2012) assert that public officials must be seen to be acting justly and fairly by being transparent and accountable to their stakeholders. This is in line with *Batho Pele* principles and is one of the elements of good governance.

Regarding questions 28 and 29 respectively, there appears to have been some confusion among the respondents. The mean for both these questions is above 3, indicating that they agree with both statements. It is unlikely that bureaucrats will be involved in corrupt activities and at the same time provide full and accurate information.

Table 12: Descriptive statistics on Accountability

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q27: Accountability and transparency are considered the elements of democracy and building blocks of governance. It is critical that both the councillors and administration adopt them in their operation to gain trust of their constituencies?	225	3.87	1.029
Q28: Municipality administrators/staff engage in corrupt activities especially when awarding tenders?	222	3.58	1.142
Q29: Do you feel that the municipality provides full and accurate information about services that the community is entitled to?	222	3.13	1.075
Valid N (listwise)	219		

The statistical mean for question 30 is 3.36, indicating that the respondents feel strongly that uMhlathuze Local Municipality provides information at service points in their home language.

The *Batho Pele* principles call for citizens to be treated with courteousness and consideration and to have access to the services that they deserve. This could be achieved through decentralized offices, like the Thusong Centres. Thusong Centres are one-stop-shops providing integrated services at one point. Effective communication is about providing relevant information at the right time and place. Information pamphlets should be made available across all the Thusong Centres, municipal offices and libraries to inform the public about available services; bring services closer to communities and empower the poor and disadvantaged. The question that arises is; does staff treat and serve customers/clients with courtesy and respect?

The responses to question 31 show that an almost equal number of respondents agreed and disagreed that municipal staff adhere to the *Batho Pele* principles. The statistical mean for question 31 is 2.94. The percentage for those that agree with the statement is 35.6% (agree = 29.8%, and strongly agree = 5.8%), while that for those that disagree is 35.1% (disagree = 12%, and strongly disagree = 23.1%).

For question 32, the statistical mean is 3.23. Of those that participated in the survey, 37.8% agreed that municipal staff treat community members with courtesy and respect and 7.2% strongly agreed, while 32.4% remained neutral and 22.6% were of the view that the front-line staff does not serve with courtesy and respect. Although the statistical mean is above 3, service excellence on the part of municipal staff is on the borderline and management needs to attend to this before it deteriorates.

Table 13: Descriptive statistics on communication and service excellence

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q30: Information is available at service points in the language that you understand?	222	3.36	1.062
Q31: Weekly/Monthly newsletter is distributed to the community with relevant and recent development from the office of the City Manager?	225	2.94	1.115
Q32: Frontline staff serve with courtesy and respect?	222	3.23	1.023
Q33: The municipality has a mechanism to record public views, including complaints and dissatisfaction with services – toll free number, suggestion boxes are available?	224	3.19	1.102
Valid N (listwise)	219		

One participant did not answer question 33. The statistical mean for this question is 3.19.   This is less than that for question 32. The respondents confirmed that the Municipality has mechanisms to record public views including complaints.   The question that remains is whether management responds to such views on time.   Of the 224 respondents, 27.7% remained neutral while 26.3% disagreed with the statement.   This suggests that some community members are not aware that they can voice their dissatisfaction and have not seen the suggestion boxes in the municipal service centres.   This raises questions regarding the management of satellite offices.

Table 14: Efficiency and Accessibility

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q34: Staff can handle complaints fast and efficiently?	223	3.09	1.157
Q35: The municipality's offices are accessible by all community members and have extended business hours to cater those who are working?	221	3.10	1.116
Q36: The municipality provides service delivery to physically, socially and culturally disadvantaged persons (including infrastructure)?	225	3.07	1.186
Valid N (listwise)	219		

Two hundred and twenty-three (223) participants (99.11%) responded to question 34 and 44.7% agreed with the statement that complaints are handled fast and efficiently, while 22.4% remained neutral. The statistical mean for this question is slightly above 3 at 3.09. This suggests that complaints are handled fast and efficiently.

Question 35 investigated whether the Municipality caters for the needs of those who are unable to visit municipal offices during working hours. Two hundred and twenty-one participants (98.22%) responded to this question. It is interesting to note that 45.3% were of the view that municipal offices have extended hours to cater for those that are working, with 28% not agreeing with this statement and 26.7% remaining neutral. This suggests that many are not sure if the Municipality's offices have extended hours of business. The statistical mean is just over 3.

All the 225 participants responded to question 36, with 45.8% agreeing that the Municipality does cater for the physically challenged and those who are socially and culturally disadvantaged. However, 33.3% disagreed. As prescribed by the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997), principle number 3 of the *Batho Pele* principles state that "all citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled".

5.5.2 Factors that drive/impede transformation initiatives (Political Appointments and Politics)

Questions 37-40 investigated factors that drive and/or impede transformation initiatives within local government. They investigated the appointment of the municipal manager and CFO by political officer-bearers and what impact this has on service delivery and development.

Table 15 below shows that the statistical mean for question 37 is 2.86, indicating that the participants disapprove of political appointments at senior level in local government. It is interesting to observe that 42.2% of the respondents did not agree that senior officials should be political appointees, with 36% agreeing with this statement. This suggests that many are of the view that if those appointed to senior positions are political appointees, they will be dictated to by politicians who are perceived to be corrupt, negatively impacting service delivery and development. This is in line with views of scholars, such as (Alexander and Kane-Berman, 2014; Basheka and Mubangizi, 2012; Picard and Mogale, 2015), that there is suggestion of widespread wastage, ineffectiveness, ineptitude and corruption in South Africa.

Table 15: Factors that drive/impede transformation initiatives

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q37: Do you think that the appointment of the municipal manager and CFO should be political appointments?	225	2.86	1.295
Q38: Nepotism within the Municipality in the appointment of people with critical technical skills and expertise compromises the service delivery?	224	3.36	1.100
Q39: The Municipality does not have a strategy to attract and develop scarce skills?	223	3.48	.999
Q40: Politicians have a role on service delivery. Political differences amongst political parties has an impact and affect collective political decision-making in council?	223	3.84	.976
Q41: It is believed that conflict between political and administrative leadership has a negative effect on service delivery?	225	3.98	.975
Valid N (listwise)	220		

Question 38 sought to establish the impact of nepotism on the appointment of people with critical and scarce skills. The statistical mean is 3.36, indicating that respondents agreed that this practice compromises service delivery.

On the question of whether the Municipality has a strategy to attract and develop scarce skills from within (question 39), the statistical mean is 3.48, which means that most of the participants subscribed with this statement. Indeed, 56.5% of the respondents agreed with this statement, with 26.9% remaining neutral, less than in question 38.

Table 15 shows that, question 40 has a statistical mean of 3.84; the majority of the respondents (71.3%) concurred with this statement and only 9.9% disagreed. It is immaterial whether political fighting is intra or inter-party conflict. Conflict leads to failure to achieve a quorum and major decisions cannot be reached. This impedes transformation initiatives. In answering this question, some participants indicated that political in-fighting amongst politicians; either intra or inter-party, has a direct impact on service delivery. All the participants responded to question 41 and the statistical mean is 3.98. The majority (78.7%) agreed that any conflict between politicians and bureaucrats has negative effects on service delivery.

The above questions relate to different forms of corruption within local government, whether real or perceived. Weylandt (2013) is of the view that decentralization in African countries increased corruption due to increased bureaucracy; however, in Uganda, it resulted in a decrease in corruption. According to this scholar, corruption lies at the root of the failure to achieve good governance.

5.5.3 Local Government Legislative Framework – Audit Opinion

The final three questions (42-44) of the questionnaire related to the impact of the local government legislative framework and how audit opinions impact governance and service delivery. Table 16 below shows that the statistical mean is 3.76 for question 42, 3.88 for question 43 and 4.06 for question 44. All 225 participants responded to the last three questions.

Table 16: Descriptive statistics on local government legislative framework

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q42: Local government is over legislated and this result in the municipality spending more time to comply instead of service delivery?	225	3.76	1.016
Q43: Not understanding how the local government operates affects the ability of communities to participate in local government activities?	225	3.88	.920
Q44: Audit outcomes have a positive correlation towards the delivery of services and quality thereof?	225	4.06	.952
Valid N (listwise)	225		

The percentage of respondents that agreed with the statement is 67.6%, 77.3% and 77.4% for questions 42, 43 and 44, respectively. The respondents thus strongly agreed that audit outcomes have a positive correlation with delivery of services and the quality thereof. This casts doubt on assertions that local government is over-legislated, resulting in municipalities spending more time complying with the law than delivering the services. Mathebula (2016) contends that decisions are based on available information and if there is no coherence between a decision and what informs it, such information is unreliable. Unreliable information results in inefficient usage of resources. Therefore, according to Motubatse (2016), audit is a key governance structure providing oversight of financial reporting.

Given that there is a positive correlation between audit outcomes and service delivery, question 42 needs to be investigated further.

5.6   Conclusion

The study's results show that participatory democracy is in place within the uMhlathuze Local Municipality but has not spread across all the communities under its jurisdiction. There are still areas where the community has not yet experienced the benefits of decentralization. The results of the study are in

line with most of the literature discussed earlier on. According to literature, decentralization has, in South Africa and other African countries been viewed as the panacea. Decentralization is believed to be a powerful and effective tool to reducing poverty and improving governance in Africa. However, scholars have indicated different views, but most of all was the indication that there are still major gaps in relation to access to services, especially in rural areas. This view has been held by Siddle and Koelble (2012) where they mentioned that progress has been uneven in South Africa with some areas relatively well serviced, while others are not, particularly those in rural regions. Citizens in the per-urban and rural areas have not enjoyed the benefits of decentralization since service delivery in those areas is still lacking. This has been evidenced by the exodus from the areas of Nkandla and Ntambanana Local Municipalities respectively to uMhlathuze Local Municipality.

The study found that a majority of the participants were of the view that the Municipality consults with community members, mainly via ward councillors or *headmen*. This is a signal that ward committees are active.

Party-political conflict is a cause for concern and needs to be addressed since it leads to failure to achieve a quorum and major decisions cannot be reached. This impedes transformation initiatives. Majority of the participants indicated that political in-fighting amongst politicians; either intra or inter-party, has a direct impact on service delivery. The majority agreed that any conflict between politicians and bureaucrats has negative effects on service delivery.

Finally, there is a strong view that audit outcomes have a positive correlation with the delivery of services and the quality thereof. This begs the question of whether local government is over-legislated, resulting in municipalities spending more time complying with the law than delivering services.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1   Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of findings and recommendations.   The results of the study have been varied, with most of the participants indicating that the uMhlathuze Local Municipality does involve its communities with the government issues. But the Enseleni Township residents indicated a bleak and a gloomy picture about the municipality.

6.2   Summary

With the advent of democracy in 1994, the local government in South Africa faced enormous pressure to transform the lives of its citizens, particularly Black Africans, women, the youth and people with disabilities. The new dispensation (i.e. the democratic state) created high expectations, especially amongst the poor and the impoverished Black Africans, that the government would improve their lives by democratizing state institutions to redress inequality and extend services to those affected by racial segregation that resulted in disparities in income levels and development.

The democratic South African government pledged to transform the society by providing sustainable elementary services and giving priority to the basic needs to all its citizens irrespective of race. To achieve this objective, it embarked on various transformation instruments, one of them was to utilize decentralization as a service delivery model for developmental local government. In addition, the KZN Provincial Government introduced the OSS programme as an integrated service delivery model. This study employed the decentralization model as a lens to investigate whether governance practices are effective in improving service delivery through responsive, accountable, and efficient democratic participatory local government.

The study sought to investigate the effects and impact of decentralization on governance, closely examining community participating in budgetary and policy-making activities. It further sought to establish if there is any correlation between audit outcomes and service delivery. Finally, the study sought to investigate factors that drive/impede the implementation of transformation initiatives. Its findings will add to the body of learning on decentralization of democratic local government institutions.

The journey to transform the local government system was and is still not an easy task. The vision as set out in the Constitution is clear, but implementation posed immense challenges. Studies have established that while decentralization brought about fundamental changes on the African continent, however these changes only resulted in modest improvements in service delivery. The modest improvements in service delivery is as a result of the constraints from the lack of skills in engineering, finance and project management (Powell, 2012). Some scholars like Siddle and Koeble (2012) found that progress is uneven with some areas relatively well serviced, while others, especially those in rural regions are not. Some of the challenges that confronted local government in South Africa include the amalgamation of local municipalities' personnel from different racial and cultural backgrounds, inability to raise adequate revenue, poor public participation, unjustifiable party-political interference, political infighting, corruption, lack of capacity due to a lack of skilled human capital, and the lack of skills amongst the youth to take up positions in the local government sphere.

This study revealed that municipalities which have shown improvement in their audit opinions have made some progress in service delivery. uMhlathuze Local Municipality obtained a clean audit opinion for five consecutive years and has reported great strides in service delivery, despite outcries from other regions of its jurisdiction.

6.3   Findings

The study's findings are presented against the backdrop of its objectives. This research study sought to achieve the following objectives:

a) To establish the impact of decentralization within uMhlathuze Local Municipality.
b) To determine the impact of audit opinions on transformation initiatives in uMhlathuze Local Municipality.
c) To identify the factors that drive/impede the implementation of transformation initiatives in uMhlathuze Local Municipality.

6.3.1 Effects and Impact of Decentralization

Literature (for example Twala, 2014 and Chibba and Luiz, 2011) paints a bleak picture of the democratic local government. The local government sector is said to be affected by constant service delivery protests, creating the impression that democratic local government is failing to deliver fundamental services to the community as mandated by section 153 (1) of the Constitution. Increasing urbanization has resulted in the first and second-class citizens and has produced an unequal society. While no protests have been reported within the uMhlathuze Local Municipality area, protest incidents have however occurred within the KCDM. The causes of the service delivery ranged from accusations of corruption to a meagre and inferior service delivery in some of the municipalities falling under the KCDM. An example is the case of the uMlalazi Municipality mentioned above regarding the King Dinuzulu road project which was not completed on time. However, participants in the study were in relative agreement, suggesting that uMhlathuze Local Municipality consults with its communities during policy-making, budgetary and IDP processes. Some of the participants felt that communities need to engage in protest since politicians and bureaucrats take such actions (i.e. protests) seriously. Some scholars like Tambe Endoh (2015) contend that with the decentralization of services to local government sphere, South Africa has made great progress in advancing the well-being of the majority of its citizens, and in addressing service delivery backlogs.

The decentralization of services to local government appears to have had a direct impact in improving participation in the local government affairs within the uMhlathuze Local Municipality. Out of those that participated in the study, most of the respondents were of the view that community involvement and participation enhance service delivery. Participants felt strongly that public/community participation in the matters of local government is important and necessary for development as this ensures that government policies and planning dovetail with the needs of the community. Further, the majority of the respondents agreed that the OSS is a vehicle to assist the local government to create a better life for its citizens and represents renewed government commitment to delivering essential services to all communities.

The introduction of the OSS programme improved the functioning of ward committees through War Rooms. This programme is fully functional within the uMhlathuze Local Municipality even though the Enseleni participants reported that it has not yet been implemented in their area. Some of the participants reported that communities bring their concerns first to the War Rooms to be addressed by local government and if the problem is not of the local government, but for provincial government, the matter is referred to the respective department. If the matter is not resolved, it is escalated to another level. However, some participants noted that if a municipality is not run by the ANC, the OSS programme will not be implemented since it is regarded as promoting the ANC's agenda. This causes suffering among communities in such areas where it is not implemented.

6.3.2 The impact of audit opinions on transformation initiatives in uMhlathuze Local Municipality

Former AGSA Mr. Nombembe commented that the office of AG is mandated to not only audit financial statements but must include other matters that are

significant to oversight and the public interest. These include *inter alia*, reporting against predetermined objectives of service delivery reports, and compliance with the laws and regulations (Auditor General South Africa, 2012). In the same report of 2012, the AGSA asserts that efforts towards this end increased awareness among clients/auditees and resulted in improved service delivery across all levels of government. Good governance deliberates on both performance and conformance within local government legislation and risk management framework instead of trading one off against the other (Australian National Audit Office, 2003). Apart from reporting on weaknesses in organisational performance management, the AGSA also works with other relevant role players (like the office of the Public Protector, Committee on Public Accounts, etc.) in government to address the root causes thereof.

The Chapter 9 institutions were therefore established to strengthen corporate governance within government institutions and ensure that local government achieve outcomes that enhance public and stakeholder confidence in their organisations (Australian National Audit Office, 2003). Good governance requires that municipal leadership and staff are accountable for their actions, decisions and policies and that the government, Parliament and the people can depend on them to do their work well. The AGSA mentions that local government leadership's actions, decisions and policies are critical for financial and performance management, including respect for the law (Auditor General South Africa, 2016).

The study revealed strong views among the participants that audit outcomes have a positive correlation with the delivery of services and the quality thereof. The uMhlathuze Local Municipality made great strides in guaranteeing that its residents have access to essential services, including water and electricity. However, some scholars, and indeed some of the study participants, view local government as over-legislated and is thus unable to deliver efficiently and effectively. Despite this view, the uMhlathuze Local Municipality has received

clean audit opinion in the last five consecutive years and has made good strides with service delivery.

6.3.3 Factors that drive/impede the implementation of transformation initiatives in uMhlathuze Local Municipality

Ward Committees are regarded as effective agents in promoting community participation in local government affairs. The OSS programme encourages participation and embraces pro-poor policy-making with a developmental agenda to improving communities' quality of life, especially the marginalised, women, people with disabilities and the poor. The OSS programme encourages community participation through ward committees, and mobilization of grassroots cadres, NGOs, traditional structures and other stakeholders.

Public Participation: According to the uMhlathuze Local Municipality, much has been done to ensure that communities from different backgrounds participate in their own development. The study's results show that most of the respondents agreed that the Municipality consults with communities on the nature, quantity and quality of services to be provided. The study revealed that this is mainly done through the IDP and budgetary processes. The IDP is one of the participatory mechanisms that offer a forum to identify and discuss issues relating to improved social conditions, especially in under-developed areas.

Effective communication: The Batho Pele principles call for citizens to be treated with courtesy and consideration. Effective communication is about providing relevant information at the right time and place. This could be achieved through decentralized offices, including the Thusong Centres which are a one-stop-shops, integrated community centres. In terms of the *Batho Pele* principles, information must be provided in a multiplicity of media and languages to cater for the diverse communities the municipality serves.

Written information is not sufficient, as some people may prefer to receive information verbally, so that they are able to ask questions and clarify issues, and such information should be available in a variety of languages. Participants indicated that the municipality does provide full and accurate information about services that the communities are entitled to. However, language variety poses a challenge within the municipality. Stats SA (2011) indicates that 87.7% of the population within the uMhlathuze Local Municipality speaks IsiZulu. Further, 96% of the participants in the study indicated that IsiZulu is their home language. This is a challenge to the municipality to providing a variety of languages within its jurisdiction since the majority speaks in IsiZulu. It would not be financially feasible to provide languages like the Sotho, Venda and other languages within the uMhlathuze Local Municipality since there are few persons communicating in these languages including Afrikaans as well.

The OSS Programme: The OSS programme aims to ensure an improved life for all the citizens and represents government's renewed commitment to deliver essential services to all communities. War Rooms focus on food security, fighting disease and poverty to combat social ills, empowering the youth and women, promoting behaviour to address gender-based violence, and curbing teenage pregnancy, substance abuse and HIV and AIDS. Task teams at provincial, district and local government levels profile individual households and in some instances, services are provided immediately. While the decentralization process and the OSS programme are mechanisms to drive transformation, they cannot be a panacea for service delivery. The literature indicates that despite the milestone achievements of the OSS programme, challenges persist. Poor and lack of participation by ward-councillors and communities and a lack of responsiveness on the part of government departments, render the War Rooms dysfunctional. Tshishonga (2016a) concludes that the OSS programme has the potential to address socio-economic and service delivery challenges and backlogs by "recommitting and activating intergovernmental relations" whereby the three spheres of government and departments establish partnerships with affected people and communities.

Political Appointments of Senior Managers: The study found that most of the respondents were of the view that senior officials should not be appointed by politicians. Politicians are perceived to be corrupt and collusion between them and bureaucrats would negatively impact service delivery. Nepotism in the appointment of persons with critical skills and expertise was also regarded as compromising service delivery and impeding transformation.

Political Fighting

Political fighting, whether intra or inter-party, conflict leads to failure to achieve a quorum and major decisions cannot be reached. This impedes transformation initiatives. Some of the participants indicated that political in-fighting amongst politicians; either intra or inter-party, has a direct impact on service delivery. The majority of the respondents indicated that any conflict between politicians and bureaucrats has negative effects on service delivery.

Literature has observed that perceptions of uncaring, unresponsive, self-serving and corrupt political leaders (councillors) and municipal officials (administrators) have fuelled such protest (Alexander, 2010; Jakoet-Salie et al., 2016; Nleya, 2011). Other challenges include inadequate intergovernmental fiscal transfers, undue party-political interference in local government affairs, political infighting, and a lack of capacity due to a lack of skilled personnel in both technical fields and finance.

6.3.4 Other issues raised during the survey

During the survey, most of the elderly respondents requested that the purpose of the survey be explained in its entirety and the implications thereof. After the explanations of the purpose, they found comfort in discussing their experiences with the Municipality. Although the study was not a qualitative one, respondents felt at ease to discuss their issues and concerns to supplement

their responses to the questionnaire. The following touching story was shared by the participants from Enseleni Township:

Due to the escalating crime rate in the area, the community established a Community Safety Forum, called Isikebhe. They reported that there is one Police Station operating from a four-roomed house. The station has two vehicles that cover the whole township and its surrounding rural areas. They alleged that the Police Station does not have enough personnel to handle the community's complaints and problems, let alone other community services. To address these problems, the community established a Community Safety Forum, known as the Isikebhe. Each household contributes R50 per month to pay for the services rendered by the Isikebhe. The services provided by the Isikebhe include the following:

a) Traffic marshals – there are no municipal traffic marshals, though the municipality has a department for traffic control. The Isikebhe's members assist with traffic control during school hours, especially in the morning and after school.

b) The Isikebhe has assisted with the recovery of stolen vehicles in the Dondotha area. Vehicles are hijacked and sold across South Africa's borders.

c) In some areas, the Isikebhe has mobilised the Izinkabi (people alleged to be hired by taxi owners to kill their rivals) to recover vehicles (as the SAPS is failing the communities).

d) They have destroyed dealers' nests that are involved in selling parts from stolen vehicles.

e) They assist with the collection of refuse since refuse collection is almost non-existent.

f) The Isikebhe's members help to repair leaking water pipes that the Municipality is not attending to.

The respondents also indicated that in-fighting within the ANC contributed to service delivery failures. The birth of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF)

also fanned the flames. This resulted in most people not voting during the August 2016 local government elections. Others voted for the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) which is not normally their first choice.

6.3.5 Limitations of the Study

This study was confined to uMhlathuze Local Municipality and the community it serves. Although the findings can be generalized to the entire local government in South Africa, this must however be done with caution. Some people were reluctant to participate in the study because they could not fully comprehend how it would impact on their lives.

6.4 Recommendations

6.4.1 Safety and Security

The researcher believes some of the recommendations have policy implications, not only within the local government sphere, but in the three spheres of government. Provision of safety and security is the responsibility of the national government under the South African Police Services Act. Since crime is a problem throughout South Africa, proactive measures could go a long way in improving the overall safety within the municipality by eradicating crime. Participants in the Enseleni Township painted a very bleak picture about the municipality's commitment in providing services within this area. The study found that there is a lack of community involvement in the affairs and planning within the municipality, especially amongst the Enseleni residents. This led the local residents in providing themselves with the services which should have been provided by the local municipality. It is therefore recommended that the municipality must:

a. Put proactive measures in place to preventing crime in the area, by reinvigorating the current police force to patrol the Enseleni area.

b. Assist in the establishment of neighbourhood watches and community policing forum and farmer associations to augment the limited capacity of the police force.

c. Revive its service delivery within this township and its surroundings including some of the rural areas that fall within the municipal boundaries.

d. The municipality must engage the Provincial Commissioner of the South African Police Service to address the plight of the Enseleni residents.

6.4.2 Match Responsibilities with Funding – Fiscal Decentralization

With decentralization, there have been devolution of powers, authority and expenditure assignment to municipalities. Population growth within the uMhlathuze Local Municipality has been at 15.65% followed by uMfolozi Local Municipality at 14.91%. In contrast, Nkandla Local Municipality's population shrank by 14.36%, followed by Ntambanana Local Municipality at 12.31% and uMlalazi Local Municipality at 3.38%. This high population growth in the uMhlathuze Local Municipality as compared population shrinkages in the Nkandla Local Municipality and Ntambanana Local Municipality could be attributed to better job opportunities that are available in the uMhlathuze Local Municipality. With the influx from the municipalities with no tax base, funding has been inadequate, and thus leading to a lack of accountability by the local government. The two tables below shows clearly that the bulk of revenue sources comes from service charges, mainly electricity, water, sewer and refuse removal (Kumar, 2017). Although funding from National government increased from 19% to 30% in 2012/2013 and 2015/2016 respectively, population increase, and inflation has had an impact and therefore must be factored in. It is therefore imperative that when the national government devolve responsibilities to local government, those responsibilities should be fully funded to enhance local government accountability and responsibility to local communities. This will enable even those municipalities with no source of income to ensure delivery of services.

Table 17: Main sources of municipal operating revenue

Main Revenue Sources of Municipalities – 2012/2013	
Property rates	16.1%
Service charges	55.0%
Interest earned – external investments	0.9%
Other revenues	8.5%
Transfer and subsidies from National government	19.5%

Source: *Alexander and Kane-Berman (2014).*

Table 18: Main sources of municipal operating revenue

Main Revenue Sources of Municipalities – 2015/2016	
Property rates	14.0%
Service charges	46.1%
Other own revenues	9.9%
Transfer and subsidies from National government	30.0%

Source: Kumar (2017).

Through fiscal decentralization local output could be distinguished according to local preferences and situations, thus improving social welfare. However, Schoburgh (2016) notes that, local government often lacks the level of administrative and human capacity required for successful decentralization. Weak institutional and administrative capacity results in inefficient and ineffective service delivery (including infrastructure), thus limiting the achievement of local economic development goals.

To counter balance the effects of migration to urban areas, national government must provide adequate funding to the struggling rural municipalities to create suitable infrastructure for the creation of job opportunities and access to good quality services, including health, education etc. Apart from national government funding, the local government has to ensure that it employs personnel with the required academic qualification and experience in order to ensure that the IDP programmes are adequately managed and implemented without wastage of the resources.

6.4.3 Provision of Good Quality life for the disabled persons

The White Paper on Local Government (1998) calls for a good quality of life for all. Although the results of the study indicate that most of the respondents are of the view that the municipality caters for the physically challenged persons too, but some of the service points, especially those outside from town do not have facilities for these persons. This is in contravention of the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997) which calls for all citizens to have equal access to the services to which they are entitled. Through the transformation initiative processes, disability was incorporated in the format of both legislation, policy and by-laws. However, needs for the disabled requires full incorporation by council by providing opportunities and facilities for the persons with disabilities.

If council is concerned with radical changes that affect persons with disabilities, the municipality must allocate adequate funding to effect changes and improvements to all its service points offices. The call to providing adequate funding for the transformation of the disabled persons does not end with the transformation of infrastructure buildings but goes beyond. This calls for the provision of other pressing needs like transportation, provision of training skills catered for the disabled and this culminating into careers for them and other businesses within the municipal's jurisdiction.

6.4.4 Reduction of the high unemployment rate

Caldeira et al. (2015) regard decentralization as a powerful and effective tool to reducing poverty and improving governance, especially in Africa. Decentralization has been adopted in many developing countries, notably in Africa over the past two decades in response to the failure of national governments to achieve development and the reducing the high unemployment rate. Chikulo (2016) records that the Human Poverty Index increased from 20% to 25% between 1998 and 2009. Government's is to improve the lives of its citizens by providing basic services. This could be achieved through the

provision of good quality and cost-effective services whereby the local municipal area is considered a congenial place to live and work, thus boosting the local economy (Koma, 2012). Koma (2012) contends that the introduction of local economic development was a result of market failures, including urban decline, high unemployment rates and increasing poverty.

In his article, Koma (2012) argues that local government could play a significant impact in promoting local economies by creating conducive environment with the local businesses and attracting foreign investments (i.e. business outside its jurisdiction and those from abroad) by establishing networks and linkages with various stakeholders. To alleviate the high unemployment rate, the municipality must establish relationships with the private sector and technical colleges to providing training skills that is required by the industry. For the local government to create ooportunities, is to create opportunities for the locals to be providers of services and goods to the municipality. This can be achieved by establishing relationships and partnerships with the financial institutions and organizations like National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) and Small Enterprise Developmental Agency (SEDA). These institutions provide training in business management and provide start-up capital at reasonable interest rates, at times free capital funding to youth entrepreaneurs and women.

6.4.5 Political Appointment of the Accounting Officer and the Head of Departments.

The study found that most of the respondents were of the view that senior officials should not be appointed by politicians. Politicians are perceived to be corrupt and collusion between them and bureaucrats would negatively impact service delivery. Nepotism in the appointment of persons with critical skills and expertise was also regarded as compromising service delivery and impeding transformation. In terms of the current legislative framework, the appointment of the Accounting Officer (for example, the Municipal Manager) is the

responsibility of the Mayor and councillors. Reddy (2016) is of the view that politics-administration dichotomy impacts the success of democratic decentralization in Africa. South African politicians are said to be performing an indispensable role in the appointment of senior administrative staff and ruling party loyalists are appointed to carry-out the party line. According to Mehrotra (2006), this creates instability when there is a change of political head, resulting in dysfunctionality and poor performance in most municipalities in South Africa.

Invariably, the term of the Accounting Officer coincides with the term of the Mayor and equally so, the term of the HODs is fixed for a five-year period. Employing senior management for fixed term is also a problem since after every five-year term, a new person must be employed. Invariably these new persons are not suitably qualified for the position. Most of them lack experience. Many are of the view that if those appointed to senior positions are political appointees, they will be dictated to by politicians who are perceived to be corrupt, thus negatively impacting service delivery and development. This is in line with the views of the scholars, such as (Alexander and Kane-Berman, 2014; Basheka and Mubangizi, 2012; Picard and Mogale, 2015). There is suggestion of widespread wastage, ineffectiveness, ineptitude and corruption in South Africa due to political interferences. It is therefore recommended that the accounting officer and HODs should not be appointed through the political processes. Further, their tenure should not coincide with those of the political heads. It is recommended that this legislative framework be reviewed, and possibly be amended as well.

6.5   Conclusion

With the dawn of democracy in 1994, government adopted various transformation initiatives, including decentralization of services and powers to local government since this sphere of government is regarded as the nucleus of economic development. Local government is closest to the communities it

serves and is therefore thought to be more efficient in meeting their needs. Whilst government has published several blue prints and White Papers that aim to enhance the standard of living of all South Africans, implementation has, however been hampered by the fact that local government lacks the skills and capacity required to accomplish this task. This includes personnel with engineering/technical skills, and financial and project management.

The adoption of transformation initiatives through a decentralization process that aims to systematically achieve participatory local government, has resulted in a slow progress towards the realisation of a democratic citizenship through integrated development and reconciliation between divided communities. During the transition period, affirmative action and voluntary severance packages resulted in an exodus of skilled and experienced white government officials. This created a skills vacuum since the majority of Black Africans were deprived of quality education during apartheid an era. Other factors, including corruption, poor community participation, and unjustifiable political interference in municipalities have hampered the achievement of good governance through decentralization. The endemic problem of corruption cuts across all sectors and calls for a culture of zero tolerance across society.

While the literature notes that decentralization has mixed impacts, the evidence shows that the democratic government has made some progress to improving the lives of South Africans despite the population increase between the 1996 and 2011. It is therefore recommended that all stakeholders be committed to the implementation of the OSS. The OSS programme offers opportunities to reap the fruits of decentralization as government structures, service providers, and the community will work together to tackle current challenges. This would empower local communities and enable them to play a critical role in finding solutions to the problems that confront them daily.

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ANNEXURE A: PERMISSION REQUEST LETTER TO UMHLATHUZE MUNICIPALITY

10 Redwood Place; Washington Heights
PINETOWN; 3610
Telephone: 083 390 46 59
E-mail address: bmhlongo@fnbconnect.co.za & mhlongo63@gmail.com
27 July 2017

The Municipal Manager
Dear Dr. Sibeko

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: BM MHLONGO (901343250)

I, *Bongani M Mhlongo,* a registered student for a Master Degree in Public Administration (MPA) in the School of Management, IT & Governance in the Discipline of Public Governance, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Westville Campus, hereby request permission to conduct research in the uMhlathuze Local Municipality. The participants will participate in a *voluntary questionnaire as part of a survey for* a research project entitled "**An analysis of transformation initiatives to promote development: A case study of uMhlathuze Local Municipality.**"

The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of transformation initiatives in promoting development within the uMhlathuze Local Municipality. The researcher intends to examine if decentralization of services to local municipalities promotes the engagement and participation of local communities in their affairs and to identify if the audit outcomes have any correlations towards the delivery of services.

Information gathered will be used solely to complete the research dissertation and will be shared with the Municipality on request, but names of the research participants shall remain confidential and participation is voluntary.

Yours sincerely

Bongani M Mhlongo

ANNEXURE B: PERMISSION REQUEST GRANTED BY MUNICIPAL MANAGER

OF

CITY

uMHLATHUZE

U

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VISION INIO ACTION

| T: 035 907 |
| F: 035 907 54441516/7 |
| Toll   No: 0800 222 827 |

www.umhlathuze.gov.za

Your ref:

Our file ref: N MTHETHWA

Contact: 035 907 5260

In response to DMS No:

Date: 10 AUGUST 2017

ATTENTION: MR BONGANI M MHLONGO

10 Redwood Place, Washington Heights
PINETOWN

3610

Dear Sir

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: BM MHLONGO (901343250)

Your letter dated 27 July 2017 is hereby acknowledged, content of which has
been duly considered.
This serves to confirm that uMhlathuze Local Municipality grants you
permission to conduct research as requested. It is expected that you shall
abide by the ethical standards in conducting your research and the Municipality
will not be liable for any unethical research conduct.

We wish you all the best with your studies.

Yours faithfully

R NJ SIBEKO MUNICIPAL MANAGER

DMS1221615

ANNEXURE C: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL
For research with human participants

Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research

Date: 21 September 2017

Greetings,

I, *Bongani M Mhlongo,* a registered student in the School of Management, IT & Governance in the Discipline of Public Governance, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Westville Campus. I hereby invite and request you to participate in a *voluntary questionnaire as part of a survey for my* research project titled "An analysis of transformation initiatives to promote development: A case study of uMhlathuze Local Municipality"

The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of transformation initiatives in promoting development within the uMhlathuze Local Municipality. The researcher intends to examine if decentralization of services to local municipalities promotes the engagement and participation of local communities in their affairs for the developmental purposes and to identify if the audit outcomes have any correlations towards the delivery of services.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee **(approval number HSS/1501/017M).**

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at this number **083 390 4659** or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION
Research Office, Westville Campus
Govan Mbeki Building
Private Bag X 54001
Durban 4000 KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609
Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Your participation in the study is voluntary and by participating, you are granting the researcher permission to use your responses. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in the study. Your anonymity will be maintained by the researcher and the School of Management, I.T. & Governance and your responses will not be used for any purposes outside of this study.

All data, both electronic and hard copy will be securely stored during the study and archived for 5 years. After this time, all data will be destroyed.

If you have any questions or concerns about participating in the study, please contact me or my research supervisor at the numbers listed above.

Sincerely

Bongani M Mhlongo

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

I ……………………………………………. have been informed about the study titled "An analysis of transformation initiatives to promote development: A case study of uMhlathuze Local Municipality" by Bongani M Mhlongo.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study that is to investigate the impact of transformation initiatives in promoting development within the uMhlathuze Local Municipality. The researcher intends to examine if decentralization of services to local municipalities promotes the engagement and participation of local communities in their affairs for the developmental purposes and to identify if the audit outcomes have any correlations towards the delivery of services.

I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to. I have been informed about any available compensation or medical treatment if injury occurs to me as a result of study-related procedures.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher on **083 390 46 59**.

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION
Research Office, Westville Campus
Govan Mbeki Building
Private Bag X 54001
Durban
4000
KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609
Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date

ANNEXURE D: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Biographical Information

1. What is your gender?

Male	Female
1	2

2. What is your age?

25-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61+
1	2	3	4	5

3. What is your home Language?

IsiZulu	English	Afrikaans	Other
1	2	3	4

4. What is your marital Status?

Single	Married	Divorced	Widow/widower
1	2	3	4

5. What is your educational Level?

Never attended school	Primary Level	Secondary Level	Tertiary Level
1	2	3	4

6. What is your employment Status?

Unemployed	Casual	Seasonal	Permanent	Self-employed	Pensioner	Studying
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

7. Your area of Residence?

Rural under Tribal Authority	Township (Esikhaleni/Ngwelezane/ENseleni	Urban (Richards Bay/Empangeni
1	2	3

8. What is the estimated distance do you travel to the community meeting from your place of residence?

0 – 3km	3.1-5km	5.1-10km	More than 10km
1	2	3	4

9. Which mode of transport to community meeting do you use from your place of residence to council meetings?

By Foot	Own transport	Lift by friend/other	Transport provided by municipality	Other
1	2	3	4	5

10. Which language is used to invite community to council meetings?

IsiZulu	English	Afrikaans	Other (IsiZulu & English)
1	2	3	4

11. Which medium of communication is used by council to invite community to council meetings?

Newspaper	Municipal Website	Radio	TV	Post or email	Ward Councillors/headmen
1	2	3	4	5	6

12. According to your assessment, who normally attend the community meetings?

Mostly Youth	Mostly Adult
1	2

13. According to your assessment, who normally attend these meetings?

Mostly males	Mostly females
1	2

14. According to your assessment, who normally attend these meetings?

Mostly Employed	Mostly Unemployed
1	2

GOVERNANCE Tick the appropriate box	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
15. When visiting municipal offices for services, officials use the language that I understand, if not another person is there to interpret?					
Community Participation					
16. I feel that the municipality fairly consults the community about their needs, especially on the nature, quantity and quality of services to be provided?					
17. Community involvement and participation does enhance service delivery?					
18. Low turnout in the recent local government elections was an indication of community dissatisfaction with the municipality service delivery?					
19. Community protest is another form of community participation which has positive consequences since politicians and officials take these protests seriously?					
20. The Ward Committee System is fully functional in deepening the democracy and promoting public participation?					
21. The War Rooms in your ward are fully functional and they enhance community participation in their affairs?					
22. Members of the community are engaged with through the War Rooms, by bringing their issues of concerns and participating in the service delivery?					
23. Operation Sukuma Sakhe is helping to create a better life for all. Through Operation Sukuma Sakhe the Government of KwaZulu-Natal is renewing its commitment to deliver essential services to all communities of this beautiful province?					

Tick the appropriate box	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
24. IDPs and budgets in the uMhlathuze Local Municipality are driven by municipal officials and councillors instead to be driven by the people?					
25. Consultation and stakeholder engagement are elements of democracy. Councillors need to adopt these principles as the basis of their operation. This provides opportunities for the community to participate in issues affecting their lives?					
26. Accountability and transparency are considered the elements of democracy and building blocks of governance. It is critical that both the councillors and administration adopt them in their operation to gain trust of their constituencies?					
27. Municipality administrators/staff engage in corrupt activities especially when awarding tenders?					
28. Do you feel that the municipality provides full and accurate information about services that the community is entitled to?					
29. Information is available at service points in the language that you understand?					
30. Weekly/Monthly newsletter is distributed to the community with relevant and recent development from the office of the City Manager?					
31. Frontline staff serve with courtesy and respect?					
32. The municipality has a mechanism to record public views, including complaints and dissatisfaction with services – toll free number, suggestion boxes are available?					
33. Staff can handle complains fast and efficiently?					
34. The municipality's offices are accessible by all community members and have extended business hours to cater those who are working?					

Tick the appropriate box	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
35. The municipality provides service delivery to physically, socially and culturally disadvantaged persons (including infrastructure)?					
Factors that Drive/Impede transformation initiatives					
36. Do you think that the appointment of the municipal manager and CFO should be political appointments?					
37. Nepotism within the Municipality in the appointment of people with critical technical skills and expertise compromises the service delivery?					
38. The Municipality does not have a strategy to attract and develop scarce skills?					
39. Politicians have a role on service delivery. Political differences amongst political parties has an impact and affect collective political decision-making in council?					
40. It is believed that conflict between political and administrative leadership has a negative effect on service delivery?					
41. Local government is over legislated and this result in the municipality spending more time to comply instead of service delivery?					
42. Not understanding how the local government operates affects the ability of communities to participate in local government activities?					
43. Audit outcomes have a positive correlation towards the delivery of services and quality thereof?					

ANNEXURE E: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

UNIVERSITY OF™

 KWAZUIU•NATAL

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YAKWAZULU-NATALI

28 August 2017

Mr Bongani Mzwakhe Mhlongo (901343250)
School of Management, IT & Governance
Westville Campus

Dear Mr Mhlongo,

Protocol reference number: HSS/1501/017M
Project title: An analysis of transformation initiatives to promote development: A case study of uMhlathuze Municipality

Approval Notification — Expedited Application In response to your application received on 18 August 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted FULL APPROVAL.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years. The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.
Yours faithfully

....

Dr Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Professor M Sibanda

Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Brian McArthur
Cc School Administrator: Ms Angela Pearce